

Mission Canyon Association
Minutes of the Board of Directors

October 06, 2015

1. Call to order & introductions. Board members introduced themselves and guests were asked to sign in.

• Board Members:

○ Present: Karl Hutterer, Darby Feldwinn, Alex Feldwinn, Richard Solomon, Kellam de Forest, Alastair Winn, Hugh Twibell, Ray Smith, Jean Yamamura, Laurie Dahl, Steve Windhager (SBBG), Luke Swetland (MNH).

• Absent: Barbara Lindemann, Richard Axilrod, James Madison, Kevin Snow, Laurie Guitteau.

• Guests: Brittany Burrows, Paulina Conn, Sven Nebelung, Judi Doernberg, Bill Urbany, Laura Urbany.

2. Minutes of September 01, 2015 accepted as written.

3. Treasurer's Report. No questions. Accepted as written.

4. Old Business:

4.1. Museum of Natural History update (Luke Swetland)

• School groups started back at the Museum. They are there from opening till 2:00pm. The Museum is submitting an application to the City police department requesting a temporary road closure for 3 days in March 2016 (Thursday March 3 - Saturday March 5). Closure would be along frontage of museum which would allow 100 extra people to attend by putting an extra tent in front of Museum. Event always sells out. Road closure is for Museum's annual gala / fundraiser. 2016 is Museum's 100 year anniversary. Does not impact evacuation for Museum or for other neighbors. Neighbors can still exit on Puesta del Sol or the other direction on Mission Canyon Road.

4.2. Botanic Garden update (Steve Windhager)

• The Garden is working on the new parking lot for the new Conservation Center. This is causing construction vehicles to park on Mission Canyon Road. The Garden is getting calls about this from neighbors, but they are parked outside of the fog lanes so there is nothing that the Garden can do about it. The Conservation Center is coming along very well. MCA Board is welcome to come to "Wishes In The Walls" party on October 21 to walk through construction site and leave name and wishes for what building will achieve in conservation inside the walls.

• On a separate note, the Garden just finished installing hardscape, instead of pavers, for the Home Demonstration Garden. It is approved by HLAC and the Garden feels that it is promising for use in other parts of the Garden. Looks good and seems to wear well. Product is "Ecopave", and it is made by

a company called Mid-West.

- On a separate note, Garden's grant for pilot study on oak trees and chaparral was not approved.

4.3. Cell phone tower in Mission Canyon, committee report

- We had 220 responses to cell phone tower survey. The data is all over the place — inconclusive. No correlation to who one's service provider is AT&T, Verizon, etc. No correlation to type of phone. The overall impression is that more than 50% of survey respondents would like better cell phone reception, either when they are in their homes or when they are driving/walking along the road in the Canyon. We did not get specific street addresses from respondents, so we can't draw any correlations in regard to that. Richard suggests that the mini-towers (repeaters) attached to telephone poles (as opposed to one mega tower) might be preferable, to provide better reception to the most residents. There is some debate as to whether the questions in the survey were leading — i.e. obviously if people were asked whether they will want better cell reception, without hearing the consequences, they will say yes.
- The Committee does not have an official recommendation for the Board. Alex's opinion is that because 50%+ of the Canyon has stated that they would like better reception we need to address the issue.
- Alastair said that the house repeaters and pole repeaters interfere with each other, so it is not an option to just install a lot of repeaters around the Canyon.
- Steve (SBBG) suggests that we might put the tower next to the new Conservation Center, without being intrusive to residents.
- Jay (from Verizon) is going to come to a Board meeting once he has options from the Verizon engineers on other locations for the tower.
- Richard Solomon suggests that the Committee contact Jay and explore the possibility of putting a new tower by the Conservation Center, and then report back to the Board. The Committee will also explore the mini-tower (repeater) option. The Board is in favor of this option.

4.4. Short-Term Rentals (Hugh Twibell)

- Hugh attended the Montecito Association meeting today re short-term rentals (STR's). They voted to send a letter to the Montecito Planning Commission and the County Planning Commission suggesting that all STR's be banned. Zoning ordinance does not address STR's at all. Board of Supervisors wants to know whether to address it. The Montecito Association feels that STR's are a commercial enterprise, and that commercial enterprises are not allowed in residential zones, so the County should ban them entirely.
- Debate ensues. Sven suggests that not all STR's are disruptive. Hugh points out that a lot of them are party rentals or events. Everyone agrees that there should be a distinction between owner-occupied STR's and non-owner occupied STR's.
- This will go to the County Planning Commission on November 4.

- The Board suggests doing a survey of Mission Canyon residents. Richard, Alex, Hugh, and Laurie Dahl will confer on the survey questions and send out a survey.

