

NIVA MEETING RECORD

March 11, 2009

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. PA-10 JAMBOREE MEDICAL/SCIENCE CENTER COMMITTEE [LaPorte] -
2. PA-40 R & D DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE [_____] - [Awaiting a response from either the Aug 5 letter sent to City Manager Sean Joyce objecting to the insufficient time to review the Staff Report, the lack of inclusion of NIVA's comments in the Report, and misaddressing of the Response to Comments causing it to arrive after the Hearing.]

Tract Map #17246 and accompanying Master Plan for a residential development in the abandoned middle school site in Woodbury, as submitted by TIC, was recommended for approval by the Community Services Commission at its Feb 18 meeting. The development would consist of 140 DUs -- all single-family detached. Though mentioned in the report by City staff, the CSC perceived no problem with the proposed elimination of a neighborhood park and the transfer of the related park credits to the community park within the village. This is unusual but apparently was acceptable to the Commission. The application was subsequently scheduled to go to the Subdivision Committee on March 11, and the Planning Commission on April 2.

OLD BUSINESS

1. EL TORO MCAS REUSE - [Awaiting a response to NIVA's letter of Dec 29, 2008 to the Mayor expressing concern about the increasing number of land uses/activities being proposed and/or approved for the Great Park that generate traffic but were never included in the traffic study for the approved EIR and requesting the City to expedite the SR-133/Trabuco interchange so as to minimize the impact on North Irvine. The letter explicitly solicits a commitment regarding traffic impacts and uses being considered for approval.]

At the Feb 24 Meeting, the City Council approved the Comprehensive Park Design for the O.C. Great Park under Consent Calendar. The approval without discussion was to be expected as the Great Park Board, of which all 5 Councilmembers are members, had already reviewed and unanimously approved the Design.

Per Irvine Sr. Planner Diane Vu [3/2], neither Lennar or its consultant, Outdoor Dimensions, has not as yet responded to the City's Second Screencheck Comments on its Great Park Neighborhoods Sign Program. Lennar has indicated to Vu that they would like to meet with NIVA reps. sometime in the future in conjunction with NIVA's comments on the previously proposed program.

2. MUSICK JAIL EXPANSION - Last Feb 20th, the O.C. Sheriff, Sandra Hutchens, reduced the existing size of the jail and thereby delayed the planned expansion of the jail. This action was taken as a consequence of funding problems. The average daily population in the county jail system has dropped to the lowest level in 4 years at 5,900.

3. NORTH IRVINE LIBRARY - The City Council decided [4/1 w/ Choi objecting] at its Feb 24 meeting to place the Library Services Advisory Committee [Committee] majority on an indefinite hiatus. (There was no prior indication given to the Committee members of such an action being given contemplated.) The reasons given by those supporting Mayor Kang's motion were anything but clear but essentially seemed to be that, because of the economy, the City has no money for investment in new library facilities so therefore there is no need at present to have a Committee doing any planning! To the contrary, because of the slowdown, the Committee would have some time to do the needed planning so as to develop a plan for the Council before the economy turns around. Serious long-term deficiencies have previously been identified and quantified by the Committee. With the previous burgeoning City population, the deficiency was escalating with each passing day and any efforts by the City or County to alleviate the situation were not even keeping pace with the increased population.

The Committee's last action was to recommend that the Council (1) change the City standard from 1 parking space per 100 sq. ft. of library to 1 space/300 sq. ft. and (2) authorize City staff to explore the possibility and feasibility of leasing library space rather than constructing the next neighborhood branch a library.

The first recommendation stemmed from the Committee's assessment of the standards of other library systems and cities which indicated a much less demanding parking requirement. Reducing parking requirements would translate into a smaller site for any new library which in turn would mean less land costs and increase the inventory of possible sites as sites become all the more scarce due to the rapid development. The Council directed staff to perform a traffic [parking] study deem a pre-requisite to establishing the new lower standard of 1 space/ 300 sq. ft.

