

**Neighborhood Council Valley Village  
Board Meeting  
09-22-04**

**Draft**

The meeting was called to order by NCVV Vice-President Breice Reiner at 7:25 pm.

Ms. Reiner thanked the Board and those in the audience for their attendance, and thanked the election committee for the candidate orientation hosted at 6:30. Ms. Reiner reminded the Board of the upcoming election, and explained that there were many candidates in the audience who might be attending their first NCVV Board meeting. She briefly reviewed the history of NCVV, and explained the process for speakers to address any issue by completing a speaker's card and handing it to any Board member.

**Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order, Roll Call and Welcoming Remarks.** Ms. Reiner explained that Board President Peter Sanchez is with his family attending his mother's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. She noted that there was a quorum present and asked the secretary to call roll. Board members in attendance were: Mr. Tony Braswell (residential renter), Ms. Ginny Hatfield (community senior organization), Mr. Paul Hatfield (at large), Ms. Jody Hidey (residential homeowner), Ms. Ann Hull (business representative), Mr. Greg O'Connor (education), Mr. Tom Paterson (residential renter), Mr. Chris Pechin (residential homeowner), Ms. Breice Reiner (community based organization), Mr. Stuart Simen (business), Dr. Daniel Wiseman (faith based). Board members excused absent were Mr. Peter Sanchez (residential homeowner), Ms. Debra (D.J.) Harner (cultural organization), Mr. Nick Pool (business representative). Absent Board member was Mr. Walter Katz (residential renter).

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the July meeting were sent by email to the Board, and copies were available for the public at the meeting. *A motion was made by Mr. Simen to accept the minutes and seconded by Dr. Wiseman. The minutes were approved by a vote of 10-0.*

**Agenda Item 3 – Vice President's Comments, Introduction of Distinguished Guests.** Ms. Reiner recognized Deanna Stevenson, with DONE, and Fortuna Ipolita, with Councilman Jack Weiss' office. She thanked them both for their support. She also recognized staff from MTA who would be presenting later in the evening. She noted that Lori Dinkin, President of The Valley Village Homeowners Association was present as well.

**Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment on Agenda Items.** Ms. Reiner recognized George Cruze, a homeowner in Valley Village. He spoke to the Board related to Inclusionary Zoning. He stated he is "dead against it" and that the Board should be as well, and that all interested parties need to attend the scheduled meeting to occur Thursday, September 23. Ms. Reiner thanked Mr. Cruze for his comments, and stated that NCVV and The Homeowners Association would both be represented at the meeting. Ms. Dinkin added her comment that all who could should attend the meeting, and that there will be strong representation from a broad coalition who are opposed to the issue. She has been informed that Council members Reyes and Garcetti will not be attending, and that there will be empty chairs to signify their absence. Homeowners are opposed to this and uniting in opposition as this current proposed change to zoning will cause added strain on resources, including utilities, schools, traffic and other infrastructure.

**Agenda Item 5 – MTA Presentation.**

Maria Castillo and Devon Brown, from MTA, were present to give an update on The Orange Line project, and answer questions related to the progress of the project. "Many issues continue to come up, and we are here to address those". The stated they will return as often as needed to communicate information.

Ms. Brown opened the presentation by stating the project is "back on track". She gave a computer-based overview (attached to the permanent minutes) and answered numerous questions within the presentation. She stated that the point of the presentation was to address any and all issues point-by-point and give clear and concise answers on the questions.

Questions related to the presentation were:

Mr. Patterson asked if the MTA has brought the legal case to the California Supreme Court? Yes, but not certain if the court will hear the case. The environmental impact study is underway, as requested in the lower court ruling. A member of the audience asked when the injunction will be "over"? It is over, but the community group is trying to refile it.

Dr. Wiseman asked for specific location of Bull Creek? It is near the Tujunga Basin. Ms. Paterson stated that related to the future of the busway, there was a letter asking about the federal funds required to convert the bus line to a light rail line. There has not been clear information about the validity of the statement.

