



Building A Better Community

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General Meeting Minutes – Approved
Wednesday, January 22, 2014 7:00-9:00 p.m.
American Jewish University 15600 Mulholland Drive Bel Air, CA 90077

Present: 17

Quorum: 12

2013 Stakeholder Groups / Certified Representatives	Present	Not Present
Bel Air Crest Master Homeowner Association		
Irene Sandler		X
Bel Air Ridge HOA		
Andre Stojka	X	
Benedict Canyon Association		
Alan Fine	X	
Don Loze	X	
Nickie Miner	X	
Michael Chasteen		X
Kelly Welland, Delegate, stood in for Michael Chasteen	X	
Casiano Estates Association		
Gary Plotkin	X	
Faith-Based Organizations		
Lonnie Mayfield		X
K-6 Private Schools		
Vicki Kelly		X
K-5 Public Schools – Pending		
7-12 Private Schools		
John Amato	X	
Laurel Canyon Association		
Jamie Hall	X	
Cassandra Barrere	X	
Monica Weil		X
Tony Tucci	X	

2013 Stakeholder Groups / Certified Representatives continued:	Present	Not Present
Members-at-Large		
<i>Larry Leisten</i>	X	
<i>Chuck Maginnis</i>	X	
Residents of Beverly Glen		
<i>Ramin Kolahi</i>	X	
<i>Robert A. Ringler</i>	X	
Roscomare Valley Association		
<i>Robin Greenberg</i>	X	
<i>Michael Kemp</i>	X	
Save Our Strip: Pending		
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy		
<i>Travis Longcore, Ph.D.</i>	X	

City Officials

From DONE:	<i>Amber Meshack</i> , Project Director:	Not Present
	<i>Alisa Smith</i> , Elections Advisor	Not Present
From CD5 Office:	<i>Jeff Ebenstein</i> , Field Deputy:	Not Present
	Noah Muhlstein , Planning Deputy:	Present
	<i>Gurmet Khara</i> , Council Deputy:	Not Present
	<i>Shawn Bayliss</i> , Director PLU:	Not Present
From CD4 Office:	<i>Sharon Shapiro</i> , Deputy:	Not Present

Welcome to the Special Guests and Stakeholders Present:

From the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Improvements Project, Fortuna B. Ippoliti, Manager, Construction Relations
 From Nextdoor, Marquis Olison
 Los Angeles Fire Department Inspector, Gabriel Orona
 Samuel Nava & John Cespedes, Arborists with the International Environmental Corp., the tree contractor hired by the Fire Department.
 Local Stakeholder, Ms. Elena Ong.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- 1. Call to Order** – Council President, Gary Plotkin, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
- 2. Roll Call** was called by Robin Greenberg. At 7:05, there were 13 members present, at 7:10 there were 14 members present, at 7:35 there were 15 members present, at 8:00 there were 16 members present, at 8:17 there were 17 members present. A quorum of 12 met.
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.
- 4. Approval of November 20, 2013 minutes:** Chuck motioned to approve, Robert seconded, and the 11/20/2013 minutes were unanimously approved, without revisions or amendments.

Approval of December 18, 2013 minutes: Robert motioned to approve, Chuck seconded, and the 12/18/2013 were unanimously approved, with no revisions or amendments.

5. **Approval of January 22, 2014 Agenda:** Andre motioned to approve, John Amato seconded, and the agenda was unanimously approved.
6. **Public Comments** – None.
7. **Agendas, previous minutes, brochures, & public service handouts were available.**
8. **President’s Report** – Gary Plotkin

FAST TRACK – WRITTEN REPORTS:

- a. **Public Schools K-5 Representative:** No change in vacancy status.
- b. **Metro Update:** *Irene Sandler* – Irene was absent and no report was given. *Gary Plotkin* noted that the sidewalks are being built @ Skirball Bridge to Mulholland.
- c. **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Report** – *Travis Longcore, Ph.D.*

Guest speaker from the Fire Department, *Inspector, Gabriel Orona*, spoke on the FD’s current canopy tree-trimming project, at the request of Council District 5.

- *Inspector Orona* stated it was the California State law that trees in major thoroughfares are to be clear from the sky to the curb. They aim to cut down and trim up trees to eliminate a few rungs on the fire ladder, to give the FD and homeowners a chance to fight fires, by clearing as much vegetation out of the canopies for escape routes for the FD. He noted that when doing the brush clearing last year in Beverly Glen, Benedict Canyon and Laurel Canyon, they removed 45 tons of vegetation.

