

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
LAND-USE COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES
May 7, 2018

- I. Meeting was called to order at 7:08pm by Chairperson Cindy Cleghorn
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 - i. Cindy Cleghorn
 - ii. Bill Skiles
 - iii. Elektra Kruger
 - iv. David Barron
 - v. John Laue
 - vi. Liliana Sanchez
 - vii. Vartan Keshish
 - viii. Pati Potter
 - b. Absent
 - i. Debby Beck
 - ii. Nina Royal
 - iii. Cathi Comras
 - c. No public representatives were present
- III. Self-Introduction of Committee Board Members
- IV. Cindy C.: Explained the purpose of/function of the LUC
- V. Approval of Minutes
 - a. **MOTION:** by Pati Potter to approve the April 16, 2018 STNC-LUC Meeting Minutes as amended 2nd by Vartan Keshish Vote: Unanimously approved
- VI. 10638 Oro Vista – CUP for an unmanned 33 ft Verizon Cell Tower on church property
 - a. Pati Potter recuses herself and steps out during the presentation
 - b. See attached application
 - c. The number one question asked when a new cell tower is being proposed is “why do you need another cell tower, my phone works fine”
 - i. More people than ever are using wireless devices – that of all carriers, not just Verizon – all are expanding their networks to meet the rising demand (see attached “Wireless Trends” & “Connecting our Homes, Businesses and Communities”)
 - 1. The average home will use 48 gigabytes of data/month in 2023 –up from 5.2 GB/month in 2016 and 7.1 GB/month in 2017
 - 2. +/-52% of American households are now wireless only for voice service
 - 3. There are now 2.1 wireless devices/person in the country – usage that is sucking life out of existing networks/cell towers. Capacity is running out/has run out of existing cell towers
 - 4. There are an average of 13 connected WiFi devices in the average American household today – cell phones, laptops, computers, etc
 - 5. Schools are going wireless – textbooks are becoming a thing of the past. They are expensive and are out-dated before they are published. Homework is being done on tablets

6. Business connections are moving toward “on-the-road” access. It can’t be denied that we are becoming a wireless society – the clock cannot be turned back
 7. The only way to address that is to expand the network & “off-load” capacity fr existing facilities. There are 2 overloaded facilities in Sunland – by Ralphs at the W, Mt.Gleason/Foothill at the E (see attached tower location map)
 8. These two facilities have already been maxed out – both have already been extended with more antennas/radios – nothing can be done to these two facilities to increase capacity
- d. Technology that increases capacity = “macrosite” and “small cell”
 - i. Cell Towers = Macrosites – have the max capacity for its location to serve the greatest number of customers in an area. Small Cells = sites mounted on street lights, etc – covers a limited # of users in a very small radius around the site
 - ii. Staple Center has over 600 antennas to serve just those watching a game/concert = Indoor Distributing Antennas (IDAs)
 - iii. LA Colosseum is working on a Project to provide Outdoor Distributing Antenna service (ODAs)
 - iv. LAX, as is, is the worst service location in the world for all four carriers – they are working to up-grade service over the next five years to have ubiquitous service for all four carriers in all terminals
 - e. Finding the right location (see attached “coverage with and without Oro Vista”)
 - i. Major factor in Sunland = topography. Canyons, trees etc make it difficult to provide RF coverage in the area. Facilities must have “line-of-sight” from one another to pass on signals
 - f. Re issue of property values (see attached “Importance of Wireless Coverage to Homeowners and Buyers”). There is a lot of mis-information out there re people not wanting cell phone facilities in their area and how they will effect property values
 - i. Only one 2000’s study supported that – and that has been challenged and has subsequently been replaced with more current studies reflecting the change in people’s attitudes
 - ii. The iPhone was introduced in 2007 following which SmartPhones became ubiquitous in America changing the landscape. The use of wireless devices expanded exponentially.
 - iii. Today, based on the most recent market studies, +/-75% of prospective homebuyers said good cellular connection was important to them (see attached “Importance of Wireless Coverage to Homeowners and Buyers”)
 - iv. That same study showed that +/-83% millennials (DOB 1984-2004) said cell service in the home was the most important consideration in buying a home – more important than proximity of hospitals, schools, etc
 - g. 911 calls are made predominantly from cell phones – public pay phones are rare and far between increasing dependence on access to cell phones
 - h. People have concerns re health and safety
 - i. See attached “cellular Phone Towers” by the American Cancer Society, “health and Safety” and “Does Electromagnetic Field Exposure Endanger Health”
 - ii. The FCC regulates wireless radiation frequency output for all carriers. There is a maximum output allowable – the actual exposure of the average cell user is 1/1,000 of the allowable levels of exposure