An audience member asked for more information about what are "fiber optics?" They are the communications link between the buses and MTA. Ms. Hull asked about a speed limit for the buses. The buses will be limited to the speed of the adjoining roadway, for Chandler it is 35 mph. All bus limits will be coordinated with the limit of the area served.

Mr. Pechin asked about the fencing around the roadway? There will be a small 4 feet high picket-type fence to keep pedestrians off the roadway. An audience member asked about noise on Chandler. "I live on Chandler, and it is very quiet. What are you doing to address noise?" The environmental impact study required that MTA address noise and we are using a new bus type to mitigate noise and keep the decibel level down. Also MTA will be using rubberized asphalt.

Mr. Braswell asked if the Laurel Canyon Station has been named for Valley Village per the recommendation of NCVV? That is still under consideration.

A member of the audience asked if there will be more vibration to neighboring communities like last summer during the construction? There should not be further vibration, but if anyone does have a claim for damages against the construction effort that should be filed soon. Ms. Hatfield asked if alternative fuels were considered? The buses will run on Natural Gas. Mr. Hatfield asked if consideration has been given to the legal implications of naming the buses "Metroliner" as the name is currently used by Amtrak in Washington DC? This will be investigated. Dr. Wiseman raised the concern that \$5 million in federal funds have been allocated for the landscaping of this project and will that money still be dedicated to The Orange Line? Ms. Castillo stated that that is under consideration but regardless of the outcome MTA has provided for a lush landscaping plan and full irrigation. "We will be going back to the community soon to present the final landscape plan."

Ms. Hatfield asked what other naming requests have been received for Laurel Canyon Station or other stations? There have been other requests. Ms. Hatfield asked if the halt in construction has "hurt" the bottom line for the project? We don't know at this time.

Mr. Pechin thanked the MTA representatives for their hard work and complimented the fact that they have been very communicative and open about the progress of the project.

Dr. Wiseman presented examples of pedestrian and bike pathway designs that exist along Chandler Boulevard in Burbank and the project improvement along Chandler Boulevard east of the Red Line Subway Station (Lankershim Boulevard). He asked what we could expect to see along our portion of Chandler? There will not be a dedicated bike path due to the space constraints, but we want "our part" of Chandler to be as attractive as the parts east and west of us. Dr. Wiseman reiterated his concern and the motion approved by NCVV "that the Valley Village portion of the Chandler corridor look as good as that portion of Chandler past Ethel."

Ms. Reiner thanked the MTA representatives and Dr. Wiseman for their presentations, and thanked the public for their input into the discussion.

**Agenda Item 6 – Treasurer's Report.** Mr. Hatfield presented the Treasurer's report to the Board. He noted a significant update that Neighborhood Councils must exhaust the current allocation of funds before the next allocation can be made. The budget that was distributed reflects the allocation for the budget as approved by the NCVV Board. Mr. Hatfield received an email requesting attendance at an October 12 meeting with Laura Chick to review Neighborhood Council funding. He will send an email to confirm the attendance of NCVV. He asked for volunteers to attend. *A motion was made by Mr. Pechin to accept the financial report, and seconded by Mr. Simen. The motion was approved 10-0.*

**Agenda Item 7 – Mayor's Budget Survey.** Dr. Wiseman distributed a summary report of the Mayor's budget surveys that have been received from stakeholders within Valley Village. Almost 150 have been received. He expressed a concern that this is a priority based survey, and a way to possibly emphasize some "priorities" and defund other issues. Dr. Wiseman has a copy of the budget from the Mayor's office that he is happy to share with Board members.

The number one survey priority for respondents within Valley Village is Safety. The second (very close behind) priority is neighborhoods. Dr. Wiseman reviewed all the priorities noting that the priority of planning is also high on the list. Dr. Wiseman asked that the Board appoint two more persons to the committee. Ms. Reiner asked if these appointees must be Board members? No. Dr. Wiseman stated that the persons appointed should have a financial skill

set. Dr. Wiseman will send a copy of the summary to the Mayor's office, and will copy the Board on the letter. Any other input from the Board should be sent to Dr. Wiseman.

