

Hillside Federation
Draft minutes
March 2, 2016

I. Call to Order

President Marian Dodge called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Guest speakers:

Neighborhood Integrity Initiative

Opponents:

Mark Edwards, Coalition to Protect
Los Angeles Neighborhoods and Job

Alan Bell, former Deputy Planning
Director, City of Los Angeles

Kevin Keller, AICP, LA Mayor's Office

Mark Edwards of the Coalition to Protect Los Angeles Neighborhoods and Jobs, spoke about the complexities in the City of Los Angeles and the challenges in the City such as the balance of housing; the high cost of rental housing; population growth; the inability of people to purchase homes. LA has a tremendous housing demand. The Coalition opposes the Initiative as they feel that it is written in such a way that there will be unintended impacts such as more development in R-3 and R-4 neighborhoods or other areas that have not maxed out their density. The proposed initiative contains ambiguous language; inability of communities to change such. On the plus side, more people are getting involved to come together to find solutions. NII may put the brakes on development, but it won't stop the city from growing. He shares the frustration of communities, but NII is not the best response. A council motion directs certain city departments to start on the analysis on the issues raised by NII.

Alan Bell, retired Deputy Director of City Planning, talked about his time working on code amendments. This Initiative would change the rules for how City Planning does its job. There has been a growth spurt in LA since 2009. With respect to the major mega projects, the developers may be able to ride out the 2-year moratorium but they would be able to go through plan check during the moratorium, and after the moratorium ends, those projects would go forward. The projects that wouldn't be built would be smaller projects that may not be able to survive and may not be built. Many areas zoned R-3 and R-4 have room for more FAR. It doesn't change the SB 1818 density bonuses. He spoke about the impacts on community-based planning and how this initiative would take away communities' ability to plan their own future. NII would tie the city's hands. Communities would not have access to the new zones and may not be able to downzone neighborhoods. The main concern is the prevailing conditions principle that future rezoning and plan amendments have to match what is on the ground at the time the

initiative passes. NII was specifically written to address the Palladium project. The system is not necessarily broken but it has not been prioritized. NII is not the solution; giving Planning the resources to do the job is the solution.

Kevin Keller is the Mayor's Director of Planning and Housing Policy and a former City Planner. The Mayor has not yet taken a position on the initiative. The Mayor is reviewing the initiatives (there is a second initiative). They could be adopted by the City, but if not would go to voters. There is a severe housing crisis in the City, so the key to evaluating the Neighborhood Integrity Initiative is how it will impact housing and jobs. There is a need for pro-active community planning but it has been a struggle to find the funding as there are 35 community plans. The NII calls for a schedule but does not address funding. The Mayor is looking at the components of the initiative very closely. Some of the pieces, for example the EIR part, can perhaps be looked at by the City. The material will be submitted to City for review, followed by some City analysis which will be prepared and then an analysis statement. If the City does not adopt it verbatim, it goes to voters.

Hillside Federation members commented that people feel disenfranchised and the underlying problem of a lack of trust in the City. Several aspects of the initiative were clarified. It may have an impact on Re:Code LA. If the initiative is approved by voters, it can only be changed by another vote, not by the City. The accuracy of growth numbers was challenged. How much downzoning has been done in the last 10 years?

Marian requested that guests leave the meeting so that the Federation members could discuss the issue. It was suggested that the Federation form a sub-committee and ask members to submit ideas for what the Hillside Federation would present to the City to address some of the issues intended to be covered by the NII. Then the Hillside Federation would revisit the issue to consider taking a position once the City has had an opportunity to evaluate and share its analysis. There is plenty of time as the initiative is not scheduled to be on the ballot until November. Many board members have not yet read the NII. Volunteers for the ad hoc committee are: Wendy-Sue Rosen, Wayne Schlock, Charley Mims, Mark Stratton, and John Given.

II. Approval of Minutes

The February minutes were approved as submitted.

III. Officers' Reports

A. President's Report – Marian Dodge

Marian announced the 2016 Nominating Committee for the slate of Federation officers which will be put in the April newsletter. The Nominating Committee will be: Barbara Dohrmann, Gerry Hans, and Kit Paull. Candidates will be voted on at the April Federation meeting.

Councilmember David Ryu has introduced Motion CF 16-0198 regarding the creation of a Construction Overlay Zone on substandard streets in the hillsides.

Dennis Hathaway sent an update regarding *Lamar vs. City of Los Angeles*. A tentative decision was made by the Court of Appeals reversing the trial court decision and upholding the City's ban on offsite digital billboard signs.

Representative Adam Schiff will be holding two meetings to discuss the Rim of the Valley special study: Tuesday March 8, 2016 at the Los Angeles Zoo, and Wednesday March 9 at Oak Park High School in Agoura. Marian will distribute the flyer when it is available.

Claudia Freedle from the Studio City Residents Association announced that the new location for their meetings will be the Rio Vista Elementary School. Wendy Greuel, newly appointed by Mayor Garcetti to look into solutions regarding the homeless will be speaking to the SCRA on Tuesday, March 8.

