

**Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Land Use Committee
Chatsworth Depot
Minutes January 17, 2013- Draft Minutes**

Linda van der Valk, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Present: Teena Takata, Mark Levinson, Andre van der Valk, Linda van der Valk, Vicki Briskman, Jelena Csanyi, Mary Kaufman, Jeff Hammond, Jim van Gundy, Janice Eddy-Languelin, Judi Daniels

Not here: Larry Heller, Dan Huffman, Chuck Knolls

Others; various stakeholders attended for 10801 De Soto; 66 people were announced as in the committee room during the review of this project.

Stakeholder and Public comments

The 125th Birthday of Chatsworth is coming ! Celebrate all year.

Friends of Library book sale this Saturday, 10-2.

Chatsworth Coordinating Council – meeting Jan 28, Mitch Englander is the speaker; the meeting will start at 11:30 am. Questions by written cards. At Rockpointe, Devonshire and Valley Circle. Meeting is open. Chatsworth Park South will soon be closed for 1800 days.

Election of stakeholder member for Land Use. Michael Price was introduced as a long term resident interested in working on the committee. He is a recent homeowner and a real estate agent for about 10 years. Michael was elected unanimously as a committee member.

Minutes – approval of minutes and emergency meeting from our November Land Use Meeting. Minutes were approved as presented.

Presentations and possible motions:

10801 De Soto, 99 bed Residential Care Facility, Seniors (Contact address 10814 Independence per map). Note – names of certain neighbors are listed below but are spelled phonetically.

Presenter/owner Craig initially made a presentation; he and his wife operate a similar home in Van Nuys. Their existing residential care home focuses on older people who suffer from Alzheimer’s and dementia. It is fully licensed, not a group home. He stated many similar homes turns over their residents every two years, their customers stay significantly longer. Their residential care home is moderately priced, and that is their plan for this home also. These are non-medical facilities; with organized activities for the residents.

Committee Secretary reviewed a map that was distributed, and noted the following: The lower floor shows 4 beds per room, x 20 rooms; and much smaller second floor shows 7 private rooms and 6 semi private rooms (which presumably have 2 people); so the total matches 99 beds. Large areas are

designated as public areas, about 1/3 of first floor. Lot appears to be 180.48 x 580.36 per a map that was distributed. Zone per map is RA-1.

Mr. Amond is the land use planner. He noted this will be a quiet place, low parking uses. Setback in front is about 100 feet (looks like 180 feet as drawn). Required parking is 41 spaces. They have designed 51 spaces. They stated there is no driveway on Independence, but two driveways are shown on the map. The ordinance, 178063 (Nov 2006) provides for elder care structures to be provided by right. Linda commented that under the cited ordinance, the Zoning Administrator must find the strict application of the land use regulations would result in practical difficulties, and provides 5 Findings including a Finding that the project is consistent with the General Plan, and the buildings are compatible with existing and planned structures in the community. How many employees? 3-4 people. This was questioned as an inadequate number. They replied their existing home has 46 beds, and they have a total of 21 employees on their existing home. Evergreen Chateau is their existing home. There is no access to Independence per them. They stated this home would have an overall lower ratio of workers per resident. They have low hospital admissions in their current facility.

Audience commented that an ambulance would need to make a left turn across De Soto which would be very difficult at peak traffic time, based on where the fire stations are located nearby and the directions the emergency vehicles would come from. Mary commented on the driveways onto Independence on the map, there are two of them. One driveway is for the residence that is there (labeled as Administration on the map); the other one is reportedly gated and for emergency purposes only. On the south side wall, what access is there for the home to the south? (for trail access). It will be there. There are no oxygen tanks, just concentrators. The project will be on sewer, not septic. Day shift employees would be 10 at existing facility that has 46 people being cared for. They suggested there would be 14 day employees here with 99 beds after some thought.

What was the square feet of the facility, it seemed huge compared to the neighborhood – 36,000 square feet?

Questioned by Teena; their existing facility has been represented to serve 46 people / with 21 employees. As a working estimate, multiply the existing number of workers at their current home by two for the increased beds, which would bring projected employees to 42. An exact translation of the numbers here would be that this would serve 92 people; so this provides for some efficiencies at a 99 person level. Our presenter then clarified the 3-4 employees would be the night shift. They then increased the expected number of employees but indicate no real overall increase over the amounts at the end of the prior paragraph (14 day employees).

The back building called “administration” is a group home presently; they indicated those people would stay, they would like to move, they want to use that as administration. This was a very confusing comment and totally unclear.

Comment from community member, this project is well designed but it just is not compatible with the neighborhood; Lacy Withers; she lives near this project.

We have a finite emergency response team in Chatsworth; only two vehicles, it would be difficult to get a hook and ladder truck into the facility. People die in car accidents on De Soto all the time.

Huge traffic problems in DeSoto, from 5pm it is totally backed up. Questioned, how many beds are needed to break even? Questioned about dementia, if anyone got out on De Soto, it would be fatal. Presenter commented the elderly love horses, peacocks.

Aron Sempler, Van Nixhom, commented on the inconsistency of this project with the community. There is no where to take anyone in this facility on a walk in this area; no sidewalks and a very busy street. Concern with speed of local traffic in non-peak periods. Monica Hernandez; lives next door; what about the traffic? Nobody lets anyone out into the street and traffic. John Loaw, on Independence; this property is horse property. That needs to be preserved as horse property; if approved there is additional precedent for destruction of additional horse properties. Roosters are loud all the time, and horses can smell – how will the elderly like that?

