

# NIVA MEETING RECORD

March 14, 2007

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. PA-10 JAMBOREE MEDICAL/SCIENCE CENTER COMMITTEE [Nancy LaPorte] - An e-mail was sent Mar 4 to Doug Williford, Dir. of Com. Dev., for the City expressing objection to the lack of landscaped berm or hedge to screen parking lot vehicles from view of motorists on the SB I-5 Freeway especially in light of the proximity to the City of Irvine Gateway Entry Monument Sign.

## OLD BUSINESS

1. EL TORO MCAS REUSE - NIVA reps (Melvold, Ravenscroft, and Zelinko) met on Feb 27 with Heritage Fields reps (Com. Affairs VP Carol Wold and Mgr. of Engrg. & Planning/Design Jennifer Bohlen) to continue the discussion on the connectivity of trails from North Irvine into the Great Park. The meeting primarily addressed the proposed trail paralleling the railroad from Sand Canyon to the Great Park. There was discussion on the complexity created by the many interested agencies and private parties. Heritage Fields will compile a drawing which indicates the available ROW along the south side of the tracks and the respective adjacent owners and facilities in this segment.

On Feb 24, the letter agreed to at the last meeting was sent to the City Council regarding the need for the SR-133 Corridor /Trabuco interchange at time of opening of Great Park Main Entrance on Trabuco. Copies were distributed at the meeting. In an April 1, 2006 drawing of Transportation Corridor Agency's Near-Term Capital Projects with Funding Years 2007-2011, the interchange is indicated as Project #5, which also includes improvements at the Santiago Canyon/SR-241 interchange, and a cost projection of \$35.1 Million. Elliot was told by phone call with Mike Endres, ETC Corridor Mgr., that the City of Irvine is actually the lead on the project. The Irvine Co. (thru consultant RBF) is guiding the project through Caltrans approval process. Currently the process is at the Project Study Report stage.

One of the identified problems is that the interchange is less than a mile from the I-5/SR-133 interchange. No explanation was volunteered as to why this is considered a problem. Endres stated that funding must be 100% by TIC. Funding has previously been considered to be shared by TIC, O.C. Great Park Corp., and Heritage Fields. Even Irvine was anticipated to be a fair share funder. However, the recently released estimated cost for the Great Park prepared by The Great Park Design Team does not indicate any funding to go towards this interchange or any off-site roadway improvements.

Additionally, the timeline for the interchange is not good as Caltrans can not make a decision until after the California Transportation Commission and Federal Highway Administration have each reviewed and approved the concept which is not expected before about 2008. Upon receipt of all approvals, the design is expected to take a year and construction from 18 to 24 months. Consequently, we are looking at 2010 to 2011 at best -- far after the expected opening of the Great Park. It then appears strange that the City could approve development projects which assume the timely installation of this interchange when it can not even be assured of either approval or anywhere near a timely installation.

As agreed at the last meeting, a letter was sent Feb 28 to the OC Great Park Corp Board requesting it take a formal position against the expansion and change of character of the Musick Jail in close proximity to the Park. Copies of the letter were distributed at the meeting.

At the Mar 6 meeting of the City's Guideway Demonstration Project Community Advisory Team [CAT], a summary was presented of the staff's progress since the Dec meeting and the responses received from the City Council at its Feb 27 study session. Essentially, the 4 alternatives most likely will be reduced to 3 with the possible elimination of the Personal Rapid Transit alternative as this alternative does not qualify for funding under Proposition 116. The planning is being kept in compliance with requirements of Prop. 116 to assure qualification for funding. No funding can come from the Great Park. If an alternative is

selected, the system is not expected to be in service prior to 2012, i.e., some time after the first phase of the Great Park is expected to be in operation. During the presentation, it was announced by Jolene Hayes of the consultant team that the Great Park is currently not being planned to "fully park" the Great Park to accommodate special events expected to be held at the Park. Consequently, alternative means to access the Park for special events will be necessary with some sort of parking arrangements off site possibly along the Guideway system and Metrolink stations. The next meeting of the CAT is tentatively scheduled for early evening of Thurs., April 26.