**Agenda Item 8 – NCVV 2004 Election.** Mr. Simen and Mr. Braswell reviewed the progress of the 2004 election. Prior to the September Board meeting the 2004 Candidates Forum and Training was hosted, with numerous Board members in attendance. At this time there are 14 candidates approved by the League of Women Voters who will be on the ballot. This information was sent to the full Board in a memo dated September 21. There are two other persons who attended the candidate reception to state they might be write-in candidates. The election will be held on October 20, at Colfax Elementary. The Homeowners Association is hosting a meeting the same evening and this will be a great opportunity to increase voter turnout.

**Agenda Item 9a – Committee Structure.** Deferred until October

**Agenda Item 9b – Soundwalls.** Mr. Pechin updated the Board on his current stakeholder status, stating that he had sold his home in Valley Village and would not be running for re-election as a residential homeowner. He does intend to stay active on the soundwall issue as he does still live very much within the area impacted by the proposed soundwalls. He has begun the DVD to help us advocate for our portion of the soundwall and will continue working on that. Ms. Reiner thanked Mr. Pechin for his hard work and asked that he continue to support us as the next Board takes this issue forward.

**Agenda Item 9c – Planning and Land Use.** Mr. Paterson distributed six motions (attached) for the NCVV Board to consider. The motions were considered individually, and read aloud by Mr. Paterson.

**Motion 1.** *The Neighborhood Council Valley Village thanks Councilmember Wendy Greuel for support of the community effort to overturn the South Valley Area Planning Commission decision to approve a car wash on Laurel Canyon, and for her success in persuading the LA City Council to overturn the SVAPC decision to sustain the original City Planning Department decision denying the Valley Village Specific Plan exceptions. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Connor and approved 10-0.*

**Motion 2.** *In the matter of 5027 Colfax, The Neighborhood Council Valley Village supports and endorses the City of Los Angeles Advisory Agency findings and decision dated August 16, 2004 in granting a Tentative Tract No. 60963 approval for only 4 condo units, subject to various conditions, and the subsequent Staff Appeal Report dated October 14, 2004 supporting the Advisory Agency initial decision and recommending that the applicant appeal to that decision be denied. Ms. Hidey asked for clarification related to what we are actually "saying" with this motion? Mr. Paterson stated that with this motion NCVV is supporting the city in their denying of 5 units for this space, and supporting 4 units. Mr. Hatfield asked if the owner is denied, weren't we told that they could then get 5 apartments for the space instead of 5 condos? Mr. Paterson stated that is an issue, but alternate use is not addressed by this motion. Ms. Hatfield stated that she recalled at the August meeting the owner stated they would stop building until this issue is resolved, but that it appears they are continuing to build. Mr. Paterson confirmed that is true, and stated that his investigation shows the architect and developer knew a full year ago that they could not build 5 units. The question remains how did the owner/builder get a permit issued for 5 units? The motion was seconded by Mr. Braswell, and approved 10-0.*

**Motion 3.** *Prior to submitting the motion for vote, Mr. Simen noted that the motion is actually a "compound" motion and not eligible for consideration as presented. Mr. Paterson restated the motion as follows: The Neighborhood Council Valley Village requests that Los Angeles City Councilmember Wendy Greuel require that the city investigate how and why both a grading permit and foundation permit were issued in June 2004 by the City for a 5 unit apartment project at the 5027 Colfax site since the site can legally only permit 4 units, why were multiple sign-offs for a prior terminated project allowed to be used on Clearance Summary Worksheet for Permit 03010-1000-00914, and why were sign-offs allowed on Specific Plan compliance when not all Specific Plan conditions had been met? The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Connor. Ms. Hidey asked Mr. Simen if there has to be a formal action on each motion, or can they be considered in one action? There must have separate votes on each motion. Dr. Wiseman cautioned the Board that we are talking about specific activity of the NCVV Board that will be precedent setting, and we need to establish a formal framework how this will be handled in the future. He suggested that all projects over \$250,000 be presented to the Board for approval, but that such an action will significantly effect the work of the Board. The motion was approved 10-0. Mr. Braswell stated that it appears we have been misled on two specific proposals now, the car wash and this condo, and that although Dr. Wiseman is correct about the impact of such an effort on part of the Board, it must be done to preserve the integrity of the community.*

