



CASA CONEJO MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Members of the Council:

Chair Wendy Zimmerman
Vice Chair Edward Villa, Sr.
Richard Gaz
Catharine Hogue
R. Scott Horn

CASA CONEJO MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES May 18, 2022

The Casa Conejo MAC held a Meeting Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 6:00 pm
at Walnut Elementary School, 581 Dena Drive, Newbury Park

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Wendy Zimmerman** at 6:09 pm. MAC members **Edward Villa, Sr., Scott Horn, Richard Gaz**, and Student Representative **Ashley Neier** were present. **Catharine Hogue** attended later.

2. Flag Salute

Wendy Zimmerman led the flag salute.

3. Agenda Review

Scott Horn moved to hear Item 10b after Item 8. **Wendy Zimmerman** seconded the motion, and it was approved 4/0.

4. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2022

Scott Horn moved to approve the minutes from March 16, 2022 as submitted. **Richard Gaz** seconded the motion, and it was approved 4/0.

5. Public Safety Reports

California Highway Patrol Commander Heather Hoglund said the date for construction on the 101 scales is still pending. She said the northbound scale will be replaced followed by the southbound scale later in the summer. She said all construction will be off the freeway and if any issues arise to let the CHP office know as they will have strike teams available to ensure commercial trucks are not using short cuts. **Wendy Zimmerman** asked if the project will also help improve merging lanes into traffic. **Commander Hoglund** said construction will not change lane striping. She reported an incident involving a commercial vehicle that tipped over on a lawn in the community.

California Highway Patrol Officer Ryan Ayers elaborated on the commercial vehicle incident that it was an older truck that was parked and it was operator error. He also reported four collisions in the area since the last meeting. He announced an expo in Simi Valley that will provide information about CHP programs, including Age Well Drive Smart for senior drivers, Start Smart classes for beginning drivers, and car seat installations. He said there will be a blood drive at the Moorpark CHP Station on June 21st. He said law enforcement will be on maximum enforcement through the Memorial Day weekend, and that CHP is currently running a Click-It-Or-Ticket campaign from May 22nd to June 5th to educate and enforce wearing seatbelts. Lastly, he reported an arrest for catalytic converter thefts in Simi Valley and discussed the free Etch-and-Catch program to deter converter thefts.

Ventura County Sheriff's Deputy Christopher Jones responded to a resident question on how catalytic converter perpetrators will be charged saying the DA's office has a prosecutor dedicated to these cases who is very proactive, and that there is legislation at the State to prosecute for possession of stolen converters. He also said the detective in the Conejo Valley working on catalytic converter cases also works with CHP and the Tax Franchise Board. He said peak times for the thefts used to be 2am to 5am, but thieves are getting bolder and are starting to commit crimes during the daytime and in some cases in high traffic areas. Officer Jones also discussed the County's Social Host Ordinance that cites the owner of

a property where three or more underage drinkers are found, even if the homeowners are not present at the time. He said the fines are assessed to the property on the next tax cycle. He said the difference between the County ordinance and the City of Thousand Oaks ordinance is that the City requires four or more underage drinkers and their fines begin at \$2,500. He said the County is currently reassessing their fine structure to match surrounding cities. Lastly, he said he was honored to participate in Police Week in Washington DC as part of the honor guard.

Catharine Hogue asked about using the noise ordinance for fireworks. **Officer Jones** said the only area where fireworks are legal outside of a public permitted event in Ventura County is Fillmore. He said they must witness lighting the fireworks in order to issue a citation, and that the noise ordinance states no noise after 10pm Sunday to Thursday, and 11pm Friday and Saturday.

6. Comments of Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks

Supervisor Linda Parks announced the upcoming Educational Arroyo Conejo Channel Walk on June 1st at 7:30 am where people can walk the channel and learn about local flora and fauna. She said the Living with Wildlife symposium was very informative and the Power Point presentations and Zoom recording are available on her webpage at www.ventura.org/lindaparks. She provided the results from the April 23rd Community Beautification Event at Newbury Park High School saying it had a very good turnout. She said California America Water will be notifying residents about water conservation measures due to the drought, including a reduction to watering one day per week beginning June 1st. She said she attended the groundbreaking for the Wildlife Crossing over the 101 Freeway at Liberty Canyon on Earth Day along with the Governor and many other elected representatives. Lastly, she announced that the Ride of Silence highlighting bicycle safety was being held this evening in Thousand Oaks.

