

Mission Canyon Association
MINUTES
August 4, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

1. Call to order & introductions
Board Members Present: Richard Axilrod, Laurie Dahl, Kellam de Forest, Alex Feldwinn, Darby Feldwinn, Laurie Guitteau, Karl Hutterer, Barbara Lindemann, James Madison, Ray Smith, Kevin Snow, Richard Solomon, Hugh Twibell, Alastair Winn, Jean Yamamura
Board Members Absent: zero (a new MCA record?)
Guests: Luke Swetland, Paulina Conn, Erica Sharghi, Michael Vea (??sp)
2. Minutes of the July 7, 2015 meeting – accepted as written
3. Treasurer’s report (Read on January, April, July, October), Jean Yamamura – accepted as written
4. Old Business
 - 4.1 Museum of Natural History update (Luke Swetland)

Two quick things: (1) The Museum is on the consent agenda for City Council meeting to approve the annexation of 3 Museum parcels to the City. If approved this issue will then go to LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission) for approval. (2) On Wednesday (5th) morning the dome will be placed on the Museum’s new planetarium. There is also a new telescope that will begin being used sometime in mid-September.
 - 4.2 Botanic Garden update (Steve Windhagen)

Steve reported via email that “construction continues to move forward”, that “Trails and Tails event” will be August 15th”, and to check website (<http://www.sbbg.org>) for further information regarding upcoming events.
 - 4.3 Road work and brush clearance schedule (Ray Smith)

Ray reported that the fire crew was not available, probably because of backup for the fires in Northern California. He proposed that MCA hire someone to chip and move the dry brush that folks have placed beside Tunnel road. This proposal was approved and Laurie agreed to arrange to have this done asap. Ray to send an email to Capt. Rob Hazard informing him of this proposed work. Alex and Barbara said they would take chips from this clearing.
 - 4.4 Cell phone tower in Mission Canyon (Barbara Lindemann)

Barbara reported that she had contacted Jay Higgnes (Verizon) and he said they don’t do story poles but could put a truck with lift on the spot to indicate the height. He also indicated that sound from the tower should not be a concern. There was considerable discussion and the following points were made:

 - it is important to understand the role of improved cell phone communication within the Canyon with respect to public safety (fire, emergency response, etc.)
 - presumably, better communication would be for the common good

- we do not want something that is a blight on the canyon or disruptive of nearby neighbors

A committee (Hugh Twibell, Richard Solomon, Alex Feldwin) will further investigate this issue and report back to the Board.

4.5 Endangered species designation for chaparral in the Goleta Valley Community Plan (Ray)

Kellam reported that he had attended the Planning Association briefing on environmental issues associated with the Goleta Valley Community Plan noting that only four types of chaparral were covered in the proposed Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) overlay.

Ray reported that:

- Environmental Defense Center (EDC) folk had attended the July 16th Fire Safe Council (FSC) meeting where they had repeated, as one of the benefits of protecting chaparral, that “chaparral actually helps reduce fire hazards”. Rob told them that this statement is very misleading, that ignition is only one aspect of creating defensible space for communities. Other key factors are flame height, intensity of burn and creation of embers all of which are more dangerous with chaparral than grass. He asked that EDC not spread this misleading information to the public. It was also noted that in 100 years of SB County fire history there are no recorded examples of a grass fire burning down a home. Since 1964 we have lost 1298 structures in wildfires burning in chaparral fuel type. Since 1964 four firefighters and one civilian have lost their lives in chaparral wildfires burning in SB County, and in the 2009 Jesusita Fire alone there were six entrapments involving firefighters and civilians resulting in three serious injuries and over 20 moderate injuries.

- County Planning Commission has accepted the Environmental Defense Center’s (EDC) contention that there should be an ESH overlay on chaparral. Ray noted that Capt. Rob’s admonition not to spread misinformation had been ignored. The issue will next go County Board of Supervisors (BOS).

- the critical issue – how to create defensible space for communities - has not been addressed and most certainly should be addressed prior to acceptance of the ESH overlay of chaparral.

Karl commented that this points out a real problem with our public process and suggested that what is needed is a dialogue with all concerned parties. It was noted that Steve Windhager had hosted several meetings at the Botanic Garden (attended by representatives from environmental groups, homeowner associations and most County fire agencies) in an attempt to find common ground. After several meetings, they were abandoned with considerable polarization remaining.

Laurie commented that the best way to deal with this issue is to involve other homeowner associations in this discussion. The fire committee will see what can be done in this regard.

4.6 Vacation rental (Hugh) – county wide

Hugh reported that the County, as well as the City of SB, are holding meetings to discuss vacation rentals. Web site for further information is here:

<http://longrange.sbcountyplanning.org/programs/Short-term%20rentals/STR%20Workshop%20Presentation%20Westmont.pdf>

Short Term Rentals (STRs) issues discussed:

- create nuisance issues (noise, parking, traffic, ect.)
- effects community character
- establishes commercial uses in residential zones
- impacts housing stock
- promotes tourism
- creates revenue for community
- defrays costs of mortgage

The Land Use Committee (Kevin, Hugh, Laurie D.) will investigate the subject of vacation/short term rentals and report back to the Board. Next public meeting

Thursday, August 20th

6:00 p.m.

Westmont College

Page Hall - Multipurpose Room

955 La Paz Road, Santa Barbara

For a campus map visit

http://www.westmont.edu/_visitors/pdf/map.pdf

- 4.7 Discussion regarding the City annexation hearing of museum property
Richard S commented that we should want LAFCO to insist that MCCP is part of the conditions for annexation. Luke noted the Museum agrees with the specific provisions of the MCCP.
Paulina Conn read a statement urging the MCA Board to oppose the proposed annexation of the three Museum parcels into the City on the grounds that this would compromise the rural character of said parcels. It was noted that our Board has already addressed this issue, and previously voted to support the Museum's request. Further discussion ensued.
5. New Business
 - 5.1 Graffiti removal under the bridge at the water tunnel, City or Water Dept. responsibility?
Hugh reported that he had been in contact with the City Water Dept regarding graffiti under the Tunnel trail bridge. He noted that 2 years ago he was successful in getting the City to remove the graffiti but that this time he appeared to be given a bureaucratic run around – bounced between Water and Road Departments. It was agreed that we would continue to push the city to clear up the graffiti asap so as to not encourage other graffiti makes to follow
 - 5.2 Culling/cleaning/repairing the MCA storage locker (Laurie Guitteau) – Laurie reported that she and Owen had made a pass a culling and cleaning and repairing the MCA storage locker. There was a rousing thank you to Laurie and Owen for this effort.
6. Additional Committee Reports (as needed)
 - 6.1 Newsletter (Jean Yamamura)
 - 6.2 Architectural Design Review (Hugh Twibell)
 - 6.3 Parking & Traffic (Dick Axilrod)
 - 6.4 Land Use Committee (Kevin Snow)
 - 6.5 Membership (Laurie Guitteau)
 - 6.6 Fire Committee (Ray Smith)
 - 6.7 Mission Heritage Trail Association (Alastair Winn)
 - 6.8 Web site (Alex Feldwinn)

Next meeting, Sept. 1, 2015
7:30 MacVeagh House
Natural History Museum

Respectively submitted,
Ray Smith,
secretary