

“DRAFT” STNC Design Advisory Committee

Monday, July 17, 2006, 6 p.m.

Mt. Gleason Middle School, 10965 Mt. Gleason Ave, Sunland

48 in attendance, 9 Committee Members

Introduction to the DAC by Victor Castro, DAC Chairman with Board Members: Penny Blackwell, Charles Montgomery, Mark Seigel, Lloyd Hitt, Debby Beck, Cindy Cleghorn, Vic Agakhanian and Ed Rock. Also present were Anita Cerna, Community Planner and Dale Thrush of CD2. Anita and Dale then responded to stakeholder’s questions.

Public Comment:

- Laura McNall reported that Robert Hall, a builder, has surpassed limitations on building new homes. Anita took the name of the builder but said she could not do a search in her database by the developer’s name but would look into it further.
- John Lauer asked about the Verdugo Hills Golf Course development saying the area doesn’t need a 9-hole golf course; that what the community needs is what they already have - a par 3 course with short holes.
- Wendy Schmidt talked about a construction project on her street and asked what responsibilities developers have to residents when they come into a community. Dale told her that it depends on the kind of entitlements they are asking for and on the existing zoning and size of the property; for each zone there is a prescribed square footage.
- Elaine Brown reported that the homeless are returning to the Oro Vista property. She also asked for an update on that proposed project.
- Roberta Actor-Thomas expressed concerns about the ICO expiration and neighborhoods not being protected enough.
- DAC’s Penny Blackwell reported that the Business and Professional Women fundraiser, an ice cream social, will be held at her home on Saturday, July 29 at 6 p.m. Call her for details: (818) 371- 3231.
- DAC’s Mark Seigel: Reiterated that builder Robert Hall may need to be investigated, saying he has built more than 4 homes in one year.
- DAC’s Vic Agakhanian asked if the City could investigate whether Robert Hall is using illegal workers on his project on Irma Ave.
- DAC’s Debby Beck reported that it might be another month before the developer can break ground on the project at the old Ford property.

CD2 Update: Dale Thrush:

Discount Tire Order to Comply: (6511 Foothill): Dale reported that the owners of this business are appealing the revocation of the building permit to the Board of

Building and Safety Commissioners. Under Bldg. & Safety policy, they can continue their business as long as they are making satisfactory progress toward a resolution.

Former Popeye's (8668 Foothill): Building and Safety has issued their intent to revoke this Change of Use occupancy permit for Payroll Check Cashing. Dale stated that this type of business is prohibited by the Foothill Specific Plan and would need to be amended for this business to go forward. The applicant has stated that they have spent \$80,000 on improvements to the building already. They have been told that they can sub lease the property or do another type of business as permitted under the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan.

Home Depot (8040 Foothill): Home Depot is just days away from the Planning Department's upcoming decision on whether this is a project, requiring a review under the Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan, or not. If it is NOT considered a project, Dale said they could start construction on their improvements in the next few days. Joe Barrett, No Home Depot campaign, reported that they have been told by the Planning Department that no decision would be made until No Home Depot Campaign submit additional comments. Dale said that if Home Depot is allowed to move into the former K Mart building, no discretionary improvements or operational conditions could be imposed on them as long as they are operating their store under the law.

Canyon Hills Development (7000 La Tuna Cyn.): The development agreement was approved two weeks ago by the City Council extending the entitlements beyond the normal duration. The developer has made several commitments to the City: #1 they are giving up their right to build two new freeway ramps between Sunland Blvd. and La Tuna Cyn., 2. they have agreed to remove all sound walls from the project. Instead, they have redesigned the homes by the freeway so that they cannot be seen and have constructed burms within the property so that the sound walls are no longer needed. The next step is for the developer to create design standards in conjunction with the DAC and the City Council. They will be in touch with DAC on that.

EIR request 11130, 11140, and 11160 Oro Vista: This is a 5-acre project on Oro Vista which Dale said has many complexities in regards to zoning. He has asked the City Planning Dept. to give an opinion as to whether the current zoning combination and proposed land use for the property are consistent with the General Plan. Depending on what they decide, he will ask the City Attorney to review it and advise as to whether he agrees with the Planning Dept.'s determination. Regarding a question about the endangered "Santa Ana Sucker," found on that property, Dale said Mr. Plafkin, from the Planning Department's

Environmental Review Section, was looking into whether this affected the development proposal.

