

Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Land Use Committee  
Chatsworth Depot  
Minutes September 15 2011– Regular Meeting-Draft Minutes

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Present: Andre van der Valk, Linda van der Valk, Judi Daniels, Larry Heller, Teena Takata, Saul Daniels, Diana Dixon-Davis, Mark Levinson, Vicki Briskman, Dan Huffman, Jelena Csanyi, Jeff Hammond, Mary Kaufman, Jelena Csyani

Not here: Janice Eddy-Languein, Chuck Knolls (excused)

### **Stakeholder and Public Comments**

Sierra Canyon compliance report, deferred to next meeting.

Pioneer Day Oct 2 at the Homestead Acre

### **Presentations:**

August minutes – additions, corrections – approved as read.

Minutes from June were deferred to next month

### **Presentations and Possible Motions:**

**Presentations:** SMMC Presentation, regarding Hidden Creeks, Brown Canyon – Deputy Director Paul Edelman. This area is a pristine wilderness area in the Santa Susana Mountains – it requires 2 million cubic yard grading for road, plus another 5 million cubic yards grading on site. There are significant biological impacts, they cannot mitigate it. Core habitat for mountain lions, bears is lost. This type of development, after the initial production generally drains City services; they present another group of 33 ranchettes on the site, access through Browns Canyon. Economic feasibility may well work with this small more naturally sited project. Remove 100 acres landslide and repack if you do a major project causes a lot of grading. The SMMC isolated open space of 75 acres relates to the minor remaining width of Mormon Creek, making it less usable for wildlife. Mormon Creek will lose much of its natural flow, and the runoff will be different. Paul’s educational background is in Environmental Science and in Biology. Supervisor Antonovich recently contributed approximately \$50,000 for the quarry access off Browns Canyon to improve the equestrian uses there. Friday Sept 23 at 2:30pm hearing is scheduled. We just received the FEIR today. Dan O’Donnell is the hearing officer.

Vicki commented – there are too many impacts to this project. This wasn’t part of the Porter Ranch plan. Diana – at a 33 home level, the impacts would be greatly reduced, we could have legitimate horsekeeping. Overly dense, for the nearby use of the area. Judi, the 25 equestrian lots are over 20,000 square feet; but questions about footprints of the homes, and proper 75 foot distances between horses and habitable rooms.

Do we want to take a position on this project?

Moved, by Teena – The committee moves to disapprove the project as presented. There are many unanswered questions. The density of the project and the infrastructure and grading requirements provide an excessive impact to the community. A beautiful oak woodland, as well as key wildlife habitat, is to be destroyed. Our community values the aesthetic views of the hills, and as Porter Ranch was approved, additional projects piggybacking on that development were not considered or disclosed. Jelena seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

10800 Topanga Canyon – Question about effect of firewood lot on Topanga; the home is now fenced in a way that prevents horsekeeping. The square footage for house and the side yard provides enough space for horsekeeping. There is a contiguous lot with an arena for use by that home. Jelena noted they keep a clean space; they do own the property. Front mid, read center with 1 inch fire pipes; designed with and by LAFD and they follow through. They also have and carry a 2000 gallon white water truck as supplemental water sources. They also use their yard for fire equipment staging.

Dan moved to approve the request for the variance for firewood sales on the lot. Our approval is limited to use of the lot for storage and sale of firewood and accessories, and does not include any type of manufacturing or other industrial use. Equipment related to the firewood sales and storage are specifically permitted. We have noted that this business has been there for many years. The footprint of the firewood yard shall not prevent horsekeeping on adjacent homes under the same ownership by infringing on the minimum areas needed for horsekeeping. Mark Levinson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, although 2 recused themselves.

**8:00 Email our notes to [troth@core.us.com](mailto:troth@core.us.com)**

9350 Topanga Canyon. Tanya Roth for Verizon Wireless. She is with Core Development, who helps Verizon with the installation of new facilities. Coverage has increased needs to cover both the mobile and stationery areas as land lines are less used. Data usage also has hugely increased. Chatsworth is difficult and tends to have pockets due to hilly topography. The existing towers used to cover between them but now are short – the additional use has decreased the “reach” of the existing cell towers, so they now have gaps. Vicki – where are the existing towers? They have not been forthcoming with responses. With the tower map, a coverage map showing how they meet with each other is needed to fully understand what is needed. Antennas - stealth on the roof, equipment is on third floor in two of the storage units. Larry commented if he adds an air conditioning unit, he can't just put a little box around it. The box wouldn't be allowed in a general construction context – is there an exception for cell towers? Diana commented this type of screening is still much between than an outright tower or a poor fake tree. Andre – questioned about a moratorium on future cell towers. We need an inventory of existing structures and coverages. Make the building have a more ingenious design, a parapet to have a more harmonius visual effect on the site. Perhaps a tower effect – just suggestions. We don't need a separate structure such as has been used elsewhere in Chatsworth. Just a better design on the roof can be quite satisfactory. EME comes from the antennas.

