

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
LAND-USE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – July 21, 2014

- I. Meeting was called to order at 7:07pm by Committee Chairperson Dean Sherer
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 - i. Dean Sherer
 - ii. Bill Skiles
 - iii. Cindy Cleghorn
 - iv. Debby Beck
 - v. Nina Royal
 - vi. David Barron
 - vii. Elektra Kruger
 - viii. John Laue
 - ix. Roberta Konrad
 - x. Karen Zimmerman
 - b. Absent
 - i. Chaz VanAalst
 - ii. Arsen Karamians
 - c. CD7 Representative Present ☺
 - i. Claudia Rodriguez, Planning Deputy CD7
- III. LUC Committee Meeting Minutes from July 7, 2014
 - a. **MOTION:** by Karen Zimmerman to approve the JULY 7, 2014 STNC-LUC Meeting Minutes as amended 2nd by Bill Skiles Vote: Unanimously approved
- IV. Public Comments
 - a. Cindy Cleghorn
 - i. LA County now has a smart-phone app similar to that of the City's 311 app called The Works that can be downloaded from <http://dpw.lacounty.gov/TheWorks> (See attached)
 - 1. This is mainly intended for use in the unincorporated areas of LA County
 - ii. The City Sign Ordinance is expected to go to PLUM in late July or August. The new Ordinance has been in the works for almost six years – it is very important for the public to make their concerns known to PLUM
 - 1. The major billboard companies are working to get digital billboards approved. Opposition says place them in sign districts.
 - 2. The Council File can be reviewed on the City Web-Site. There is a related website at www.banbillboardblight.org (See attached flyer)
 - 3. There are 700 illegal billboards in the City – addresses are listed on this Web-Site. A few years ago Lloyd Hitt documented all billboards in Sunland-Tujunga, including photos. We need to cross-reference whether any are listed as illegal with Ban Billboard. B/S has a copy of our list
- V. New LUC Committee Member Recommendations to STNC - None received
- VI. CD7 Staff up-dates - Claudia R. just returned from vacation – needs time to catch up on things
- VII. Formation of STNC-LUC Subcommittees
 - a. La Tuna Canyon/Verdugo Hills Golf Course Project

- i. The Project architect has asked that we form a committee that can work with him to “bounce ideas off him”. The Committee was formed at our last LUC meeting. Volunteers = Dean S., Karen Z., Cindy C., Bill S. and Patti Potter. First meeting will be August 4 at 6 p.m. – one hour before the next LUC meeting. Meeting is open to all.
- b. The study and development of design standards for the Foothill Boulevard Corridor
 - i. The LUC is finally bringing this committee to fruition.
 - 1. Debby B. talked about past history and why she is very interested in being a part of this committee. Specifically: she was unhappy that so many buildings along Foothill were either white or beige rather than a variety of earthtones which is what the Specific Plan calls for
 - 2. While Debby B. still wishes to help w/this, over the yrs it has been extremely discouraging to her because developers don’t do what they said they would, got approvals from planning or LADBS that ignore suggestions in blatant disregard of the Specific Plan and verbal and written promised improvements.
 - ii. The sub-committee will reach out to our Crescenta Valley neighbors as well as work to coordinate with many of the initiatives that are moving forward in Sunland-Tujunga. Suggestions included:
 - 1. Identify and give recognition to existing specific properties meeting guideline ideas that will be developed by this committee and publicize them in a variety of venues – local papers, STNC Web-Site, etc
 - 2. Coordinate the design standards efforts with the Great Streets Program which would allow us to tap into a number of resources through the City and non-profits which may increase our chances of actually getting something done John L volunteer that having seen the Reseda approach to the Great Streets Program will reach out to them for ideas;
 - 3. Cindy C. announced that the ST Chamber just completed a Foothill Blvd. trees maintenance and improvement in the area between Vons and Ralphs. This work is being done by Hollywood Beautification Team (HBT) and includes replanting of dead trees.
 - 4. Suggestions for medians added or having existing ones improved.
 - 5. A Board Member recommendation is to add flashing crosswalks eg at Haines Cyn
 - 6. Rather than having a “design standards” subcommittee, create a “great Streets” subcommittee to prepare for the next round of Great Street selections – selections may come up within the next year
 - 7. CM Fuentes is in support of ST having a Great Streets opportunity. The STNC has issued letters of support as well.
 - 8. Debby B.: Improvement of streetscape has it’s place, but primary thought should be given to attracting the kind of development we want – eg even min visual improvement to existing bldgs eg painting. Compare to Van Nuys Fascade Improvement Program. Over the yrs trim had been removed, architectural details covered up. These were replaced/removed & bldgs were freshly painted with attractive colors
 - 9. In Pacoima, Councilmember Fuentes put together a meeting to improve businesses along Van Nuys Bl. We should ask him to do the same for Sunland-Tujunga.

