

**Westdale Homeowners Association
General Meeting
Mar Vista Park
Tuesday, January 26, 2010**

The meeting was called to order by the President, Jerry Hornof, in the Auditorium of the Mar Vista Park at 7:10 p.m. There was a full house and there were refreshments for all to enjoy.

Jerry Hornof – Opening Remarks

Jerry introduced himself and welcomed all in attendance. He thanked all the members of the Board of Directors and asked them to stand and be acknowledged. He mentioned the very successful block party on Colby Avenue and thanked all the Colby Avenue residents for their cooperation. There were about 300 to 400 neighbors in attendance at the block party throughout the afternoon. Jerry invited all to join us for our next block party in October of 2010.

Barrington Project Development

The Barrington Project Development has been in the news a lot over the last year. The developer was requesting a permit to build a 92 unit condominium development on the east side of Barrington Avenue, just south of Whole Foods, on the site of the present four buildings containing 48 rental units. The proposed building would be 50 feet high and go right to the street. Our board members worked with the office of Councilman Bill Rosendahl, the Mar Vista Community Council (MVCC), and the developer to get it scaled back to 48 units. We had to make a concession regarding the parking—the city wanted more than one parking spot per unit. This was a huge victory for our neighborhood. We will still have to keep tabs on the project as it develops regarding the additional parking spots. We are also counting on Councilman Rosendahl's office to help us get the zoning for that area changed to R3XL, which would mean a 30 foot height restriction.

Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance (ADU)

ADU refers to additional units build on a residential lot with one home on it—what we used to call, “Granny Units.” Sharon Cummings is on the MVCC Planning Committee and is working on the ADU ordinance. She passed around a spreadsheet which compares the restrictions of Los Angeles City with that of several neighboring cities, i.e. Pasadena, Burbank, Santa Monica, and Culver City. The present Los Angeles City Ordinance is much less restrictive than any of the others in a number of areas. On the other side of the spreadsheet was a sample ordinance which could be used as a guideline for a future review of the ordinance. The City Planning Commission was moving forward to pass an updated ordinance, but they have withdrawn their proposal, so there is nothing to do at this time.

RV Parking In Our Area

There are currently problems in a number of spots in our area: Ralphs parking lot, behind McDonalds and in the park. Bill Rosendahl wants to designate specific areas within his district as acceptable overnight parking areas for RVs, but no one wants them in their area.

Other Issues

Jerry called up Tom Gilder and Steve Kerman of the Windward School to acknowledge the contribution of the school towards our park and neighborhood. He presented a plaque to thank them for their support and commitment.

Marcia Winograd got up to speak about the jet traffic at the Santa Monica Airport. She has been writing letters to some high profile people, including Steven Spielberg, Governor Schwarzenegger, Tom Cruise, John Travolta and Julia Roberts, asking them to stop using the jets at that airport. Her efforts were written up by the Venice Argonaut and she has been getting even more publicity. She is asking everyone to speak up and circulate the flyer. Jet planes have been using the airport for only the last ten years and they cause noise, dirt, and air pollution when they take off and land. There was a comment from the audience to include Warren Buffet as one of the “high profile” people using the jets at the airport. He has a company called Net Jets which flies in and out of that facility.

On April 25th there will be a Mar Vista Green Garden Day Tour in our area sponsored by the MVCC. Please ask your neighbors to volunteer their gardens to be on the tour. They are looking for gardens that highlight water conservation.

Ethel Oderberg - OWLS

The OWLS program is now called “The Mar Vista Village Group.” The mission is to provide services and assistance for older residents (over 50) in our neighborhood to enable them to stay comfortably in their homes. The group will provide information, referrals and assistance in living services. They want to include “community building” and plan to use the park for classes and workshops. It will also be an opportunity for individuals to volunteer and become involved in the neighborhood and the program will be self supporting through fees and donations. At the present time, they are planning to join the “Wise and Healthy Aging” group in Santa Monica for financial assistance. There will be an open house this Sunday at 2 p.m. at the Windward School.

Debbie Kaplan – Treasurer

Debbie has been our treasurer for 15 years and has finally found a replacement. He is Bob Reville who lives on Clover Avenue. Bob Reville was unanimously approved as the new Treasurer. This is to be effective immediately. We still have a lot of money in our treasury so there is no problem there; we are very solvent. However, we have less than we have had in previous years. So if you have not paid your dues, please do so—they are only \$15.00 per year per household.