2. **NORTH IRVINE LIBRARY** - *The Irvine Library Services Advisory Committee met on Feb 15. The meeting centered around 2 subjects: (1) the County's concurrence with but unwillingness to consider any financial assistance with the City's desire to upgrade the 2 existing branch libraries and the construction of addition libraries within the City including a large metropolitan library probably at the Great Park; and (2) the content of the Library Implementation Plan the Committee is to draft and propose to the Council. The next meeting was held Mar 12.*

3. **COMPLETION OF PETERS CANYON WASH AND WALNUT TRAIL "GAPS"** - An e-mail was sent Feb 28 to City PWs Dir. Gomez inquiring as to the status/progress on the installation of signage wherever the trails intersect roadways. In a Feb 28 e-mail from Asst. City Mgr Landers, she stated that the signs have been ordered and are expected to be installed this month.

4. **HEAVY VEHICLE ROADWAY RESTRICTIONS [Jerry Kirchgessner]** - Per Feb 28 e-mail from Asst. City Mgr. Landers, this item is to be one of the topics of the next meeting with her.

5. **BUILDING FACILITIES MASTER PLAN** - [Awaiting receipt of Draft Plan from the City promised no later than end of Summer (See June 14, 2006 Meeting Record)]. In a Feb 28 e-mail from Asst. City Mgr. Landers, she simply states that "the document was never finalized and is not currently available". However, that response ignores the fact that the draft was promised by the Dir. of Com. Services McAllister by the end of last Summer and that Com. Services staff is using the document as a supporting reference for the 5-year park capital program as presented to the Com. Services Commission.

6. **ORCHARD HILLS VILLAGE [PA-1]LAND-USE PLANNING** - Melvold gave a presentation with pictures to the Planning Commission [PC] at the Feb 15 meeting about the change of grading in Orchard Hills development along Portola Pkwy which was never previously disclosed publicly prior to approval. A significant change in the final level of the grading parallel to Portola Parkway thoroughly blocks any view of the hillsides to the north but more importantly creates an imposing mass above the roadway. The intent was to have the PC address the issue of grading and the lack of opportunity for public awareness prior to approval since approval is done administratively by the City staff only, therefore, not requiring public notice. A change in the City's procedure is sought to assure public awareness prior to approval and an opportunity for public input into the decision process. Per a phone conversation with Melvold, PC Com. Greg Smith stated that he intended to bring the matter up for discussion at the PC pre-meeting on Mar 15 and would relay back to NIVA the outcome.

7. **CITY-WIDE TRAFFIC NOISE ATTENUATION STUDY** - In Nov. 2001, the City Council held a study session on the subject but continued any further action at the time. Per Doug Williford, Dir. of Com. Dev. for Irvine, this study has been shelved indefinitely. It was agreed at the meeting that this item should be closed and that NIVA should bring the matter of traffic noise increases to the City Council's attention during the consideration of the proposed widening of Culver from Walnut to Scottsdale. This project is expected to increase noise levels in this area. [ITEM CLOSED]

8. **STATE BILL AB406 ON PROJECT EIR PREPARATION REQUIRING INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS** - This bill has apparently died in Assembly committee as there is no current indication of this bill being active. Suggest the item be [ITEM TO BE CLOSED]

9. JEFFREY OPEN-SPACE SPINE - In a Feb 28 e-mail response received from Asst. City Mgr. Landers, she states that "...staff does verify the value the City is getting" in reference to the credit calculations of the acreage to be "paid" TIC for improvements in Segment 2 of the Jeffrey Spine. She goes on to acknowledge that no understanding was reached at the Jan 17 "outstanding issues" meeting in connection with past credit calculations. Her willingness to get an independent assessment of estimated value of improvements was conditioned apparently on reaching an agreement on the overall approach for the calculation. She stresses that no such agreement was reached and apparently neither she nor staff is doing anything more to verify the accuracy of the past calculations. [Notes of the meeting taken by Melvold contrasted with this recollection in that Landers had agreed to get an independent assessment as a means of resolving the disagreement and not that an agreement had to be reached first before she would get the independent assessment.] Landers is however willing to meet again to continue the discussion if NIVA is interested. Ravenscroft indicated that he would be interested in attending the meeting should it be scheduled. Melvold would check with Kiser also. Because of the detailed material involved, a review of the previous calculations prior to the meeting would be almost a necessity. Melvold would arrange for the review.