10. Code Enforcement could be called upon to assist with building improvements – by Ordinance, once a building is constructed it must be maintained.
- iii. Discussed whether it is the intent of the subcommittee to develop a document listing guidelines with examples of do's and don'ts, however there actually already is a design guideline document incorporated in the FBCSP
 1. Our existing FBCSP design guidelines, which is an Ordinance of the City of Los Angeles, is not being enforced. There are no penalties for not following it, so it doesn't get followed as it is.
- iv. For many yrs concentration has been on entitlements – what is going to be allowed in a specific location – & not enough emphasis on design & as that is being ignored the result is incompatible development and design
 1. To address this, insure that the applicant comes forth w/their Project & we address 2 issues – first being land-use ie appropriateness of location and structural points, second being design – what will it look like
- v. **MOTION:** by Cindy C. to have John L. chair the Foothill Corridor Design Standards and Great Streets subcommittee with Debby Beck and Roberta Konrad to serve as members 2nd by Dean Sherer. Motion passed by consent of all present. First efforts of this subcommittee to be:
 1. Contact the people behind development of the La Crescenta design guidelines and invite them to address the subcommittee.
 2. Contact the people behind the “Great Streets” Initiative in Reseda and invite them to address the subcommittee
 3. Identify key locations on Foothill to be improved.
- c. The study of revitalization and economic development in Sunland-Tujunga
 - i. There are a lot of well-intentioned people in Sunland-Tujunga making contacts with developers, commercial businesses, colleges, etc and while that is appreciated, a more guided, coordinated approach is needed
 - ii. A guided, coordinated approach to some of the economic development issues in Sunland-Tujunga needs to be initiated, the three biggest example being:
 1. The old K-Mart site
 2. The Foothill/Commerce Towncenter
 3. The Ralphs Shopping Center
 - iii. Concentration of effort should not be directed on individual properties, rather on a more strategic approach to determining what building blocks can be put into place to encourage greater economic investment in our commercial areas
 - iv. This is the kind of committee that needs to work closely w/the Councilmember's Office especially in those areas where private property owners and landlords are uncooperative – that don't have a sense of the community's greater good
 1. Determine how to address these issues, determine how to “strategize” by looking at a number of areas that in time can begin to turn the tide in terms of getting the type of economic development and uses we seek
 - v. Create a more coordinated effort so that when an individual finds someone/something that would be an asset to our community that recruitment is vetted by this subcommittee and the LUC to avoid overall misunderstandings
 1. Cindy C. asked Wesley Hernandez, Councilmember Fuentes' Area Director, to participate. The Chamber has already begun to take the

lead in this effort. The more we collaborate, the more productive and efficient the effort would be.

2. Hopefully this subcommittee can serve as the central recipient of all ideas and participation whether it be the Chamber, the Branding Initiative, an individual acting as go-between with a potential developer
3. In part this committee would address what is “wrong” with S/T’s “underutilized” sites – landlord issues? Ownership/tenant issues? Political issues that would require assistance from the Council Office?

- vi. **MOTION:** by John Laue to form the Sunland-Tujunga revitalization and economic development subcommittee (no second, no vote, but subcommittee formed by mutual consent). Volunteers = Debby B. and Nina R.

