

Minutes - Neighborhood Council, Valley Village

3-24-21

First Agenda

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm. All 15 Board members and four student members were in attendance.

2. Public Comments

Marissa Tindel of LA Unified School District discussed the district's safety net program, including 116,000,000 meals per year, a mental health counseling line and testing for the coronavirus. Raphael Gaceta of LAUSD reported that they will be opening 61 elementary schools on April 12 and middle and high schools will be opened on April 26. School employees are being vaccinated.

3. Presentation - Raquel Beltran, General Manager - DONE

Ms. Beltran noted that neighborhood council members have some of the most challenging jobs. The DONE staff is here to support us. Mario Hernandez is the new staff member assigned to our neighborhood council. Raquel has been on a listening tour that was interrupted by the pandemic. Their priority is the upcoming elections. They are keeping track of the progress of the elections. There has been a 314% increase in candidate filings. There will be a 30% - 40% turnover of Board members. Cornerstone training is available to new Board members, including orientation training. There is also youth civic training. Several months ago there was a Board of Neighborhood Commissioners meeting on digital media policy. After that the policy was circulated for public comment for four months. DONE will discuss a new social meeting policy in accordance with A.B. 992. A new Code of Conduct for neighborhood council members will be released in May for public comment. It will be a five month process. A reorganization of DONE will be done due to the loss of five staff positions. DONE is down to 27 staff members. Nonessential work has been dropped. The core work will be neighborhood council support. Ongoing training is to be done for new Board members. DONE is committed to keeping virtual meetings going. Zoom was approved for another year. A split meeting, both virtual and in person, may be allowed. Additional licenses for Zoom meetings may be purchased. Grievances have been filed against four Boards. Regional panels have been set up to hear grievances.

Tony Braswell indicated that he will likely set up alternating Zoom and in person meetings and asked will the budget for neighborhood councils be cut or will it remain the same? Raquel Beltran replied that the budget will remain the same, at \$32,000 per year. Suzanne Lewis asked whether there will be any budget rollovers allowed, from one year to the next year? Raquel replied that there probably will be. Alice Hart asked when will the confirmations for training completions be available? Mario Hernandez indicated that there is a moratorium on Planning 101 training until August. He is also not aware of the status of the annual Congress of Neighborhood Councils meeting for this year.

4. Presentation - Water Recapture Project - Valley Village Park

Brian Powell stated that the purpose of the project is to capture stormwater that falls onto parks. Millions of gallons can be captured to add to the water supply. Anthony Nercessian described the benefits of the project, replenishing the water supply with 150,000 acre feet to be captured each

year. 750 permanent jobs will be created. Nine stormwater capture projects are to be done in the East Valley. The water will be collected from storm drains, treated and stored in subterranean chambers to percolate into the ground. Brian Powell noted that DWP hired us in Engineering to implement the project. Michael _____ described the project in Valley Village Park. It will capture 172 acre feet per year. The project consists of a diversion structure to direct the stormwater from the storm drain and into the park, to a hydrodynamic separator to filter the water, which is quite dirty. Then the water continues on to a desilting basin and the infiltration gallery.

Brian Powell discussed the survey results as to what uses the community wants for the park. The improvements desired the most are more trees, replacing the restroom and more picnic areas. The improvements that will be done are planting more replacement trees, improved walking paths, more benches and seating areas, a new picnic area shade structure, a native habitat planting area to replace some of the lawn area, restoration of the grass and the irrigation system upgraded. The program schedule is to complete the design by December, 2021. There are three phases of construction. Valley Village is in Phase 1, to be done in the summer of 2022. A community meeting will be held on April, 2021.