- *Travis Longcore* related concern, on behalf of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, that the FD was going to do more cutting than last year, especially of native sycamore and oak trees, which would have dramatic adverse effects on the trees and on the environment, including but not limited to a) increased traffic speeds, greater access and speeds by larger trucks, with greater risk of accidents, noting that roadside vegetation and tree canopy act as a natural traffic calming measure in heavily traveled canyons; b) Increased temperatures along the road would result in drier fuels; c) disruption of native vegetation and cover in documented wildlife crossings across Beverly Glen, where wildlife needs cover to be willing to cross roads, in addition to d) impacts on oak tree health from being trimmed while stressed during a drought.

- *Travis* and other members of the Board including *Cassandra Barrere* and *Robert Ringler* requested that the Fire Department work more closely with the community, as they did last year following the community response to the FD’s approach in Benedict Canyon.

- *Inspector Orona* noted that he didn’t have the authority to make changes to orders and would be removing more tree canopy from Beverly Glen unless orders were changed.

- *Gary Plotkin* asked if the FD could set up a meeting with Board members such as *Travis Longcore* and *Cassandra Barrere*.

- *Inspector Orona* said he would check with supervisor, *Captain Valdez*, and with *Captain Knight*.

- *Gary* noted that this is a very important issue.

- *Chuck Maginnis* additionally asked who to contact regarding a recent incident with a transient and a hibachi. *Inspector Orona* indicated his Department does the inspection, but that different inspectors cover different districts.

d. **E-mail:** *Ramin Kolahi*

Motion: That \$100.00 a year be approved for 2 dedicated email addresses @ \$50.00 each, per year, with Google Apps, one for Land Use and one for the BABCNC office for outgoing Board emails used by Cathy & Gary.

Ramin made the motion, discussion was held, Larry seconded, 13 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions; the motion passed. (*A vote count sheet has been prepared.*)

Other Board Email- and Website-related Issues:

Gary noted:

1) Emergency Preparedness info has been eliminated from the website (*on the upcoming events section*); *Chuck* noted with the website's new look, it's difficult to find EP updates.

Gary will relate these issues to *Aaron*.

2) The BABCNC website's Board group photograph still needs to be updated (*there is a new photo but it does not include the entire group; a new photo is still needed.*)

[Also, the BABCNC link in EmpowermentLA's website, under NC's, still has the old group photo and needs to be updated. In DONE's BABCNC link, the current roster, has not yet been updated despite being sent with the Funding package on 09/01/13 and at least one time thereafter. The BABCNC Board meeting location on their link still says Bellagio, and that needs to be changed. Cathy is following up with these.]

e. **L.A. City Central Collections System:** *Don Loze*

- Council File #: 14-0600 (FY2014-2015 City Budget Proposal) – No report

f. **Planning & Land Use Committee Report:** *Michael Kemp*

Report Only on the following:

1) 10040 Reevesbury Drive, ZA-2013-3981, ZADOne (20' wide roadway)

2) The Committee is currently monitoring/working on 12 pending projects.

3) Determination Letter: 1020 N. Hanover Drive, 90210

4) Grading Plans & Waiver of Tract Map.

5) Pro-Active Projects: Update on "RE-Code LA"

Michael attended the **Zoning Advisory Committee** which met for the first time on January 15th, and he will keep us apprised of that.

On April 2nd, there will be a regional forum of Re-Code LA for West Los Angeles at the United Methodist Church at 10497 Wilshire Boulevard. *Michael* will provide a handout for everyone on that.

Gary noted a letter regarding insulation of an above-ground facility, AT&T mobile, located at 1405 Meadow Drive.

g. **Special Committee for a Red Flag Alert System** – *Gary Plotkin*

- *Gary* discussed need for signage, etc., working with the LAFD & *Paul Koretz's* office.

