

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
LAND-USE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 2017

- I. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Cindy Cleghorn
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 - i. Cindy Cleghorn
 - ii. Bill Skiles
 - iii. Debby Beck
 - iv. Elektra Kruger
 - v. Nina Royal
 - vi. Liliana Sanchez
 - vii. Karen Zimmerman
 - viii. Cathi Comras
 - ix. Pati Potter
 - x. Lora de la Portilla
 - b. Absent
 - i. David Barron
 - ii. John Laue
 - c. No public representatives present
- III. Introduction of Board Members
- IV. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Minutes of February 27, 2017 not available for approval
- V. 9927 Commerce – Austin Selfie, representative for owner
 - a. Briefly introduced their up-coming project, they will be returning at a future date for a more complete presentation. They have a small retail store on Commerce, are proposing a 740 sq ft addition to the rear to be used as office space
 - i. Structure should not appear any different fr Commerce (see attached). Access will be from the alley. There will also be a carport in the rear located betw Foothill and Tujunga Canyon on the west side of Commerce
 - ii. The property is located across from Merithews hardware store. It is in a Target Area 3/Major Activity Area 3 of the FBCSP. The retail portion is currently empty
 - iii. Will return in one month for a more complete presentation
- VI. 10146 N. Fernglen
 - a. Currently a SFR. Proposal for a 5-unit apartment building
- VII. The March STNC General Board Meeting
 - a. Scheduled for 2 days from now on Wednesday. Cindy C. had agendas available for distribution to those interested. The agenda is also posted on the STNC Web-Site
- VIII. ADU Regulations
 - a. Cindy C. had copies of the current State ADU Ordinance along with FAQs
- IX. Affordable Housing Linkage Fee

- a. Cindy C. had copies of documents related to the Affordable Housing Linkage Fee Ordinance along with FAQs for distribution to anyone interested
 - i. This information is also available on the City Planning Web-Site
- X. 8150-8160 McGroarty – Albert Davityan, owner and subdivider
 - a. Albert D. and his brother are owners/developers by profession. Both have lived in the Sunland-Tujunga area for over 35 years. Have been building custom single family homes since 2003.
 - b. Albert D. lives on the same property proposed for subdivision on McGroarty and thus his family will be impacted the most by the development. Albert stated they have over 50 signatures from nearby neighbors supporting the project.
 - c. The property is +/- 19 acres. Proposing to subdivide the property & build 10 new houses. There are 2 existing houses which would result in a 12-lot subdivision + one open undeveloped lot of 7-9 acres proposed to be dedicated to the SMMC
 - d. Houses will be +/- 2,500 – 3,000 sq ft w/a Mediterranean Architectural design. Albert D. claims improvement of the area will have a domino effect ie will increase the value of the neighborhood, the neighboring homes & neighboring businesses
 - e. This will not be a tract home development – each home will be different from one another and there will be a lot of open space between them. The Project will not block existing views of current neighbors
 - f. It is understood there are concerns about traffic. There is a school currently in operation on the property with a CUP for 29 students – 29 vehicles traveling from various areas to the school at peak hours
 - i. By the time construction begins, the school will be closed down permanently so traffic from 10 new homes should not be an issue
 - g. Will do everything in his power to make the Project as minimally stressful and disturbing to the neighbors as possible.
 - h. Some of the property is steep hillsides, some gentler hillsides
 - i. Of the 90 oaks currently located on the property, 51 (inclusive of 2-3 Sycamores) are proposed to be cut down though one oak recently fell down as a dead tree not designated as diseased by the arborist in his report
 1. 14 of the 51, per the arborist, are in poor health, 7 are dead trees leaving 30 trees remaining as healthy protected trees 15 of which are along McGroarty St which may not be taken down unless public improvements are required
 2. Albert D. is in contact with Public Works to see if, in some way, those trees could be saved by alternative alignment of the street. They are still in negotiation with the City
 3. Q: Oak trees are considered sacred trees to the Native Americans. Of the 14 oak trees classified as “poor trees”, is there some way that they could be saved/spared?
 4. Q: The oak trees provide habitat for 800 species/tree – removing 51 oaks means there are +/- 50,000 organisms that will die. Even

if they are replaced 2:1, it is going to take a while to provide the same ecosystem

