

## OAK PARK MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

September 30, 2021.

The Oak Park MAC held a meeting on Tuesday, September 30, 2021 at 7:00 PM  
via Zoom Online/Teleconference.

### 1. Call to Order of the meeting

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Jane Nye** at 7:03 PM. MAC members **Alon Glickstein**, **Seema Chandra**, **JL Diaz**, **Janice Smets** and OPHS student representative **Graham Ros** were present.

### 2. Flag Salute

**Jane Nye** led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 3. Adoption of the Agenda

**Alon Glickstein** made a motion to accept the agenda; **Seema Chandra** seconded the motion. It was approved 5/0.

### 4. Approval of the meeting minutes of July 29, 2021

**Seema Chandra** moved to approve the draft meeting minutes as written. **Alon Glickstein** seconded the motion, and it was approved 5/0.

### 5. Public Safety reports

**Ventura County Sheriff Senior Deputy Qui Vo** introduced himself and said he will be taking over for Senior Deputy Chiaramonte. He said there were two catalytic converter thefts in the area on Trousdale and on Aliano, but that there was a decrease from the previous month of five thefts. He said there were also thefts from unlocked vehicles and urged residents to report any suspicious activity, make sure to lock cars, and not leave any valuables out in the open. He said arrests were made from the recent residential burglaries and that the burglars tend to enter through back patios. He urged residents to lock all doors. Lastly, he said he can be contacted for any issues in the community.

**CHP Deputy Ryan Ayers** said CHP is working on traffic congestion by the schools and that he has spoken with school principals and administration to help facilitate the safe ingress and egress of traffic. He said there has not been much regarding traffic collisions, which is good news for the area. **Janice Smets** asked how much CHP presence is in Oak Park. **Deputy Ayers** said CHP's main focus is traffic related concerns and they usually try to run through Oak Park on a daily basis and that Lt. Key is trying to step up the presence. He said they also have senior volunteers in high congestion areas. **Seema Chandra** expressed concern about Lindero Canyon Road due to the work being done there. **Deputy Ayers** said there will be more congestion and suggested residents either leave early or plan an alternate route, and that there is adequate signage so he doesn't anticipate many collisions.

### 6. Comments of Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks

**Supervisor Parks** announced there were Adopt-A-Road signs installed on Kanan Road along with the new trash bins. She thanked the For Our Future Club at OPHS, the Oak Park School District, Public Works Agency, the MAC and her previous assistant Jan Osterhaven for their work on this. She congratulated Oak Park for having the highest vaccinate rate in Ventura County with 85% of residents fully vaccinated. She discussed the County's redistricting process, the criteria for draft maps, and issues involved. She said she did not anticipate Oak Park being split up or removed from her district. She said the draft maps will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on October 19<sup>th</sup> and again on November 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, and more information can be found at [www.ventura.org/redistricting](http://www.ventura.org/redistricting)

### 7. Public Comments

**Deena Perry** discussed concerns with experimental mosquito abatement and asked if that was being considered for use in Ventura County. **Supervisor Parks** said the County uses mosquito fish to abate mosquitoes and that **Vanise Terry** will follow up with Environmental Health.

**Mary Weisbrock** expressed opposition to up-zoning by Agoura Hills with hundreds of proposed residential units added to three shopping centers near Kanan Road and Thousand Oaks Boulevard, along with the potential of parking garages that would adversely affect Oak Park.

**Janna Orkney** also expressed concern about the Agoura Hills housing plan that would add hundreds of residential units and parking garages in the Oak Park community, and since there are only three exits from the area, which is an extreme fire zone, additional residential units would create a safety hazard.

## **8. Council Comments**

**Graham Ros**, provided updates from the Oak Park High School Associated Student Body (ASB), including a successful Spirit Week, Rally Day, and Homecoming, which made about \$5000 in profits for the school.

**Seema Chandra** gave a Landscaping Committee update saying she met with the residents regarding landscaping at Golden Eagle Drive. She said she was selected to represent Supervisor Parks on Women United and recently attended the Women United Awards Luncheon that provides scholarships to single mothers going back to school.

**JL Diaz** said he has been working with Sam Gunn on the application for the Oak Park Fire Safe Council and they recently submitted a grant application, but it was unfortunately denied. They plan to continue with the goal of forming the Fire Safe Council.

**Chair Nye** announced the next MAC meeting will be on October 28<sup>th</sup> and expressed a preference for the Oak Park Library as the meeting venue, but it is yet to be determined if it will be in person. **Vanise Terry** said the MAC meetings will mirror the Board of Supervisors meetings. Chair Nye said the MAC will be dark in November and December, and back in January on the last Thursdays of the month. As liaison to the Oak Park Unified School District, she reported that the District's main priority is keeping everyone safe and on the Board meeting discussion about the impact of COVID and how they are handling safety. She said September 14<sup>th</sup> was recognized as Luc Bodden Day, and at the 9/11 Ceremony the school honored Brian Wolverton, the Oak Park resident who was killed in Afghanistan. She said the Oak Park Education Foundation reported that all enrichment programs are up and running. She said there was an increase in guest teachers and campus supervisors, and the District is advertising for additional teachers and also addressing technology needs. She announced a Drip Irrigation workshop on Saturday from 9-11 am at Mae Boyar Park, and on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> Mayor Eric Garcetti will be talking about the drought at a media event. Lastly, she said the Pure Water Project is offering tours to the public.

