

Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Land Use Committee

Chatsworth Train Depot, 10038 Old Depot Road, 7 pm

Minutes March 19, 2015 - Final Minutes

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

Present: Linda van der Valk, Judi Daniels, Andre van der Valk, Larry Heller, Michael Harris, Mark Levinson, Teena Takata, Michael Preis, Vicki Briskman, Janice Eddy-Languein, Jim Van Gundy, George Nelson, Mary Kaufman

Not here – Carol Lucas (excused), Jeff Hammond (excused)

Minutes from February 2015 are not yet available, and will be reviewed at next month's meeting.

Stakeholder and Public Comments:

Stakeholder Elizabeth Harris wanted to bring certain aspects of the Los Angeles County General Plan Revision and Update regarding local land use proposals. She has spoken with Supervisor Antonovich's office, She noted there is a complete elimination of commercial zoning in Chatsworth Lake Manor (CLM) that appears to be an error; Antonovich is supportive of a revision to allow commercial zoning, and allow local smaller businesses in this area continue operations. Local business owners had no notice of this change. There apparently was no intention to change this. Local County residents are considering various approaches, perhaps to create a historic district? Nobody has been informed of this change formally in CLM; another purported change, to widen and straighten Valley Circle from Roscoe to CLM was also mentioned as an area of concern by a committee member. A suggestion was made that this be taken to the Board for consideration and vote at the next meeting, since this is time sensitive and only has about two weeks until it is again considered by the County.

Presentations and Possible Motions:

10824 Topanga Canyon, CUP renewal of a nursery school, preparatory school, and to add special needs to their program. Chatsworth Methodist Church. This site has been used since 1962, church is just north of the Firewood Seller on Topanga Canyon. In the 1960's the school started with a Head Start program, the old CUP had five year renewals, it expired in about 1991. About 4 years ago, an autistic childrens' program asked to come and operate on the site. At that time, Building and Safety told them the CUP was valid and the autistic children's program could move in. Recently they found out this was not the case, and therefore have filed for this renewal. The school filed for this CUP renewal some time ago, and still don't have a hearing date. They have about 20 students with 20-30 teachers and supervisors (yes a high teacher ratio, but that is the nature of this program and the amount of supervision needed by the students). This is the only school activity on the site presently, but since they have to renew the CUP, they are continuing to ask for the same type of students as their present CUP, and are adding the special needs students. This provides them more flexibility if this school were to leave the site. This program is unique, the program has students who live as far away as Whittier and Camarillo, there no similar programs nearby.

The school previously was approved for 150 maximum students for nursery and preparatory school. This school thinks their maximum will be 30 students for the autism / special needs program. The

special needs program is for K-12th grade, but could accommodate children through age 22 under state law to improve life skills. They have small vans/busses coming in with some students, but that is not noted in the application (we suggest they bring this up). 150 students were approved in the last CUP; they are simply trying to match the prior numbers, and include the ability to have special needs children. They are asking for continued use based on the old CUP (zoning is A2-1); the current application has the same conditions as the prior CUP, except for adding the special needs program. The school believes their maximum capacity for the special needs children will be 40-50 students. City/health permits related the schools, generally are limited based on restroom facilities. Hours requested are 8 to 6, students are there 9 to 3, but staff does have a longer day for the hours they may be on premises. The school also has a Lancaster campus.

Moved. To approve the request for the continued operation of school during the hours of 8-6 for up to 150 children, for continued use as a nursery and preparatory school as requested under the CUP. The request to add special needs children (within the maximum 150 students requested in the CUP) is also approved. Mike Harris moved, Larry seconded. Approved unanimously.

10320 Jordan Avenue; zone variance to allow a paved surface parking lot in the R1-2 zone. This is just west of Los Toros, north side of Devonshire. Applicant went to Building & Safety, had an approval, but after building the parking lot, they were cited due to inappropriate zoning for a parking lot. Also, they don't have shade trees within the paved lot surface as normally required. They are asking for a variance (usually this would be a CUP); they want to use the northeast corner for employee parking. Concerns regarding an issue with a large oak tree on the west side; the paving is over the dripline of the oak tree. There was a citation for taking a house down without a permit in that area per committee member comments.

