

**Chatsworth Neighborhood Council, Land Use Committee
Chatsworth Depot
Minutes August 16, 2012 - Draft Minutes**

Linda van der Valk Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Present: Judi Daniels, Jeff Hammond, Teena Takata, Mark Levinson, Jim Van Gundy, Andre van der Valk, Linda van der Valk, Vicki Briskman, Chuck Knolls, Jelena Csanyi, Mary Kaufman

Not here: Larry Heller, Dan Huffman (excused), Yvonne Savala, Janice Eddy-Languelin

Stakeholder and Public comments: none

Approval of June 2012 minutes – approved. The May 2012 minutes will be reviewed at our next meeting for approval.

Presentations: 10801 Topanga Canyon Blvd. Presenting, Jonathan Pae. Property is a RA1-K lot, at the southwest corner of Tulsa and Topanga Canyon. The City Planner assigned to this project has already told Mr. Pae this is not a favorably viewed project. He wants to understand why that is, if we do not favorably view this project, why. West Side of Topanga; 1997 Q and T conditions; lot is 80,851.5 square feet; the proposed religious structure is 17,125 square feet. FAR is 4.7:1. Parking is 132 spaces, 76 standard parking spaces, 49 handicap, 7 compact. Parking requirement is one space for 5 members; 124 parking spaces are required based on the sanctuary area, so they exceed the requirement. Small sanctuary, plus education areas; 7th day Adventist religion. It's a good religion based on history, to participate in the community and provide community service. Building is low, 16 feet maximum, so with landscaping will be hidden. Upon questioning from the committee, it was admitted that the top of the tower is 24 feet from ground. Tower is optional (but appeared on all presented drawings). Committee Secretary notes – she could not locate the height of the building on the diagrams provided. Current landowners (the church) acquired the property six or seven months ago. A child care center for the neighborhood (not just the church) is planned, with low costs to serve neighborhoods. Driveways are off Topanga on the map, but committee members noted that driveway access from Topanga will not be allowed, he will have to have driveway access from Tulsa. Comment this is a dedicated horsekeeping area; the community has a long history of being protective of the horsekeeping in this area, especially. Linda quoted community plan text – several horsekeeping areas, such as areas north of Devonshire and west of De Soto are dedicated horsekeeping. Comment that the tower is drawn more than another 8 feet in height over the church; it appears from rough measurement based on a 16 foot high base height, the tower is about 14 feet in height. It was noted that lower intensity lights are also part of the standards in this area, to further retain the rural character, north of Chatsworth Street. Improvements for equestrian trials, hydrants, and street improvements were said to have made the prior project impractical to build.

Mark made a motion to: Not approve the project, as incompatible with the Chatsworth community plan and with standards set in the neighborhood; the proposed structures are very large and incompatible with nearby dwellings. Additionally, horsekeeping currently is available on every RA lot along Tulsa. We do not want to have non-horsekeeping uses approved in this area. We have an

absolute policy and goal to retain larger horsekeeping lots in this area. These larger horsekeeping lots are a key component to our community, but they are under constant threat by community organizations seeking large lots for purposes other than horsekeeping. Mary seconded the motion. All approved the motion, except Jelena recused herself.

Egremont School; 19850 Devonshire – CUP for continuation; presented in June, but a quorum was not present. After brief discussion, the June motion, with minor modifications to specify certain size and hours noted in the CUP application, was presented for approval as follows.

Motion – We moved to support approval of the CUP as presented; there is no change from any prior CUP. No new construction; 240 students maximum, hours M-F 7am – 6pm; the school serves preschool through 5th. We recommend that the school ensure there is notification to neighbors and address any concerns that arise. Jelena made the motion; Teena seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ride On; 10860 Topanga Canyon Blvd. Presented in June, but a quorum was not present. Brian McQueeney presented in the June meeting. After brief discussion the following motion was made. Motion – Teena moved, Mark seconded. To support the extension of the CUP time period for Ride On, with the same operating conditions as the current CUP. Review and possible improvement of the arena lights used for night lighting is to be considered. Jelena recused, but otherwise the motion carried unanimously. This motion was considered because it was old business from the prior meeting, although it was not specifically on the agenda for tonight’s meeting.

Sierra Canyon Athletic Field, (De Soto west side, near Rinaldi) The draft letter that summarized various committee suggestions developed at the June Land Use meeting were discussed. The letter was drafted after the meeting to be mailed to applicant and various City personnel involved in the project. Mary moved that we approve the letter for presentation to, and signature by the full council; Mark seconded. Approved unanimously for approval by the full Board with a letter to the various responsible parties.