## **9. Information Items**

### **a. Oak Park Fire Safe Council Update from Sam Gunn**

**Sam Gunn** reported that the group filed a grant proposal with Southern California Edison to generate funds to begin the process of getting 501c3 status for the Oak Park Fire Safe Council, but it was not granted. However, he said they will continue building the organization in the community and apply again for funding in the future. He said 501c3 status is important for the organization to apply for additional funds to increase the Fire Safe infrastructure. He reported they have a core membership, but he will be moving to the Bay Area soon so will be more remote. However, Lori Gunn will remain a contact for anyone interested in getting involved. Their goal is to raise funds to provide community events, increase fire prevention awareness, and serve as a community interface for fire prevention issues and working collaboratively with other community groups. He mentioned recent coverage in the Acorn Newspaper that was helpful in getting the word out and they hope to begin having monthly meetings soon.

**Seema Chandra** asked about a Fire Safe website and suggested having a list of ways people can use home hardening methods to keep their homes safe. **Jane Nye** said the Fire Department will also do a defensible space inspection of homes for free. **Alon Glickstein** offered to provide a connection to the Community Foundation for Oak Park that can help with the 501c3 status.

### **b. Enhanced Landscape Status Update**

**Marcus Cannon, Enhanced Landscaping Branch Manager**, said Enhanced Landscaping is focusing on pine needle cleanup in the community, water usage and water repairs, and ensuring the slopes are in good condition. He said the rotation schedule throughout the community is about five weeks, but if there is an emergency, they will come out quicker. **Seema Chandra** asked about medians on Kanan Road by the high school and Mr. Cannon said that area was cleaned starting at Conifer working west on Kanan Road.

### **c. Status of tree removal proposals at Conifer Street and Kanan Road (Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District) and Rockfield Street and Ocho Rios Way (Resident Request)**

**Chuck Alvarez, Ventura County Public Works**, said the large tree at Mae Boyar Park on Kanan Road at Conifer Street is owned by Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) and is causing severe damage to the sidewalk. At the request of Supervisor Parks, Public Works approached RSRPD with an alternative that would allow the tree to be preserved using a ramped sidewalk. He said RSRPD is considering the ramped sidewalk alternative and Public Works is waiting for confirmation. He also reported on the sycamore tree at Rockfield and Ocho Rios Way that is damaging a resident's patio and tree roots are growing underneath the resident's foundation. He said Public Works has approved the removal of this tree because of the potential damage to the home's foundation. It will be removed in October and the cost will be roughly \$3,000 from the CSA 4 budget.

## **10. Advisory Matters**

### **a. Options for Hawthorne Drive sidewalk repairs**

**Chuck Alvarez, Ventura County Public Works**, presented options for sidewalk repairs on Hawthorne Drive, including (1) conventional repairs for all of Ventura County that involves the removal of three of five trees; and (2) a ramped sidewalk repair that would save four trees and add 6 inches of fill over the roots, along with construction of a 6-inch reinforced concrete sidewalk. He said the County's standard sidewalk repair is 4-inch-wide unreinforced concrete, and the reinforced concrete is designed to not disturb the roots and destabilize the trees. The conventional repair cost is \$10,740 and the enhanced ramp cost \$29,200, which would come from the CSA 4 budget. He said the CSA 4 budget has a line item for "Additional Landscape Repairs" with a \$100,000 budget for this fiscal year. To date there have been \$14,572 of incurred costs, with another possible \$12,305 that the MAC could approve later in the agenda. He said Enhanced Landscaping has also provided a list of 11 trees that are dying or already dead, which would incur another possible \$33,000 in costs for their removal. If the funds started to be depleted, Public Works would have to cease any requests for services and focus solely on emergency services. **JL Diaz** confirmed the repair work at Mae Boyar Park would not come out of the CSA 4 budget. **Janice Smets** asked if Public Works received any other bids for the work. **Mr. Alvarez** said the MAC requested an additional bid in December 2020 due to the high estimate from Enhanced Landscaping, so Public Works got a second proposal from PWA Roads and Transportation and piggybacked on other work for private property owners to bring the cost down. **Ms. Smets** asked to see the original proposal from Enhanced Landscaping, which was provided.

**Gary Beneduci** provided a presentation on alternative sidewalk repair and tree maintenance options from Precision Concrete Cutting. **Seema Chandra** asked how his options would address roots of the trees. He said they don't address tree roots, rather they ensure the sidewalk slab lasts longer through saw cutting before needing replacement. **Alon Glickstein** asked for a rough estimate of cost for doing this method. **Mr. Beneduci** said it would be the difference between hundreds and thousands of dollars.