Motion: *Robert* moved to form an ad-hoc committee for a red flag alert system, *Larry* seconded, *Chuck* called the question, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Motion:** *Chuck* motioned to nominate *Hillary Slevin*, who is the new President of Benedict Canyon Association, to serve as Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee for a Red Flag Alert System, for a one-year term, *Larry* seconded, and *Hillary Slevin* was unanimously approved as Chair of the new committee. [*Larry* noted the procedure is that the President has the power to nominate the Chair of an ad-hoc committee; we don't need a motion.]

h. **DWP Committees** – *Don Loze (Report)*

- *Don* clarified that the NCs have a letter of agreement with DWP, which says we won't be advocates, so to speak, and we will work in cooperation with them. There is a second committee, which is the LADWP Advocates, which is made up of individuals from various NCs, well informed about operations and workings of the DWP. They helped defeat Proposition B before and have helped get the ratepayer in place. It meets on the first Saturday of every month. This month, in their report, they are anticipating rate increases this year. Because of the lack of water, instead of getting 40% we'll have to get about 70% of the water from the Water District. We'll have a rate increase of about 20% on our bills before the actual rate increases are put in place by the DWP and City Council for the water.
- He also discussed the State-mandated activity toward getting things green by 2020, which DWP is impacted by. They are selling the coal operation in Utah, where we currently get about 40% of our power, and that's requiring financing, and other equipment and improvements will require financing. We will likely see 40% increases from DWP over the next couple of years.
- *Don* recommended we all check our bills, as some ratepayers are not receiving bills. He noted that the City gets approximately 200-250 million dollars a year out of an 8% override of DWP's rates that goes to the General Fund; that there is a bit of a conflict there as we all have to conserve water, more than ever, but when we do that there will be less money available for the City to do the things the City would like to do. He recommended that we all do what we can on an individual basis and to be aware of what is coming down the road.
- *Don* further mentioned the recent departure of the General Manager.

i. **Community Outreach Dedication of Bridge** – *Gary Plotkin (Discussion only; no motion.)*

- *Gary* related that the President of Casiano has been working with Councilman's office and Fortuna of Metro to have a community outreach dedication of the now completed bridge. -
- *AJU* has agreed to use its location to host a meeting on a Sunday. There is a perfect view of the bridge from the Activities Building. Councilmen and Metro are on board.
- *Gary* asked if the NC wants to get involved, to invite all the associations who have been impacted by this, as a form of outreach. While the bridge has already been dedicated by council-people and possibly the mayor with a plaque, since the community has suffered a lot in this process, it was *Bill Roen's* thought that this would be a way to bring everybody back together in a positive way.
- *Ramin* responded that this bridge will not do anything for traffic; we have an opportunity to use outreach through all of our associations to put pressure on Metro to make an impact on traffic, which is Transit; that we need real traffic solutions regarding I-405.
- *Gary* will put those interested in touch with *Bill Roen*, and indicated if someone wants to be the point person and have the NC be identified as one of the sponsors, that's great, if not, that's okay too.

9. **Secretary's Report** – *Robin Greenberg* – No report

10. **Treasurer Report** – *Alan Fine*

- *Alan* reported on the monthly expenditure report, stating that the only thing on there is, for the last six months, staffing costs: half to operations and half to outreach. There is \$26,000 left from \$37,000 annual budget.
- He also noted that we're awaiting the new checking system.

- **Motion** to approve the report was made by *Robert Ringler*, seconded by *Cassandra*, and passed unanimously.
- **Motion** was made by *Cassandra*, for *Jamie* to head up a special committee to think about what to do with the surplus before the end of the fiscal year and work with the Treasurer on it, seconded by *Andre*, unanimously passed. The special committee would last one year.

Public Safety/Disaster Preparedness Committee – *Chuck Maginnis & Marquis Olison*

- Senior Lead Officer 8A29 - *Chris Ragsdale*, WLA Community Police Station
- Senior Lead Officer - *Ralph Sanchez*, Hollywood Community Police Station

a) Report on 12/11/13 & 01/15/14 EP Committee Meetings – *Chuck Maginnis*

-*Chuck* reported that there has been good attendance at their EP meetings, which have averaged 12 individuals per meeting, over the last year. “Getting to know your neighbor” was brought forward through *Casiano*.

- *Chuck* reported on the emergency notification system, stating all he has to do is plug in, put in the password, make an announcement and “pull the trigger.”

- He noted that *Captain Cooper* who does CERT training gave a CERT training class.

- *Chuck* explained how the emergency notification system works and reminded everyone that if anybody sees a fire coming, please alert everybody through emails. However, he noted that his program is voice as is the County’s program, and that they are identical programs.

- *Gary* recommended that HOAs that like this concept go on the website.

- *Chuck* related that those with landlines don’t have to sign up, e.g., AT&T and Verizon, which are powered by their respective Central offices and are automatically set up by the larger system.

- Those with cable phone service that goes through a modem (VOIP) and those with cell phones do need to sign up.

- *Gary* noted that the website provides a great variety of other information including if there are pedophiles in the area, contact information for the City, the County, the court system, and many things that may be important to you.