Questions asked were: (1) Will community construction companies be used? Brian Powell replied that anyone can bid on the job but usually the large, sophisticated companies bid and are awarded the contracts. (2) How much of the park can still be used? Only the northern half will still be open to the public with the southern half fenced off. (3) What are the construction hours? The hours will be 7:00 am to 3:30 pm. (4) Will the adjoining roads stay open? The roads will remain open. (5) Will dirt from the excavation for the subterranean chamber be removed? The dirt will be hauled away with a portion of it backfilled around the chamber. (6) Will there be dust control? Yes, water will be sprayed onto the dirt three to four times a day. (7) For the trees to be removed will outreach to the community be done regarding the replacement trees? Larger replacement trees will need to be planted. Outreach to the community will be done and a list of trees will be prepared for review by the community. (8) How will the trash, the debris be removed from the filters? Trucks will come to vacuum out the trash. (9) Will barriers to unauthorized vehicles be placed at the entrances to the roadway within the park? Yes, temporary, removable bollards will be placed at the entrances to the roadway. (10) Will the restrooms be improved? New restrooms are rather expensive. They are looking into it. Prefabricated units will probably be used. (11) What about renovating rather than replacing the restrooms? They prefer replacing the restroom because renovating them is almost as expensive. (12) Can more lighting be added to the park? There is not enough money remaining in the budget to add lighting. (13) How will the filters be cleaned? The Bureau of Sanitation will be bringing in trucks to vacuum the tanks. (14) The trees are very important. They should be replaced with trees of about the same size. The project staff are working with the Rec & Parks staff to be sure that the new trees are consistent with their policies on tree replacement. (15) Lighting is important. Add at least one more light. The budget is a constraint on adding additional lighting. (16) Add another bathroom to the restroom. The stalls will be smaller, to allow only one person, to discourage "mischief". (17) Have wider walkways. There will be some improvements to the walkways. (18) Will the debris back up onto Westpark Drive? No, the debris will not overflow the filters. It will be vacuumed out. (19) When will the walking paths be lost? As soon as construction starts. (20) Can the one light in the picnic area be repaired? There may be some remaining money in the budget for that.

5. Executive Committee Report - Ginny Hatfield

Today is Equal Pay Day. Women earn only 88% of what men are paid. Minority women are paid an even lower percentage. Because of pay discrimination, \$78 billion in income is lost by women each year. Legislation on this issue is pending in Congress.

6. Finance Report - Dorothy Apple

\$311,511 was spent in February with \$1,085,291 in outstanding expenditures. There is a remaining balance of \$21,690,488 and the net available amount is 15,605,191. \$1,200 for tree feeding may be shifted to the next fiscal year. After a discussion of an increase in the cost of the upcoming election Ginny Hatfield moved and Dorothy Apple seconded to increase the amount for the election, to be allocated to Wendy Moore, by up to \$1,000. Mario Hernandez of DONE advised that this cannot be voted on because it is not on the agenda. The Board decided to table the motion and hold a special Board meeting on Monday, March 29 to vote on it. The February finance report was then approved by a vote of 15-0 with the Student Committee approving by a vote of 4-0-1.

7. Reports from Elected Officials/DONE

Jaden Stewart of the Mayor's Office reported that FEMA will provide assistance for the funerals of those who died from the coronavirus. New rules will be issued for stay at home orders and business operations. An additional round of rental assistance will be provided Recovery Act recently passed by Congress. Call 310 268-4900 for vaccine appointments.

Ryan Ahari, the new deputy in Assemblyman Nazarian's office has met with some of the Board members on community issues. Community sessions will be held on mental health during the pandemic. Significant bills introduced by Nazarian are A.B. 752, requiring doctors to inform the patient about the cost of the drugs they are prescribing and A.B. 342? to make the Slow Streets Program initiated by an executive order by Governor Newsom permanent.

Osvaldo Ramirez with Congressman Brad Sherman's office announced that Brad Sherman will be having a telephone town hall with State Senator Bob Hertzberg. The phone number to call is 833 305-1682.

8. Committee Reports

Events and Outreach - Maribel Ulloa-Garcia

The Committee is assisting with preparations for the Board election by working on getting out the notices for the May 11 election. The goal is to get 25% participation by Valley Village residents.