5. Q: If you could commit to shifting the location of the houses to accommodate preservation of the trees – that is something the community would feel a lot better about
- i. Albert stated that the Project was approved several years ago with an MND so it is anticipated that this is the level of CEQA that will again be called for this time. Several audience members insisted on an EIR
- j. Following is Q&A. Q = question, A = answer by the developer, C = comment by audience:
 - i. C: No one is opposed to development of the property, that is your right. It is only that we want it done by law following all applicable Ordinances
 - ii. Q: Have you reached out to the City to see what kind of plans they have for improving the roadway based on the size of the development because the City requires 22 ft wide roadways, sewers, drains, etc
 1. A: Yes. They have asked for a 36 ft street plus a 5 ft dedication along McGroarty. We also propose to have a private street to service our the area
 2. Q: Doesn't the fire dept require 2 ways of access to any development which the private street does not have. W/o a 2-way access, it is a danger for the fire dept to get in and residents to get out
 3. A: We discussed this w/the fire dept. They have no problem with going in, turning around and going back out – but they did request a widening of the road to accommodate a turn-around area
 4. A: The last discussion we had w/engineering, they want to have a 4' sidewalk on the easterly side of the private st and a 3' sidewalk on the westerly side of the private street with a 28' roadway
 5. A: We are trying to convince the City that we can save a lot of trees along the private street by not doing any improvements along this portion of the roadway
 - iii. Q: 49 oaks are proposed to be removed along with 2 Sycamores. The City does ask for a 4:1 replacement?
 1. A: Sometimes 2:1, sometimes 3:1, sometimes 4:1
 - iv. C: There is a lot of concern that removed protected trees will be replaced with palm trees which are non-native trees as has been done in the past
 1. A: That is why we are here to reach out to the neighbors – if you want trees to be replaced with oak trees, that is no problem
 2. C: Your property is subject to the SPSP which has an extensive list of unpermitted plants of which palm trees is one
 3. Q: Would you be willing to work with a community group in an effort to save the trees to maintain the look/feel of the property. That would require the services of a landscape architect that has a lot of experience in preserving a natural environment?

- v. Discussed how & who determines the Environmental Assessment leading to the determination of the level of CEQA to be required ie MND vs EIR
- vi. Discussed how mudflows have come down onto McGroarty in the past and concerns that grading and development of the site could trigger a similar unstable cliff in the future
 - 1. A: The City will have some kind of conditions during construction/grading given to us
 - 2. Q; So our future rests with the City?
 - 3. A: It is up to the geology of the site – the hill is bedrock
 - 4. C: That is not bedrock – you can see erosion
- vii. Q: What is the size of the lots?
 - 1. A: There are two zones on the property – RE11 and RE40. RE11 lots are a minimum of 11,000 sq ft, RE40 a minimum of 40,000 sq ft. There will be 2-3 lots zoned RE40 with the rest zoned RE11
 - 2. A: A civil engineer asked why I did not go w/a greater # of homes which would be allowable by-right. I live here – there will be some 50,000 sq ft lots, the school will be a 46,000 sq ft lot by itself.
 - 3. A: I live here, I know the area, we are not that greedy
- viii. Q: What will be happening to the school?
 - 1. A: The school will be closed down & transformed into a SFR. It was a SFR before being converted into a school. It will remain open for +/- 3 yrs. The approval paperwork will take about that much time
 - 2. Q: Will the school be out of commission before the homes are issued CoOs so traffic will not double up? A: Yes
- ix. C: An EIR is definitely a necessity. Whenever there are rains, mud comes down McVine and Woodward
 - 1. A: The City will require debris basins in the canyons
 - 2. C: I am talking about the property now – there is stuff coming down that had been trucked up before – how do we know that material that will be trucked up for this development will not also wash down?
 - 3. Q: You see how the cliff is eroding now?
 - 4. A: Yes
 - 5. Q: Have you considered putting something there now – it is going to be a while before you build this project?
 - 6. A: We cannot touch the hillside w/o permits – once the department says we can put a wall there we will do so
- x. To determine level of improvement that current residents would like to see in terms of street widening due to traffic issues and installation of sidewalks:
 - 1. Those who want the street widened with no sidewalks – many agreed
 - 2. Those who do not want the street widened at all and no sidewalks – many agreed