- *Gary* asked HOA reps to let him know how many of brochures they need, and to make sure they get to the people.

- *Cassandra* would like to have 100 copies for LC’s February meeting.

- *Chuck* noted that at the next EP meeting, they’re discussing escape routes, and will have a FD representative and Red Cross person there, as well as a County representative for the AlertLA program.

- For further information see <http://www.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/alertla>

b) Report on Nextdoor "Getting to Know Your Neighbor" – *Marquis Olison*

- *Marquis* is the City Field Manager for Nextdoor.com, described as a free private social network to make neighborhoods safer and bring people together. He stated there has been tremendous growth of this program in HOAs; 500 members, great reviews, with representatives available to provide help on how to use the program.

- To determine the scope of a community boundaries, the founding member draws the map and Nextdoor field organizers come and talk to the neighborhoods and communities. Once someone sets it up, they come in to assist.

- *Robin & Nickie* will work with *Marquis*.

Bylaws, Rules & Elections Committee (Report) – *Larry Leisten*

- *Larry* reported that he spoke with *Alisa Smith*, the Council’s assigned Independent Election Administration. At conclusion of conversation it was agreed that holding an Election/Open

Access Selection Process for our Council in 2014 is not feasible and that future efforts would be targeted for the 2016 election.

- Present understanding is for the largest stakeholder groups having multiple seats on the Council to have at least one of their representatives publicly elected or selected through an open-access process. Specifically, these stakeholder groups are Benedict Canyon, Laurel Canyon, Residents of Beverly Glen and Roscomare Valley.

- *Larry* mentioned that last month he requested each HOA representing a residential Stakeholder Group to provide a written response that describes the methodology by which they select their Council representative, as requested in the right-most column of the table describing Board structure, but that he hasn't received anything yet. He reminded residential representative to provide a response.

- *Larry* advised the Board that BCA wishes to address their concerns with open access representation directly with the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners. Until we get them on board, we won't be able to move forward in finalizing Board structure, which includes describing how representatives are seated.

- *Larry* asked the Stakeholder Groups having multiple seats on the Board, other than BCA to put in writing a proposed methodology of their how they will select the open access seat for their territory.

- *Gary* stated that he and *Larry* met with *Nickie*, *Don* and *Hillary*, and if *Don* and *Nickie* are able to achieve something, that's good; will put this out in 60 days, and that Board restructuring is tabled until then.

- *Ramin* was curious as to why the Board should allow BCA the opportunity to take their issues directly to the Board of Neighborhood Commissioner. He reasoned that because we make our decisions as a NC here, and, as far as DONE or Board of NC is concerned, BCA is under us. He was concerned that it may backfire.

- *Gary* responded that there was a question in the minds of BCA representatives as to whether the City has the power to compel open access representation within their territory. *Larry* added that he agrees with *Gary's* decision to hold off finalizing the bylaws issue for 60 days to give *Don* an opportunity to meet with the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners and plead their case....

11. Neighborhood Commissioners Plan Review (Discussion) *Larry Leisten* - Tabled

12. Outreach Committee Report: (Discussion and possible action) – *Robin Greenberg*

- Form a committee & Set up ideas such as Bench and Bags programs – Tabled

13. West L.A. Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) (Report) -- *Nickie Miner* – Tabled

14. CD 5 Report – Planning Deputy, *Noah Muhlstein* & Council Deputy, *Gurmet Khara*

Noah gave update on two items:

1) 4 Oaks @ 2181 N. Beverly Glen, stating that owner, *John Allen*, kept taxes and business licenses up to date; has liquor license. *Noah* is working on this with *Ramin* and discussed concern about this variance in place, the fact that there has to be a continuous use. There is a question of who has to have a license. *John Allen* is a retailer, does not have to hold the business license for a restaurant; that would be the operator's responsibility. It's not working out and he's in the midst of terminating that lease. There will not be anything there and it will go back to status quo.

- *Ramin* thanked *Noah* for his diligence on 4 Oaks.

- *Robert* noted they're proposing a large fill shoot, per *Chris Ragsdale*.

- Robert asked Noah to thank Gurmet for the new level of safety with the striping done from Sunset to Mulholland; that it's better than the original edge lines; kudos to Gurmet.

2) Curtis School: On December 19th, the first set of entitlements and case number were withdrawn; however, entitlement package won in the interim; #8 was withdrawn from the process. At CPC meeting, the matter couldn't be heard since it was withdrawn. They met again with Planning Dept.; circulating M&D's and are going back to Review Board. Planning Dept. hopes to get back to this in mid-March.