Debbie Kaplan – Real Estate

The good news is that homes are still selling. Fifteen homes sold in our neighborhood last year (2009) the same number as sold in the previous year (2008) and the prices were 3% higher. The average price of those fifteen homes was \$1,072,000. The average price of the homes sold the previous year was \$1,038,000. The federal program for home buyers (\$8,000 credit for first time buyers and \$6,500 for current owners) will continue for homes in escrow by April 30th. The present mortgage rates are about 5%, but it is very difficult to get a mortgage—the banks are just not lending. Many buyers are coming in with 50%, 75% and even 80% cash down.

Jerry Hornof – CERT Update

Carl Ginsberg is home ill with the flu so Jerry will be giving his report. We are all newly aware of the dangers of an earthquake due to the recent events in Northern California and Haiti. Check on your emergency supply materials to make sure you are prepared for an earthquake.

One year ago the board approved funds for the installation of an antenna on the roof of the Westchester Fire Department Station. This would be used in the case of emergencies for official communication and for the use of ham radio operators. Weather permitting, the installation should be completed on Friday.

Leah Oye – Crime and Safety

They are trying to start a neighborhood watch program. Our neighborhood has been relatively quiet lately, but there have been some home burglaries and attempted burglaries—many during daylight hours. The best thing you can do is to get to know your neighbors and call the LAPD if anything looks suspicious, and if there is an incident, file a report. If there are no reports filed, the police will think that we do not need any police coverage. You can contact them at LAPDOnLine.org or check on local police issues at www.pacificbeat.org Leah mentioned that currently there seem to be more incidents on Friday afternoons, between 12 and 2 p.m. There was a comment by Roz Bessen, who worked as our Police liaison for twenty-five years, that there is often a pattern to burglaries.

There will be a meeting for Block Captains on Wednesday evening, February 24th, at 7 p.m. at Whole Foods Market. So far we only have 12 signed up. We need more volunteers. We have received a grant to create informational binders for each Block Captain.

Office Thomas Wicks is our Senior Lead Officer, but he just had knee surgery and will be out until February. The Captain is John Stevens

Bill Rosendahl – 11th district Councilmember

Bill Rosendahl met with the developer of the Barrington Project Development and made some compromises with the parking issue in order to keep the development within the character and scale of our community.

The Scattergood project: more electric power is needed on the Westside—you may have noticed some recent rolling blackouts. The DWP wants to run a new power line down Inglewood Boulevard, but residents are concerned about health issues. There were a series of community meetings with David Freedman of the DWP and an expert on EMF from UCLA came to talk about the health problems. The DWP has agreed to do a full Environment Impact Report so the issue has been “pushed off the clock.” The whole thing is on hold for 6 to 18 months.

The biggest issue of the Council at the moment is the budget. The budget crisis is bigger this year than it was last year. The council needs to present a balanced budget by June. To that end, they will be devoting their Tuesday and Wednesday meetings wholly to the budget. You can watch the proceedings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10 a.m. on Cable Channel 35. The airings are repeated in the evenings. Friday meetings will be used for all other city business, including the budget.

Bill is now the chair of the transportation committee. He told them that he would agree to this position only when the voters passed Measure R which imposes a ½ % sales tax increase for transportation. This measure should bring in about 30 – 40 billion dollars over the next thirty years. He wants to work to get the public transportation infrastructure built and would like to get an advance on this anticipated income from the federal government to expand the Metro lines and pay it back as the tax becomes collectible. His main goal is to get all the various lines connected and bring the Green Line all the way to the airport. Mayor Antonio Villarigosa's first priority is to get the "subway to the sea." They have already "cut the ribbon" at the UCLA station which is not scheduled to be completed until 2027. They anticipate that the line should arrive in Santa Monica about 2036.

Bill has also been involved in "Access L.A." which is a group of business types. Their goal is to create jobs and infrastructure for the city.

The Medical Marijuana issue is done. Bill worked to get the businesses licensed and impose taxes, but the final vote is in and it is not to be.

Questions from the audience:

- 1) About the water filtration that is being built in our park at the site of the tennis courts. It is not yet on-line.
- 2) Playa Vista Phase II. For the next phase, Bill's office is trying to get the developer to include more community benefits, such as more senior and low income units, and to deal with the issue of increased traffic. The developers will be putting five million dollars into a fund for neighborhood parks.
- 3) Playa Vista vacancy rate? Seven thousand people live there now. It is almost to full capacity. Bill is very impressed with what has been done and how it is developing into a real community. It is a vibrant community with all the amenities of a real neighborhood. Phase II will add another 2,600 housing units.
- 4) The budget crisis may require additional layoff of many city workers. Bill sits on the Stimulus Oversight Committee
- 5) Fire Station #62. That is a work in progress. Bill wanted to get senior housing units and a community center built, but that is not to be. Steven ??? and Sharon Cummings are working on this issue. They have more information.