The draft letter to Sierra Canyon and the Planners, as presented, is below.

Draft of letter to Sierra Canyon; from LU; copy Planning Department...and Hannah Lee and responsible designer with City was reviewed and discussed.

Thank you for coming to the Land Use Committee to discuss your Phase 2 project for the athletic fields. As the project was described to us, and later discussed, we had several suggestions that we believe will assist your project integrate better with the equestrian impacts created by your project. As you are aware, the project is impacting a historic trail called the Mission Trail that goes along Rinaldi in this area, and there are multiple concerns about the future interactions of pedestrians, equestrians, and vehicle impacts along this heavily travelled De Soto and Rinaldi intersection, which is significantly changed by your project from open space to a highly improved concrete urban setting, that still is to be used by equestrians and therefore must be designed to accommodate this historic and continuing use. Comments in this letter focus on the light pole on the west side of De Soto, although the comments regarding required access for equestrians are still applicable to the east side of De Soto and should be considered for that pole design and layout.

Positioning the demand light pole that is at the De Soto and Rinaldi intersection correctly for equestrians, at the edge of the driveway, should avoid requiring equestrians in the street and avoid equestrians needing to be on the sidewalk push the crossing demand button. All parties involved in the design of this area must recognize that it is unsafe for equestrians to be in De Soto due to traffic volume and speed, and under California law, it is ILLEGAL for equestrians to be on the sidewalk. Many horses become more nervous when they are immediately next to speeding cars, and may not stand quietly, which is another issue that must be faced to create a safer design.

The pole on the west side of De Soto for requesting the crossing light that will be used by equestrians and pedestrians needs to be changed; so the equestrian button is relocated so it is accessible by riders. The proximity of the do not walk button, and the equestrian crossing demand button need to be changed so the equestrian button can be reached easily by a mounted rider, and is readily accessible. Some pictures and details on acceptable distance between equestrian crossing signal request and do not walk buttons are included.

This area will include concrete vaults in that immediate area that horses may need to stand on as demand for lights are made. The vaults must not open as horse hooves stand on them, and the pressure created by a single hoof can be quite significant. We request that Cal Trans heavy traffic rated vaults be used exclusively in this area to prevent damage to vaults by horse hooves especially and improve safety.

You advised there would be a 15% slope along the driveway from De Soto into the parking lot. This is steep. The driveway should be finished with a rough broom finish to provide a rougher surface and reduce slippage by horse shoes along the driveway. The rough finish should be from the street, through 12 feet away from the street, creating an equestrian suitable surface (at the approved width for an equestrian trail) along the entire driveway into the parking lot from Rinaldi.

The available waiting space at the light for equestrians will be very limited and very exposed to De Soto traffic. A request was made at the meeting, that an additional equestrian demand for crossing light be located at the easterly side of the equestrian trail, next to De Soto. This demand light to be set at equestrian height and as an additional crossing demand pushbutton. (The equestrian pushbuttons at the signal remain). Many horses may be very intimidated by standing at the light due to traffic and standing in a less confined, softer surface space while waiting for the light to begin changing at the east edge of the equestrian trail would provide a safer "holding" area and will have some more space for the horses. In designing this, also make sure flashing countdowns of time to the light change (the do not walk box) are visible to this area, so equestrians holding in this area can move forward to wait momentarily at the crossing light pole as the light begins to cycle to a stop light and allow crossing of De Soto.

We believe incorporation of the above suggestions will help improve the safety of this very difficult area for our equestrian members that are an important part of Chatsworth's history and are common in this area.

Sincerely,

cc: Hannah Lee
cc: hearing officer
cc: City staff in charge of specific design issues for this project

DRB-Andre updated us with the most recent news – There has become an issue with a lighted, flashing sign. A business on Devonshire, just west of De Soto has installed a flashing lighted sign, and is adamant that the minor penalty for an infraction will not stop him from continuing this sign that is not allowed under the Specific Plan. Enforcement has been requested.

Community announcements – Comer sold the property approved for approximately 22 homes; north of Tulsa, west side of Topanga; new owner didn't google well as being sensitive to the community. We need to watch what transpires there. Original project said all work under oaks must be done by hand, we continue have concerns about oak tree protection.

Meeting adjourned 9:05pm.