4.5. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat designation for chaparral in the Goleta Valley Community Plan (Ray Smith)

- County fire department has made a lot of progress on this issue in the last month. The Environmental Defense Council wanted all chaparral designated as an environmentally sensitive habitat. Turns out that the biology report that the EDC was relying on does NOT say that all chaparral is endangered (as the EDC was originally claiming it did). Steve (SBBG) says that some chaparral is endangered, but not all. County Staff has amended the Plan to reflect the correct designation for ESH. Also the Fire Safe Council recommended that a Community Wildfire Protection Plan be created for the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan, and require an update to the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan Safety Element updating defensible space fuel reduction treatments for the County. It was also noted that SB County Fire, Cal Fire, and the US Forest Service are also exempt from any county permit requirement for fuel modification. Ray suggests that the Board should support the new changes.
- In addition, the Santa Barbara Mountain Communities Defense Zones Project has been proposed by the District Ranger. This Project will create a community wildfire protection plan for the 8 communities from Painted Cave to Refugio Canyon. The District Ranger wants to hear comments by Oct 31. Ray recommends that we write a letter in support of the Ranger's effort because it is similar to the Canyon's and County Fire Vegetation Management's recent effort to create a chaparral buffer zone at the top of the Canyon.
- Paulina Conn asserted that wind is spreading all the wild fires, and you cannot build a fire break large enough to protect the Canyon from a wild fire. Ray says that the proposed fire breaks would reduce the flame length to 6-8 ft., thereby making it possible for the fire fighters to fight the fire. Chaparral causes a much larger flame length (20-40 ft.) which is very difficult if not impossible for the fire fighters to fight. Ray cites statistics on how many properties have been lost from grass fires (none) versus chaparral fires (1298) historically in Santa Barbara County.
- Ray recommends that we write a letter supporting the Santa Barbara Mountain Communities Defense Zones Project Proposed Action from Los Padres National Forest — Santa Barbara Ranger District report.

Alastair moves, Kellam seconds, all in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

5. New Business

5.1. 849 Cheltenham Road proposed building project (presented by guests Bill and Lara Urbany)

- Bill and Lara Urbany objected to the proposed building project at 849

Cheltenham Road (narrow vacant lot at the bottom of Exeter). They brought a copy of the Mission Canyon Residential Design Guidelines. According to the Urbanys, the original design was rejected by SBAR because it was too large and had too many intrusive windows. According to the Urbanys, the MCA endorsed the project.

Hugh Twibell clarified — the project came before the Architectural Review Committee of the MCA Board. The Committee issued a letter in April 2014 with proposed architectural modifications but supporting the overall design. This letter went to the SBAR, the SBAR reviewed the project, and came back with harsher comments. The SBAR finally approved the project, the Urbanys appealed it to the Planning Commission, but the Planning Commission supported the SBAR. After further architectural modifications, the Planning Commission rejected the Urbanys appeal. Now the Urbanys are appealing it to the Board Of Supervisors. The Urbanys are concerned about why the Mission Canyon Residential Design Guidelines are not being followed. Hugh points out that these are “guidelines”, they are NOT zoning ordinances.

- Steve suggested that the MCA clarify that we have not reviewed these current plans and have not endorsed them. Hugh offered to write a letter to that effect. Hugh does not want to review the new plans, because the issue has moved beyond our jurisdiction now.

Richard Solomon moved that the Board write a letter. Karl Hutterer seconded it. All in favor.

None opposed. Motion passes. The Board will send a letter to the County Board of Supervisors, and we will CC the Urbanys.

5.2. MHTA report and request (Alastair Winn)

- MHTA is moving forward with a virtual design. The County doesn't have funding available to proceed quickly, so the progress is slow. A 3D design of a corridor was donated to the MHTA. The MHTA is providing this to Cal Poly SLO, hoping that the Engineering department will have a contest for students to design bridge concepts for the proposed West footbridge. The students will have untouchables and accurate plot plans to use as guidelines.

5.3. Banning of open fires during periods of high fire danger

- A property at the top of Mission Canyon Road has had an RV parked at the top for a few weeks. The RV had a campfire a few weeks ago in the peak of the fire season on a hot day, and they refused to put the fire out. The Fire Department responded to a report of smoke, but couldn't do anything because it is on private property. It has been suggested that we should go to the Board Of Supervisors and ask for an emergency ordinance to make open fires within the Canyon illegal when the Forest Service says that they are illegal. Ray thinks we should take this up with Supervisor Carbajal and report back at the next meeting. The only existing guideline is that the fire must be less than 3 feet x 3 feet.

6. Additional Committee Reports:

• **Ray makes a motion to send Rob Hazard a letter thanking him for excellent brush clearing efforts in the Canyon. Second, Jean Yamamura. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.**

Next meeting November 3, 2015
7:30pm MacVeagh House
Museum of Natural History

Respectfully submitted.
Laurie Dahl (Acting Secretary)