10. "SMART" PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OF YALE & GRADE-SEPARATED CROSSING FOR VENTA SPUR TRAILS - Sent an e-mail Feb 28 to PWs Dir. Gomez inquiring into the status of the Jeffrey overcrossing consultant study and on the investigation of options for improving the safety at the Venta Spur Trail crossing of Yale Ave. on the Jeffrey overcrossing. In a responding e-mail the same day, Asst. City Mgr. Landers stated that Public Works will be (1) installing new signs in a couple of weeks indicating that pedestrians can go either to the left or right to get to a crosswalk for safe crossing and (2) putting in a crosswalk at the Montecello/Yale intersection to facilitate crossing at that corner. Melvold sent a Mar 4 e-mail to the City essentially criticizing this "fix" as ineffective in alleviating the risk and stating that it does little beyond maybe reducing the responsibility/liability to the City in the event of an injury.

The City has installed signs along Harvard Avenue near the UCI campus which say "Senior Citizens Area" and indicate a reduced speed limit of 25 mph. Either side of this zone, the speed limit is 45 mph. This reduced speed zone was implemented due to the nearby assisted-living facility on Harvard. Per City spokesperson Judy Pal, the reduced speed zone is to provide additional safety for senior citizens who regularly walk across Harvard in that area. Since Jeffrey is a 6-lane major arterial with a 55 mph speed limit between Irvine Blvd. and Trabuca, it would seem that similar safety concern for seniors (and children) attempting to get to the Jeffrey Open-Space Spine would warrant similar special consideration. Requiring seniors and children to cross at either the Irvine Blvd. or the Bryan intersections is not comparable consideration. In either case, they are required to cross 8-lanes of traffic and if unable must await another signal cycle in a narrow median with high speed traffic and with no button to push to actuate the pedestrian walk sign. Additionally at Irvine Blvd., the pedestrians must traverse the unsignaled free right-turn. Is this just another example of differential treatment between the north and the south by the City?

It should also be noted, that several of the pedestrian-crossing embedded light systems have been installed at The Spectrum though granted these were done by TIC on private property.

11. NORTH IRVINE SENIOR CENTER - Melvold received a phone call from Com. Dev. Dir. Williford regarding a question on the Mormon Church's ultimate use of the balance of their property at Bryan/Jeffrey. This inquiry indicated that he was involved in investigating the suggestion of potential use of this site for a senior center as previously suggested to Councilmember Agran by NIVA.

12. REPLACEMENT WITH CO-LOCATION WIRELESS TOWER IN NORTHWOOD SHOPPING CENTER - Suggest closing until resurrected by the applicant and/or City. [ITEM TO BE CLOSED]

13. **MANAGEMENT OF OPEN-SPACE MOU** - Last Feb 13, the City Council approved a payment of \$49,373 to the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve Trust to initiate the development of a Northern Open Space Management Plan to preserve and manage the open space (2,772 acres) in the northern foothills. The land is expected to be donated by TIC possibly in pieces to the City in the 2008-2012 time frame. The plan would include ways of preserving sensitive habitats, maintaining and restoring existing trails, designing and building new trails, and increasing public access programs. A key effort will be to determine what part of the land is to be preserved as natural wildlife areas and what is to be open to the public. Mike O'Connell is the executive director of the Trust.

14. **WB BRYAN BUS-STOP AT YALE** - [Awaiting contact from R. Sandzimier for meeting with City on the City staff's final recommended design.] Melvold sent an e-mail on Mar 4 urging Sandzimier to move this matter along with Community Services.

15. **REFURBISHMENT OF NORTHWOOD SHOPPING CENTER** - [No response to date from Business Properties Dev. Co. to NIVA's July 17 letter.] The general position of the attendees was that NIVA wants to be in the planning loop should any change be proposed to the City by the Center's owner. There was a general concern about the current increase in nuisance or blight associated with the Center. Klein agreed to draft a letter which would go to the City expressing the general concern of NIVA membership for signature by Melvold.