- Gary noted that Curtis is trying to buy the property on the right side of the bridge, with a road.

- Noah noted that Caltrans owns the property. They are proposing 12 parking spots for maintenance, trash, etc., and have to work it out with Caltrans.

- Noah noted concerns about access road, because of animals, and Gary noted traffic concerns.

15. CD 4 Report – Field Deputy & Deputy of Housing & Transportation, *Sharon Shapiro* – None

16. Traffic Committee Report & Police Advisory Board Report – *Robert A. Ringle*

Next LAPD West Bureau Traffic Committee: Wednesday March 12, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. at the West Los Angeles Community Police Station, 1663 Butler Avenue.

17. Ad-hoc “I-405 Sepulveda Widening Improvement Project” - *Irene Sandler* – Tabled

18. Private and Public Schools News - No report.

19. New Business / General Announcements:

(a) The Los Angeles 2020 Report - *Andre Stojka* (**Discussion & Formation of Standing Committee to Study Report & Advise NC of its Contents.**)

Andre spoke on the “2020 Report” stating that the Commission will be issuing solutions for problems outlined in the report. He advised forming an Advisory Committee with no independent power by itself, to simply be a reporter to the entire Board.

Motion: *Larry* motioned that an Ad-Hoc Committee be formed as described above; *Cassandra* seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Motion: *Gary* nominated the Chair and Vice Chair, *Andre Stojka* and *Tony Tucci*, respectively; *Ramin* seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

(b) Prior Transit Motion & CIS: (Update and Discussion). – *Ramin Kolahi*

Ramin spoke and mentioned the proposed possible half-cent levy or extension of Measure R, next year or in 2016, which may help the Sepulveda Pass Corridor project.

Motion: to create an Ad-Hoc Committee moved by *Cassandra*; seconded by *Andre*; and was unanimously approved.

Motion: *Gary* appointed *Ramin* to Chair, *Chuck* seconded, and was unanimously approved.

(c) Mansionization: (Discussion) – *Tony Tucci*

Tony Tucci spoke on the issue of amending the “Baseline Mansionization Ordinance” (BMO) to reduce the base ratio, home size; to reduce the green bonus, and to eliminate exemptions for attached garage; forwarding an amendment across the board for the BMO, taking a base ratio for R1 homes, and reducing it, and eliminating a lot of exemptions and bonuses. He proposed taking this to PLU.

- *Gary* referred this to *Michael's* meeting.

- *Tony* further stated the BMO is now set up for the flats and he is looking to apply some of these ideas to the hillside communities.
- *Ramin* is supportive of the BMO but feels this is not taking the effort of an overlay and taking it City wide, and thinks it does not make sense. He thinks this is anti-development.
- *Don* discussed amendments to the Mansionization Ordinance for the flats and the hills; that many compromises were made. He stated that individual neighborhoods are considering having overlays in their community plans. This overlay issue relates to issue of ridgelines, and all of these relate to the ability of the Planning Department to address those things, which involves the budget of Mr. LoGrande. He states that we have to understand what we want to have in our area, and there will be some pushing and pulling against each other. Need to see what is working and not working.
- *Chuck* added that the ordinances are not curbing McMansionization.
- *Tony* can work with *Paul Koretz's* leadership since he is already hearing this.
- *Gary* would like everyone to be invited to *Michael's* meeting.

(d) **Jamzilla Fortuna Ippoliti**, Construction Relations Mgr. of I-405 project – added to agenda. *Fortuna* spoke about the upcoming planned 80-hour closure of the Interstate 405 on President's day weekend, February 14th through 18th. She noted that though Sepulveda will be open at full capacity it cannot take on the overflow, and detailed the lanes closures. She recommended telling all the HOA members to “stay off and stay local.” They will be excavating and paving. *Gary* asked for a pdf, to send to all our board members. She said that Metro is having their quarterly meeting tomorrow at the Skirball; she will stress keeping off the freeway that weekend. *Gary* will make sure we get this out to our constituents.

Various events going on in the City and surrounding areas were mentioned, including the largest concrete pour west of Mississippi on Figueroa and 7th of a new hotel complex, Korean airlines, a PGA tour, among others.

20. **Adjournment** of the meeting was motioned by Larry, seconded by Chuck and approved.

NEXT BABCNC MEETING: February 26, 2014 @ AJU