Teena moved that we defer this matter to our next committee member to provide Tanya an opportunity to respond to our question. Jelena seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

8:40pm

Chatsworth Hills Academy – field trip, additional studies on area. Brad Rosenheim. They are addressing three issues; fire department; line of sight; what is the process for the remaining 8 acres? Scott Rabin, head of foundation. They provided a letter from their attorney relating to the land use attorney. They have about 170 families at the school. Three to four years ago started to look at infrastructure on the campus. Investment is about \$2.5 million to do the proposed build out; and it didn't make sense to be able to put that type of money into a leased property. CHA historically tried to purchase the 8 acres, for

twice the appraised value, and was turned down. The 2004 lease agreement included the paragraph the attorney letter cited, that CHA had the opportunity to build structures. Annette Woo is the project architect. LAFD update – single access – is ok; LAFD requested a fire truck turnaround between buildings 2 and 4, and they are adding another fire hydrant as requested. The line of sight is reasonable, the elevation of the home that is nearest to the multipurpose room is about the same height. Tree screening along the drive really helps. This is the only affected home based on existing layouts. Lawyer Lisa Weinberg, Gains & Stacey discussed the below issues.

Question on the validity of the CUP on the upper 8 acres as compared to their property. 12.24N, LAMC, is cited. The entire approved site shall be retained for the conditional use, and no portion shall be severed. Teena questioned the effect of construction on the existing CUP? They would still be running a school during the construction. The construction would be authorized under the new CUP. Teena noted there would be a bit of separation and inconsistency with the present CUP caused by the construction project and the new CUP... They hope for a 30 year grant, similar to the existing term for the existing school. There may be a sewer easement, or they may be able to use public access.

Fenwick family – Steve Kaplan, attorney – Luna & Glushon presenting. They will file a planned reduction for the CUP, to include their existing structures (they have to add 73 parking spaces) to meet all requirements of the March 2011 CUP. All other conditions are included in the March 2011 CUP. So we may have two schools on these parcels. They will not oppose the separate CHA application. There is another 4 acres that Fenwick owns, but including that would be a new CUP. This reduction is a plan approval; prove you can live with the conditions of the original grant on the smaller site plan. The plan approval is different than a CUP – there will be some sort of public hearing, but having that hearing is optional, but it will occur here due to impact. There are appeal processes similar to CUPs. Fenwick family will lease the site to a school. Linda commented on feedback received from Dan Scott – the current CUP will not be valid without the lower portion. New CUPs will be required by the 8 acre upper site as well as the lower property. Andre and Jeff commented on the issues created by increased use/density that may be caused by two school operators. Vicki – we can only look at the project before us.

Hours, events, are the same. There will be, an authorization for a few more administrators on site. Homeowner on 21443 Celtic Court - Earl Miller, just east of the Multipurpose building. The building is about 20 feet from his property. He has been there 12 years. His views of Stoney Point will be curtailed by the project.

New Proposed Motion -  
(Introductory comment –)

The 4.5 acre site is the single lot between a recorded Native American burial ground and a recognized (recorded?) Native American village. Pictographs exist today on the upper 8 acre site immediately to the north, and the entire area, including this lot, is believed to have been used as a large Native American village, so protection of archaeological resources is an especially significant issue.

Because of the past use of the site, a Cultural Resources examination of the site and a report should be done before any work is begun, which will include at least a check of Fullerton records, consultation with persons knowledgeable of the site, and perform initial pre-grading testing, for both surface and proposed excavation areas. It is imperative that this work and inspection of all areas to be graded are examined by a professional archaeologist before grading commences.

When work proceeds that involves any excavation work or grading, a professional archaeologist must be on site to monitor the vegetation clearing, monitor ALL soil excavations necessary due to any development or digging on the site for any purpose.

Stakeholder, Celtic; no gym now – why is one needed? Traffic will be significant if the school load is doubled. There are significant access problems if there are fires because there is not enough width to widen access roads in the area to improve emergency access. Vicki – why devalue on your property? Increase use due to gym/multipurpose room; loss of view, increased traffic. Celtic court neighbors (the nearest neighbors) were not notified of the school meeting (five/six of them here). Neighbor commented parking lot grading was done without permits.

Gym – an assembly area would really be helpful to avoid sun and rain. Building area used to be orange grove, so archaeological items may not be in area. Stakeholder comment, the school operation has moved much closer to the developed residential area, so noise will increase. Note lighting is photometric, and therefore should be limited in offsite impact. 500 foot notice goes all along the property boundaries.

Andre – support the CHA proposed project as presented for 420 students, recognizing this is only for 4.04 acres (much below the 12 acre combined site of the March 2011 CUP). Motion to include all conditions of the March 2011 CUP, except this CUP is may have additional administrators. Request that the school meet with neighbors immediately east of the school to mitigate the view effects of the multipurpose room. Include arch summary as read earlier. Second by Mark Levinson, for 10; oppose 2, abstain 1. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned, 10pm