1. Power in radio communications drop off by the universal square of the distance – for every foot distance, power drops off exponentially. At 3 ft away == ¼ power, at 4 ft away = 1/16 power, etc
 2. This is why antennas are put on towers and not at ground level in addition to which ground level would provide no line-of-sight from tower-to-tower.
 3. Antennas shoot out a horizontal beam which is at its most effective at a distance of on average 2,000ft away from a cell site, at the base one would be getting a much weaker signal than at 2,000 ft away
 4. A cellular signal works like a flashlight beam – shooting out horizontally, scattering as it passing over the community, so there is no hazard being in close proximity to a cell site
- i. Specifics of the Oro Vista facility (refer again to the attached zoning map indicating location of existing cell sites at Ralphs/Mt. Gleason-Foothill)
- i. These 2 sites currently cover all of Sunland (refer again to attached coverage w/& w/out Oro Vista maps). People living in areas indicated in purple are experiencing “capacity exhaust” as existing sites are being maxed out
 - ii. The location was selected based on zoning – except for Foothill Corridor, zoning was totally residential except for the church and a school. By policy, LAUSD does not allow cell sites on school property leaving the church as the only alternative to cover the service-poor areas
 - iii. The proposed structure is concealment by full eucalyptus tree, the newest design in faux tree tower concealment. History of tower structure – initially 150’ tall site, far apart, broadcasting for many mi b/c of limited demand
 1. With increased demand, cell towers got shorter and closer together because a single site can only cover so many calls which can be dealt with by any single site covering less demand
 2. Lead to attempts to conceal with faux tree design, the earlier models of which failed, then evolved to use of lush foliated trees better at concealing poles/antennas
 3. Proposal = a short 33’ tower, concealed by broad-leafed/full-leafed faux eucalyptus – add’l ht not needed where the site is located and faux tree is in scale with trees in the area. Surrounded by 8’ block wall enclosure
 4. Verizon wishes to propose a cell site least intrusive to the community – felt a faux tree to be the most harmonious with the surrounding environment vs eg addition of steeple CFV (Concealed from View) Cell
- j. Q & A
- i. Q = Question from the audience C = Comment from the audience A = Response from the presenter
 - ii. Cindy C.: Why did you select this site? What other sites did you explore before selecting this site? Do you have any data to verify this site is superior to any commercial site in Sunland? What Verizon AGFs are already in the area? What potential is there for future co-location?
 1. A: The site needs to be in a location that can specifically off-load the 2 existing sites & the sectors served by these sites. Most cell towers have three sectors with 120 degree separations to cover a 360 degree radius