**Motion 3a.** *We (NCVV) request the investigation be completed and a report issued by the appropriate City departments no later than October 4, 2004, and that the NCVV be copied, since as an appeal of the City Advisory*

*Agency granting only 4 units is scheduled for public hearing on October 16, 2004. A supplemental letter detailing various NCVV investigative findings in support of the requested investigation will accompany this motion when transmitted to Councilwoman Wendy Greuel. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simen. Mr. O'Connor asked if the results of the investigation could be shared with the full Board? They will be shared with the full Board. The motion was approved 10-0.*

**Motion 4.** *The Neighborhood Council Valley Village requests confirmation from the Chief Zoning Administrator, Robert Janovici, that density bonus shall apply only to housing developments consisting of five or more dwelling units, based on State of California Government Code Section 65915(2)(g)(1), definition of density bonus. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pechin. Dr. Wiseman stated that this is an issue that could be settled without a motion, through a letter from the Board. Ms. Hatfield again asked if the owner could get five apartments if the request for five condos is denied? Mr. Paterson stated that given the size of the lot, they can only construct four units. The only way they can build a fifth unit is with an exception from the city or a density bonus. Ms. Reiner asked if this motion was valid? Mr. Simen stated yes. A letter would be acceptable, but if this were presented as a formal motion from the NCVV it becomes an official request for action. Ms. Hatfield asked if Mr. Paterson would be representing NCVV in this request? Yes. The motion was approved 9-0-1.*

**Motion 5.** *The Neighborhood Council Valley Village requests the Chief Zoning Administrator, Robert Janovici, correct the City of Los Angeles' computer records for properties within Valley Village, including Colfax Avenue frontages, incorrectly shown eligible for 35% transit density bonus based on proximity to transit centers. Colfax Avenue does not qualify for 35% density bonus under the transit center criteria. Mr. Paterson then reviewed the criteria which make an area eligible for the 35% density bonus of the transit authority. Mr. O'Connor asked if anyone else in Valley Village has received the transit density bonus? Not to our knowledge. Mr. Hatfield seconded the motion. The motion was approved 10-0.*

**Motion 6.** *There is a need to resolve the "paper alley" issue affecting potential desirable residential development within Valley Village. For some reason, a meeting requested multiple times with city officials, has been stalled since February 2004. The Neighborhood Council valley Village requests that Councilmember Wendy Greuel promptly schedule a meeting with the Chief of the City Bureau of Engineering and City Attorney and representatives of The Neighborhood Council and Valley Village Homeowners Association in order to determine an appropriate resolution of the "paper alley" development problem. Mr. Paterson then reviewed the "paper alley" issue for the Board. NCVV has in the past asked the city to address the "paper alley" issue and no one has responded. There have been formal requests made of Dale Thrush in Councilwoman Wendy Greuel's office, and meetings have been requested with him that have not been set. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion.*

Mr. Simen recommended that the motion be amended as follows: *The Neighborhood Council Valley Village requests that Councilmember Wendy Greuel promptly schedule a meeting with the Chief of the City Bureau of Engineering and City Attorney and representatives of The Neighborhood Council and Valley Village Homeowners Association in order to determine an appropriate resolution of the "paper alley" development problem. The amendment was accepted. Ms. Hatfield stated that for guidance on this issue NCVV should investigate other "paper alley" issues within Wendy Greuel's district that are in other Neighborhood Councils. Ms. Hidey asked what was the original intent of the "paper alleys?" Most of the spaces were originally zoned R-2 with alleyways that now exist only on paper, these could have been intended to be multiple units. Ms. Hull added that there might be issues with "statutes of limitations" which sometimes are ten years. Dr. Wiseman reminded the Board that the intent of committees such as Mr. Paterson's is to provide the opportunity to reach our city offices directly and provide communication for those disenfranchised by the city agencies. We need Wendy Greuel and Jack Weiss to sit down and discuss this with us.*

The motion was approved 9-0-1.

