

**Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Land Use Committee
Chatsworth Depot
Minutes May 17, 2012 - Draft Minutes**

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Present: Andre van der Valk, Linda van der Valk, Judi Daniels, Jeff Hammond, Jim Van Gundy, Mary Kaufman, Vicki Briskman, Teena Takata, Larry Heller, Mark Levinson, Janice Eddy-Languin

Not here: Jelena Csyani, Dan Huffman, Yvonne Savala

Stakeholder and Public Comments

Public Safety – 500 foot notices – Relative to recent improvements started at Chatsworth Street, near DeSoto – the residents did not get notice that the street was being widened because applicant was Sierra Canyon or Deerlake, and the applicant did not live in the immediate area. Public Safety Committee is asking that residents be informed where the residents are within 500 feet of a project but outside of the applicant’s 500 foot notice area. Linda polled the Land Use committee by straw vote to see if there was support for a motion to this effect to be presented at the next Board meeting; the committee agreed unanimously.

Cultural sites – cultural landmarks in our community are being surveyed. Please submit any additional sites to Linda.

The Land Use minutes from April were approved as presented.

Presentations and Motions

9610 De Soto - Habitat for Humanity

Resale of housing items. Tom Stemnock presenting; he has been on the board for this charity for 8-9 years. The company builds housing for low income people. Applicants for the homes need to be able to make payments; they usually have 35-40 applicants per house. The homes usually cost \$150k in improvements for homes; mostly the company receives donations from public, some grants, funds are more limited than they were. Current focus is moving toward veterans. 12 units in Sylmar, 90 units in Santa Clarita are current projects. Usually two workers in family; usually several jobs, children, applicants also have to provide 500 hours of sweat equity for Habitat for Humanity. They also provide training and construction for several years for applicant. As a result of the training provided, the children resident in their projects have graduated high school in recent years, without exception. Habitat is somewhat created as a franchise with some funds going back to home office. Locally, the site will be 5000/6000 feet sales, remainder warehouse, of a 15,000 square foot building. They also receive a variety of items from local retail stores such as Lowes (paint as colors change, other items), appliances, etc. 9606/9610 De Soto is a 37000 square foot building, they are leasing 15,000 feet of that. They have adequate parking. Sales of building materials is OK in M2. TVs, appliances, cannot legally be sold in an M2 zone, unless a variance is granted. Some items they sell are used. Expected operating hours are Tu – Sat 9am to 6pm. Deliveries will come in through the back. Donations are accepted. Lumber is stored indoors. No storage to be done on De Soto. Issues were raised about off-hours drop offs.

Mary moved to support the variance request to allow sale of household goods (such as TV's, appliances, etc.) at this location. In addition, a sign that clearly prohibits drop off of items outside business hours in the parking lot off De Soto is requested as a condition. Jeff seconded. Passed unanimously.

Chelsea McFarland, Urban Beekeeping Proposal.

Chelsea has formed an organization that is working within the City of Los Angeles to authorize limited urban beekeeping, which presently is not allowed in the City. They started working on this in Mar Vista. CCD is colony collapse disease that is common today. Monoculture, such as exists on large farms today, is hard on bees; everything blooms at once. So a City provides better range of blooming choices and makes sense as good habitat for modern bees. They had a National Honeybee Awareness day last year in the Mar Vista area. Maritza with Mar Vista City Council came in. They now are approaching other communities, especially those that have open space areas, to continue to gain support within the City for this concept. The County of Los Angeles will provide a bee permit. Under how the City laws are created, where an activity such as beekeeping is not specified as an allowed activity, it means that activity is not allowed. Their proposal is to allow up to two hives, a certain amount of feet from neighbor, per home. Their present mission is to ask each area to take a position to support a study, not to approve any specific ordinance. What is urban beekeeping? Weights and measures is in charge of beekeeping issues with the County. A-1 is permitted for a commercial apiary. They are trying to have this allowed in R-1. Africanized bees? Having honeybees should be fine; most the bee colonies are 90% partly Africanized. Backwards Beekeepers is an organization that helps teach (and helps rescue) that is active locally. Normally, even now, there are 9 feral hives in each square mile of Los Angeles. Urban forestry and DWP both spend time dealing with bees now. Her organization is Honeylove.org; it is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Within their website, look at Resources – this shows studies on bees. The healthiest local bees really are the native bees and imported bees often are those that end up with have health problems. Effectively, creating an urban beekeeping program provides a transition method to move feral colonies to kept colonies. Bees swarm when they outgrow their space. Therefore, bee boxes increase in size during the summer and reduce size in winter to accommodate space needs that increase in size during summer as more pollen and nectar is gathered and made into honey.

The above presentation was informational; the committee will consider this matter and vote on it at a future meeting.

Aliso Canyon Wind Turbine Replacement (and expansion) DEIR comment letter

Teena brought a two page draft comment letter on the DEIR for review, editing, and a vote. She commented that the letter addressed two primary concern areas; first fire hazards caused by a combination of what is done at this location, and fire hazards due to being in an open space area on the south side of Oat Mountain (NE of Tampa/Sesnon). The letter also commented on the failure to find significant numbers of Plummer's mariposa lily and suggested they were undercounted. Lastly, the other major point in the letter was to express concern and set standards for and note appropriate archaeological monitoring for the various cultural resources that archaeologist Al Knight noted in a memo he drafted on the project, which also was incorporated and referenced in the letter.

The committee wanted to strengthen safety measures proposed for the project, as suggested to include a modification to include a fire safety officer, with duties as read at the meeting. Other aspects of the project were discussed. Teena made a motion to approve the letter as modified; Mary seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

Linda to sign the letter as Chair of Land use, with a presentation to CNC after the comment deadline expires on May 22. Teena to update letter as suggested by the committee, and to forward it to Linda for signature and mailing. CNC can confirm the comment letter by separate letter after their meeting.

DRB – Andre reported on a recent matter before NV Planning; the Ramada (motel) on Devonshire – they want to go to 48 feet for their cell towers. The community Plan has 45 feet only for the cell towers. The DRB objected to the extended height due to the poor aesthetics. Planning backed the DRB and also said no. Other comments – stores along the Specific Plan area (Devonshire between Topanga Canyon and Mason) are not allowed to hang banners outside the store. Several landlords and/or tenants disregard the rules; the Council office, or 311 will send out someone to eliminate inappropriate signage. Candidate signs on Stoney Point – no ! Everyone on the committee needs to keep an eye out for inappropriate items, make some calls please !

Announcements:

The CNC has a June 2 retreat at Radisson – to start at 8:30am to 12:30pm. Stakeholder members of the Land Use Committee are invited to attend, please rsvp to Linda.

Take a hike in the Santa Susana Park on Saturday, 9am to 12pm. The Devonshire Police Division's annual pancake breakfast is also this coming Saturday morning, and there is a ride with ETI Corral 54 and councilman Mitch Englander that day also.

There is an unhitched trailer on De Soto every weekend for advertising purposes. It comes out late Friday and stays through Sunday.

Meeting adjourned 8:45pm.