Don Andres announced that the Department of Rec. and Parks Board of Commissioners approved the major water improvement project in Runyon Canyon Park and as a result, the park will be closed April 1 for 4 months.

B. Treasurers Report – Don Andres

Don Andres gave the Treasurer's report and reminded all that dues were due by March 1, 2016.

IV. New Business

A. 1400 Linda Flora Landscaping – Steve Twining

Steve requested a letter from the Federation to Councilmember Paul Koretz and the Mayor regarding the landscaping of the huge retaining walls along the project at 1400 Linda Flora. Currently, there are bushes between the two walls, but none in front of the lower wall. The original plans for this development called for sizable trees to conceal the retaining walls. Carol Sidlow mentioned that over the years, the Federation had written letters regarding a few issues in opposition to the development. The Retaining Wall Ordinance calls for landscaping but is not very detailed about the subject. A discussion followed and included whether this was an enforcement issue, a CD 5 issue, and any mandatory requirements.

MOTION: Steve Twining moved that the Hillside Federation write a letter to Councilmember Paul Koretz asking him to prioritize the landscaping of the lower retaining walls along 1400 Linda Flora. The motion passed.

V. Old Business

A. Harvard-Westlake Parking Improvement Plan – Sarah Boyd, Save Coldwater Canyon!

Sarah Boyd described the new Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) for the Harvard-Westlake project. Not much has changed except that the new RDEIR does mention the significant impact to the oak and walnut woodlands. A few species have been added to the sensitive species list but the impact to birds has been downplayed. A debris basin has been added.

The proposed project for a parking structure is still three stories with four levels, with a bridge across Coldwater Canyon, lights with more poles so lights can be more directed, retaining walls up to 90 feet, and grading of 135,000 cubic yards, among other requests.

The traffic report was peer reviewed, but problems still exist. The community has hired a consultant to review the traffic report. An alternative location for a subterranean parking garage on the East side of Coldwater Canyon was rejected. New entitlements have been added including a paper street vacation and a vesting conditional use permit for a maximum of 79,261 sq. ft. in lieu of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance limits.

The Studio City Neighborhood Council will be meeting next week and discussing this project. Harvard-Westlake will be making a presentation, as will the opponents, and there will be public comment. The comment period deadline on the RDEIR is March 21, 2016. Although previous comment letters will still apply, there are changes including the inclusion of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance.

MOTION: Wendy-Sue Rosen moved that the Hillside Federation write a letter regarding the RDEIR addressing the deviations from the Baseline Hillside Ordinance in addition to the comments already submitted. The motion passed.

B. LA-RICS Telecommunication Towers and EC Action – John Given

The public comment deadline for the FEIR on the LA-RICS telecommunications towers was February 25, before the Federation meeting. Although the proposed tower on San Vicente Peak was removed from the project at the Federation’s and Mike Bonin’s request, there were other towers proposed in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreational Area on Topanga Peak, Green Mountain, and Temescal Canyon. The FEIR was deficient because it failed to consider a “no project alternative” on a per site basis or alternative sites and antenna configurations. The Executive Committee discussed the issue and voted to write a letter in response to the FEIR.

MOTION: Marian Dodge moved that the members confirm the Executive Committee’s decision to write the letter responding to the FEIR for the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System (LA-RICS) Land Mobile Radio (LMR) System. The motion passed.

C. Re:Code LA – Carol Sidlow

The Public Forums regarding Re:code LA will start on March 16. Information on dates, times and location were in the March newsletter. In addition to public meetings, there will be a virtual forum on April 26. Sign up for the virtual meeting can be done at the Re:Code LA website.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Submitted by Carol Sidlow
Recording Secretary

Members Present:

Beachwood Canyon	George Abrahams
Bel Air Skycrest	Mark Stratton
Brentwood Hills	John Given
Brentwood Res. Coal.	Wendy-Sue Rosen
CASM-SFV	Dan Feinberg
Franklin Ave/Hlwd Bl.	Don Andres
	Yvonne Hessler

Franklin Hills Res.	Charley Mims
Hollywood Dell	Mary Ledding
Lake Hollywood	David Benz
Laurel Canyon Assn.	Alison Simard
Lookout Mountain	Carol Sidlow
Los Feliz Impvmt.	Marian Dodge
Mt. Washington All.	Dan Wright
Oaks Homeowners	Wayne Schlock
Res Beverly Glen	Stephen Benson
Roscomare Valley	Steve Twining
Save Coldwater Cyn!	Heidi Mackay
	Sarah Boyd
Sherman Oaks	Elke Heitmeyer
Studio City Res.	Claudia Freedle

Guests:

Mayor's Office	Kevin Keller
	Daniel Tamm
Planning Dept. (ret'd)	Alan Bell
Communities for	Mark Edwards
Jobs & Housing	
Coal. to Preserve LA	Jill Stewart
	Laura Gutierrez
	Mickey
Chair Emeritus	Patricia Bell Hearst