Charlotte Brodie commented that because we are losing horse property, we do not want this type of development in this area. That is a key issue here.

Lessa Crane, on Independence – has many people in family with cognitive impairments – but that still doesn't make this project compatible with the community in this area. De Soto truly is terrible for traffic, and the Rinaldi/De Soto traffic light is terrible. This will change the character of the neighborhood. Independence turns to a flood when it rains; and it is heavily used by local equestrians.

Sharon Robertson, lives next door, on the north side. It can take 15-20 minutes for her to leave her home in the morning to get onto De Soto; all adjacent properties drain rainwater runoff onto that parcel presently. Turning into her property is also dangerous, as other traffic will run you down. The parking seems barely adequate when actual employee numbers are considered.

Erick Greely; grew up in Northridge; he's always liked Chatsworth. We enjoy this as an equestrian community, we don't want to lose it. We want to keep our existing equestrian lots and not change the nature of the community.

Where is 10801 on the map? Will they ask for a variance? What will they do with the zoning? This is two legal lots. Will they tie the lots? The population density on this lot is tremendously over the average in this area, with 99 beds plus caregivers proposed for this lot.

Liz Ricchi; on Chatsworth Street resident. New incompatible people/uses come into the neighborhood, then there are too many flies in the neighborhood.

Mary, when were the lots tied together? They are tied by ownership only.

When they propose this on 2.4 acres, don't you have to tie the lots together?

Comment that there may well be a waiting list so there may not be any vacancy.

Dorothy Allison; inconsistent with the community standards. Keep Chatsworth as rural as possible.

Chatsworth likes that rural, animal type lifestyle.

They state the Independence houses would be linked to the De Soto street sewer.

13530 Sherman Way was noted as the address of their existing home in Van Nuys.

Teena commented that there is a fifth requirement in the findings that is part of the ordinance cited earlier; that the project be in conformance with the General Plan. She commented that the Community Plan for Chatsworth is the local component of the General Plan, and it has a specific provision that horsekeeping shall have a higher priority than other development uses, which may not be incompatible with horsekeeping or harm horsekeeping. This standard is in the Chatsworth Community Plan, for properties west of De Soto and north of Chatsworth Street. The community stands with that provision and defends horsekeeping, as the project presenters may infer from the 66 people here compared to the usual 20 people. It appears the fifth Finding requirement cannot be met.

Judi questioned, there is no sidewalk shown on the drawing of the project as presented; they will need to incorporate one, surely.

Another comment that horses, for facilities and items like flies, just always have to move as a new building is made.

Vicki moved that the project be denied. Mark seconded. Voting was unanimous for the motion (to deny approval of the project), except that Mary recused herself from the vote.

Discussion regarding letters about the Santa Susana Field Lab –

The letter to David Szymanski was discussed first. The NASA site is under a federal disposition process presently and therefore if the NASA site is to be preserved for parkland, action needs taken soon. The NASA site includes the Burro Flats pictographs, and multiple archaeological sites; it is the “gem” of the properties that are there, although it is only about 400 of the total 2700 acre site. The Burro Flats cave is a tremendous local site in color and clarity, that has been well protected. It also has rocket test stands, so is a key parcel. The site is part of the contaminated property at the SSFL, and cleanup is underway and is to be completed. This letter is designed to begin to provide a record of community support for this as an acquisition by NPS. The entire SSFL is a key parcel because it is the next parcel that would represent an extension of open space north of the former Ahmanson Ranch, now the Upper Las Virgenes Open Space. It is hoped these properties eventually will link open space through the Chatsworth Nature Preserve and through to Los Padres. A major concern is commercial development may occur in these areas.

The ROV Comment letter was reviewed. This letter addresses comments on the ROV study and highlights the SSFL as a desirable acquisition. Discussion about the SSFL contamination, the cleanup, and commentary from the scientific community that ran education courses “Groundwater University” during the two last years was discussed, extensive testing has occurred. Among other items the water under the higher elevation at SSFL does not blend with the usual water table on the Valley floor; the SSFL aquifer simply stays on site. There is one plume, coming off the north side of the property toward Sage Ranch, primarily TCE, but it isn’t spreading, and the extension off the SSFL site is limited. In general, contamination is not spreading.

Teena made a motion that the letters be approved as presented, subject to editorial review and modifications by Judi Daniels. Mary seconded. It was suggested that the final versions copy various politicians, namely Englander, Sherman, Feinstein, Boxer, Blumenfeld. Unanimously approved.

Other Motions:

To spend up to \$250 for American Publishing for a new LAMC Mary made motion, Jelena seconded, carried unanimously.

Chatsworth will be 125 years old this year. Lets spend up to \$300 for promotional items, suggested by Linda. Judy moved to spend up to \$300 for promotional items, Mary seconded; passed unanimously.

Comment – at Parthenia and Nordhoff – a 140 bed elder home is being applied for.

April 14 is Day of the Horse at Stoney Point; poster contest is out. A birthday cake is planned for this event also. Attendance last year was 750 to 1000 people, Mary will need help getting this organized and will need help on the event day to run the event from all of CNC as it's a big event.

The meeting ended at 9:00 pm

DRAFT