

Hillside Federation Newsletter July, 2011



www.hillsidefederation.org

New Executive Committee Marian Dodge



Past President Alan Kishbaugh administers the oath of office to the new officers: Wendy-Sue Rosen, Don Andres, Charley Mims, Marian Dodge, and Mark Stratton.

New Hillside Federation officers were installed at the May meeting. Past President Alan Kishbaugh did the honors of administering the oath of office. Alan was president when the Hillside Federation was involved in AB 283 to force the city to comply with the General Plan and was instrumental in getting the city's first Hillside Ordinance passed as well as establishing the Mulholland Specific Plan and Design Review Board. He urges the Federation to continue to be vigilant with regard to the Mulholland Scenic Parkway.

Agenda

July 6, 2011

7:00 pm

I. Call to Order

Guest Speaker:

Retaining Walls - David Olivo

II. Approval of June 1, 2011 minutes

III. Officers' Reports

A. President's Report

B. Treasurer's Report

IV. Old Business

A. Cell Phone Towers - Chris Spitz

B. La Rocha Trail

V. New Business

A. Grandview - Jim Nelson

B. Linda Flora - Steve Twining

C. By-Right Notification - Carol

Sidlow

VI. Adjournment

Next meeting - August - No meeting

Wednesday, September 7, 2011

Pinz Bowling Center, next to Jerry's Deli

12655 Ventura Blvd., Studio City 91604

101 between Coldwater Canyon exit and Laurel
Canyon exit

The mission of the Hillside Federation shall be: To protect the property and the quality of life of the residents of the Santa Monica Mountains and other hillside areas of Los Angeles and its environs, and to encourage and promote those policies and programs which will best preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles.

Your new Executive Committee is committed to staying on top of issues that affect the hillside areas and to helping our member organizations with problems in their neighborhoods.

The new Executive Committee brings an impressive amount of talent to the Federation. New Chairman Charley Mims (Franklin Hills Residents Association) is well known to most of you because he has been a member of the Federation for many years. He brings special knowledge of how the city operates. He has a special knack for helping people word their motions to state what they want to achieve.

First Vice President Mark Stratton (Bel Air Skycrest) has a long track record of attending city meetings to speak on behalf of his organization as well as the Federation. He is also the one who has been bringing cookies and coffee to Federation meetings. Mark is a two-for-one special; his wife Lois Becker, although not officially on the Executive Committee also speaks at many city meetings, helps with the refreshments and getting members to sign in.

Second Vice President Wendy-Sue Rosen (Upper Mandeville Canyon) is a fountain of information. She keeps track of an amazing number of issues and brings them to our attention. She confers frequently with councilmembers and their deputies. She also speaks regularly at city meetings, writes articles for the newsletter and edits letters.

Recording Secretary Donna Messinger (Hollywood Heights) brings a youthful perspective to the board. She is very tech savvy and is helping the Federation update its communications. Her flying fingers do a

wonderful job of recording the minutes of our meetings.

Treasurer Don Andres (Franklin Avenue/Hollywood Blvd. West) immediately did an analysis of past expenditures so he could create a budget. In addition to the traditional duties of a treasurer, he can be counted on to deliver sound, logical advice and suggestions.

We also have a phone committee to call members to remind them of meetings: Shirley Cohen (Roscomare Valley), Claudia Freedle (Studio City), and Nickie Miner (Benedict Canyon). It is always nice to get a reminder from a friendly voice.

Together the Executive Committee is a team of hard workers who are dedicated to serving their constituents. They are a pleasure to work with, and their dedication reflects positively on the Federation.

Hillside Federation Meeting Calendar

Save the dates!

September 7
 October 5
 November 2
 December 7 Party
 January 4, 2012
 February 1
 March 7
 April 4
 May 2

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PRESIDENT
 Marian Dodge
CHAIRMAN
 Charley Mims
VICE PRESIDENTS
 Mark Stratton
 Wendy-Sue Rosen
SECRETARY
 Donna Messinger
TREASURER
 Don Andres

ORGANIZATIONS:
 Bel Air Knolls Property Owners
 Bel Air Skycrest POA
 Bel Air Ridge Association
 Benedict Canyon Association
 Brentwood Residents Coalition
 Crests Neighborhood Assn.
 Encino Property Owners Assn.
 Franklin Ave./Hollywood Bl. W.
 Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
 Highlands Owners Assn.
 Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
 Hollywood Heights Assn.
 Hollywoodland Homeowners
 Holmby Hills HOA
 Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
 La Tuna Canyon Community
 Laurel Canyon Assn.
 Los Feliz Improvement Assn.