3. Those who want the street widened and have sidewalks installed – no one
 4. Those that want street lights installed – no one
 5. In the past, the community did fight against improvements for the sake of preserving oak trees & w/the assistance of our then CM the City did not require them. That might be done again if we stand strong & united – no guarantee, but it is possible
- xi. Q: To deal with drainage issues, will you use permeable materials?
 1. A: We plan on using fake grass to deal with water conservation issues C: However, this also adds to climate issues – concrete and plastic fake grass will increase temperatures
 - xii. Q: Are you doing any kind of water-saving measures such as rainwater capture before it hits the sewers?
 1. A: Yes
 - xiii. Q: When you put in the big house that is there now, did you put in a sewer line?
 1. A: Yes
 - xiv. Q: What is the timeline?
 1. A: 6-9 months to Public Hearing. There are still some conditions that need to be worked out with Public Works
 - xv. Q: Would you be agreeable to a field trip with the LUC?
 1. A: Yes
 - xvi. Q: You said you wanted Mediterranean style homes – are you set on that? Would you consider other options – more like the community itself? More cabin-style, craftsman style?
 1. A: Each of the 10 homes will have a different appearance. Everyone has their own signature. We are proud of what we have done in the past
 - xvii. C: The developer has 19 acres – he is willing to donate a portion of it to the SMMC not because he has to – that is unreal. He is building only 10 homes – that is +/- 2.5% of the land – the rest is open land
 1. C (to audience): How do you know that an oak wasn't cut to have your home built, how do you know that your neighbor wasn't complaining when your home was built?
 - xviii. C: You said you were going to donate land to the MRCA – they don't take everything. You don't just give it to them – it doesn't work that way. You need to check whether they have interest in the land
 1. C: You will also have to pay them to maintain it so there are a lot of things to consider when considering a donation
 2. A: With the previous approval a donation was already approved
 3. C: That would be great
 - xix. C: The City will ultimately be the one making the decisions – this is the community's opportunity to weigh in with various concerns and various adjustments that could be made to make this a better project

- xx. C: When you first moved into the neighborhood, you were so proud of the wildlife – that will no longer exist in the future. You may not be aware of this, but because of your SFD development we are paying thousands of \$s to get rid of vermin that have been chased downhill – gophers, rats
- XI. 7179 Foothill – Aurora Banquet Hall (former Flamingo Banquet Hall) – Samuel Zograbian
 - a. It was and will remain a Banquet Hall. Proposing an addition into the parking lot. The LUC had questions regarding safety of cars entering/exiting. I have a solution (see attached) – opening a third gate.
 - i. The Foothill side will be used as an entrance, the exit will be on Greeley. Also the valet station will be moved 10’ to 13’ further into the parking lot to keep the entering queue off Foothill
 - 1. This will also shorten the distance for guests to reach the entrance to the Banquet Hall hallway. The parking lot has 85 parking spaces not anticipated to be full during events
 - b. **MOTION:** by Pati Potter to support the proposed addition/renovation to the Banquet Hall at 7179 Foothill Bl. 2nd by Elektra Kruger with the condition that the valet station be moved 10’ to 13’ further into the parking lot to mitigate traffic issues Vote: Unanimously approved
- XII. Mission College Satellite Campus – Nina Royal
 - a. There will be a grand opening 3/28
 - b. Classes will begin Apr 10
 - c. Check the Web-Site www.lamissioncollege/sunland. Select the classes you wish to register for
- XIII. Public Comment
 - a. Cindy Cleghorn
 - i. Remember to vote tomorrow
- XIV. Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm