

**Neighborhood Council Valley Village
Board Meeting
1-25-06**

Approved February 22, 2006 11-0-0

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order, Roll Call, Agenda Distribution and Welcoming Remarks. The meeting was called to order by Peter Sanchez at 6:40 pm.

Mr. Sanchez welcomed the Board and stakeholders in attendance. The history and purpose of Neighborhood Councils was given, and it was noted that the meeting would be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order and within the guidelines of The Brown Act. Anyone wishing to speak to any issue was invited to complete a public comment card.

The roll was called. Board members present were: Mr. Tony Braswell (residential renter), Dr. Alan Brody (residential homeowner), Mr. Fritz Friedman (business), Ms. Ginny Hatfield (senior based organization), Mr. Paul Hatfield (at-large), Mr. Yoni Kahn-Rose (residential renter), Mr. Ben Lautman (business), Ms. Harriet Newton (faith based), Mr. Greg O'Connor (education), Ms. Breice Reiner (community service), Mr. Peter Sanchez (residential homeowner), Mr. Paul Weiner (residential renter). Absent were, Mr. Bill Santoro (residential homeowner), Mr. Stuart Simen (business), Dr. Dan Wiseman (Cultural).

The Posting Roll was called – posting requirements for the meeting were met (7).

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes. *Ms. Reiner motioned to approve the November minutes, and Dr. Brody seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 10-0-2.*

Agenda Item 3 – President's Comments, Introduction of Guests. Mr. Sanchez introduced Chris Olsen from Wendy Greuel's office.

Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment. Lorraine Engelking, Huston Street homeowner, addressed the Board regarding streets – noted that she recently had relatives in town who were “flabbergasted” at the condition of the streets. In particular she brought to the attention of the Board Magnolia at Whitsett. She also stated that the 4900 block of Houston at Laurel Canyon, on the east side, had an unhealthy level of traffic. There need to be speed bumps to slow the traffic. There was no public comment. She expressed concern regarding the low availability of parking, and that this will only get worse with a new building that is being constructed at this site.

Mr. Sanchez thanked her for her comments and advised her that she should attend the Planning and Land Use Committee meeting. He also mentioned she should contact her City Council member. Mr. Kahn-Rose stated that he lives on Magnolia at Whitsett, and verified there is a “terrible” parking problem at that site.

Mr. Sanchez reviewed the process for approval of speed bumps, and advised that Ms. Engelking get involved. She closed by stating there is a bar on Riverside that attract late night revelers on motorcycles and it is a nuisance to neighbors.

Mr. Friedman asked if the process for speed bumps is similar to the process for requesting crosswalks? Yes. Mr. Olsen suggested a call to Joan Pellicone, and a call to 311.

Ms. Lori Dinkin reported on the storage unit at Laurel Canyon and highway 101. The report from the South Valley Commission has no provision for the "Q" condition. PLUM was not alerted to the conditions and they were not part of the approved plan. It is now before the city council and all conditions have been included. She also mentioned that the developer who will build the Stevens Nursery property is responsible for the townhouses at Otsego and Whitsett, and that he assured the Homeowners Association the new units constructed on the Riverside property will be similar.

Agenda Item 5 – Finance Report. Mr. Hatfield noted there were no substantial changes to the finances from the December report. This year's budget looks very good, but next year will be tight. He attended the Mayor's budget meeting Saturday, January 21. He mentioned that the process was not useful, although he was certain their intentions were good. Mr. Hatfield introduced to the Board, for adoption, a statement regarding the budget process. The statement read:

As one of NCVV's representatives at Saturday's Budget meeting at City Hall, I expressed my reservations regarding the use of the 2006 Mayor's Budget Survey as the basis for planning the budget. The four priority areas that required ranking were way too general and, as a result, the detailed activities within each were subordinated to a level where they could not be evaluated. Similar comments were raised by other representatives, including the likelihood that the objectives and scenarios contained in the survey were misinterpreted. For example, while one of the sections was entitled "Education", the underlying activities presented concerned safety. Overall, there was no way for the participants to express key preferences such as street re-pavement, as opposed to, say, sidewalk repairs.

Another significant problem with the survey is the lack of attention given to the estimated \$250 million deficit faced by the city. Out of six possible scenarios posed about spending alternatives or new taxes, only one addressed the prospect of cuts in service. Even there, the choices were the same four very generalized categories used to establish budget priorities. Once again, how could a participant express a preference when the categories mix apples and oranges?

Lastly, the participation rate was less than 30%. That alone should tell you something about what people thought of the survey, especially when you consider they went out to the neighborhood councils. The poor response represents too thin a slice on which to base budget assumptions.

At best, I can say that the survey was an honest attempt but poorly designed; at worst it could be perceived as a charade designed to give the appearance of reaching out to the neighborhood councils and their constituencies. The end result in any event will be a budget based on flawed data.

I realize that government budgets are influenced by politics, but our Mayor and City Council are paid to make tough and unpopular spending cut decisions, and that is what is required now.

Mr. Sanchez asked Mr. Hatfield what was the next step in the budget process? There will be a meeting with the mayor. Dr. Wiseman is one of two people who will represent Neighborhood Councils in the meeting.

Mr. Friedman asked if the statement was presented at the meeting? No, it would need to be adopted first. *Mr. Braswell motioned to adopt the motion with "wordsmithing". Ms. Newton seconded the motion. Ms. Reiner offered an amendment to remove the "wordsmithing" and accept the motion as stated. The amendment was accepted. Mr. Friedman asked that the statement be distributed. Mr. Hatfield stated he would like to review it with Dr. Wiseman as well. Mr. Sanchez noted that if there were any further review, it would change the motion as stated. That amendment was not accepted. Mr. Lautman asked if the motion could be re-read. Ms. Hatfield called the question. The vote to close discussion and take action on the issue was approved, 12-0-0.*

The motion to adopt Mr. Hatfield's statement was approved 12-0-0.

Agenda Item 9 – Standing Committees – Planning and Land Use Committee. Mr. Gray from the Country School briefly answered questions regarding the School's request for a zoning variance. Mr. Sanchez explained the background on the project, and the issue of parking space rented from a long time resident of Valley Village on the North side of the School. Mr. O'Connor clarified that the school already has a conditional use permit on the south parking space and the newly acquired land. They also have a conditional use permit on the rented parking space. Mr. O'Connor asked if this conditional use permit would remain in place even if the property were sold? Yes. Mr. Gray noted that the conditional use permit for the North parking is for the Country School use of the property only. Mr. Friedman asked if there is a current lease on the rented parking lot? Yes, since 1981, and it is a year-to-year lease. Mr. Sanchez explained the history of the relationship between the Country School and the family that owns the lot. Mr. Lautman asked if there has been an attempt to secure a longer lease? Yes, but the owner prefers year-to-year. Mr. Kahn-Rose asked, with the conditional use permits in place, what would happen if the property is sold. It would jeopardize the conditional use permit for the entire school property. Ms. Hatfield asked if the rented parking were ever for sale, would the school try to buy it? Yes. The presentation was closed, and Mr. Sanchez noted that action would occur later in the agenda.

Agenda Item 6 – Committee Assignments. Mr. Sanchez reminded the Board that he asked for feedback regarding individual interest in both committees and liaisons for the

new Board year. A review of committee definitions was provided – Short Term for projects of 12 months or less, Long Term for projects that take more than 12 months, Outreach for increasing awareness of NC in the community, Elections to hold the annual election, and Planning and Land Use to work on zoning/permit issues in Valley Village. The following assignments were made:

Short Term Projects – Mr. Paul Weiner, chair

Long Term Projects – Dr. Dan Wiseman, chair

Outreach – Breice Reiner, chair; Harriet Newton, co-chair

Elections – Ginny Hatfield, chair; Tony Braswell to step in to run the 2006 election

Planning and Land Use – Greg O'Connor, chair

Alan Brody – NCVV Representative to Neighborhood Congress

Liaison assignments were also made:

Department of Aging – Ginny Hatfield	Port of Los Angeles – Ben Lautman
Board of Public Works – Breice Reiner	Los Angeles World Airports -
Burbank Airports – Tony Braswell	Recreation and Parks – Ben Lautman
Animal Services – Scott Sorrento	Dept of Transportation – Dan Wiseman
Bldg and Safety Dept – Greg O'Connor	MTA – Fritz Friedman
Community Development – Fritz Friedman	Volunteer Bureau – Harriet Newton
Cultural Affairs – Dan Wiseman	DWP – Dan Wiseman
Department on Disability –Ginny Hatfield	CalTrans – Bill Santoro
Emergency Preparedness – Alan Brody	Los Angeles Zoo – Scott Sorrento
Environmental Affairs –Alan Brody	Finance – Paul Hatfield
Fire Department/Services – Paul Weiner	General Services – Breice Reiner
Housing Authority – Fritz Friedman	Information Technology – Yoni Kahn-Rose
Libraries – Harriet Newton	N'hood Empowerment – Peter Sanchez
Planning – Greg O'Connor	Police Services – Paul Weiner
Public Works – Breice Reiner	Neighborhood Congress – Alan Brody

Agenda Item 9 – Standing committees – Planning and Land Use. Mr. O'Connor reminded the Board of the need to take a formal position on the Country School project. *A motion came from the PLU committee to approve the Country School project pending city approval. The motion was approved 12-0-0.*

A motion came from the PLU to host a Town Hall meeting on the issue of single-family development, using the \$3700 approved in 2005 for the meeting that was requested by the Councilwoman's office. The dates suggested were March 8, 15, 29. Mr. Friedman asked that there was to be a more concrete definition of what this issue is from Wendy Greuel's office. Ms. Dinkin stated she is working on a date to review this with Ms. Greuel's office, and asked that the public meeting be delayed until there is more feedback from the councilwoman. Mr. Hatfield noted that to adhere to the budget allocation, the meeting has to happen in this fiscal year.

Public comment on this issue came from Ms. Lory Oberg, Huston Street, mentioning for reference point a very large home on Sunnyslope at Greenbush in Valley Glen. There are three lots on Huston that are in the process of being subdivided. The question was called. It was noted by Mr. Yakov Yellin that Purim is March 15 (note that Purim is Tuesday, March 14). *Mr. Sanchez asked that the motion be amended to remove March 15 as a possible date. The motion failed 4-5-0.*

Agenda Item 9 – Standing committees – Elections. Ms. Hatfield reported there will be a roundtable with the City Attorney regarding elections issues. The meeting is to be held February 10. Please send any thoughts on the election to her as soon as possible.

Agenda Item 9 – Standing committees – Short Term Projects, Outreach. Ms. Reiner reported on both Short Term Projects and Outreach, therefore the report is combined. There is a plan in place to complete the gateway sign. It will require that NCVV fund a portion of the costs. The total cost is anticipated to be \$14,000. Our city council office will assume some of the costs. *A motion came from the Short Term Projects Committee for NCVV to assume up to \$8500 of the costs associated with the gateway sign.* Mr. Lautman asked about insurance for the prior damage to the sign. It was explained by Mr. Sanchez, and comments from Dr. Wiseman were added, that the city self-insures and there are no funds to replace the sign. Mr. Lautman asked what will happen if the sign is vandalized again? Mr. Sanchez stated there is a caveat that this is the only time the councilwoman will step in and assist with the costs of the sign. Mr. Hatfield asked if the sign could be insured? No. Mr. Weiner questioned if this was a wise use of funds if we could not ensure the sign would be safe. Mr. Lautman asked how much money is currently in the NCVV coffers? Over \$40,000. *The motion was approved 10-0-1.*

Agenda Item 9 – Standing committees – Long Term Planning. Dr. Wiseman was absent as he was recovering from surgery, so the report was postponed. The Board wished Dr. Wiseman well in his recovery.

Agenda Item 10 – Valley Village Birthday Party. The birthday party is coming along on schedule. There will be more information in the next issue of The Bridge.

Agenda Item 11 – Liaison Reports and Material Distribution. Mail was distributed.

Agenda Item 12 – Other Items for Discussion Per Mr. Sanchez. Mr. Sanchez detailed the current lack of a phone line dedicated to the Board. For two years the official phone line of NCVV has been his home phone. He presented to the Board the opportunity to establish a phone line with a voice mail box for NCVV business. The costs are \$22 monthly and \$20 set up fee. *Mr. Braswell motioned to approve the expense including the one time set up fee and monthly charge for phone service, Mr. Friedman seconded the motion. The motion was approved 11-0-0.*

Regarding office space, Mr. Sanchez noted there was no news to report. The Board is still encouraged to be looking for a space that is accessible, within Valley Village, and

preferably donated, to use for NCVV office. Ms. Hatfield will check into NoHo Commons.

Disaster Preparedness Training is now being scheduled, and will be at Union Hall on Reseda. Shaarey Zedek has also offered space.

The Culture of Peach will be held at the end of May. Ms. Hatfield is trying to coordinate the effort with North Hollywood High School.

There will be an essay contest to determine possible candidates for the Student seat. The contest will be held in March and the Elections committee will make a recommendation to the full Board. *The essay contest came forward as a motion from the Elections committee, and was approved 10-0-0.*

Agenda Item 14 – Public Comment. Lory Oberg, Huston Street, asked what will be done with property on Huston Street? It is 90 foot frontage that someone is trying to develop. Mr. O'Connor will check and get back to her.

Agenda Item 13 – Future Agenda Items. Mr. Friedman asked for a discussion on the crosswalk at Magnolia and Bluebell. Ms. Hatfield noted that this Sunday's Los Angeles Times would feature Valley Village in the Real Estate section. Mr. Kahn-Rose asked for a review of street repairs.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25.