

Minutes of the Meeting of the Northridge East Neighborhood Council Board Meeting

April 15, 2009

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:07PM by President Steve Patel.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Peter McCarty.
3. Roll Call: Steve Patel, Thomas Baker (excused), Peter McCarty, Barry Greenberg, Kelly Lord, Pamela Butts (excused), Yeprem Davoodian, Don Dwiggins, Nestor Fantini, Alice McCain, Lucille Meehan, Caroline Moore, Brittny McCarthy, Connor Lansdale, Steven Ramirez. Quorum was present.
4. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes from March 18, 2009 made by Mr. McCarty, 2nd by Mr. Greenberg. None opposed, motion passed.
5. Comments from Public Officials:
 - a. Council District 12 – John Bwarie discussed the city’s budget cuts and how they are going to affect balancing the budget over the next six weeks. The budget will be available on the city’s website early the week of April 20th. Members of the community can sign up for Council District 12’s newsletter on their website to receive updates. There will be an Earth Day Celebration at Chatsworth Park to clean up trash and graffiti April 25th at 9:00Am. Citrus Sunday is May 3rd. People who would like information regarding the city’s stimulus money should contact the mayor’s office for information.
 - b. Department of Neighborhood Empowerment – No appearance.
 - c. CSUN Police Department – Chief Anne Glavin discussed the auto traffic/pedestrian problem in and around the university. Cell phones and MP3 players cause distractions for both drivers and pedestrians. The Department has created safety education fliers available around the campus in order to make the public aware of driving laws. Mr. Patel hopes DOT, CSUN, NENC, Councilman Smith’s office and the community can work together to make everyone more aware and safe.
 - d. Officer Kathy Bennett – Officer Bennett updated the NENC on the traffic taskforces she discussed at the March meeting. The council suggested more patrols around schools before and after school due to large amounts of traffic from parents dropping off students. Officer Bennett also announced upcoming events, including the Pancake Breakfast at the Devonshire Area Police station May 16th and the Devonshire Area Annual Town Hall Meeting May 28th which will discuss the impact of local foreclosed homes on the neighborhood.
6. Public Comments
 - a. Melrose Castillo addressed the Council regarding Green Neighborhoods LA’s mission to educate people on environmental awareness, including green power, recycling, renewable energy, and city services.
 - b. Dianne Brooks wants to grow registration for Salute to Recreation and wants to grow tennis in Northridge. Her flier illustrated how several parks and schools have received “quick start” tennis kits, including balls, nets, and racquets, and P.E. teachers have received free coaching workshops.

Ms. Brooks would like to come back to the NENC and create a collaborative effort to retain and continue to grow tennis in Northridge.

7. Old Business

- a. 18240 Superior Subdivision Updates – No status change.
- b. Zelzah Speed Limit – Motion to adopt resolution as formal NENC position read by Mr. Patel regarding the Zelzah Speed Limit. Position of NENC is to not support a speed limit increase on Zelzah Avenue. If the city does make a speed limit increase, the NENC has made a list of safety conditions they would like implemented. Motion 2nd by Mr. Lord. After a brief discussion between NENC and the public, Mr. Greenberg called for the question and the motion was passed unanimously.
- c. City Ethics Training – Mr. Patel reminded the NENC members to complete their ethics training online or in person by June 1st.
- d. Rollback of White Oak Zoning and other PLUM Projects – Mr. Dwiggins discussed the need of a land use consultant which can be shared by more than one local NC.
- e. Salute to Recreation – Salute to Recreation’s name has been changed to the Hawaiian Festival; other NC’s are also donating money for Saturday’s fireworks show.
- f. 18259 Halstead St. – Pastor Sunoko Lin addressed the Council and the public regarding his church’s desire to help CSUN’s immigrant students learn English and American culture while they study. Pastor Lin said his church was unable to find a proper commercial zone that fit their needs and that is why they purchased a residence to start their church as they wanted a location close to the university. A long discussion followed between Pastor Lin, many concerned neighbors and the NENC regarding parking problems, noises issues, and the fear that more commercial buildings will move in to the residential community. Mr. Patel expressed his concerns that churches do not legally belong in RA-1 zones, which is what 18259 Halstead is zoned as. Public Hearings regarding the issue will be announced to anyone who lives within a 500 ft. radius and will also be posted on the lot itself. Pat LoPresti gave a short opposition presentation and reiterated the neighborhood’s concerns and invited Pastor Lin to a meeting with the neighborhood which he accepted. Mr. Patel wants to defer all future discussion on the issue to the Land Use Committee.

8. New Business

- a. Gautam Dutta from the New American Foundation gave a presentation regarding Instant Runoff Voting, or IRV. Several American cities and other countries have successfully implemented IRV in which voters vote for not only their first choice of candidate, but their second and third choice as well. IRV can eliminate the need for multiple elections and save money. A discussion between the NENC and Mr. Dutta ensued regarding issues about accuracy, disenfranchising voters, and how counting IRV votes works. Mr. Patel would like to invite the New American Foundation to return to another meeting for a lengthier discussion.

- b. Budget Update and Fund Balance – Mr. Lord discussed the NENC’s need to spend their current budget by June 1st before they lose their money. A short discussion about the budget ensued including the following budget spending.
 - I. LADOT – Zelzah Speed Limit: Up to \$75,000 to fund up to two projects for Smart Crosswalks
 - II. Sidewalk Cleanup: \$12,000 for vendors
 - III. New Vision Committee: \$25,000
 - IV. Revision of Previous Allocation for Land Use Consultant: \$250/hr for up to \$7,500
 - V. Education Allocation: \$25,000
 - VI. Special Projects Coordinator/ Facilitator: \$9,000
 - VII. Outreach Projects/ Miscellaneous:
 - 1. Reusable Shopping Bags: \$2,000
 - 2. Logo Upgrade: \$500 - \$1,000
 - 3. Nametags: \$500 (previously budgeted)
 - 4. Recognition Plaques
 - c. Mr. Lansdale made a motion to approve all proposed budgetary spending items, 2nd by Ms. McCain. Motion passed unanimously.
9. Committee Reports
- a. Environmental Committee – Mr. McCarty introduced Kathy Arnos who briefly addressed the Council regarding her desire for the NENC Environmental Committee to work with schools in the neighborhood on environmental issues.
 - b. Ms. McCarthy reminded everyone of the Grand Reunion at CSUN on April 25th. Everyone is welcome and attendees are encouraged to RSVP on the university’s website.
 - c. Mr. Lord wants to acknowledge and thank Mr. McCarty for representing the NENC at the Breathe LA event.
10. Mr. Patel thanked Weiler’s Restaurant for providing the refreshments for NENC’s March meeting and The Gilded Rose Manor for providing the refreshments for NENC’s April meeting.
11. Mr. Patel adjourned the meeting at 9:08PM.