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SPECIAL TO THE MOORPARK ACORN

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MOORPARK MAKES CHANGES BASED ON GRAND JURY REPORT

Moorpark Mayor Janice Parvin and the city council, city manager and community development director have responded to a report published June 16 by the 2013-2014 Ventura County Grand Jury titled "Moorpark Zoning Compliance, Tracking, and Reporting." The report, triggered by a public complaint, followed up an exhaustive 10-month investigation and included its methodology, major findings and recommendations for improvement.

The grand jury's inquiry found that the city not followed its own Municipal Code and that "inadequate and fragmented" record-keeping allowed a developer to put off submitting permit applications and fees for an extended period.

"Moorpark officials have implemented or committed to implement every one of our recommendations," says Grand Jury Foreman Robert Stewart, "which should have a major positive impact on Moorpark's administration practices."

Among the recommendations being adopted are ones calling for written documentation of code compliance agreements between the city and code violators; expansion and improvements of its permit-log database; and use of a centralized computer database solution to facilitate project tracking, with each step of processing permits or handling violations electronically written up and date-stamped. December 17, 2014, and June 30, 2015, are the two milestone dates by which the various recommendations should be completed.

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The Grand Jury is a civil investigatory panel of 19 citizens created to serve as a voice of the people and a conscience of the community. Jurors are not appointed by politicians; they are volunteers who act as independent eyes and ears of Ventura County residents. Grand jury reports turn a public spotlight on troublesome issues and act as catalysts for improvements. Elected public officials and boards that are subjects of a grand jury report are legally required to respond in writing to specified aspects of the report, and these responses are made public under the report itself.

To access the responses and to view the complete report, log on to <http://grandjury.countyofventura.org>, click on the "Annual Reports" tab, and consult "Fiscal Year 2013-2014."

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