7. Council Comments on Items not on the Agenda

Wendy Zimmerman discussed bicycle safety and the Ride of Silence event. She said she was able to get No Parking signage at the roll-thru on Michael Drive.

Scott Horn commented on a postcard sent by Southern California Edison regarding tree trimming on the area by power lines at no cost. He announced the Smile Jam event on Friday, May 27th at 6:30 pm, an outdoor live music session for the community.

NPHS Student Representative Ashley Neier said NPHS is nearing the end of the year with several activities. She said prom is scheduled on Saturday, May 21st at Granada Hills, which will be the first prom back after two years due to Covid. She said graduation will be June 10th in the afternoon so residents should plan for traffic, and that the school will also have a rally to celebrate seniors. Lastly, she said AP and International Baccalaureate testing is wrapping up and the SAT exam is scheduled on the first Saturday in June.

Richard Gaz asked why there are no bike lanes on Borchard Road. **Chair Zimmerman** said that Borchard is too narrow and fast to add bike lanes, and since there is not enough width it would be dangerous. She suggested cyclists use the roll-thru on Michael Drive.

8. Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

10. Information Items

b. Report from the Ad Hoc Borchard Wetlands Property Subcommittee

Scott Horn presented a video with background information on the Borchard wetlands, flooding history as far back as the 1940s from information available in the special collections at the Thousand Oaks Library. He talked about how the channel has changed due to development in the area, the prohibition of construction on the wetlands, flooding, and hydrology reports from 1971 to 2020 provided by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District (WPD). He said there is evidence that the wetlands could return to its natural state if allowed and that a keystone wetland species called the southern tarplant was found on the land, but also that the land has been regularly plowed. He said there is indication that in 2016 there was an attempt to remove the wetlands designation from the land with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, but their response was that it is defined as a wetland and they would not remove the designation. He said the National Wetlands Inventory in 2018 also designated the land as seasonal wetlands.

Karen Wilburn commented on her independent research into the Borchard wetlands regarding flooding, hydrology, and degradation of the land, and its need to be protected. She cited correspondence received

through a Public Record Act from County WPD disputing the property owner's claims about the County's flood easement and elevation of the properties south of the channel, as well as the City's response which agreed with the County's assessment, not the owner's. She requested that the MAC generate a letter or memo regarding having the Borchard wetlands taken off the City's updated General Plan Housing Element for proposed mixed-use development.

Supervisor Parks said the high ground water table contributes to the land being considered a wetland. She said Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) had expressed interest in purchasing the land, but the property owner was not interested in selling it.

Lorrie Dingman commented on her opposition to development on the wetlands as a resident that is adjacent to the property mentioning public safety and traffic concerns.

Wendy Zimmerman said she would prefer to see eco-driven projects on the Borchard wetlands for the community and to preserve wildlife and native plants.

a. Conejo Gateway Plaza Update

Vanise Terry read an update from the City of Thousand Oaks that the entitlement was approved, no appeal was filed, and the applicant has submitted their building plans for building plan check, but they are still waiting for them to submit to Public Works for grading/paving plan check. The City will send a copy of the pre-grading meeting notice when it goes out.

Wendy Zimmerman reported that she spoke at the Thousand Oaks City Council meeting regarding her opposition to the drive-thru project in the Conejo Gateway Plaza. She requested a copy of the plan check from the City and wants to know what drive thru restaurant will be going onto the pad.

c. Graffiti Removal Intervention Team Update

Ed Villa, Sr. said graffiti was cleaned from the Wendy/Gerald bridge and that it was gang related. He said it was reported to the Sheriff's Office and they were able to apprehend two culprits, and there has been no graffiti there since. **Scott Horn** said he saw graffiti at Borchard Park by the ball fields in the channel.

9. Advisory Items

a. Arroyo Educational Tour on June 1, 2022

Supervisor Parks presented a flyer with information on the upcoming Educational Channel Walk along the south branch of the Arroyo Conejo. She said staff from the Ventura County Watershed Protection District will talk about life in the arroyo and discuss flood control projects in the area. The walk will begin at 7:30 am at the gate for the Wendy Drive Bridge just south of Gerald Drive.

b. Casa Conejo Community Picnic

This item was continued to the next meeting.

11. Correspondence

There was no correspondence reported.

12. Future Agenda Items

- a. MAC Consideration of Letter Regarding the Borchard Wetlands
- b. Casa Conejo community picnic

13. Adjournment at 8:21 pm to Wednesday, July 20, 2022.