16. **CULVER DRIVE/WALNUT AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT** - The City has noticed the public on Feb 22 of the issuance of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Culver Drive-Walnut Avenue Intersections Improvements dated Feb 21, 2007. The Draft is out for a 30-day public review which closes on Mar 26. A PC hearing is anticipated in April. Basically, little has changed in design for the proposed project since the previous preliminary Draft reviewed by NIVA dated June 19, 2006. Though Elliott had clearly requested that the City hold a public outreach meeting in the neighborhood of the project and had been subsequently informed such a meeting had been approved by the then PW Dir. Bryant, the public notice announced a Public Information Meeting to be held at 5 PM on Wed., Mar 14 at City Hall. Not only does the location disregard the previous request and agreement but schedules the meeting on the evening of NIVA's regular monthly meeting. City Hall is well aware of NIVA's meeting schedule.

The proposed Project will be going to only a hearing before the City Council for approval. There will be no Planning Commission hearing since the project originated within the City. Therefore, the public will have only one opportunity to be heard and possibility affect desired changes to the Project.

NIVA reps (Elliott, Kirchgessner, McFadden, Melvold, and Zelinko) met on Mar 1 at City Hall with City Planner Faredeh Lyons and City consultants Rock Miller (Katz, Okitsu & Associates), Ludwig Smeets (Norris-Repke traffic engrs.), and Lori Trottier (Michael Brandman Associates environmental consultants) to discuss the details of the latest revision of the proposed plan for the Project. The discussion covered many aspects of the proposal. The meeting assisted in explaining some of the proposed modifications and understanding others. However, after more than 3 hours of discussions, the only concession of sort extended was that the City, with consultant support, would check further into whether an actual bus turnout could be placed on the WB Walnut west of Culver.

The most serious objection to the overall plan as voiced by NIVA reps is the failure of the City to propose a coordinated plan for the entire section of Culver from Walnut to Trabuco, i.e., the widening of the NB Culver from 3 lanes to 4 over the entire length. Instead, the City is proposing widening of Culver from Walnut to Scottsdale while Caltrans is leading the widening from the I-5 SB offramp intersection with Culver to Trabuco. There is no plan or effort underway to widen the short but critical section in the middle between Scottsdale and the I-5 SB off-ramp/Culver intersection which would remain 3 lanes! All 3 segments must be widened simultaneously for the "improvements" to accomplish anything and they mus

be constructed simultaneously to minimize the period of construction congestion, etc. imposed on the neighborhood.

Funding for this segment of the widening comes from OCTA Measure M money and the City has a deadline of July 1 for having at least a design contract executed or loose the funds. Regarding the missing segment, Lyons stated that it usually takes 6+ months to receive a response from OCTA once an application has been submitted. Even then, if approved, the funding time frame could be anytime in the future. Consequently, unless heroic efforts are put forth immediately, it is unlikely that a consolidated design and construction of the entire section from Walnut to Trabuco can have any possibility of being constructed at one time. NIVA reps expressed the absolute need for such. Lyons agreed to take the matter back to her supervisors for consideration.

Because of the need to submit a response to the City and due to (A) the length and complexity of the list of concerns and (B) the need to have a copy of the Draft to review the comments, it was decided to have a few key players (Elliott, Kirchgessner, McFadden) review Melvold's draft of NIVA's results and to complete and forward the response to the City. Copies of the 12-page Mar 13 response were distributed at the meeting.

