



CHATSWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
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SPECIAL CNC GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR 12/03/2019

(held at Freedom Center)

AGENDA

Any and all items listed below on the agenda are subject to discussion and possible action by the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council.

1. Welcome, Call to order (6:40p), Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and approval of minutes from November 6th, 2019 CNC Board Meeting.

Roll Call:

Present: Jeff Hammond, Andre van der Valk, Vicki Briskman, Cher Bentley, Dorothy Allison, Shekhar Chikhalikar, Mark Cox, Daniel Huffman, Sheldon Itzkowitz, Jeff Mackie, Marina Mackie, Nick Montano, Linda van der Valk, Jim Van Gundy, Lucie Volotzky, Summer Walters, Matt Weintraub

Absent: Kamesh Aysola, Steve Columbus, Tracey Pomerance-Poirier, Rudy Schultz

Left early: Shekhar Chikhalikar, Nick Montano

Note: November minutes vote moved to February board meeting to allow for more time for special meeting with developers.

2. NEW BUSINESS: All listed motions include discussion, possible action, Community Impact Statements and NPGs.

3. Presidents Report:

A. This Special CNC Meeting replaces our normal scheduled first Wednesday of the month meeting to accommodate the developer (Affirmed Housing) presentation for the proposed Apartment Project located at 10243 N. Topanga Canyon Boulevard/south of Devonshire. As of August, 2019, the CNC has not received direct information on the proposed project despite City/County and State mandates to the developer to involve the local Chatsworth Community for outreach on the project. Affirmed Housing has confirmed their attendance at this meeting. Please note the change of venue for the presentation. The Freedom Center is capable of accommodating over 650 persons. In the event there are more in attendance, the overflow may have to be outside, listening to a professional public address system. Only light snacks and water will be available.

Developer Presentation

Jeff Hammond speaks. Asks everyone to behave civilly and allow people to speak and the developers to present without interruption.

Andre van der Valk speaks: Asks Senators Hertzberg and Stern to get involved in the housing fight since it goes all the way to the lawmakers for the state. Funding has been allocated towards this project, but approvals are not yet done. Why is it ok to make Chatsworth the same as everyone else? We are a different community and want to stay the same as we have for decades. Reminds everyone that CNC already voted against the project. Regulations say it can't build over 50% of the lot, but plans show it's being built over almost the whole lot. They are building over 45' tall. Sacramento is waiving these requirements. Should be a local decision, not forced on us by the City.....Senator Stern agrees.

Jimmy Silverwood from Affirmed Housing speaks - based out of San Diego, family owned (his father started company in 92), 50 communities throughout CA. Completed 500 and currently in operation supportive housing apartments. 300 supportive housing units currently under construction. (developments: Cypress -San Diego, Villas on the Park - San Jose, Zephyr (Veterna) – San Diego). Includes kitchenette, bathroom. Criteria for selecting Topanga location: high opportunity area, within ½ mile of transportation hub, close to amenities, commercial corridor with adequate zoning, price for land and availability. Not single family-zoned.

Tom Greer – Architect from Affirmed Housing - 10' height reduction from original plans, 9 unit reduction from original, 5 parking spaces at rear, roof terrace above front of building, Compliance with Topanga/Devonshire specific plan. 45 resident bicycle parking spaces. 1100 sq ft of amenity space on 1st floor. Each studio is between 365 sf to 410 sf. Roof area adjacent to residential is not occupiable space on roof terrace (a/c condensers).

Heather Pollock, Director of Supportive Housing Services from Affirmed Housing - Homeless Health Care of Los Angeles was not able to be here this evening. They will be the onsite provider. There will be 3 full time case managers (which is a Master's level social worker or LMFT who go through extensive training). 20:1 case managers to residents (best practice ratio). There are 660 homeless in CD12, At this site, they will choose 50% chronically homeless (continuously homeless for a minimum of 12 months or 4 different periods in 3 years equaling 12 months) and 50% homeless residents (living in a place that is not meant for human habitation or emergency shelter/safe haven/, . Chatsworth is in the service planning area 2. Must be U.S. Citizen or Legal resident. No registered sex offenders. People who have life-long medical condition (i.e., dialysis, stage 4 cancer) are prioritized for residency. Onsite services: life skills classes (budgeting/financing), connection to behavioral and physical healthcare, recovery programs, mental health services, job training and transportation services to offsite services. Supportive housing facts: people in supportive housing are more likely to remain housed, make 70% fewer ER visits. Vermont Villas has not received any complaints from the nearby school. Vermont Villas have received approximately 5 calls/a month to police. The residents of the affirmed housing take pride in their housing.