Elections and Bylaws - Ginny Hatfield

The 2021 election for the Board of Directors is scheduled for May 11. The candidate filing period, from Jan. 9 to Feb. 23, has closed. The second phase of the election is voter registration, which is being done on line. Information on how to register will be mailed out. The deadline for registration is May 4. The ballots will be sent out starting April 12. The deadline for voting is May 11 with the

deadline for ballots to be received is May 21. Election results will be posted on May 25. Documentation verifying a stakeholder's category for registration will be needed. The candidates are:

Lisa Miller - Education Getting children back into school after the pandemic is not enough after the trauma of the coronavirus. More funding to assist children to recover is needed.

Jake Yokum - At Large He is excited about adding to the community.

John Thyne - Business He would like to help small businesses recover from the pandemic.

Chris Yoseppi - At Large He would also like to help small businesses.

Dorothy Apple - She would like to continue doing community events such as the food drives and July 4 parade.

Paulette Stokes - Renter She would like to help her community regarding living conditions. She has lived in Valley Village for 35 years.

Suzanne Lewis - Renter She is concerned about high rents and evictions.

Student Committee - Tiffany Mar reported on the Youth Town Hall event for student volunteers.

City Services - Suzanne Lewis

The work on painting the utility boxes is being paused. It will resume in April. The coyotes have come down from the hills. Be careful when walking one's dog. Vendors who are selling food in Valley Village do not have permits and are leaving trash, which attracts vermin. The Health Department has been contacted, which can only take away their food. The Committee is working with the Resident's Association to do a community cleanup, including the tunnel under the 170 Freeway. Alice Hart noticed that the vendors are parking on Laurel Canyon.

Vision Committee - Marc Woerschling

After their January 7 approval of the staff recommendation that the nomination of the Magnolia Boulevard Oak trees for an historic designation move forward, the Cultural Heritage Commission had an on-site visit on February 25 to view the trees and discuss the nomination with Board members and our consultant, Charlie Fisher. Then a second Commission meeting and public hearing will be held in April with the Commission likely to approve the historic monument designation.

9. Public Comment

Michael and Christie had questions for Congressman Brad Sherman that he could not ask at Sherman's presentation at the February meeting and had criticisms of how the meeting was handled. They asked that their letter be sent to the rest of the Board.

Second Agenda

10. Planning and Land Use - Glenn Block

A five story project on 5426 Hermitage Avenue near Weddington will be using the Transit Oriented Communities program which allows greater height and density. The Committee voted to disapprove the project due to it violating the Specific Plan. The Committee also approved a second motion expressing concern about the adequacy of the infrastructure in the neighborhood.

The Board unanimously approved the first motion to disapprove the project.

The Board unanimously approved the second motion to express concern about the adequacy of the infrastructure for the neighborhood.

The Board approved the third motion for a historic designation for the Simpson/Morella/ Carpenter neighborhood by a vote of 12-1-0. Desmond Faison abstained.

The Board approved the fourth motion to add Radford, Gentry, Agnes and Ben Avenues to the proposed historic designation due the historic character of the streets, by a vote of 12-1-0. Desmond Faison abstained.

The Board discussed S.B. 9 and S.B. 10, two bills being considered by the State Legislature to change single family zoned neighborhoods in California. S.B. 9 would eliminate single family home zoning, allowing up to eight units on a single family home lot. No affordable units would be required and no local input would be permitted. S.B. 10 would allow up to 10 units on multifamily zoned lots, with no local control.

The motion to support the motion by Councilman Koretz in opposition to S.B. 9 and S.B. 10 by submitting a community impact statement was approved by a vote of 13-1.

At the Planning Committee meeting regarding the project at 5426 Hermitage Avenue the applicant's representative made inappropriate comments about East Los Angeles that sounded racist. Tony Braswell was not sure how to respond and will request guidance from DONE.

11. The meeting adjourned at 9:42 pm.