They may provide more research on the issue and proposed corrections. Committee worried about proposed mitigations and preservation and continued sensitive treatment of the oak; restore permeable surface. Applicant stated, to demolish a home would be a by right activity. They may be able to reduce 18% landscaping to 10% if they request that reduction to the City. Is there a lighting plan? (Photometric layout). Citation says to desist use until approved. Committee members request input from neighbors. And notification should be made to neighbors regarding the next NC meeting where this is considered. Committee requested that no trees are to park under this tree as a short term measure, but additional steps to improve the long term health of this tree were also requested.

A suggestion to deny the request was brought up by one committee member, to ensure the applicant returns with corrective procedures for the preservation and health of the oak tree. After some discussion, applicant offered to return after they have a better understanding of the mitigations and processes they may offer that improves the long term health of the tree.

22601 Lassen Street, Oakwood Cemetery. Requesting plan approval. (No public hearing; applicant did not appear at the meeting due to scheduling conflicts). Typically no site plan unless 15 living occupants. This request is made related to the Oakwood Cemetery mausoleum. Question about noise, construction. They have access, it does not appear there is any significant noise/construction issue with neighbors. The cemetery has been there since 1920. One committee member noted that a rock surface on a gravel road near Rockpoint washes into the street during rains, they also could provide a dg (decomposed granite) walkway similar to a sidewalk, in front of their property. Comment was made the inspector for the Miranda reconstruction did not cite the cemetery for significant added construction of non-permitted parking lot and/or blue line stream bed alterations on the south side of

the property. State Parks has had various resource agencies at the site and they have reportedly been cited by at least one of the other agencies.

Motion (Michael Harris) – to approve the expansion and support the mausoleum. The committee notes they have been advised that streambed alterations were made after the improvement to the adobe and the crematorium were made without any sort of permit; the committee cautions that this approval is limited to the mausoleum that is the subject of the project. Mark seconded. Motion Approved unanimously; Jim recused.

Illegal dumping operation in Browns Canyon. Neighbors are afraid of the dumping property owner. Dump trucks filled with construction debris have been dumping in various locations toward the top of Browns Canyon since November; at that time there were about 25 trucks a day. A week later, 30 trucks a day. January about 50 trucks a day. Now 55-60 trucks a day. Neighbors have seen up to 100 trucks a day. No permits exist for grading, or anything. The operator moves the specific dump site after being cited, so it is hard to stop the activity. It is believed the operator makes \$100 – \$140 dollars per truck. The local water board gave the operator a permit to fill for 9600 cubic yards, more than that is a non-industrial, simpler permit. Then, California Recycle may approve 2000 tons to be dumped. Under 10,000 cubic yards is a non industrial permit, and the Water Board approves it. Then Cal Recycle approves it. But the permit, based on truck volume, has been filled multiple times, way over any possible volume. Grading filed a stop work order on recently. Last hearing the operator had a 35 day extension. So more money he can collect from continued dumping. The 9600 yards is a deemed a minor repair. Local stakeholders believe approximately 200,000 cubic yards have been filled so far against the single 9600 cubic yard permit. The operator provides various explanations for the operation; farming, or recycling, another excuse every minute. City should be asking where the haul route is. County has problems with enforcement. Pictures of various sites with active work showing various materials dumped were circulated to the committee members.

Letter to be written, emphasize haul route, community effect, cubic yards of material moved already. Request letter to various parties; Englander, Antonovich, Water Board, various other elected officials including Senator Pavley, Wilk State Representative, also notify Army Core of Engineers, downstream impacts, county grading, others that may have concerns.

Vicki and George suggested a community impact statement. The committee discussed writing a letter describing issues with dumping in the upper elevation of Browns Canyon, and request to stop work from being done. This letter is to be drafted by a stakeholder, in consultation with an engineering consultant, for approval and review by CNC; Michael Harris to review and assist with the letter as needed.

Larry moved to support a letter on stopping the grading. Michael Harris seconded. Approved unanimously.

Announcements: The Chatsworth Historical Society's Garden Festival April 26; open from 11 to 3.

The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Common Abbreviations:

CD-X – Council District

CNC – Chatsworth Neighborhood Council

CUP – Conditional Use Permit

ZA – Zoning Administrator

ZAI – Zoning Administrator Information (memo)

DWP – City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

TBD – To Be Determined

SW – Southwest

ZA – Zoning Administrator

Land Use, or Committee – Land Use Committee, Chatsworth Neighborhood Council

Board – Board members of CNC