

**Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
Design Advisory Committee (DAC)
Minutes of Monday, June 5, 2006
North Valley City Hall, 7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga, CA**

1. Call to Order by Victor Castro, DAC Chairman: 7:17 p.m.

Roll Call of DAC members: Mark Seigel, Lloyd Hitt, Penny Blackwell, Deborah Ray, Cindy Cleghorn, Debby Beck, Charles Montgomery, Vic Agakhanian and Victor Castro with Pat Kramer, Apple One, taking minutes.

Introduction of DAC Committee & Visitors: approx 35 stakeholders with several attending due to receipt of the blue postcard that came in the mail. DAC expanded outreach in the area along Tujunga Canyon Blvd.

2. City Planning Update – Anita Cerna, Katherine Peterson, & Dick Platkin. Dick explained that the FBCSP training requested (Agenda Item 7.b.) will consist of an overview of three important documents: training for the plan, itself; using the design guidelines and standards manual; and processing the caseload – how the process of evaluations and referrals to DAC works. He is proposing a Saturday morning training in three sessions.

Questions to City Planning from the DAC Committee:

Does Department of Building and Safety (DBS) know these documents exist? Dick said that they are aware of the procedures but DBS doesn't address design. Applications come to Planning for final clearance and a field inspection is made.

Penny Blackwell asked when the City's zoning was last updated and whether it will be addressed and updated. Dick said that while the basic zoning was prepared in 1947, it has been modified by amendments and ordinances so there is only a minimal resemblance to the original plan. Dick explained the designations with zoning and how it works with the General Plan.

Deborah Ray asked if there is a discrepancy between the Plan's designation and the zoning? Dick told her that the community gets to provide input at public hearings. The Planning Department is going to review and possibly update 35 different plans for the City. The first eight are part of Round One but Sunland-Tujunga is not part of that round. Victor Castro asked what it takes to get the Planning Department to include this area in Round 2.

3. CD 2: Dale Thrush, Councilmember Wendy Greuel Planning Deputy.

6.e. 9166 Tujunga Canyon Blvd. (Oakview Convalescent) update: Dale talked about a zone change proposal on Tujunga Canyon Blvd. at the convalescent home for up to 25 condominium units similar to those nearby the site. The applicants have made their presentation with the Council Office and have met with the project's neighbors. Since the developer agreed to all requests for cosmetic modifications, Councilmember Greuel presented the request to the Planning Department and it was approved. It will next come before the L.A. City Council for a public hearing.

6.f. Home Depot has taken two separate tacts with their project at the former K Mart:

1. They proposed building a brand, new building on the K Mart site and tearing down the old building. This request was met with unanimous hostility from the community and the Council Office.
2. They proposed remodeling the existing K Mart building and requested necessary City permits. This Tenant Improvement Plan was submitted several months ago and is still awaiting a determination. A meeting has been scheduled for the Planning Department and No 2 Home Depot Campaign. After that meeting, a larger public meeting will be scheduled to review the options.

3. Joy Fellowship Church was the subject of a public hearing 45 days ago. Dale, Victor, and Cindy Cleghorn asked them to come before DAC with more information.
4. A homeowner has lobbied for a hardship exemption for a remodel project.
5. The developer of a lot at 10525 Las Lunitas wants to divide the lot and build two homes on it. Dale said he did not think it was appropriate and the Council office would be opposing it.
6. (Item 8.d.) City Council File #06-1087: An apartment/condo streamlining proposal was submitted by Councilmember Greuel, which would eliminate a legal loophole used by developers when applying for City building permits from the Department of Building and Safety. Dale said that normally, when they receive an application for an apartment building permit, it is allowed to move forward. However, some developers apply for this permit, knowing that is not what they are building. He said this saves them six to eight months of time in the process. The Councilmember's proposal would allow for a streamlining of processing, but take the loophole out.
7. Shadow Hills Rezoning: Dale said the zoning is barely adequate in Shadow Hills for meeting code requirements for horses. On June 13th, at 7 p.m. Councilmember Wendy Greuel will conduct a meeting for Shadow Hills residents on the Shadow Hills General Plan amendment. Dale explained the General Plan for the City's districts and how zoning amendments work.

Questions from the DAC/Stakeholders:

- Deborah Ray asked about developers coming in and abusing the community with subdivisions and rezoning requests, saying that zoning changes are being done to appease developers. Dale replied by saying the City can't do "spot zoning." He said the City Attorney has advised them that once a developer has started developing a property, it's difficult to stop.
- Elaine Brown asked about the Ellis Act evictions taking place with regard to tenant's rights. Dale said that the City has lost in excess of 10,000 rent control units in the last five years but they have to work within the legal structure. He said they couldn't impose a moratorium on the demolition of rental units.
- He also addressed a stakeholder's question about traffic delays on Lowell and the proposal of developing the Tujunga Hills Golf Course.
- Nina Royal asked why the City has moved forward on this (?) when the DAC has objected to it. Dale told her that the DAC is just an advisory body and that the City Council is the only body that can make that decision.
- Victor reviewed for stakeholders the various development projects proposed along Tujunga Canyon Blvd. going toward the freeway and asked the public to visualize what it would be like if all these projects were approved.
- A stakeholder asked about whether a traffic study has been ordered and whether they are considering making Tujunga Canyon a four – lane street. Dale said that most of the opposition to these proposals is traffic related. The developer for one of the projects (Joy Fellowship Church) has been asked to do a traffic assessment. Dale said there would be traffic studies done prior to any approvals.
A stakeholder pointed out that Tujunga Canyon was initially designed with low traffic usage in mind.
- A stakeholder noted that Lowell is backed up to Foothill during morning traffic.
- Victor stated that the area is over developed and over impacted.
- A stakeholder asked whether the streamlining proposal would apply to condos, such as the 9166 condo project.
- Deborah Ray asked why the City doesn't limit development to what the infrastructure can handle right now. Dale said that Land Use policies for the City are contained in the General Plan and Zoning ordinances. If they suddenly say that policy is no longer operative, without going through appropriate procedures, they would be facing lawsuits. Dale said the property rights of every property owner are based on those

policies. To abruptly change them without good reason means they would essentially have "bought" those properties and the City Attorney won't let them do that. Dale said that is why they are updating the General Plan; they don't just willy - nilly change the General Plan. He said he would try to get Sunland - Tujunga and La Tuna Canyon into Round Two of the Community Plan updates.

- Victor asked why Councilmember Greuel is facing all these development proposals, whereas, previous Council members did not. Dale said it is a sign of the times: There has been an absolute boom in new development based on normal cyclical forces. Ten years ago, nothing was happening because there was a recession going on.
- Jeannine Crowley asked how long it would take to get Sunland - Tujunga on the list for the next round. Dick Platkin said is had to do with many factors under new Director of Planning Gail Goldberg. He said they would like to incorporate overlay districts with the Community Plan update. In the case of S-T, he said they have to make sure policies are fully consistent and implemented.
- Elaine Brown asked why stakeholders couldn't appeal zoning changes approved by the City Council. Dale said they have to focus on the process; decisions are made by zoning administrators for conditional use permits. With a proposed zone change, there is no action until the City Council acts. After that, the only recourse is the courts.

4. **Narrow Streets ICO Meeting Report:** Mark Seigel said the next meeting takes place on June 19, at 6 p.m., an hour before the regular DAC. He explained this has to do with helping to make narrow streets safer and to provide better passage for emergency vehicles by reducing traffic on those streets.

5. **Public Comment – non agenda items:**

Introductions by:

Janis Barquist – Candidate for Superior Court Judge, seat #144.

Susan Lopez - Giss - Candidate for Superior Court Judge, seat #95.

6. **DAC Committee Member Reports:**

Chairman Victor Castro reminded everyone to vote tomorrow, June 6th. He reviewed important upcoming dates: The Sunland – Tujunga July 4th Parade starts at 10 a.m., 7/4/06 and is sponsored by the Sunland – Tujunga Rotary. Anyone interested in being in it can sign up with Michael Lucas of the Rotary. The Sunland -Tujunga Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the fireworks at the High School on July 4th.

DAC Education & Outreach will be present at the 4th of July fireworks pending a participation motion that will be brought forth to the DAC committee at the next meeting, June 19th.

Canyon Hills Development Project: New hearing dates have been scheduled by PLUM for the Canyon Hills Development Agreement: On June 20 & before the L.A. City Council on June 28. The STNC website has more details.

Historic Home Report. Barbara Howell presented the DAC with the new Historic Structures Report, a lengthy document prepared from a database of about 100 properties. She stated the purpose of the report: to recommend efforts that the community can make to preserve historic properties. She asked the DAC to approve the Report and then distribute a copy to Councilmember Wendy Greuel, Lloyd Hitt recommended a committee be formed to contact owners of properties and give them info and recommendations for getting their homes declared historical monuments. **Lloyd Hitt moved (Debby Beck, seconded), "That the DAC accept the historic report with our thanks and that we forward the report to the STNC with our recommendation and ask that it be expedited and forwarded to Councilmember Wendy Greuel's office."** Lloyd told the DAC that they have designed kits for homeowners to show them

how to apply for historic preservation of their properties on their own. **The motion passed unanimously.**

DAC Style Guide Report, Debby Beck: Tabled for the next meeting. A draft one-page sheet was distributed to the DAC for review.

Discount Tires: 6511 Foothill: City Planner Anita Cerna said this issue is still pending. The business owner still has to get back to them. Penny Blackwell spoke against the City's allowance of this Conditional Use Permit. Mark Seigel wondered why the business was still operating. Nina Royal suggested there might be confusion with the language for the Specific Plan. Anita said that the Conditional Use Permit would provide a public hearing for comment. She said they have to allow due process. She said the owner of Discount Tires has stated that the previous business did auto maintenance work on the site so he doesn't feel it is a "Change of Use." Victor asked Anita to keep the DAC up to date on this issue. Any information will be made public via the STNC website.