Public comments from **Carolyn Cass-Barton, Lynn Rollo, Jay Kapitz, Mary Weisbrock, and Janna Orkney** expressed support for saving trees while achieving sidewalk repairs through alternative measures, suggestion for additional arborists to assess the trees, assertions that the pine trees are not Monterey pines but Aleppo pines, suggestion to having an arborist on site when sidewalks are replaced, comments on the benefits of trees providing shade and being a detriment to fires, saving trees to be consistent with the Oak Park Area Plan, and the County's commitment to plant 1,000 trees. **Jeff Fleishman** commented that consideration should also be taken for the homeowners that back up to Hawthorne and have had damage to their property due to the roots and branches. **Jane Nye** asked if other areas needing sidewalk repairs have been looked at. **Mr. Alvarez** said once Public Works is made aware of a sidewalk hazard, they have constructive notice and there is financial liability associated with not repairing the hazard. He said seeking additional bids could take this issue to 2022 and that vendors must be on the GSA schedule. **Janice Smets** asked for additional arborist reports to see if the trees could be saved. **Alon Glickstein** commented that with the potential for more sidewalks needing repair, more cost-effective measures should be looked at before the MAC makes a decision, and that one arborist report is not enough to know whether all the trees can be saved. **Supervisor Parks** said once the County has been put on constructive notice there is increased liability, which is why Public Works is asking for a decision. She said grinding and saw cutting are options available with the County, and there are also other innovative options such as rubberized mats used in Westlake Village. **Jane Nye** commented the MAC already voted at the last meeting to save the trees.

**Mr. Alvarez** said contracts are administered by the General Services Agency, not by Public Works, he also said options presented this evening did not address the County's Sidewalk Standards established by the County Board of Supervisors. He said Oak Park is the only area in the County in which the County has liability for sidewalk damage because the trees maintained within the CSA 4 landscaping areas are causing the damage. The MAC discussed the need to amend the standards to allow for alternative measures to be considered for repairs. **Alon Glickstein** said they need a temporary solution that is cost-effective to make the sidewalks safe while measures to save the trees are investigated. **Janice Smets** asked if the sidewalks could be marked for safety, whether Public Works received any other bids for the work, and for a waiver of the sidewalk repair standards from the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.

**Alon Glickstein** made a motion to recommend that the Board of Supervisors allow an exception for Oak Park in the Ventura County's Sidewalk Standards for repair work, including grinding, horizontal saw cutting, and any other alternative repair methods, for up to two inches of sidewalk displacement. **Jane Nye** seconded the motion, and it was approved 5/0.

#### **c. Landscaping proposals at Golden Eagle Drive**

**Marcus Cannon** discussed four proposals for additional landscaping enhancements to the corner of Golden Eagle Drive and Lindero Canyon Road, the slope between Sterling Oaks and Golden Nugget Way, the slope between Trousdale Street and Golden Nugget Way, and the corner of Golden Eagle Drive and Kanan Road. The cost for all four proposals totaled \$12,305. **Seema Chandra** said she visited the area with Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Cannon and slopes are causing dirt to flow onto the sidewalk. **Mr. Cannon** said the proposals include shrubs and ground cover to prevent the migration of silt onto the sidewalk when watering or from rain. **Supervisor Parks** suggested that drought tolerant plants should be considered because there is less watering needed, which would save on cost, and is a better choice with climate change. **Jane Nye** said she feels it is critical to switch to drought tolerant plants. **Mr. Cannon** said the plants in the proposal are medium for drought tolerance and he will bring the proposals back with drought tolerant plant options.

#### **b. MAC protocols regarding trees and tree removal**

**Janice Smets** discussed her letter with suggested protocols to address tree removal proposals under \$10,000 that the MAC does not have to approve. **Supervisor Parks** said Oak Park is the only MAC in her district that has a CSA budget and deals with sidewalk repairs and trees, and that the MAC has previously voted on the threshold for CSA funding needing MAC approval. She also expressed appreciation for Mr. Alvarez's support for the MAC's suggestions. The MAC decided to table this item to the next meeting on October 28, 2021.

#### **d. Landscaping Committee appointment**

There were no volunteers from the MAC to join the Landscaping Committee. **Seema Chandra** said she will have to cut back on her site visits.

### **11. Written Communications**

**Jane Nye** reported that issues with emptying trash cans was addressed by PWA Roads and Transportation and she thanked Chuck Alvarez for his assistance. She said she connected with a local resident who is doing her Master's Degree and was interested in speaking with a MAC member. **Seema Chandra** said she also spoke with her.

**Janice Smets** received communication from Jay Kapitz regarding the proposal to remove trees to be discussed at the meeting.

### **12. Future Agenda Items**

- a. MAC protocols regarding trees and tree removal
- b. Presentation on the Calleguas-Las Virgenes Interconnection Project
- c. Presentation on the Pure Water Project

### **13. Adjournment**

**Chair Nye** adjourned the meeting at 9:44 PM.