

**Mission Canyon Association
Minutes of Board Meeting
December 6, 2005**

A regular monthly meeting of the Board of directors of the Mission Canyon Association was held at the McVeigh House at the Museum of Natural History on December 6th, 2005, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Present were Tim Steele, Ray Smith, Kathy Koury, Tom Jacobs, Ginger Sledge, Jenny Cushnie, Dorothy Veal, and Bill McCullough. Absent were Ralph Daniel, Randy Reetz, David Vorbeck, James Madison, Remo Ruccione, Sandra Peterson, and Nancy Bertelsen. Guests Present were Dan Meeder and Nancy Johnson.

The minutes of November's meeting were presented. Tim Steele made a motion that the minutes be approved. Board members approved the motion.

Tom Jacobs opened the meeting by proposing the ADRC adopt a new and more professional way to notify the immediate neighbors of proposed building projects in the vicinity. Tom described how for a long while notification has depended on one person (Nancy Bertelsen) to phone and walk the neighborhoods giving out notices a week prior to ADRC meetings. A new system using JDL Specifics, an automated mailing company, which uses a radius map service, could be utilized at \$90 per project to get the word out to surrounding neighbors in a timely and efficient manner. The \$90 includes repeated mailings for projects that come to the committee several times. Tom suggested the MCA ADRC pass the cost on to each applicant as an additional fee on top of the current registration fee of \$75. Another alternative discussed was hiring a part time secretary, like Anita Hodosy, secretary to the County BAR, and again pass on the cost in the form of a fee to applicants. A motion was tabled until Tom gets more information and hears back from Anita about her availability.

Kathy Koury suggested that whichever system is chosen, neighbors should receive the case notifications at least two weeks prior to each meeting.

Next on the agenda, Tim Steele introduced our Association members to J'amy Brown, current President of the Montecito Neighborhood Association. Ginger Sledge invited J'amy Brown to speak to the Board about how the Montecito group functions with its members and the County. J'amy discussed several topics:

1. Historical authority - 60 years old. The MNA has clout with County because of its age.
2. The founding fathers of the MNA had a vision to protect their semi-rural community.
3. The 1927 founders created tools to support their vision - a community plan and the first zoning ordinance for an unincorporated area in California.
4. Up until three years ago MNA had a powerful land use committee and ARC who made judgments which would go on a consent agenda in front of the County Planning Commission. These committees' judgments were rarely if ever challenged or denied. After fifty years of experience these committee members, consisting of independent homeowners, had historical authority, a legal valid authority.
5. Montecito Neighborhood Association gave up or lost a level of power due to forming the MBAR and Planning Commission. The MNA must now face fellow neighbors, members of the MBAR and MPC, and the Association often finds itself in contentious situations over developing projects. The County Counsel is a direct cause of this conflict because the MBAR and Montecito Planning Commission appointees must adhere to County laws. Before they had no County liabilities to be concerned with. MBAR and MPC Members are truly County agents now.
6. Planning Commissioners are lifetime appointments.
7. MNA has seventeen board members consisting of one to two members from each of six geographic districts. The board also has subcommittees - Land Use and Community Involvement.
8. \$Power: the County collects approximately \$60 million of property taxes yearly from Montecito.
9. The Association hired Victoria Greene, a land use consultant and prior County planner, to help educate and guide the board members to learn land use terminology to successfully negotiate projects within the County system. The Association can now talk the same language with the County Staff and discussions between the County

and the MNA are “on point” regarding how the County reviews specific issues and projects.

10. MNA has 1250 parcel members out of 3000. The yearly dues are \$50/pp or \$100/couple.
11. Since the Association is a 501 C4 it can only take membership dues for funding; moneymaking fundraisers are not allowed and the donor cannot write it off.
12. The Montecito Community Foundation was created by the MNA so that the Foundation can raise money and the Association can benefit by asking for grants for activities such as parades, festivities, etc.
13. MNA stands alone and does not join with other local groups to oppose or support issues. The Neighborhood Group Alliance comes to two annual meetings a year hosted by MNA.
14. Pedro Nava, appointed to CA Homeland Security, concerned about lack of disaster preparedness.
15. Regarding disaster recovery plans - MNA has “Neighborhood Watch” and random leader neighbors who carry emergency radios and organize immediate streets and neighborhoods.
16. Regarding land use and antiquated sub-division lots: Five big “in town” law firms hire interns to search the County for antiquated sub-division lots for their developer clients. This is contributing to the current problems cropping up in our semi-rural communities. County Counsel is backing recent land use legislation making it easier for the development of these non-conforming lots. The Climate in SB County is also leaning toward developers because of the philosophical differences of our five Supervisors. “North County” property rights attitudes. Example: Jack Maxwell (lawyer Richard Monk) was denied 5 buildings on six non-conforming lots by the Montecito Planning Commission. He is appealing to the Board of Supervisors and word is that he has four of five of the Supervisors’ votes.
17. Meetings with our Supervisor Carbajal are very important! MNA meets with the First District Supervisor regularly - once a month. Carbajal is politically astute and he gets things done!
18. J’amy discussed the functionality of the Montecito fire district.

In closing, J’amy said we are all being pushed by the State and County and her advice is to keep saying no to preserve what we have and save

for the future. Protect and support Mission Canyon's vision for the community.

Jenny Cushnie informed the Board that MCA has a scheduled meeting with Salud Carbajal, First District Supervisor, Diane Meester, and Steve Chase, at 2pm on January 12th, 2006. The agenda will start with discussing the situation on Orange Grove Avenue and how the County process and its results will affect the entire Mission Canyon for the future.

A land use committee meeting will be held January 5th, 2006 at Kathy Koury's home at 4pm to prepare for the meeting with Salud.

Tim Steele gave members a homework assignment to bring our property tax bills to the next meeting. We want to compare sewer assessment fees. They have not been raised in twenty-five years and there are reports they have been raised for Mission Canyon to between \$250 - \$500.

Nancy Johnson reported that the Botanic Garden is hosting author, Doug Kent, who wrote "Firescaping." Doug will present a workshop for local landscape professionals on May 5th, 2006.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next scheduled monthly meeting of the Mission Canyon Association Board is Tuesday, January 3rd, 2006 at 7:30pm.

Ginger Sledge, Secretary