

The Coastal Current

Issues and Information
From The Coastal San Pedro
Neighborhood Council

March 2006

Councils Push for Community Involvement in Ponte Vista Planning Process

By Doug Epperhart

Representatives of the Coastal San Pedro, Northwest San Pedro, and Harbor City neighborhood councils have been working with other area groups and Councilwoman Janice Hahn to ensure the community has a say in what happens at the old Navy housing site on Western Avenue where Bisno Development plans to build 2,300 condominiums.

In a series of meetings to determine whether to support or oppose a specific plan process and how to proceed, the various organizations involved utilized the services of a consultant hired by the Northwest council who provided information on the process and ways to make it work for the community.

Writing a specific plan to address all of the planning, zoning, and building code issues raised by a project of this magnitude benefits the developer by streamlining, to some extent, the legal procedures required by the city. However, some processes, such as a change in zoning, must still go through all the steps, including public hearings.

Ideally, the specific plan writes into law (ultimately, the specific plan is enacted by the city council as an ordinance) the things necessary to make the project conform to what makes economic sense for the developer and benefits the community. Items in the specific plan can include everything from the number of parking spaces to what colors the buildings can be painted to how much open space is required.

Specific Plan: A plan addressing land use distribution, open space availability, infrastructure, and infrastructure financing for a portion of the community. Specific plans put the provisions of the local general plan into action (see California Government Code Sections 65450 et seq.)

For more information on specific plans, please see A Citizen's Guide to Planning online at www.ceres.ca.gov/planning

The Coastal council and its neighbors are engaging in a planning process that will include an assessment of the development projects in the vicinity of the Ponte Vista site. This will pull together, in one place, information on all of the ongoing and planned development, including Mary Star of the Sea High School, Rolling Hills Prep School, JCC Homes' project on North Gaffey, and others.

There will then be a number of focus group meetings so that community members can provide their comments about what is acceptable for the area in general and the Ponte Vista site in particular. Officials and planners have a good idea of what people don't want; the idea is to find out what people do want.

Councilwoman Hahn will also be appointing a task force of about 10-15 members who will advise the planners as the specific plan is written. Each of the area neighborhood councils will be appointing representatives to the task force. Focus groups will continue to meet during the time the specific plan is written in order to provide input and comment. The whole process could take as long as 12 months.

The Coastal governing board members are interested in hearing your opinion on development in San Pedro in general and on the Ponte Vista project in particular. We also want your thoughts regarding the proposed LAUSD high school on the site.

To tell us what you think or for more information, please visit the Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council website at www.coastalsanpedro.org or call (310) 290-0049. You can also send us a letter. The address is CSPNC, 1536 West 25th Street, #223, San Pedro, CA 90732.

**"You will only be heard
if you speak up"**



John Stinson

Wishful Thinking? With many San Pedro and neighboring community residents opposed to the development's proposed density and the Los Angeles Unified School District identifying part of the property as the preferred site for a new high school, the project's future is anything but certain.

Cleaner Air In Port's Near Future? Recent developments point toward reducing emissions

By Richard Havenick

With black dust sitting on our windowsills and brown haze over the Port and Catalina Channel, many local residents are aware of the significantly increased risk we suffer in the Coastal San Pedro area for cancer, bronchial disease, and other health effects. Some of us are concerned about property values, and others are asking why people would visit a Bridge to Breakwater development where the cancer risk is above allowable limits? Can anything be done to turn around the significant decline in air quality, and what are our responsible elected and appointed representatives doing? What can you do?

Let's first understand the problem. According to studies conducted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, as long ago as 1999 the residents of the coastal areas of San Pedro were exposed to air pollution that results in a predicted increase in cancer deaths

Workers on Pier 400 were exposed to even higher levels of toxic pollution. Since 1999, Port activity has doubled, resulting in even higher risk. The health costs resulting from the emissions from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach last year are estimated to be in the range of \$2 billion, including the 300 premature deaths predicted by applying standard scientific methods.

The Port of Los Angeles has determined that a full 50% of the toxic air pollution resulting from Port operations is from ship propulsion engines. These engines emit tiny toxic particles as they come and go from the Ports. The black dust on your windowsill may not kill you, but the microscopic particulate matter that travels with the black soot causes significantly higher cancer risk as well as other health problems.

Still, don't throw in the hat just yet; help may be on the way.

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) released their Emission Reduction Plan for Ports and Goods Movement last December. The plan charts a course for returning our air quality to the 2001 level. It isn't a perfect plan, but it would offer some improvement. Shockingly, the ARB has no

Cleaner Air/3

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