

Hillside Federation
Newsletter
September, 2010



THE 405 WIDENING PROJECT

by Mark Stratton

Metro's I-405 Widening Project raises many issues relevant to Hillside Federation members, including official and unofficial detour routes through the hillside communities (Roscomare, Beverly Glen, Benedict Canyon, Calneva, etc.). However, the bigger issues, which will be with the hillside communities and the entire city long after construction is over, involve the reconfiguring of Sepulveda Boulevard. One of the most biggest impacts of the new design is the moving of the southbound 405-Mulholland/Skirball onramp and offramp a quarter mile down the freeway, so that southbound freeway ingress and egress will now be via Sepulveda. LADOT originally proposed a simultaneous project, the Sepulveda Tunnel Reversible Lane, which included, among other things, a dedicated right turn lane that would feed cars exiting from the freeway back up to the Skirball Bridge and from there to Mulholland. (Freeways fall under the jurisdiction of Metro, while surface streets, like Sepulveda, fall under the jurisdiction of LADOT.) But due to the current budgetary crisis in the city, LADOT projects have been put on hold. Consequently, the dedicated right turn lane that was to connect the offramp to the Skirball Bridge is not happening, and people exiting the 405 who need to get back to Mulholland will instead be dumped into Sepulveda through-traffic, which seems likely to cause back-up on the 405 and interrupt the flow on Sepulveda. Add to this the configuration of the turn pocket (or lack thereof) and the coordination of the traffic lights, and a troubling picture begins to emerge. Currently, concerned citizens are attacking the problem on two fronts: attempting to convince Metro to 1) leave the on and off ramps where they are and 2) find a way to incorporate the Sepulveda concerns into their budget and their project.

Agenda
September 1, 2010
7:00 pm

- I. Introductions
 - California State Parks Initiative -
Don Robinson
- II. Approval of July 7 minutes
- III. President's Report
 - A. President's comments
 - B. Confirmation of Shirley Cohen as
Chair Emeritus
- C. Approval of ad hoc Bylaws Committee
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Van de Kamps Bakery - Dan Wright
& Laura Gutierrez
- V. New Business
 - A. Widening on 405 impact on traffic -
Mark Stratton
 - B. Bel Air Presbyterian Preschool
School - Mark Stratton
- VI. Adjournment

Next meeting - Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2010

Universal City Nissan
3550 Cahuenga Blvd. West
between Lankershim and Universal Dr. bridge
off ramps. Park in the underground garage or on
the street; take elevator to 2nd floor conference
room

**The Bel Air Presbyterian
“Preschool” Project**
by Mark Stratton

Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners Association (BASPOA) has been in negotiations for some months now with the Bel Air Presbyterian Church (BAPC) about their proposed preschool at 16190 Mulholland. These negotiations broke down when it became clear to BASPOA that the preschool was actually going to be a multi-use facility with night-time and weekend uses, which would greatly impact our community and the Mulholland Scenic Corridor. Saturation level has already been reached on the corridor, with huge traffic, parking and other impacts, and yet this project is being rushed through the city processes without adequate environmental review. Furthermore, BAPC already has a history of violation and enforcement issues, including their preschool currently operating without a Conditional Use Permit or Certificate of Occupancy on property that is supposed to be open space (part of a trade-off with Stephen S. Wise Temple for increased enrollment for the Temple’s middle school).

The Hillside Federation has supported our community for many years in calling for a master plan for the Mulholland Institutional Corridor, but the city has failed in its promises on this matter. We ask that the Hillside Federation now support BASPOA, the closest residential neighbors to the project, and the Brentwood Residents Coalition, in appealing to the city to comply with CEQA and require a full EIR (Environmental Impact Report).

California State Parks Initiative

California’s 278 state parks, beaches and historic parks, are priceless public assets and a vital legacy for our children and future generations. However, budget cuts have starved state parks, causing them to accumulate a backlog of more than \$1 billion in needed maintenance and repairs. On Nov. 2, California voters will have the opportunity to approve Prop. 21, which will provide California vehicles free, year-round day-use access to all of California’s state parks in exchange for a new \$18 annual surcharge. Funds from the surcharge will be deposited in a trust fund, which will be specifically dedicated to state parks and wildlife conservation. Prop. 21 is the only solution that will provide the stable and adequate funding needed to protect the legacy of state parks for future generations.