The second recommendation was put forward by the Committee merely as a natural followup of a perceived opportunity created by the City's imposed condition on the recently proposed development in the IBC under which the developer would have to furnish development fees for various identified City services including that of library. It seemed natural that since such a fee was required, that a neighborhood library would be expected in the vicinity. None existed and the IBC was in the general area of west Irvine which had been previously selected by the Committee as a possible future neighborhood library location. (The Committee had also looked at placement of one in the Civic Center but that location was ruled out due to conflict with the land-use stipulation of the State Quimby Act under which the Civic Center site was acquired.) To instigate planning and to assure the possibility in the future should the City desire to go forward, the Committee recommended that leasing exploration be authorized. This was NOT a recommendation that the City actually go forward with any such lease -- as misinterpreted and incorrectly analyzed by the Council and subsequently mistakenly reported by the news media. The City staff report failed to indicate that the Committee's premise was, that should a lease appear possible, any needed capital expenditures and annual operating funding would be expected to be provided by the County.

4. COMPLETION OF PETERS CANYON WASH AND WALNUT TRAIL "GAPS" - Letters sent Feb 20th to Irvine Police Chief David Maggard, Jr. and OCFA Deputy Fire Marshall Pete Bonano as decided last month [Copies were distributed at the meeting.] No responses had been received as of time of the meeting.

5. NIVA "ON-THE-ROAD" PRESENTATIONS TO MEMBERSHIP - Review of revised draft letter prepared by Chiechi to go to potential new member associations. It was agreed that since there has been no progress report on this effort that the item would be dropped. **[ITEM TO BE CLOSED]**

6. NORTH IRVINE SENIOR CENTER - The City has initiated an effort to develop a 5-year Senior Services Strategic Plan. A Task Force was established with individual committees formed to address each of 5 areas of interest: Housing, physical & mental well-being, transportation, recreation & leisure, and financial, legal & advocacy. The effort is being overseen by Sheila Driscoll, Senior Services Superintendent in Community Services Dept. Interested parties were to contact Lynne Conger [949-724-6913] to participate. Melvold attended the initial meeting of the Transportation Committee on Feb 17 at the Lakeview Sr. Center during which ideas, issues and concerns were expressed by those in attendance. The open discussion was preceded by a slide presentation on the senior population demographics & projections, current service status, and goals of the committee. The comments were being collected and would be compiled for the next meeting which is scheduled for Mar. 24. A final meeting of this committee is scheduled for April 14. From the overall schedule of the committees, it would appear that a draft of the plan should be forthcoming before summer.

7. CITY-WIDE ZONING ORDINANCE AND MUNICIPAL CODE UPGRADE - The General Plan Amendment and corresponding Zone Change were approved by the City Council at its Mar. 10th meeting. It included the revision of the library standard from 0.2 to 0.5 sq. ft/capita thus returning the standard to the level it was before the reduction by the City in 1999 at the recommendation of the Community Services Department. The City had been ignoring the standard requirement for years during project development applications prior to 1999 though constantly reminded of its existence and the City's fairly to comply by NIVA during the public environmental review process. City staff's "solution" was, therefore, to simply undercut NIVA's repeated objection by securing a reduction in the standard.

8. CULVER DRIVE/WALNUT AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - Melvold reported that he has not had an opportunity as yet to contact the City's rep. to the OCTA (Supervisor Bill Campbell) about setting up a meeting to discuss the bus stop at Scottsdale.

8. BRYAN AVENUE TREE REPLACEMENT IN SETBACK - [Zelinko] It was reported last Sept. that the pear trees damaging mowing strips were to be removed and sweet shade trees not performing would also be removed with both replace with tristania trees per email from Keith Byers of the City. Zelinko reported that there still has not been any action taken by the City to date to upgrade the landscaping per that commitment.

9. CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE GROVES - The letter was drafted by Melvold as discussed at the last meeting, reviewed by LaPorte, and sent Mar. 3rd [Copies distributed at the meeting.]

NEXT MEETING - The next meeting would be Wed., April 8 at The Colony Clubhouse. It was agreed that a determination of the need for the next meeting would be decided by LaPorte and, if so, a brief notice would be drafted and sent out by McFadden.