

OJAI VALLEY MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY
April 15th, 2013

Chair Todd Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00. Members present were: Todd Wilson, Carin Kally, Terry Wright, Brian Segee, and Tom Kennedy. Catherine Lee's absence was excused.

The summary of the March 18th meeting was approved unanimously on a motion by Terry Wright, seconded by Carin Kally and approved unanimously. Russ Baggerly requested that the meeting be adjourned in memory of the victims of the Boston bombing.

Under MAC comments, Steve Offerman noted an upcoming public workshop on the County's effort to create countywide antenna regulations.

Representing the Ojai City Planning Commission, John Mirk said the City has completed the Housing Element, no development projects are pending, and they are revising the sign ordinance.

The next item of business was review of a County Public Works Agency (PWA) project to construct a five-foot wide sidewalk along the south side of El Roblar between Lomita and La Luna in Meiners Oaks. Steve Offerman noted that Supervisor Bennett's Office had received many citizen requests for a sidewalk over the years, and that the Meiners Oaks School Principal and PTO had also requested a sidewalk. Steve said that the purposes of the sidewalk are to improve pedestrian safety, make Meiners Oaks a more walkable community, and to achieve a measure of traffic calming on El Roblar.

Chris Hooke, deputy director the County Transportation Department said that project is funded with a Safe Routes to School grant. The timeline is for construction to start in October, and the cost estimate is \$250,000. A property owner expressed concern with potential use of eminent domain: Chris Hooke said eminent domain would not be used, and if a property owner would not sell needed right-of-way, then there would be a gap in the sidewalk. Mike Krumpschmidt of Meiners Oaks said that the sidewalk and bike lane projects on Lomita have been great for the community, the El Roblar sidewalk is needed for safety, and he supports the project. Bill O'Brien asked whether the project would alter drainage patterns and whether it could address stormwater mitigation. Chris Hooke said that the project would not change drainage patterns, that the addition of a curb and gutter would improve drainage, and most of the project is in areas already paved, so additional runoff would be negligible. Chris said they would consider use of permeable concrete, but that generally it has a very rough surface that isn't good for sidewalks.

A property owner along western El Roblar said that some second driveways were not shown on the plans; PWA said they would meet with property owners to look at their properties. Mike Hollebrand of the Meiners Oaks Water District said that some district wharfheads are in the project area and close coordination with the district will be needed. Pat Baggerly asked what CEQA document was used- a categorical exemption. Pat said that there is a flooding problem along El Roblar that should be addressed, that more children live on the north side of El Roblar than the South and therefore the sidewalk should be on the north side. PWA said that conflicts with parking lots of several businesses on the north side were unresolvable and too many parking spaces would have been lost if the sidewalk were on the north side. Stan Tenpenny said his children walked to school on El Roblar and the southside is better for children because it goes with the morning flow of traffic and keeps kids out of the street where the morning sun is in drivers' eyes; the project would be very beneficial. An El Roblar property owner requested that their large mailbox be replaced with a large mailbox, and PWA said they would.

Patricia Cardinalli of the Meiners Oaks Business and Artists Association (MOBAA) said that the project should consider the interests of Meiners Oaks business owners. PWA noted that every effort has been made to not reduce the number of parking places on El Roblar. Patricia encouraged that crosswalks on El Roblar be enhanced with raised pavement, bumps or brighter paint and that additional 25 MPH speed limit signs be installed. Chris Hooke said that PWA would look at improving the crosswalks and would request additional speed enforcement after the project is completed. Patricia requested that the County pursue constructing a public parking lot and park along El Roblar. Steve Offerman said that is an excellent idea, and the County will look for grants for this purpose.

Audience question was asked if property owners were responsible for sidewalk area repairs and who was responsible for liability. Answer: Chris responded that technically, property owners retained ownership and would technically be responsible for repairs. In a practical sense, the county Public Works Dept. handles such repair throughout the county. He responded that the county did not take an ownership interest in curbs and sidewalks, but maintained the improvements and handled the repair work. He stressed it was important that he was clear that property owners retain the underlying ownership interests.

The public hearing on the proposed project was closed and Chairman Todd Wilson suggested the Ventura County Public Works representatives have expressed interest in meeting with interested members, following conclusion of the meeting. Questions and comments were then solicited from MAC Council members.

Brian Segee indicated he was a new resident of Meiners Oaks and is the current MAC representative of the proposed project area. He said he was attracted to Meiners oaks by the pedestrian qualities of this small community. He sees a problem with having to cross El Roblar and feels speed of traffic was a problem. Brian expressed it was his experience that property values actually improved with the addition of improvements proposed in this project.

Tom Kennedy remarked that he was glad to know that Eminent Domain was not to be considered for the proposed project. He says he grew up in the area and felt that if sidewalks were installed, as proposed, kids would use them. He was concerned with drainage and did not want this project to "transfer" drainage problems to other properties. Allison responded that Public Works was careful to not do this. Tom asked if there would be other public hearings on this project. The Public Works representative responded that this was expected to be the last public hearing for the project.

Terry Wright said he rides his bike on the newly improved Lomita St. in Meiners Oaks. He said he also uses the new bike lane added to Lomita. He felt sidewalks were needed on El Roblar and pointed out that County Public Works Dept. had completed sidewalk repairs on his own property.

Carin Kally said she both surprised and pleased with the openness of the Public Works representatives and willingness to address public concerns on this project. She asked if a crossing guard could be a solution to crossing El Roblar to reach the proposed sidewalk on the South side. Chris responded it was possible to talk with school officials.

Todd remarked that the O.V. MAC held two MAC meetings attempting to address health and safety issues related to traffic patterns in the proposed project area. One meeting included a Ventura County Sheriff's Officer in the discussion and the resolution was pretty much that we all needed to be good neighbors. He felt sidewalks made sense for this area of Meiners Oaks, whether sidewalks were located on the North or South side of El Roblar.

On a motion by Tom Kennedy and second by Terry Wright the O.V. MAC unanimously approved support for the project, as presented, recognizing that Ventura County Public Works representatives were working with property owners and members of the community on individual issues of the project. Chairman, Todd Wilson, asked interested members of the audience to meet with Allison and Chris, from Public Works, in the back of the room.

The MAC members resumed meeting agenda items, finding no Future Agenda Items and no Reports on Prior MAC Actions.

MAC members agreed to adjourn the meeting in special memory of today's tragic events at the Boston Marathon. Chairman adjourned approximately 8:45.