2. A: This is not always the case as with Ralphs shooting NW and SE to parallel the 210 freeway leaving the purple areas (refer to coverage map) having poor coverage. My Cell Phone has one bar now
 3. A: 2nd criteria = "significant gap in coverage" = low bar signal = insufficient capacity in the network to serve customer demand. Capacity off-load will improve service to purple sections experiencing gap in coverage
 4. Cindy C.: You did not answer the question – have you checked out any sites along the commercial corridor and do you have any AGF Verizon sites in the area as well?
- iii. C/Q: I sympathize w/the need to improve cell service & the need to add a cell tower to the church property as long as it does not interfere with my view of the mountains – it could be put on the N side of the bldg. – why next to my house?
 1. A: A couple of considerations went into selecting the location – it was the location the landlord, the church, preferred. We would have preferred a location a little further east on the lot
 - iv. Q: What about us?
 - v. C/Q: I moved to Oro Vista for, among other reasons, being close to nature with its real trees. My children will be attending Sunland Elementary School. I believe the proposed cell tower will place the well-being of my family in jeopardy.
 - vi. C/Q: A lot of kids play on the church parking lot b/c it is such a big area. Why would Verizon risk our children's health & well-being over better reception? I am disappointed that Sunland Neighborhood Church can be bought and sold.
 - vii. C: I am on the PTA of Sunland Elementary School w/its 500 students/staff, most of whom oppose the bldg of a cell tower across fr the school. I have worked too hard to get here to let an ugly cell tower be placed in my neighborhood
 - viii. Q: What is RF technology – is it microwave technology or not?
 1. A: Radiofrequency is the radio bandwidth on the spectrum of electromagnetic energy. Radiation is separated into two different groups – ionizing radiation and non-ionizing radiation
 2. A: RF waves are at the lower end of the electromagnetic spectrum – the non-ionizing end running fr 600 megahertz to 300 gigahertz. Radio-carriers typically operate between 700 megahertz and 1.9 gigahertz.
 3. A: Above RF waves on the spectrum is visible light, then ultra-violet light, then X-Rays and then gamma rays. It is the electromagnetic spectrum above visible light that is ionizing radiation.
 - ix. Q: What is the difference between ionizing and non-ionizing radiation?
 1. A: Non-ionizing radiation does not change DNA – ionizing radiation could. Microwaves are in the non-ionizing range of the electromagnetic spectrum – they only change the polarity of H2O molecules back & forth
 2. A: Microwave ovens work by the friction of the molecules rubbing against one another creating heat – they cook with heat, not radiation. That is a common mis-conception
 - x. Q: Is it true that the WHO considers these frequencies to be class 2 carcinogens in the same category as lead?
 1. A: All agents tested are broken down into categories – carcinogenic, possibly carcinogenic, not enough information to categorize one way or the other and non-carcinogenic

2. A: Only one agent in the history of RACC studies has been determined to be “non-carcinogenic” – Starbucks has to label its coffee as carcinogenic because it has been determined to be so by the RACC
3. A: Processed meat is carcinogenic, red meat is possibly carcinogenic (Class 2) ie not saying it is carcinogenic, but it can’t be ruled out
- xi. C: One has a choice whether to eat red meat or go to Starbucks, but I live +/- 2,000’ away from where the coverage is going to hit – I don’t get a choice as to whether I have to ingest your “carcinogen” or “possible carcinogen”
 1. A: Obviously there is a group here with whom we will never see eye-to-eye. The bottom line is the laws of this country are established by Congress and they have created the Federal Communications Act
 2. The supremacy clause of the US Constitution says that laws on the Federal level take precedence over local regulations
- xii. Q: Then why do we bother with this?
- xiii. Cindy C.: Even though arguments may be limited as the application goes through the City’s approval process, on the agenda are some key points the City WILL be considering. Ask Stakeholders to review them and provide feedback
- xiv. C: Covering up (concealing) a problem does not make the problem go away. There has to be a reason the LAUSD does not allow cell towers on their property. Placing a tower on church property does not seem very neighborly
- xv. C: It seems like finding a loophole and you people are good at doing that. The chance of risking health – how many times can we say “if we do better, we do better” – right now we don’t know the outcome of research studies
- xvi. C/Q: Who pays for the research, b/c that is going to effect the results being published. How many of your kids live by an elementary school/church that has 1 of these towers right in front of them? Are you 100% comfortable with that?
- xvii. C: People are being taken advantage of. Verizon didn’t go out and ask “is it ok that we could ‘possibly’ give you these carcinogens and we could ‘possibly’ end up with some kind of cancer but we don’t know for sure yet
- xviii. C: There is no evidence that it does, but we don’t have any evidence that it doesn’t. They are almost forcing this onto people. You say this is a nation of laws – it is also a nation of freedom of not taking anyone else’s crap
- xix. Cindy C.: Have you looked for a site on Foothill Bl on commercial properties or any other specific sites & are there any AGF sites that could work for this?
 1. A: This is a “targeted sector”. No other location would achieve the off-load we need. AGFs may be a possibility down the road with 5G, but in this case right-of-way is not a solution because it does not give us the same capacity as a macrosite
 2. A: AGF (small-cell) capacity is 1/6 that of a macrosite. By constructing one macrosite tower you avoid building 6 small-cell units.
- xx. C: What is sad is that the leadership of the local church with whom you made this deal did not have the guts to show up tonight and face the neighbors
- xxi. C/Q: I attend the church and am very sad. How much does the church gain by having this cell tower on their property when the school cannot have the tower on their property and the fire department will not permit one on theirs?
- xxii. C: As a parishioner my biggest beef is that we found out about this cell tower issue by accident by attending another Land-Use Committee – not from the church – and apparently the sign-off on documents happened way back in Oct