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Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations
July 7, 2010
Draft Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by President, Marian Dodge.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Marian thanked Cassandra for doing double duty last month and taking the minutes in June.

Marian announced the nomination of Donna Messinger for Recording Secretary. Her nomination was approved unanimously.

Past Executive Secretary Liz Tigar sends a warm hello and her best wishes.

Marian asked the Board about the start time for meetings. Is 7 pm too difficult for people with long drives? Would it be better if we started at 7:30? Past President Shirley Cohen suggested that from her experience if you move the start to 7:30, then the meeting won't actually start until 8:00. Marian asked if anyone is aware of a free venue for us where they have the space to accommodate all members and visitors for the meeting in addition to parking. The Board will consider the change if it helps.

Each Board Member was asked to fill in their organization's area on a map so we can keep it in mind for potential new venue for the monthly meetings.

In order to keep the meetings flowing Marian proposed a time limit of 3 minutes for speakers who are not on agenda since there are many who need to discuss their individual organization's concerns. After the presenta-

tion each person will have opportunity of 2 minutes to discuss the topic. After each person who wishes to speak has done so, those who have additional comments will have another two minutes. It was agreed by consensus to try the plan.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Federal environmental officials will have a 'listening session' tomorrow (July 8) at Occidental College, 3-7pm.

Wendy Sue Rosen described The California State Parks ballot initiative which would provide funding for state parks whose funding has been reduced due to the financial crisis. They are proposing an \$18 fee for non-commercial vehicles with an estimated potential of over \$500 million to be raised. She's asking organizations to get involved and will invite a guest speaker to talk about this at our September 1st meeting. Marian will forward their newsletter to directors.

We don't meet in August, but in September we will meet on September 1st.

Matt Epstein has been named to serve on City Planning Commission.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Upper Stone Canyon Reservoir - Shirley Cohen

(Shirley is a past president of the federation, including the 25th anniversary of Hillside at Al Bodini's house, a gala event which included the Mayor at the time.)

Upper Stone Canyon is a man-made reservoir, and falls under the federal requirement that all reservoirs need to be covered. The issue is how to cover it. She distributed a hand out of

potential solutions for covering: a buried concrete cover, an aluminum cover, or a floating cover. Local residents want to preserve the scenic view with its native habitat and vegetation. The preferred solution is the buried cover which is more expensive. It would be covered with soil and native plants preserving the natural environment of the area. A discussion followed regarding the safety of earth dams, the impact of construction on the wildlife, security.

Wendy Sue Rosen moved that the federation support the buried concrete cover because it would retain the natural environment of the area, it is the safest alternative, and it would allow for limited public access. The motion passed.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the May 5 and June 2 meetings were approved as written.

NEW BUSINESS:

B. Van de Kamps Bakery - Laura Gutierrez and Miki Jackson, Van de Kamps Coalition

Van de Kamps Bakery, modeled after Dutch architecture, was built in the 1930s. After the bakery closed, the building was preserved and was supposed to become a satellite campus of Los Angeles City College. In 1999 the VdK Coalition went out to communities for support, including the Hillside Federation. Proposition A and AA bond measures funded the construction of the campus. They devised an 80/20 plan where fee classes would support the college credit classes so that the campus would not be dependent on state funding. Then in April, 2009, citing lack of funding to run the campus, LACC handed the property over to the Los Angeles Community College District to become commercial rental

property. School bond money (\$7.1 million) was being spent illegally for tenant improvements. The Van de Kamps Coalition has hired an attorney to pursue the CEQA violations for changing the use of the site. More information is available at: www.vandekamps.org.

Wendy Sue Rosen made a motion to: Continue gathering information with supportive documents and revisit it at our next meeting with attorney Dan Wright. The motion passed.

C. Amend bylaws to allow voting by e-mail; quorum

Our organization needs to have some manner to respond promptly if there's something urgent that needs addressing between monthly Board meetings. Additionally there is the problem of being unable to act because of a lack of a quorum. According to federation bylaws, a quorum is 1/3 of 32 members.

Wendy Sue Rosen: Other professional boards she sits on have allowed for voting by e-mail in unique cases such as between board meetings if necessary.

Joan Luchs: There was a discussion before meeting about amending bylaws. The July 7 agenda specifically says amend bylaws. Joan cited the definition of the term 'previous notice' in Robert's Rules: please refer to p.118-119 of *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, 1990 – 9th Edition (Scott, Foresman)

Shirley Cohen: I don't think you should decrease the number of quorum.