17. PUBLIC STORAGE FACILITY EXPANSION - On Feb 23, NIVA received a copy of the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Public Storage Project dated Jan., 2007 from the City along with a Notice of Intent. The public review period for the Draft is Feb. 13 to March 14, 2007. The Project application includes not only approval of the Conditional Use Permit for the construction and operation of *the new structure for Public Storage but a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change*. Since most of the concerns with the proposed Project had been previously addressed with the applicant and modifications incorporated to make the building acceptable to the adjacent residents, the outstanding concerns dealt primarily with the proposed roadway entrance. After assessing the situation regarding stacking and the need for any right-turn lane, the City engineers have proposed a condition that a right-turn lane will be required when the adjacent property is developed -- as it is a shared access -- and that Public Storage will be responsible for half of its cost of construction. However, there are two concerns with staff's assessment. These are (1) the stacking does not indicate the size or type of vehicles assumed and will include both trucks and vehicles with trailers which would require greater stacking distance than simply cars, and (2) the right-turn analysis did not consider the consequence of unusual features of Jeffrey at this location. These include the higher number of trucks, the high speed limit, the long downhill slope of Jeffrey which tends to cause unexpected higher vehicle speeds, and failure to consider anticipated traffic volume increases beyond Year 2010. The latter would occur due to further buildout of Irvine to Year 2025 including that of the Northern Sphere and the extension of Jeffrey Road to the north over the hills. These concerns were included in a letter to the City which was forwarded on March 5 to meet the deadline for comments of March 14. Copies were distributed at the meeting.

18. LOWER PETERS CANYON COMMUNITY PARK ANNUAL JOINT-USE EVALUATION - A copy of NIVA's Feb 15 letter sent to John McAllister, Irvine's Dir. of Com. Services, inquiring as to the findings of the evaluation of the year's joint-use operation was attached to the meeting agenda. As of the meeting, no response has been received from the City.

19. NON-RESPONSE FROM CITY ON CORRESPONDENCE - Attempts are being made to schedule the second meeting between Asst. City Mgr. Sharon Landers and other members of City staff and NIVA reps. to discuss the remaining issues identified as "outstanding items". So far it has been difficult in finding a date that mutually acceptable to all parties.

20. INTERSECTION SIGNAL SYNCHRONIZATION CABINETS - Melvold and Zelinko met on Feb 27 with PWs Mike Aminian in the field to view the location modifications City staff is prepared to propose in response to NIVA's objection of the cabinets blocking the Northwood Village Monument signs at the

Irvine Blvd./Culver Dr. and Bryan Ave./Culver Dr. intersections. The City proposed moving the cabinet at Irvine Blvd./Culver Dr. to a new location to the east along Irvine Blvd. Melvold and Zelinko indicated that this change was satisfactory/adequate. For the Bryan/Culver intersection, the City indicated that there is a possibility that the cabinet can be moved about 10 feet north of its current location. However, to do so would cost between \$45,000 to \$100,000 to pull new wires to all existing signal standards on the intersection as the slack existing in the current runs would not accommodate the relocation. Also, the existing old signal control cabinet along Bryan would be removed. Aminian was told that NIVA would take up the matter on this intersection and get back to the City. Upon completion of discussion, it was agreed that NIVA should wait until City staff comes up with a specific proposal and then request to have the proposal in writing.

21. NIVA MEETING RECORD DISTRIBUTION INTERNET vs. MAIL - This item was discussed and concluded at the last meeting. [ITEM TO BE CLOSED]

22. ELECTION OF NIVA OFFICERS - This item was continued from last month's meeting. Melvold and LaPorte were re-elected as President and Vice-President, respectively. McFadden was elected Secretary/Treasurer replacing Elliott who had served diligently and tirelessly in this capacity for more than 20 years. At the request of some members and after discussion, it was agreed to have the complete 2006 year-end financial report distributed to the membership and to do so each year in the future.

23. IRVINE BLVD. TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM UPGRADE - On Mar 13th the City Council approved \$239 thousand expenditure for upgrades of the traffic signals on Irvine Blvd. between Culver Drive and Jeffrey Road. The upgrades consist of a traffic signal controller and closed-circuit TV at Irvine Blvd. and Yale along fiber interconnections to existing controller cabinets at other intersections on Irvine Blvd. These changes are supposedly to improve the traffic flow, decrease delays, and maximize intersection capacities between Culver and Jeffrey. Funding comes from Measure M. The lead traffic engineer for the City is Thomas Roberts. Per City Traffic Engineer Ken Louie, the new cabinet will replace the existing cabinet in the same location. It will be the new style so it will be a taller cabinet but the overall height will be 3 inches shorter since the foundation will be replaced with one of less height. A second temporary cabinet will need to be installed temporarily to accommodate the transfer.

NEXT MEETING - Next meeting is scheduled for Wed., April 11, 2007.