VIII. 6340-6346 Sister Elsie appeal – hearing held 7-17-14

- a. See attached letter of STNC support of Sister Elsie appeal
- b. The appeal before the Area Planning Commission was denied. It is possible that the Commission felt it to be duplicitous of them to support the appeal since the Project had been approved a few years ago
 - i. Our argument was one of a policy in that the Planning Department and decision makers are “giving away the store” when it comes to Hillside Development which will wreak havoc down the line as unregulated development spurred by granting of Variances detrimentally impacts hillside areas
 - ii. The Commission’s decision is appealable to City Council. It is not certain if another appeal will be filed.
 - iii. The Area Planning Commission did a poor job of processing the case – it was not handled as an appeal in which the appellant gives arguments which the applicant could then rebut, but as a case presented by a developer seeking initial approval in which case the developer would present the Project first subsequent to which those in opposition would testify
 1. The applicant was given as much time as he wanted to present his case while appellants were held to 2 minutes per person. In an appeal a primary appellant representative should have been given free rein on time to present the appellant case.
 2. There was also a procedural issue in that neighbors did not get a notice of the pending hearing
 3. It was already decided before anyone walked in the door

IX. 10110 Commerce Ave, Little Landers Park. Lack of maintenance/landscaping care

- a. Rec and Parks had turned off the water and the park “died”. Now they are flooding the place, but dead trees can’t be resurrected. Lloyd Hitt showed a radius map to Wesly Hernandez of the Councilmember’s Office asking what happened to the Quimby funds

X. Status of Early Notification cases

- a. 10629 Sherman Grove – conversion of storage unit into a residential unit
 - i. A scan of the application has been sent to Committee members. May actually be a code enforcement case. The storage unit may already have been converted to a residential unit and the owner now has to legalize the action. We shall see.
- b. 7117 Apperson
 - i. Application is on the web-site. The case has been assigned to Nelson Rodriguez of the Planning Department
- c. 10251-10257 Tujunga Cyn Bl

- i. Information packet just received by Cindy C. for a ZC-ZV for a building line removal, ZA adjustment for the continued use and maintenance of existing one and two-story apartment complex with residential units in 3 buildings
- ii. A new owner inherited a basketful of issues. To date has complied with +/-200 corrections. Now needs to meet lot size requirements for the existing number of units. A ZC is required to make it a “clean application”.
- iii. 10014 Amanita – proposed lot split
 - 1. Case is on hold due to missing information by BOE
- iv. 12232 Big Tujunga Cyn – Lot line adjustment
 - 1. AA-2013-2908-PMEX was withdrawn last October, AA-2013-2904-PMEX was approved in March. STNC was not informed of this determination
- v. 9300 Reverie Rd – Project Permit Compliance for ground mounted solar
 - 1. Decision issued in April. STNC was not informed of this determination. Elektra K. stated that the determination having been issued is of no surprise. The item has been on the agenda for too long for something known to have quick action
- vi. 6723 Foothill – Addition of Adult Day Care to Caesar’s Banquet Hall
 - 1. Hearing date scheduled for August 22 9:00am before a Hearing Officer. Case just assigned to Mary _____? _____ on the 7th. Claudia R. recommended applicant be invited to give a presentation to the LUC

XI. General Up-Dates

- a. Foothill Commerce Town Center
 - i. New agent signs on display
 - ii. Escrow has not closed
 - iii. Property is in horrible shape with graffiti, vandalized air conditioning ducts
- b. 6241 Day St at Sister Elsie/Pali area
 - i. No up-date
- c. 8000 Verdugo Crestline Dr for proposed T-Mobile wireless facility
 - i. See attached STNC letter of concern addressed to City Planning
- d. 8200 Verdugo Crestline Dr. for proposed Verizon Wireless Facility
 - i. See attached STNC letter of concern addressed to City Planning
- e. The former Arrigato site continues to be vandalized.