Mt. Olympus Property Owners
 Mt. Washington Homeowners
 Nichols Canyon Assn.
 N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon
 Oak Forest Canyon Assn.
 Outpost Estates Homeowners
 Residents of Beverly Glen
 Roscomare Valley Assn.
 Shadow Hills Property Owners
 Sherman Oaks HOA
 Studio City Residents Assn.
 Tarzana Property Owners Assn.
 Torreyson Flynn Assn.
 Upper Mandeville Canyon
 Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

CHAIRPERSONS
EMERITUS
 Shirley Cohen
 Jerome C. Daniel
 Patricia Bell Hearst
 Gordon Murley
 Polly Ward

CHAIRMAN IN MEMORIUM
 Brian Moore

Requests for Action

The Baseline Hillside Ordinance that went into effect in May will be a great help in controlling inappropriate development in our hillsides. However many applications for permits were submitted to beat the deadline so they wouldn't have to comply. Since most of the lots that are easily built on have already been developed, those remaining are fairly unbuildable or have difficult access. We expect that many of you will be bringing requests for assistance to the Federation so we need to be able to address these projects in an efficient and fair manner.

One of the suggestions of the new Executive Committee was to develop a template that members can use in preparing their presentations to the Federation. This will guide you in gathering the data you need to present and hopefully simplify the process for you. Most of the issues come from your homeowner association or from your neighborhood council. You can probably present the same motion to the Federation that your association passed; there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

Remember that old expression: A picture is worth a thousand words. In this case, it really is. A photo of that 9.5-foot dirt road to a proposed mansion perched on a steep slope goes a long way toward clarifying the issue. A map will save you a lot of trouble describing the location of the project. It's easy to supply using Google Maps.

The template is attached in both Word format and pdf so that you can see what is expected and have it on hand when you need it. Many thanks to Wendy-Sue Rosen and Don Andres for creating the template.

We are trying out the template to see how it works and will be making adjustments as necessary to make it a useful tool for you.

Motions:

If you are planning on making a motion at the meeting, please prepare your motion ahead of time and bring enough copies for all member associations. This will make it easier for the directors to consider the merits of the motion and easier for the secretary to record it.

Draft Minutes June 1, 2011

I. Call to Order

President Marian Dodge called the meeting to order at 7:17 pm. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Guest Speaker: Ben Saltsman

Ben Saltsman, a deputy from Zev Yaroslavsky's office explained LA County's "Clean Hands" ordinance. If your property is under the jurisdiction of LA County, you will be unable to get any building permit if you have an existing violation on the property. For example if you open a group home for 10 people in a single family neighborhood, that's illegal. If you want to add another room to the home, you will be unable to get a building permit. So it gives the county a tool to go after the property owner.

This policy has been in effect for about 25 years; it's something that is working well in the Santa Monica Mountains. The only thing that gets property owners to comply with the zoning code is this tool. The non-compliance fee goes up to \$1000 per day. For example, illegal marijuana dispensaries are fined up to \$1000. The policy only applies to land uses. For example, if the property owner has a retaining wall that is longer or higher than code, he will not be able to get any permits. They have provisions for waivers for minor violations like a small addition to the house; they are not after the innocent homeowner. The violations are attached to the property and continue to subsequent owners.

MOTION: Wendy-Sue Rosen moved that the Hillside Federation urge the City to adopt an ordinance similar to Los Angeles County's Clean Hands policy. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval minutes

The minutes of May 4, 2011 were approved as written.

III. Officers' Reports

A. President's Report

Lopez Canyon Open Space - The judge granted Community Alliance For Open Space's petition. The court ruled in CAFOS' favor on both major points, first that the City's adoption of

the MND violated CEQA, and second that the variance was improper. The court concluded that an EIR must be prepared before a truck driving school can be built in the open space. Wendy said the judge scolded the City for not understanding and complying with CEQA. CAFOS thanks the Federation for their support and invited everyone to a Victory Pot Luck on June 11, 2011 4:00-6:30 pm.

B. Treasurer's Report - Don Andres

Don announced that the CD has been renewed and gave current account balances. He also responded to 8 IRS quarterly requests for information on Federation employees (We have none!).

IV. Old Business

A. Ads in Parks - Marian Dodge, Friends of Griffith Park

Marian gave an update on the proposal to place ads in city parks. The Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners tried to approve a plan by the LA Parks Foundation, both headed by retired Latham & Watkins attorney Barry Sanders, to sell advertising in city parks. At the recent City Budget Committee meeting Barry Sanders made a 15-minute presentation on why we need advertising to make up for park budget cut backs. The only councilmember who stood up and said no was Paul Koretz so if you're in his district, call and thank him for having the courage to object. It is very unusual for the President of the Commission, Barry Sanders, to attend the meeting and to be seated next to the General Manager. Sanders claimed it was not advertising, but "government speech." Also unusual was that they took public comment at the beginning of the meeting before some speakers arrived instead of at the end as agendized.