8: New Business, Presentations:

Presentation: Joy Fellowship Church, 971 – 29 Tujunga Canyon Blvd. Mr. Alex Woo gave a presentation on the Church's proposal for using their 11.35 acres, purchased in 2001, for three structures, particularly, a 9,300 sanctuary with a parking lot for 67 cars. Mr. Woo said they would only be holding two church services, both on Sunday: at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. and that they would instruct their congregation to enter the property from Foothill, as opposed to using Tujunga Canyon to minimize traffic. He said their congregation currently has 180 – 200 members and they don't expect much growth. Their plans are for up to 250 members. The Church has submitted their application for development to City Planning and a public hearing has already been held. They have gone through environmental assessment and have some negative mitigating factors that they promised to deal with if the project moves forward.

Dale Thrush answered questions regarding the Conditional Use Permit, which he said would include all entitlements for the owner to build the facilities, parking lots, etc. He confirmed that they already had a public hearing before the Zoning Administrator and CD2 and the Council reps asked that no decision be made until they came before STNC's DAC for review. He said the next step is for DAC to discuss whether they have sufficient information to render a decision and to make a recommendation to the STNC Board or to table discussion. In either case, Dale said he would ask the City Zoning Administrator to allow additional time before making a decision on this matter, if needed. After the STNC makes a decision, the Zoning Administrator will make their decision, which can be appealed to the Planning Commission. However, once the Planning Commission makes a decision, it cannot be appealed. **After much discussion and due to the lateness of the meeting (10:30 p.m.), the DAC tabled discussion without making a motion. Victor asked Mr. Woo to come before the STNC on June 14th, 7 p.m. then to return to the next DAC meeting on June 19.**

Presentation Hardship exemption, Kevin Regan: 7754 Jaydee Circle, Tujunga. Mr. Regan, a stakeholder and property owner of a single family home, asked the DAC to allow him to build over the limit set by the Sunland – Tujunga FAR/ICO. He explained that his former architect misled him and that his second architect submitted his plans for expansion without knowing that the garage counted as footage. **Deborah Ray moved, seconded by Charles Montgomery, "That this hardship exemption be approved contingent upon letters being provided by his neighbors in support of his expansion."** The motion was approved unanimously. It will now be sent to the STNC and presented at their June 14 Board meeting.

c. Inspiration Way: 9531: Architect Franco Noravian asked the DAC for a variance to build a 3,000 sq. foot home on a 13,000 square foot, substandard, hillside lot. The variance would reduce the side yard to build a larger home.

Victor asked the DAC to look at the implications approval of this project would have on open space and the future of Sunland - Tujunga. He reminded the Committee that this is also the area where the proposed Canyon Hills development emergency exit will exist. He recommended that all DAC members visit the site before making a decision and to postpone a decision until the next meeting on June 19. A suggestion was also made to, not recommend the variance reducing the side yard, but if approved, that the square footage be reduced to conform to the area (lots in this area are small for building of cabins), and to recommend that the building design conform to the area. Mark Seigel (seconded by Deborah Ray) **moved to table the motion to the June 19 DAC meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.**

6. i. Former Popeye's Restaurant, 8668 Foothill: The Department of Building and Safety in L.A. issued a permit for change use at this site to a check-cashing business, in violation of the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan. Debby Beck expressed concern that these mistakes will have adverse affects on our community for decades. **Deborah Ray recommended sending a letter to Department of Building Safety. This was postponed until the June 19 meeting, due to the lateness of the hour.**

6. g. Sign Inspectors: Penny Blackwell moved, seconded by Lloyd Hitt. **"That the DAC/STNC send a letter to City Councilmember Wendy Greuel requesting additional sign inspectors for our area. This is imperative based on the following:**

1. We have had requests from the community for another sign sweep (Penny Blackwell has called Inspector Dean Starnon and we are now added to the list. Due to the shortage of inspectors and the communities they have scheduled for "sweeps," it will be months before Sunland – Tujunga can be scheduled.)
2. The illegal "fan signs" have returned.
3. Many of the illegal signs remain, i.e.: the 99-cent store by Smart and Final, the sign on Foothill with the words, "Pawn Shop."
4. Many non conforming signs and illegal signs have been installed since the last sweep.

We strongly think that in order to eliminate or minimize these signs, the City needs more inspectors. We need ongoing enforcement, follow up, and regular sign sweeps."

The motion was approved unanimously.

11. Future DAC agenda items:

6. DAC Committee Reports:

Prop 218 Street Lighting Maintenance Assessment Districts – Tabled to June 19th DAC agenda.

k. Early Notification Report items – Tabled to June 19th DAC agenda.

l. Environmental Notices – Tabled to June 19th DAC agenda.

7. Unfinished Business

a. EIR request: Oro Vista: 11130, 11140, & 11160 – Tabled to DAC June 19th agenda. Dale Thrush reported no updates as case manager had been on extended leave of absence.

8. New Business:

b. DAC forms – Tabled to DAC June 19th agenda.

9. Approval of minutes for May 15, 2006 – Tabled to DAC June 19th agenda.

10. Approval of DAC expenses for May 2006 – Tabled to DAC June 19th agenda.

12: Meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Pat Kramer, Apple One

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL ON 6-19-06