Additional items

Bill had a plaque prepared to give to Debbie Kaplan for her years of service to our community as treasurer of the organization and in the area of real estate. It was a very nice gesture, but it stated that she had served for 12 years, and in truth, she has done so for 15 years. Jeffy Hornof took responsibility for the error. I hope they get it changed.

Bundy Village is in the planning stage on Bundy Avenue, just north of Olympic Boulevard on twelve acres of land. The plan is to build assisted support housing for seniors, which includes housing and medical services. The builder is Michael Lombardi.

There is a new Cloverfield project planned for the Santa Monica Airport consisting of one million square feet of office space. The good news is that the area will have its own Metro Line stop.

There is a continuing problem with jets landing and taking off from the Santa Monica airport and idling on the tarmac. There are about 16 to 20 thousand jet take offs and landings (per year???). They take off over Venice and land over Mar Vista but Santa Monica gets all the revenue. It's time we start talking to the city of Santa Monica over this issue.

Kate Anderson - Zone 3 Representative of the Mar Vista Community Council

Regarding the Scattergood Project, the DWP needs to run another power line south through the Mar Vista neighborhood. Their present plan is to run it down Inglewood Boulevard. Power lines have a negative impact on our health. We are trying to get them to take another look at their options, but we have to accept the fact that it will eventually need to be built.

The MVCC has Community Improvement Grants available for funds for any project that is for community improvement. Contact Kate if you need assistance with filling out the forms.

Albert Olsen - President of the Mar Vista Community Council

There will be a Sustainable Works Green Living Workshop beginning this Thursday night for six weeks made possible by a grant from the MVCC. They will be meeting at St. John's Presbyterian Church on National Boulevard at 7 p.m.

In April the MVCC will be holding its bi-annual elections. Up for election will be six zone directors, six at large directors and one community director. They are looking for candidates.

On April 25th there will be a Green Garden Showcase Tour. We would like for you to attend the tour of gardens in the area and offer your garden.

The Department of Recreation and Parks no longer has the money to sponsor the Mar Vista Park Fall Festival. We are soliciting volunteers and donations so that we can put it on as a community.

Tom Ponton – Mar Vista Park Advisory Board Chair

The Park Advisory Board meets here at the park on the third Tuesday of the month. We welcome your participation.

Chuck Ray – DWP High Voltage Project

Chuck spoke about what meetings have been conducted with various groups and the DWP in order to get them to make sure that they are following the correct procedures for conducting the Environment Impact Report. The options for the high voltage power line to go south through our area are: Inglewood Boulevard, Barrington/McLaughlin, Sawtelle Boulevard, Sepulveda Boulevard, and Centinella. The power dissipates with distance so it is imperative that it be at least 30 to 40 feet away from any dwellings or businesses. We are trying to keep the community involved.

Questions from the audience:

- 1) What is the story about the new power station on National Boulevard?
It is now operational. We are now getting all of our power from that station.
- 2) Can we see the proposed routes of the power line on the Internet? Not yet.
- 3) Why do we need to worry about a power line going through our neighborhood?
Possible childhood leukemia. In Belgium and Italy they shield the wires at a cost of a million dollars per mile.

Laura Island – Director of the Mar Vista Recreation Center

Jerry gave Laura a very impressive introduction, saying that she has done WONDERFUL things for our park and we can not lose her. Laura was visibly touched. She told us that the Park Advisory Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month and all are invited. The big question is the budget—no one know what is in the works. She has heard that they are losing 300 employees and there is a hiring freeze. There have already been changes made in the hours of operation at our park—we close at 3 p.m. on Sundays and closed on all holidays. There are financial cutbacks to all special events. You can go to the on-line survey at the MVCC website and express your opinion.

There will be an Open House at the end of February.
In March there will be a Teen Dance.
She wants to continue all classes and sports activities.

Questions from the audience:

- 1) What is the story with the soccer field fence? It was supposed to have been erected about three weeks ago, but Laura felt that it needed a meeting of the neighbors to let them know what was going on. What with the weather, and other things, the meeting has not happened. It should be up within a week or two.
- 2) Jerry spoke as a member of the Park Advisory Board. Bill Rosendahl has been active in the creation of skateboard parks on Venice Beach and in Stoner Park. He wants to create a skateboard “spot” in our park, in the area by the north parking lot, between the swimming pool and the hockey rink.
- 3) Some one needs to supervise the kids and see that they are wearing their protective gear. Jerry replied that it is hard to police, and, as it turns out, if someone gets injured while the area is being policed, the organization has liability, whereas, if someone gets injured when there is no policing in place, no one can be sued.

Jerry Hornof – Adjournment

Thank you to everyone who came. Please remain active and involved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Algaze
Secretary