Wendy suggested that if you're not in Koretz's district, you should send letters to your councilmember and tell them to not subsidize park budgets with advertising. Several members suggested various ways of tastefully thanking donors such as naming benches or donor walls.

MOTION: Wendy moved that the Hillside Federation oppose advertising in city parks and recreation centers and recommend alternative ways of recognizing donors such as donor walls and naming rights. Donna pointed out the fact that advertising is also over stimulating for autistic

children; we should get autism organizations involved. The motion passed.

B. Cell phone towers

Marian announced that the cell phone tower ordinance report is still in the City Attorney Office. Chris Spitz will be here next month to update us. She urges us to write letters to the City Attorney thanking them for the work they have done on the report and requesting that they move the report to the Public Works Committee as soon as possible.

Wendy added that the City Attorney's entire budget was renewed. Today they battled and restored \$1.2 million.

V. New Business

A. 9118-9229 Crescent Dr. - Carol Sidlow, Steve Poster

The Federation was involved in 2007 with another applicant on same substandard street visible from Sunset and Doheny. The applicant sued city and lost. Now a new applicant is filing further down the road. They are working with the previous applicant who lost their filing. They are applying for a B permit for roadway improvements which doesn't require a public hearing or any public input. Part of Crescent Drive is a dirt road only 9 feet wide, well below fire regulations. A turnaround for fire vehicles is also an issue. The proposal is to build the largest single-family residence, 12,000 square feet, in the area. The applicant can legally build 5 houses; he wants to open up the area for more large homes. Only 3 houses of 1,000 - 3,000 square feet were built on that part of Crescent Drive in the 1950s.

Poster is asking that an EIR be undertaken to ascertain the impact on the narrow street and surrounding area and not allow a piecemeal B permit at a time. The applicant is requesting 4 retaining walls (out of compliance with retaining walls ordinance). What they are not revealing is that they are applying for 5 retaining wall 18 feet high. There are 28 homes that lie below this project. Bel Air, Upper Wonderland Avenue, and Sunset /Doheny are all unanimous in opposition to the project. Charlie suggested we look at it practically – they have the right to build, but they have to do it according to the law.

MOTION: Charley Mims moved that the Hillside Federation support the construction of a home at 9183 Crescent Drive that conforms to the character and scale of the neighborhood only if the owner develops Crescent Drive and Wonderland Avenue to the nearest improved 20-foot-wide roadway and that such improvements, including retaining walls for private developments and the public roadways conform to all hillside ordinances for retaining walls. The motion passed.

Jane Usher was shocked at how many permit applications were received right before the Baseline Hillside Ordinance took effect.

B. Modified Parking Requirement Districts - Wendy-Sue Rosen

The City is recommending a new ordinance to modify public parking requirements in certain districts. Specific Plan areas were supposed to be exempt, but they are not. Hillside areas are not exempted. There are already a number of ordinances that exist to protect the community. The new ordinance requires no findings. The City Planning Commission is very concerned about why they need a new ordinances. Councilmember Koretz wrote a very serious letter requesting additional studies. We need to put on pressure on the Planning Department.

MOTION: Wendy moved that the Hillside Federation request additional protections in the ordinance. The motion passed.

Senate Bill SB-375 asks the municipalities to reduce traffic with development concentrated around transit corridors to get people out of their cars.

VI. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Submitted,

Recording Secretary, Donna Messinger

Members Present:

Bel Air Skycrest

Franklin Av/Hlwd Bl
Franklin Hills Res.
Hollywood Heights
Laurel Canyon Assn.
Los Feliz Impvmt.
Nichols Canyon
N. Beverly/Franklin
Resid. Beverly Glen
Roscomare Valley

Sherman Oaks
Studio City Res.
Upper Mandeville

Mark Stratton
Lois Becker
Barbara Dohrmann
Don Andres
Charley Mims
Donna Messinger
Jim Nelson
Marian Dodge
Madeline O'Donnell
Bob Levy
Gillian Calof
Shirley Cohen
Steve Twining
Niles Chapman
Claudia Freedle
James Provenzano
Wendy-Sue Rosen

Guests Present:

Chair Emeritus
N. Beverly/Franklin
Save Franklin Canyon

Lookout Mt. Alliance

Citizens Against
Strip Mining

Patricia Bell Hearst
Connie Levy
Rob Wagner
Audrey Gallant
Carol Sidlow
Steven Poster
Ellie Brooks
Mr. Brooks

Web Site

The Hillside Federation has a new web site, www.hillsidefederation.org.

One of the things we want to do is have live links to the web sites of all our member organizations. Please send us the link to your association's web site. In return, we ask that you post a link to the Hillside Federation web site on your web site.