DAC Reports:

- a. The July 31st DAC meeting will be held in conjunction with STNC's Board Meeting to make a determination on whether to support or oppose the proposed development by Union Rescue Mission for Kagel Canyon.
- b. Victor reviewed his efforts to set up a meeting with a DOT official regarding Tujunga Canyon Blvd.
- c. Verdugo Hills Golf Course Project Team Report – discussed by Dale Thrush.
- d. Narrow Streets ICO Mtg. Report - postponed.
- e. Letter to City Planning re: FBCSP training: postponed.
- f. Early Notification Report & Environmental Notices: postponed (available for review in PDF format for anyone interested).
- g. Status on DAC request for list of residential demolition permits issued by the City: Anita Cerna said that she does not get a report on projects applying for demolition permits. She suggested following up on this with the Council office.
- h. DAC Style guide reports: postponed
- i. DAC Education and Outreach Report: postponed

New Business: Two presentations were made, one was voided:

10105 Commerce Ave: Alen Parseghian reported on the progress he has made with the renovation of his property for its lease to a dance studio. While the plan was to install six windows on the building, Alen can only do four due to the existing wall structure. The windows will be divided between Commerce and Valmont. He also plans to install a planter, 1-foot high, made of river rock on the street with other landscaping. The new tenants will be moving in on August 15th. The Board then discussed the color proposed for the building. Cindy pointed out that this property is a key historic site; it was the first post office in Tujunga. The DAC was impressed with the efforts made by Mr. Parseghian and acknowledged his hard work and cooperation with the DAC on this project.

6924 Valmont: The developer for this project, Fred Gaines of Valmont Villas LC presented plans for their tentative, 3-story, 14 – unit, detached condo project. The project would be constructed on a 42,362 square foot site in the RD3 (residential) zone and replaces three, single family bungalows that were on that site. This is a multifamily project and under the zoning, the developer explained that they were allowed 14 units. The developer brought picture boards of the proposed architecture, which the DAC reviewed. Initially, there was a favorable response on the architecture proposed. Anita Cerna called it a “great design.”

The developer spoke about installing windows on the front of the complex to have it resemble the front of a house. He also spoke about landscaping with drought tolerant plants and providing an internal garage for each unit on the property. The developer was requesting a variance as the project was just sort of the land required for 14 units. The developer told the DAC that a subdivision hearing is scheduled to take place on July 25th 2006 at the Marvin Braude Center after 11:30 a.m. Tentative Tract Map No. 64751, ZA-2006-429-YV, ENV-2005-9008-MND. Written comments can be sent to: Department of City Planning, Subdivision Unit, 7th Floor (Main City Hall) 200 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

Voided: (Another request that was on the agenda and scheduled to be reviewed involved the same presenter, Mr. Gaines, for the nearby property at 6934 Valmont. That request was for a 3-story, 7-unit detached condo development on .49 net acres of land. However, that request was withdrawn due to a lawsuit between the seller and buyer).

However, comparisons made to another development (Hillrose Court) by the same developer turned up negative comments and new concerns from stakeholders and the Committee including:

- Other developments going on adjacent to this proposed site
- The size of the units were considered too large for the street (2,000 to 2,400 sq. ft.)
- A huge increase in units built on the site
- That STNC/DAC was brought into this proposal late in the process
- A perceived lack of open space
- The removal of 19 trees in bulldozing the site
- Replacing 3, single family residences with an architectural style that is out of character with the neighborhood
- Concerns about dust generated by construction and additional traffic on Valmont

Penny Blackwell moved, seconded by Mark Seigel, “To not approve this request for lack of information at this time.” The motion failed with a vote of 2 for and 5 against the motion. The DAC will send a letter addressing their concerns about this project to the Deputy Advisory Agency. DAC Chair Victor Castro will, most likely, attend the upcoming public hearing, July 25th, at the Marvin Braude Center in Van Nuys.

In an effort to reach an agreement, the developer agreed that he will return to the DAC with updated design plans as a condition of his tentative tract map approval to bring the design into compatibility with the community’s concerns.

Approval of Minutes for May 15, June 5, and June 19

- The minutes for May 15, 2006 and June 19, 2006 were approved as presented with a unanimous vote.
- The minutes for June 5, 2006, were approved as corrected with a unanimous vote.

Committee Comments:

Penny stated that she will distribute a copy of a City decision paper, dated Dec. 2001, regarding Auto Uses in the Foothill Corridor for the DAC
Cindy announced the July 22 STNC and DAC Board and Committee training: 8:30 – 1 p.m. at North Valley City Hall, Sunland
Anita Cerna reported that Von's Market on Foothill Blvd. has requested to present to the DAC at an upcoming meeting.

Cindy distributed a copy of a DAC recommendation form to make it easier to give Anita Cerna a copy at the close of our meeting. Suggests this item be approved at the next meeting.

Discussion re: DAC Budget for FY 2006/2007 & approve DAC proposed expenses postponed.

Meeting Adjourned: 10 p.m. **Next Meeting:** July 31, 2006

Minutes prepared by Pat Kramer, Apple One