

OAK PARK MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES of Meeting – July 25, 2006

The Oak Park MAC held an official meeting Tuesday, July 25, 2006, 7:30 P.M. at Oak Park High School, 899 N. Kanan Rd., Oak Park

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Todd Haines at 7:32 P.M. MAC members Todd Haines, Deena Parry, Bonnie Biddison, Ron Stark, and Jay Kapitz were present.

2. Flag Salute

The salute to the American flag was led by former MAC member Glen Wilcox.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Ron Stark moved the adoption, Jay Kapitz seconded the motion, and the MAC approved it 5-0.

4. Approval of the Minutes of June 27, 2006

Ron Stark moved the adoption of the June 27, 2006 minutes, seconded by Jay Kapitz, and it was approved 5-0.

5. Comments of Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks

Supervisor Parks noted that the Region Public Affairs Manager for Southern California Edison, Rudy Gonzalez, planned to be at the next MAC meeting to discuss SCE work to prevent repeats of the past week's prolonged outages in Oak Park.

Supervisor Parks reported that the Board of Supervisors voted to raise salaries for Sheriff's Department dispatchers.

She announced the 3rd Annual Oak Park Beautification Day to be held at OPHS from 8:30 AM to 12:30 on August 5. Thanks to the efforts of **Captain Bill Flannigan**, this year for the first time Explorers from the Sheriff's Department will assist at the event to keep traffic moving smoothly.

The terms of three MAC members are set to expire in December, and a TSD seat will also be up for election. Supervisor Parks summarized the V.C. Election Division filing procedures for becoming a candidate. **Harvey Kern** added that the Community Foundation for Oak Park would be sponsoring a candidates' forum in October.

Supervisor Parks reported on her recent tour of the Oak Park Neighborhood for Learning School. She expressed appreciation to **Officer Randy Hosking** for providing a quantity of CHP children's coloring books illustrating safety lessons that she brought along to the school.

She mentioned how Oak Park residents could assist the family of Sheriff's **Deputy David Bonebright** who helped get the Oak Park area safely through the 2005 firestorms; with family and community support his young daughter Ashlyn is overcoming health problems.

Supervisor Parks described efforts to expand the RAIN complex on Lewis Rd. to accommodate more youth who have aged out of formal foster care but could still benefit from some housing and support services to successfully transition to adult independence.

Many issues were raised by residents at the MAC meeting about Oak Park's response to the heat wave and the power outages. Supervisor Parks told residents she would add her voice to the requests for SCE equipment upgrades to prevent frequent or prolonged outages in the area of Oak Park around Brookside Elementary School.

Todd Haines reminded residents that it is the PUC that determines rates for SCE. **Deena Parry** observed that Oak Park was in need of better communications and a clear plan for what to do in emergency situations. **Jay Kapitz** said that he wanted to build up neighborhood organizations like HOA's for helping out in unusual situations. A resident said that Oak Park feels very far from the area's "centers", and that fact heightens the importance of Oak Park CERT, with its trained members and preparations such as stockpiling emergency supplies at schools. Supervisor Parks agreed that a measure of self-sufficiency for several days is a goal each community and household should have.

6. Public Comments

Mike Green said that he would appreciate MAC action on Oak Park's power issues.

Richard Venn expressed concern about how residents obtain accurate information when situations like the power outages occur.

Alice Cadogan said that the TSD vote to raise sewer fees by 10% made the sewer rates too high. **Supervisor Parks** said that she voted against the increase. **Ron Stark** said that energy costs are the number one cause of the increase, followed by upgrades necessitated by L.A. Regional Water Quality Control changing standards, higher wages, and the special conditions of Malibu Creek and the Santa Monica Bay which receive the discharged water from the sewage plant.

David Ross said that the Community Foundation's forum in October would include State Assembly candidates, and local ballot measures, as well as MAC and School Board candidates.

Mr. Miller expressed concern about repairs needed to a bike trail to the Rolling Hills tract. **Jay Kapitz** responded that he would look into it with RSRPD; another resident added that the restoration of the trail is on hold due to Fish & Game prohibitions against stream bank alterations there.

Michael Bartolucci wondered about OPUSD plans for removing a large blue shipping container visible from Oak Hills Dr. He gave pictures to School Board member Jim Kalember.

A resident said he would prefer to see the removal of all left-hand turn arrows from Oak Park roadways.

Todd Haines responded that some years ago when there were none a man was T-boned and badly injured or killed.

Paul Pastor said he would like to have a good phone number for reporting power problems.

7. Council Comments

Deena Parry noted that the Oak Park sign on the Kanan Rd. median was looking better. She said she would not give up on introducing a VIP program to Oak Park, and planned to work on this again after the upcoming Thousand Oaks City Council elections had hopefully produced a change in the climate.

Bonnie Biddison said that residents could join guided full moon hikes in Ahmanson Ranch in coming months. Information was available at www.LAMountains.com.

Ron Stark announced that he was retiring from the MAC and would not seek reelection.

Jay Kapitz reported that the RSRPD's Oak Park Recreation and Park Planning Committee quarterly meeting held in July focused mainly on a new 10-year maintenance and capital program. There is now a regular Oak Park section on the RSRPD website. A "spray pool" would soon be introduced to Oak Canyon Park. He also said that it was not too late for neighborhoods to join the National Night Out in August.

Todd Haines expressed his appreciation for Ron Stark's 38 years of dedicated service to Oak Park, saying that Ron was a "real asset" and that Oak Park was a "strong community due to the efforts of people like Ron Stark". He noted that the Westlake/Agoura Softball 12 & under and the 14 & under teams (WAGS) both qualified for their Nationals.

8. Information items

a. V.C. Transportation Dept. update, Q&A period, with Richard Herrera

Todd Haines asked the audience whether the Kanan Rd. traffic lights should be synchronized; there was applause that the system was turned off. The Transportation Dept. did not have a specific timeline yet for its projected lengthening of turn lanes on Kanan Rd., according to Engineer **Richard Herrera**. In the case of the trail crossings at streets that resident Jay Fernandez had asked about, Mr. Herrera explained that his department would be updating signage at three crossings.

Todd Haines asked why a sign was never installed restricting right turns at Doubletree from Kanan Rd. as requested by the MAC. Mr. Herrera answered that the Transportation Dept. recommended against it. He also conveyed to Mr. Herrera a question from the OPHS traffic supervisor about the back up of student drivers trying to exit the school parking lot onto Kanan Road at lunchtime and when school lets out. Mr. Herrera said his department would look into the issue. **Jim Fox** noted that people change the Oak Hills Dr. & Kanan Rd. traffic light by flashing it with their headlights. **Deena Parry** said that the stop sign at Deerbrook and Deerhill Rd. was knocked down.

b. Redevelopment agency pros and cons, with David Ross

David Ross made a presentation about creating a redevelopment agency for Oak Park to help solve problems with aging infrastructure that include sidewalks. He noted that according to the last census 30% of Oak Park households were categorized as low income, and that blight is not necessarily visible. He would propose outsourcing the work of managing a redevelopment agency to a local bank or credit union to avoid creating a new level of bureaucracy in government. Also, he would prohibit seizing properties by eminent domain, or lavish expenditures such as the "Lakes" and Civic Arts Plaza in Thousand Oaks' redevelopment area. Any ordinance creating a new redevelopment agency must spell out that the purpose is to provide low-interest loans for owner-occupied home improvements and related infrastructure, and that no mansionization is allowed. Mr. Ross stressed that the money used for a redevelopment agency would be the "windfall" from increased assessments as property values rise, and not essential tax money that supports basic services.

Supervisor Parks suggested that the Community Foundation for Oak Park could serve as an alternative vehicle for bringing together residents to reduce the cost for homeowner sidewalk improvements. She praised David Ross for pressing on with looking for solutions to solving problems.

Dean Burnett raised questions about fairness to residents and potential impacts on essential services.

Jim Kalember asked what growth was assumed, and Mr. Ross said he would recommend using the interest rate.

Todd Haines thanked David Ross for his presentation, adding that it showed his caring for Oak Park.

9. Action items

a. Oak Park Shopping Center monument sign proposal (Allan Spiwak)

Allan Spiwak's representative **Daniela Meltzer**, property manager for the shopping center, and Vogue Signs' **Christian Muldoon**, showed new renderings for the monument sign proposed for the northeast corner of Lindero Cyn. & Kanan Roads. If the MAC okayed the new design at this meeting, Allan Spiwak was offering to remove one of the new Re/Max signs, and the present "For Lease" signs, as well as to add a sign for community announcements. **Harvey Kern** offered to again post images of the new design on oakparkupdate.com and to solicit comments on it from the Oak Park public for the benefit of the MAC members. **Ron Stark** emphasized that "from day one" Oak Park residents were against blighting the landscape with excessive signage; he promised to look into an agreement with the center's developer that he said prevented the building of the new monument sign. **Patricia Burnett** wondered why the topic was even being discussed if such an agreement existed. **Paul Pastor** vowed to withdraw patronage from the shopping center if the new sign went in. **Todd Haines** observed that out of scores of resident responses to the first pictures of the proposed sign posted on the website, only two were positive. It was agreed that the item would remain on the agenda for the next MAC meeting as an action item.

b. Recommendations of the committee for review of the oversized vehicle ordinance

Jay Kapitz summarized the three alternative versions of amendments to the ordinance that his committee had prepared. He thanked **Dan Murphy** of the County Counsel's office for consulting with the Committee. He said a second phase of work would deal with administrative issues associated with the ordinance.

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Todd Haines said that Version 2, with no work vehicles allowed after the year 2009, was against the reason why people move to Oak Park, while Version 3 makes it too easy for condo and HOA-restricted people to dump their vehicles on community streets. They know when they move in that they won't be allowed to keep their oversized vehicles onsite. He sympathized most with the people who moved to Oak Park earlier and need the ordinance to protect their right to have work vehicles.

Resident **Shawn Crane** requested clarification of what an oversized vehicle is.

Jim Fox introduced himself as a 22-year resident, and said that enforcement is a problem with these vehicles in Oak Park, and that the Fish Plumbing truck was another.

Benjamin Hiles from Shadow Ridge said that condo owners should have the right to use public streets for parking their oversized vehicles.

Leonore Lewis said that Version 3 would create dumping zones for oversized vehicles.

Paul Pastor said that there exists a prejudice against residents in HOA's and condos, and that public streets belong to the public.

Todd Haines explained that Golden Eagle Dr. had been used as a dumping ground for R.V.'s, and that situation created the impetus for introducing the ordinance. He said that the MAC "did not want to put anybody out of business", but intended rather "to keep Oak Park from looking like Reseda".

Glen Wilcox said that Version 1 should add the word "driveway" or the phrase "lawful parking space" to the word "space".

Brad Lewis said that a public opinion poll should be conducted about the oversized vehicle ordinance.

Al said that the rights of homeowners are paramount.

A female resident said that she was shocked that Shadow Ridge would want to use a double standard, in not allowing residents' oversized vehicles on its own property, but relegating them instead to public streets.

Todd Haines said he felt that most were leaning towards Version 1, and that Glen Wilcox's suggestion was a good one.

Ron Stark advised that all three versions be posted on oakparkupdate.com, giving residents the opportunity to make suggestions, and that the MAC revisit the issue in September. The MAC members thanked Jay Kapitz for his work.

c. Standing landscape committee update and recommendations

Bonnie Biddison presented **Ron Stark** with the landscape committee's July report. She thanked him for arranging an August walk through giving a Committee member the opportunity to point out to Venco West areas where improvement can be made.

Deena Parry commented that the landscaping was looking better than in times past.

Todd Haines conveyed a resident's thank you for recent upgrading of median landscaping on Lindero Canyon Road.

d. Cancellation of August meeting

Ron Stark moved, Bonnie Biddison seconded, that the meeting be cancelled. The MAC voted 5-0 in favor.

10. On a motion by Ron Stark, seconded by Jay Kapitz, the meeting was adjourned at 10:26 P.M. to September 26.