- xxiii. C: After I heard about this, I did a little research myself – I spoke to 5 different real estate agents (not 1 or 2 but 5) and they all told me the same thing – if a cell tower goes up my property values will go down
- xxiv. C/Q: I am a Real Estate Broker that has worked in this area for many years. Is it correct that cell towers are not allowed in residential areas?
1. A: That is not correct – we put them on residential properties all the time
- xxv. Q/C: These are being placed on residential properties and we just don't know about it? Wow! I would like to know more about residential towers
- xxvi. Cindy C.: We need to focus on this application for a site at the church. The application requires going through the City's Zoning Administrator which means there will be a public hearing much like this one though much tighter
- xxvii. Q: Issues about homeowners and property values have been brought up – issues about potential health risks have been brought up. How many people would not buy property right next to a cell tower?
1. The majority of the audience raised their hands
- xxviii. C: I am a Real Estate Broker. When you go into the California Association of Realtors web-site you will find that many are skeptical of cell towers due to potential health risks and their effects on aesthetics and property values
- xxix. C: My clients want to know what kind of nuisances there are – these would be disclosures – people will lose property value because nobody wants to purchase their homes because there are studies indicating there are risks
- xxx. Cindy C.: Applications for small cell towers – towers located in the public right-of-way – do not have public hearings for approval – the Oro Vista site will be on private property which will require a public hearing for approval and the community and NC can weigh in
- xxxi. Cindy C.: Verizon was also approved for the same application type as this along the Verdugo ridgeline – with those towers up there on a high plane, they do not provide the coverage needed for Sunland?
1. A: We needed a site to off-load capacity heading east of the Mt. Gleason/Foothill facility
- xxxii. C: I am opposed to this CUP as are a significant # of families affected by the Project as represented by 185 hard-copy signatures and 150 on-line signatures. Being addressed are issues of zoning, safety, aesthetics and property values
1. C: Zoning is R1 = neighborhood of SFR with one free-standing house intended for 1 family. The cell tower does not meet that criteria. Churches are permitted by variance, but it is outrageous that the Sunland Neighborhood Church abuses this privilege by bringing in a commercial enterprise
 2. C: Safety risks including fire risks and hazardous materials risks. There will be a 50-gallon storage of diesel fuel for a back-up generator system subject to fumes/spillage with lead-acid batteries
 3. C: The site is in a High Velocity Wind Zone – winds are frequent – cell towers do blow down
 4. C: Cell towers, with its copper, attract criminals/vandals into the neighborhood

5. C: Children can climb the wall enclosure encircling high voltage electrical lines and machinery inside – there are many children near the school and church
6. C: Cell towers emit radiation. There are studies that have shown that living or spending a significant amount of time within 400 meters of such towers can significantly increase your risk of contracting cancer – there should be more research before we submit our children to 943 school hours annually to this radiation. Cigarettes were considered safe until we leaned otherwise
7. C. The site is located on a fault line – the Verdugo Fault Line – in an area subject to liquefaction. Should a cell tower be built in a location that has the possibility of acting like a liquid under stress – like our next earthquake?
8. C: The California Utilities Commission urges that cell towers, antennas and main stations not be located near residences, schools, places of worship, playgrounds, hospitals or senior citizen centers
9. C: The internationally recognized precautionary standard is a 1,500' clearance minimum. Sunland Elementary School is +/- 200' away with a day-care center +/- 125' away on Oro Vista
10. C: Cell towers are banned from schools and fire stations in Los Angeles.
11. C: Re aesthetics – Cell Towers are ugly. “You can put pearls and lipstick on a pig, but it is still a pig”. We are not fooled by “concealment” by faux trees. We live in a neighborhood of real trees – the cell tower will degrade the visual character of the site and its surroundings
12. C: Once a tower is built, it will be illegal to deny a petition to add to it so it can be raised without community input
13. C: Re property values – documentation of price drops up to 20% have been shown in multiple surveys/articles. Adjacent condominiums per Zillow = +/- \$500,000. A 20% drop = \$100,000. \$100,000 x 49 units = a lot of money – who is going to pay these people for their reduced property value?