Ms. Reiner thanked Mr. Paterson for his hard work on the issues presented, and his continued effort to protect the community.

**Agenda Item 9g – Office Space.** Ms. Reiner reported that there was a meeting taking place at the same time as the NCVV Board meeting to review next steps for office space. She would report back to the Board as soon as she heard updated information.

**Agenda Item 9h – Web-site.** - Ms. Reiner reported that work is still being done on the web site.

**Agenda Item 10 – Board Liaison Reports and Material Distribution.** Mr. Braswell and Ms. Reiner distributed Board mail. Given the late hour Ms. Reiner asked that Board Liaison reports be given at the next meeting or distributed via email to the full Board.

**Agenda Item 12 – Future Agenda Items.** Dr. Wiseman asked that the Neighborhood Council process be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Hatfield asked that the Board come up with specific projects for the community, including beautification projects. Mr. Braswell reminded the Board that these type projects had been approved and a committee could come forward with recommendations for full Board approval. Ms. Hatfield, Ms. Reiner and Mr. Braswell will meet and report back to the Board. Mr. Simen stated that by-law revisions must be made, but reiterated his prior comment that the current Board could not tie the hands of the next Board with any action. NCVV needs standing committees clearly defined in the by-laws. Ms. Hatfield asked if by-law revisions could at least be proposed at the next meeting. Mr. Hatfield asked for a brief discussion of contractor stamps.

Dr. Wiseman noted that paper bags have been made available for a food collection campaign to support outreach of one of our Valley Village Temples.

**Agenda Item 11 – Other Items for Discussion per NCVV Board Vice President.** Ms. Reiner reminded the Board that the work we do needs to involve other community members and not just Board members. She asked that we be particularly aware of this with committees such as Planning and Land Use, and other outreach oriented committees that could benefit from community involvement.

She reminded the Board the committee meetings also fall under The Brown Act, and as such have to be posted 72 hours in advance and be accessible to the public. Mr. Paterson asked if we would be able to use the new proposed office space for such meetings? That is a possibility. Ms. Reiner further stated that task forces operate under much less stringent guidelines, and that work should be assigned carefully within this structure to enable us to accomplish as much as possible. Examples of task force groups that might be formed included beautification, streetscapes, Burbank Airport, soundwalls and traffic control. We can do wonderful things within this community but it cannot be done by 15 people. We need the public involved. Ms. Reiner encouraged everyone on the Board to continue to reach out to their neighbors to involve them in the Neighborhood Council process.

**Agenda Item 13 – Public Comment.** There was no added public comment.

**Agenda Item 14 – Vice President’s Closing Comments.** Ms. Reiner again thanked the Board and those members of the audience present for the attendance at the meeting. She asked that every Board member bring 3 suggestions to the next meeting to help us reach out to the broader community related to NCVV business. Mr. Paterson asked if we could use the web site to help with this outreach? Yes. Ms. Hidey stated that she had hoped to have our Senior Lead Officer speak about the liquor store shooting earlier in the month, but he is on vacation. She will ask him to come to the October meeting. Mr. Paterson stated there have been 3 murders in Valley Village in the past 5 weeks. Mr. Jim Britain stated that he has received a police sketch of the suspect in the liquor store murder, and is happy to provide copies to any Board members who want one.

**Agenda Item 17 – Adjournment.** *At 9:25 Mr. Hatfield motioned to adjourn, and Mr. Simen seconded. The meeting was adjourned.*