

Coastal Currents

• Issues and Information from the Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council •

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The Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council — Our Purpose and Function

Neighborhood councils provide a way for people to get together and discuss their mutual concerns, and then have those concerns communicated directly to our city government.

Representatives of Councilmember Janice Hahn, Mayor Villaraigosa, and the Port of Los Angeles attend our monthly meetings. We also welcome the LAPD senior lead officers, who report on crime trends and confer with us regarding issues such as parking, graffiti, and violent crime.

The governing board hears public comments at the beginning of every meeting and also receives public input on each agenda item. The public comment period often results in the creation of a resolution or action item to be taken up at a later board meeting.

The city funds each neighborhood council at the rate of \$50,000 a year. This is used to publish this newsletter and publicize the council in other ways. Money is also allocated in a number of ways, including support of local cultural activities, youth programs, crime prevention, and education. The city has rules which limit the acceptable uses and which provide for audits and oversight by city departments. This newsletter reports on expenditures.

Monthly Meetings

We meet every month on the third Monday, except in January and February, when we meet on the fourth Monday because of federal holidays. Our next meetings are scheduled for October 20, November 17, and December 15. The meetings are held at the Cabrillo Marina Community Center, Berth 28, near the Marina Hotel at the southern end of Via Cabrillo Marina. For more information, please visit us online at coastalsanpedro.org.

City Planning Commission Requires More Work on Ponte Vista



Councilwoman Janice Hahn reflects on the testimony of project opponents, including John Greenwood (at podium). Greenwood chaired Hahn's Ponte Vista community advisory committee. After nearly a year of work, the citizen panel voted to recommend keeping the site's single-family zoning. A standing-room-only crowd packed the city council chamber April 9 when the planning commission considered Ponte Vista's application for 1,950 units.

—Photos by John Stinson

Commissioners Express Concerns About Traffic, Density; Direct Study of New Proposals

By Doug Epperhart

Hundreds packed the city council chamber at Los Angeles City Hall April 9 to express their feelings about the proposed Ponte Vista development on Western Avenue. After hours of testimony and discussion, commissioners rejected the proposal for 1,950 units and directed planning department staff to work on a smaller project.

In December, major lender Credit Suisse First Boston assigned DLJ Capital Partners to replace Bisno Development as lead on Ponte Vista.

In the last two months, dozens of community members were interviewed and two public events were held to gather comment about the developer's latest proposal—a 1,395-unit project focusing on townhomes.

DLJ presented its latest proposal to commissioners, but the items agendized for this meeting were concerned with the previous denser plan.

Following the developer's presentation, about two dozen project supporters were given one minute each to speak. Proponents included representatives of area business organizations and unions whose members would benefit from the project.

Project opponents included those representing neighborhood councils and area homeowner groups. They, too, filled the allotted time, voicing concerns about increased density and traffic.

The city's planning department staff recommended a project with a density equivalent to that of The Gardens,

a residential complex along Westmont Avenue, east of Western Avenue.

This density would yield a range of 775-886 units. If the developer took advantage of the density bonus given for including affordable and senior housing, the unit count could rise to 1,196.

Planning staff was adamant about density, telling commissioners they are "set on unit count."

State law (SB 1818) allows developers who provide senior or low-income housing to increase the number of units by as much as 35 percent of the base project.

Although Ponte Vista representatives have indicated they will not use a density bonus and are willing to enter into an agreement to that effect, the assistant city attorney at the hearing said "there's too much uncertainty" that such an agreement would be enforceable.

Councilwoman Janice Hahn was present throughout the meeting. She told the assembled throng that she, too, had

questions about the density bonus. She also called for a new traffic study and fewer units in the final project.

Rancho Palos Verdes Councilmember Steve Wolowicz and a representative of the city of Lomita spoke against the project and in favor of denying the application.

Commissioner Michael Woo was not happy that any part of Ponte Vista would be closed to the public. "Gated communities are an antisocial act," he said.

Commission chair William Roschen said he was most interested in environmental sustainability and pedestrian access. He also expressed concerns about traffic, telling the developer, "Do not use senior housing for traffic mitigation."

The commission continued the item for 120 days and directed staff to analyze a new, smaller project. It is expected that DLJ's 1,395-unit proposal and planning's recommendations will be studied.

March City Election Results

Measure B Loses (Finally); Trutanich, Weiss in Runoff for City Attorney; Hahn a Shoo-in

It took a while to tally the final results, but controversial Measure B on the March ballot was defeated by a narrow margin. The proposition put forth by union representing Department of Water and Power workers was intended to establish a program to provide 400 megawatts of solar power.

Opponents decried the measure as a backroom deal rushed to the ballot by the city council as payback for political support from the union. About 30 neighborhood councils, including Coastal San Pedro, opposed the Measure B.

The opposition was led by a self-proclaimed "ragtag" group that included Coastal San Pedro board member Soledad Garcia, who chairs the LADWP

memorandum of understanding oversight committee, responsible for monitoring DWP services and notifications provided to neighborhood councils.

Harbor City resident Carmen "Nuch" Trutanich squares off against West L.A. councilman Jack Weiss. They were the top vote-getters in a five-way contest. Since neither garnered 50 percent, they'll be in a runoff on the May 19 ballot.

Councilwoman Janice Hahn cruised to a third term, crushing opponent Chris Salabaj.

Results are at the city clerk's website at <http://cityclerk.lacity.org/election/archives/archives2009/primary/bulletin.pdf>.

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