Christina Martinez from Affirmed Housing 0 program updates for Topanga - 55 total apartments (down from original 64), 5 stories tall (originally 6), 100% affordable housing, 54 studios, 1 manager, long-term housing, 12 month leases that can be renewed, case management services with apartment rental (service provider onsite - Homeless Health Care Los Angeles), services only available to residents, on-site security 24 hours/day over weekend, overnight on weekdays, FOB access.

Gianna Solari Richards, President of Solari Enterprises – Property management company. Family owned and operated. Grew up in affordable housing. Manages 14 supportive housing communities. Managing supportive housing for about 12 years. Have an additional 10 supportive housing communities under development. Has worked with Affirmed Housing since 2000.

Written questions from audience:

From Chris - has a traffic and environmental study been done and where will emergency vehicles park when visiting? Jimmy: No environmental study required. No traffic study done, as of yet. Will have to see if one will be done. Tom – emergency vehicles would park on Topanga. No emergency vehicle access on property.

Any mitigation for neighbors with a 64' tall building? Jimmy - 8' wall in back, landscaping in back, roof area that is only accessible on Topanga side. Current height has gone down to 54'.

Have other locations been considered? Not by Affirmed Housing.

Can you explain how HHH funding is tied to this site and cannot be transferred? Jimmy – That's a city question, but we're told it cannot be transferred.

Is it possible HHH funding to be used for anything other than new construction? Jimmy - We've only used it for new construction. Hannah from John Lee's office responds that does not need to be a new site, can be a motel conversion.

Have you considered making the building shorter? Jimmy – Yes, that's what we presented tonight. When we lower the height of the building, financing becomes more difficult. Land cost per unit goes up. Will not further shorten.

If a tenant owns a car, can they be a resident? Heather - most do not have cars. They do not have parking for residents. Friends and family visit. They usually take mass transit or uber.

There are two key problems that the homeless people have Mental issues and drug use. How can you build housing before you have addressed those key problems? Heather - housing first has been proven as an effective. Used to have to work through issues first before moving into a home. That's how housing first came along and has proven quite effective.

Questions from CNC:

Linda – was any thought given to the design plan in Chatsworth? If you build this, you are setting a precedent in Chatsworth and others will be able to build. We've worked hard to keep out towering buildings. The Design Review board has denied many projects over 45' and now you come in, buy the property and believe because you're working with Affirmed Housing that you have the right to come in and ruin our town's ambiance and character. Have you thought about that? Jimmy – Yes we've thought about it. The opportunity to get people off the streets exceeded that. Linda – you're violating the setback requirements, color, etc. You have no regard for the specific plan in our community. Jimmy - looking for feedback and design input (roofing, colors, etc).

Andre – we have concerns with the school being within 100'. Shows a limited partner has yet to be determined. Do you have a limited partner? Jimmy – yes, we have a limited partner who owns 99% of the property. Andre – that shows you have 9/10 or 1. Jimmy – that's where the tax credit investor comes in. Andre - do you have approval by the city for the site from the design review board? Jimmy - No. When will this happen? Jimmy – we wanted to have this meeting first and will probably submit sometime in January or February. Andre – you're over the 50% building limit of the lot site and over the height requirement. You're ok with that? Jimmy – we're not going to deal with that. We need to ask our consultant.

Vicki - how many people in each unit? Heather – cap of 1 per studio. Could be max of two dependent on voucher requirement. Usually 1 per household. Gianna – depends on housing and voucher requirement. Could be up to 2 people. Typically households are 1 person household. 90% of the units are occupied with 1 person. Vicki - Working with HUD for permanent residents? Jimmy - Yes with HUD. Vicki – so homeless doesn't come with Chatsworth. Heather - Would be from SPA2 (service provider area 2), not necessarily Chatsworth. I don't know the SPA2 area those because there are 8 within the city of LA.

Nick- why aren't families and children being housed instead of single people? Jimmy – homeless population is higher for individuals than for families and you can only focus on one population in each development. Nick – emergency vehicles are going to stop and park on a high volume state highway? You're going to block that whole area. This is a bad idea. Want to help the homeless, everyone needs beds, just not there.