Madeleine O'Donnell: Suggested a phone tree to get people to go to City Hall when necessary.

Philip Feldman: Noted the lack of enthusiasm of people not showing up. Instead of e-mail he suggested a list serve... not that expensive but lasts about a year. He did not think there were many emergencies.

Marian Dodge: Clarified that the Exec Committee needs an alternative solution in the event that there is something urgent to be taken care of before the next monthly meeting.

Marian read Nicky Miner's comments that she received by e-mail: To lower an organization's standards for a quorum is the beginning of that organization's downfall. 33% is already lowered.

E-mail voting can be abused; you can't tell if people are actually voting or someone else in their place.

Michael Chasteen: Agreed, e-mails can be abused.

Mark Stratton noted the importance of the Lopez Canyon presentation last month, but because we didn't have a quorum no position could be taken.

Wendy Sue Rosen: Every board has an emergency procedures. She belongs to a number of professional organizations which have such an alternative in place for rare urgencies. She recommends a straw vote.

Joan Luchs: Reread Roberts Rules aloud. She objection to Michael Meyers leaving early because Marian told him there would be no vote taken on the issue tonight.

Marian Dodge: Thanked members for all their comments. The point of this discussion is to create conversation and share ideas to see where we all stand in the thought process here.

Phillip Feldman: Moved that the President appoints a committee to discuss the two distinct issues: 1. Low attendance at a monthly Board meeting so an is alternative needed to make a motion. 2. Emergency votes/matters that need to be answered in between monthly scheduled board meetings. Niles Chapman made a friendly amendment that votes be-

tween meetings be only in case of urgency. The motion passed 13 - 0.

D. EIR for AEG's NFL Stadium

AEG is seeking an CEQA exemption for their proposed new NFL stadium in downtown Los Angeles. This would set a terrible precedent for other large projects. The Planning and Conservation League in Sacramento is making a list of groups who oppose the exemption.

Wendy Sue: There is a move to completely gut CEQA, and we have had numerous emergency e-mails. We need to get public input; that's the only way to get them help. She proposed a general policy statement so that the federation will not have to take a position on each specific case that arises.

Wendy Sue Rosen: I move that we adopt a policy to oppose the weakening of CEQA. The motion passed 11 - 3. Marian will add the federation's name to the list of organizations who oppose the exemption.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Baseline Hillside Ordinance

Wendy Sue Rosen: Limits on grading have been removed from the proposed ordinance. Councilmember Paul Koretz' office is working with Wendy Sue and Mark Stratton to see if we can get unified modifications to present to PLUM. Wendy Sue will send a memo and will invite a guest speaker to the September meeting to discuss this further.

B. Lopez Canyon Update - Marlene Rader
The Lopez Canyon Alliance has retained an attorney and will file a lawsuit appealing the decision to allow a truck driving school to be built on the Open Space landfill. Dan Wright was great but they have had to go to another attorney who is part of a charitable organiza-

tion and she has negotiated a flat rate to work with them. The next step is holding fundraisers and bake sales etc. to help fund the next step of the lawsuit.

Also, Lopez Canyon was grateful for the support of the Hillside Federation. Kagel Canyon took a vote and will officially rejoin the Hillside Federation to respectfully support us in return. They will have payment in for the next Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Donna Messinger, Recording Secretary

Members Present:

Bel Air Skycrest POA	Mark Stratton
	Lois Becker
Benedict Canyon Assn.	Michael Chasteen
Cahuenga Pass Neigh.	Joan Luchs
Hollywood Heights Assn.	Donna Messinger
Hollywoodland HOA	Jeanne Clark
Los Feliz Improvement Assn.	Marian Dodge
Nichols Canyon	Madeline O'Donnell
No. Beverly/Franklin Canyon	Robert Levy
Outpost Estates	Michael Meyer
Residents of Beverly Glen	Dan Palmer
	Tensie Palmer
Roscomare Valley Assn.	Shirley Cohen
	Phyllis Gottlieb
Sherman Oaks HOA	Dr. Niles Chapman
Studio City Residents Assn.	Philip Feldman
Upper Mandeville Canyon	Wendy Sue Rosen

Guests:

Van de Kamps Coalition	Laura Gutierrez, Miki Jackson
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.	Marlene Rader
No. Beverly/Franklin Canyon	Connie Levy