

Ojai Valley Municipal Advisory Council

FINAL December 16th 2019 OVMAC Meeting Summary

APPROVED 02/18/21

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM and all OVMAC members were present except Grace Malloy whose absence was excused.

Under public comments, Terry Wright noted a malfunctioning traffic speed sign in Casitas Springs, and Ron Solorzano provided an update on events and programs at the three Ojai Valley libraries.

The summary of the October 21, 2019 meeting was approved unanimously on a motion by Chris Cohen, seconded by Terry Wright,

The first item of business was a modification of the CUP for Camp Ramah. Planner Kristina Boero provided an overview of the proposal, followed by Camp Ramah representatives. Joe Westbury said that the major issue of concern is noise. The current CUP allows outdoor amplified sound until 11:00 PM, and the proposed modification would limit it to 9PM on weekdays and 10PM on weekends. Chris Cohen noted the need to preserve the Cozy Dell and Foothill hiking trails, and to reflect in the CUP that the trails will remain open to the public. Rabbi Joe of Camp Ramah said the trails would remain open, and he is happy to make that commitment.

Alaina Shodor of Fairview Rd said the neighborhood has historically been greatly impacted by noise from the Camp and that conditions are needed to assure compatibility. Lisa Thomas, a resident of the East End stressed the need for County CUPs to assure compatibility and limit noise. Diane Bertoy supports the camp, staff has improved the situation, but weekly loud events is excessive, adequate noise monitoring is needed, and spotlights and upward lighting should be prohibited, and requested that outdoor amplified sound end at 9PM all nights. Joe Westbury noted the need for a 24-hour onsite staff member to be reachable by phone by neighbors.

Tom Maloney of the OVLC stressed the need to preserve public access to the Cozy Dell and Foothill Trails, and looks forward to working with the Camp. Shawn Jenkins of Fairview road supported noise control. Judy Holman of Oak View said she has a loud neighbor and supports specific noise limits. Marty McDonald of Foothill road expressed concern about nighttime noise and preservation of wildlife habitat. Gary Bertoy said there's a need to codify noise limits, limits on amplification, days and numbers of events, and public trail access

Joline Griffin, Foothill Rd, said that evening noise should have a decibel limit, end at 9PM, and the noise fence around the tennis courts should be higher than 8 feet. Rabbi Joe said that they would make the noise barrier ten feet high, and would put controls on amplification devices.

Terry Wright noted that the proposed conditions would allow 35 special events per year which is a lot, and, that lighting conditions are needed. Chris Cohen said he supports CUP conditions to preserve public trail access, limit amplified outdoor sound to ending at 9PM, and reducing the number of large special events. Joe Westbury said that Camp Ramah is part of Ojai, but appropriate conditions must be enacted.

On a motion by Joe Westbury, seconded by Terry Wright, the MAC unanimously voted to:

Recommend approval of the project with the following conditions:

1. That the Foothill Trail and Cozy Dell Trail be identified on maps in the project description as public use trails, and that a project condition require that these trails be kept open to public use.
2. That a Camp Ramah employee be on premises for the duration of all Special Events that involve amplified sound, and that the direct contact information for this employee be provided to neighbors.
3. That the tennis court noise blankets used during dances or other noisy events on the tennis courts be ten feet high.
4. That the only sound amplification devices used outdoors be devices owned and controlled by Camp Ramah, and that Camp Ramah control/limit the sound volume/decibel level of the amplification system to assure that County noise standards are always met , including during Special Events.
5. That driveway lights and other outdoor lighting comply with the County Ojai Valley Dark Sky Ordinance, and that existing lights be brought into conformance with the DSO upon use-inauguration of the CUP modification.
6. That Camp Ramah summer camp activities limit outdoor amplified music past 9:00 PM to no more than three nights per week, and that all amplified outdoor music cease at 10:00 PM on other nights.
7. Prohibit the use of fireworks/pyrotechnics, explosions, outdoor upward-facing laser lights, outdoor spotlights, and all other upward-facing outdoor display lights.
8. That the Planning Division prepare an inventory/classification of Special Events held at the camp over the last three years, and establish as a CUP condition a classification of and limits on Special Events that:
 - a. Limits annual special events of over 500 persons to the average annual number of such events in the last three years.
 - b. Limits special events with outdoor amplified sound to the average annual number of such events in the last three years.
 - c. Limit events with outdoor amplified sound past 9:00 PM to no more than two nights per calendar month.
 - d. Limits events lasting more than 48 hours to the maximum annual number of such events in the last three years.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.