Matt – You seem pretty cavalier about parking. They will have visitors. Where will they park? Heather – my answer wasn't meant to be cavalier. Many individuals lack family support and the guests they have rarely drive a car.

Jim - property values will go down when overlooking back yards. How will you assist the property owners who live in the adjacent housing and will lose money when you build? Jimmy - no studies in California, but in NYC, supportive housing raises property values.

Jeff - will there be west-facing windows? Tom - yes. Will meet minimum code. Jeff - Do the firetrucks have ability to reach top with hook and ladder? Tom – Not with a truck. With hand carried ladder only.

Lucie - who will own the building? Jimmy – Affirmed housing will have it 15 years. The tax credit investors will own it. After 15 years, we usually resyndicate for another 15 years.

Cher- are they allowed overnight guests? Heather - Yes. House rules are different at each property in terms of number of guests allowed during the day. Gianna – We take the ID of the person coming to visit so that we can track their comings and goings. 1 person, max stay of 2 consecutive nights, 30 days max in one year. Cher – will they be drug tested? Heather - Residents will have no drug testing. If caught using drugs, there are rules against it and they will be evicted. Cher – and where will visitors park? At other businesses? In front of my neighbors homes? Will you put up restricted parking signs for my neighbors?

Questions from audience/community members:

Eva Oloff – has lived in Chatsworth since 76. Your companies are not in charge of selecting the individuals that will reside in this supportive housing? Jimmy – We are a vendor for the city. Trying to build to house the homeless. Heather – comes through a coordinated entry system. SPA2 makes the referrals from LA Housing, then Solari, Homeless HealthCare of LoA and Affirmed Housing sends for approval. Jimmy – HHH money supports construction, vouchers for living provided by HUD.

Melissa - homeless is living in a place other than a house.

Unnamed woman – SPA2 is all of SFV. Isn't the purpose of this property to get the homeless on their feet? Giving them transportation and them not being forced to get a car is not getting them on their feet. Jeff Hammond – City of LA doesn't want you to have a car.

Unnamed man – Points out there are also 2 other schools within ½ mile radius of building. Will you enter into a legally binding agreement should anything happen to any of our children at the hands of your residents? Jimmy – there will be no registered sex offenders in the building. There is no correlation between homeless and these types of crimes.

Dean Wageman - how were you awarded the project, bid process, what was your cost per sf? Jimmy - \$450k cost per unit when originally submitted. (will now go up because of change). For selection process, wide variety that goes into point system (location, amenities in the area, etc.) to be awarded. Workers would receive prevailing wages.

Jared Langford - how do you go about selecting your contractors? How do you ensure that you don't hire contractors who won't cheat our community? Jimmy – I can get back to you with that, but, I believe, our subs are bonded, at least the major ones.

Adam Lewis, attorney - Chatsworth is going to fight the project. If anything happens to the children, Affirmed Housing and Solari are liable. How are the kids going to be protected? - Jimmy - Solari is in constant contact with the police department. We will address those issues as they come up.

END OF PRESENTATION

Andre – How many people are for this project at this location? (by show of applause)

Bill Freeman – stop thinking about yourselves and start thinking about the homeless and poor.

Gwendolyn Flynn with LA League of Women Voters - Supports the housing development.

Steve Jerbe - Ordained minister evangelical church. Resident in CD12. Was at City Hall when this project was approved. Homeless affects all of us. Stand in solidarity to support.

4. Treasurers Report:

A. Financial Report MOTION: To approve of the October 2019 MER.

(To view the MER online, visit

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/NCFundPortal/Dashboard.html> and select Chatsworth

For: Jeff Hammond, Andre van der Valk, Vicki Briskman, Cher Bentley, Dorothy Allison, Mark Cox, Sheldon Itzkowitz, Jeff Mackie, Marina Mackie, Linda van der Valk, Jim Van Gundy, Lucie Volotzky, Summer Walters, Matt Weintraub

Against: none

Absent: Kamesh Aysola, Shekhar Chikhalikar, Steve Columbus, Daniel Huffman, Nick Montano, Tracey Pomerance-Poirier, Rudy Schultz

B. Motion: To approve the updated Board Budget dated 12.3.19

Did not vote to approve

5. Public comments/Announcements /- max. 1 minute per person.

6. Adjournment (approx. 8:30p.m.)