xxxiii. Cindy C.: The LUC will work on a draft comment letter. Invited the Verizon representatives to return when the draft letter is being discussed or if there are any changes to the proposal

- VII. 10209 Samoa – Haul Route, Nick Nazarian
- a. Pati Potter returned to the table
 - b. Cindy C.: Sometimes when things get built, dirt may need to be removed from the site or brought in. Transport of dirt requires an approved Haul Route – see attached proposed haul route
 - c. Nick N.: Planning to construct an 11-unit condominium on Samoa with an on-site parking structure for the residents. 2 spaces/condominium and bicycle parking spaces. Parking structure will require excavation of +/- 3,000 cu yds (+/- 300 truck loads) of dirt from the site
 - d. Nick N.: Anticipate 20 days of truck traffic
 - e. Cindy C.: Could you take Lowell to Honolulu?
 - i. Nick N.: No, because trucks greater than 6,000 lbs cannot go down Lowell because of the school

- f. Cindy C.: I would like to see your design plans – I am curious if the City worked with you regarding their citywide design guidelines for the Project. Because the Project was more-or-less by-right we did not see it or participate in its design
 - i. Nick N.: Yes, no problem
 - g. Liliana S.: Will you have water trucks for the dirt, street sweepers and street controllers/flagmen?
 - i. Nick N.: Yes, that is required by the City.
 - ii. Liliana S.: The City “requires” it, but it is not always done. Do we have your assurance that it will be done?
 - 1. Nick N.: We will try to comply with all City requirements
 - h. Nick N.: City permitted hours of operation = 7am-7pm weekdays, 8am-5pm Saturdays nothing on Sundays. Will be willing to work with the community for reasonable alternate hours if necessary
 - i. Cindy C.: I believe the prior Samoa Project did start later to accommodate traffic of working stakeholders and getting kids to school
- VIII. Should the STNC-LUC hold a meeting regarding the LA County Detention Center being repurposed as housing for homeless – Amelia Anderson
- a. We need to get homeless people off the streets while HHH housing is being constructed – there is no current transitional housing so it creates a gap. 75% of the homeless find a way out within 3 months, so we are only looking at 25% (See attached article)
 - b. Would like to form a Homeless Committee through the STNC that will work w/CM Rodriguez & Sup Kathryn Barger – asked for volunteers. Presented this to the LUC b/c City-owned/County-owned land may be used for this purpose – LUC may have input
 - i. Suggested Camp Louis Roth be repurposed for this.
 - 1. Liliana S.: (See attached letter) Per the FEMA environmental department web-site, the 2005 winter rains washed out large portions of Big Tujung Cyn resulting in closure of the Camp
 - 2. C: Isolated places by the Wash are the worst places for this – there is no electricity, there is a high crime rate, there is fire, there is flood, there already are squatters, there is no police coverage there
 - ii. Cindy C.: Those who have an interest should join the committee were it to be formed. Yes the City is looking for the community to identify City-owned/County-owned properties that could be repurposed – also motels, hotels, etc
 - iii. Vartan K.: Whatever is built, they have to provide a support system – many of these people need psychological help
 - 1. Amelia A.: Over 1,000 people have been hired this yr – social workers, mental health professionals, housing navigators, anti-addiction specialists
- IX. Presentations scheduled for 5-21-18
- a. 7738 Foothill – remodeling plans for a new façade and signage
 - b. 6477 Foothill – proposed drive-thru car wash. Previous presentation was disrupted requiring early adjournment
- X. Pending Projects
- a. 10324 Mt. Gleason – proposed land subdivision
 - i. No up-dates
- XI. Public Comments
- a. None presented

XII. Meeting adjourned at 9:13pm