

**Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
Land Use Committee
Monday, April 19, 2010
North Valley Neighborhood City Hall
7747 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga**

1. **Call to order** by Tomi Lyn Bowling, LUC Chairwoman, at 7:00 p.m. Introduction of committee members and alternates, STNC members, CD2 staff and others present.

Update: Cindy Cleghorn reported on the T-Mobile's cell phone tower hearing held this morning 4-19-10 in Van Nuys. One neighbor was present who wanted to know more about the proposal. The next hearing will be 6-3-10 before the North Valley Area Planning Commission. The LUC and STNC voted to support the new design of the tower on 10-5-09 which includes an increase in height.

2. **LUC Chair comments** – Tomi Lyn Bowling talked about the Best of S-T Business Awards for 2010. Go online to vote when it comes around again. There is now an opening on the LUC for alternate committee member and the position could be held by an STNC board member if interested.. At the next LUC meeting on 5-3, there will be a presentation on the proposed change in the septic systems by the BUREAU OF SANITATION REGARDING the State of California AB885 in the SUNLAND-TUJUNGA COMMUNITY. STNC will be outreaching to all neighbors, contractors who may be interested in learning more about increases in fees and inspections for septic systems and converting to sewer.

3. **Public Comments:**

- Nina Royal announced the next Safety Meeting on 4/22/10.
- Lloyd Hitt announced the Annual Plant Sale on Commerce on 4/24/10. .
- Elaine Brown talked about the red curbs on Commerce reduced available parking spaces. Corrections are being worked on by the City and CD2.
- Joe Barrett announced the pancake breakfast fundraiser on 4-24 at the former Wired Café from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for \$13.00.
- Sheri Smith announced an art auction on May 16 at McGroarty Art Center of a private art collection to raise money for the Sunland Tujunga community.
- Tomi asked everyone to write letters to Ralphs opposing their moratorium to ban incoming businesses from moving into their parking lot. She said this would be a good spot for Trader Joes. She then talked about how the transients are making it unattractive for people to go to the Starbucks in Sunland.

4. **Presentation by Propane Company, TransGas Propane at 7937 Foothill** – *Steve Mahan spoke representing TransGas Propane* at the site of the former Coffee Stop on Foothill Boulevard in Sunland. TransGas is seeking a change of use application and design for that site. He said they are a small business in the alternative fuels business and have applied for several grants. One of their requirements is that they interact with the community. They want to create a retail center complex at that site with repair services, an administrative office and a 20' long, 52" high, horizontal propane tank for refilling tanks. He said they have already received approval from the L.A. Planning Dept.

After he made his comments, questions were asked by the LUC and stakeholders:

- Elaine Brown questioned the boundary line and the state law regarding this business. He said they are a contract carrier dedicated to their customers and that this would be a fill station, not a distribution station. They will have a small inventory but a wide variety of propane products represented. They will supply residential customers as well as industrial. This would be a satellite location for their corporate office, which is in Los Angeles/Glendale.
- Debby Beck asked whether they were planning to have an explosion proof barrier. Steve said they were complying with the Fire Code and noted their wall that surrounds the propane tank.
- Abby Diamond asked whether they were involved in the city's Work Force Program and whether they would be working in converting diesel to propane trucks. Steve said they weren't at this time. She asked where their customers were located, whether it was in keeping with the Foothill Blvd. Specific Plan and how they would offer protection for this site. Steve said their clients will include residential customers in the mobile home parks. Currently, they have propane tanks at 200 locations around the city and that their safety factor is impeccable. He stated that zoning at their locations ranges from industrial to residential to amusement parks to the Zoo.
- Marcia asked why TransGas thought this was a good fit for the community. Steve said it would bring in some jobs and thought their business would be an enhancement to the community. Marcia said they are ignoring the Specific Plan in an area that the board is trying to develop as a pedestrian friendly area.
- There was clarification by a city official (name not provided) about the project permit for Change of Use, which is what TransGas is applying for.
- Patricia asked the size of the building: It is 908 square feet. Steve said they have already invested about \$100,000 in landscaping and structural improvements.
- Cindy Cleghorn pointed out that they have not submitted a rendering of the site. She noted that the "pre-existing" wall that was erected was impeding the access to the alley and should come down. She said there was no circulation diagram of how vehicles would get in and out of the site. She stated that this business does not work within the confines of the Specific Plan. Steve said they were not notified that a Specific Plan existed that needed to be adhered to when they applied for permits and began their construction/improvement plans.
- A question was asked about what kind of repair work they would provide. Steve said their business is supplying the parts but not the repair work for appliances using their tanks. They have a repair facility on San Fernando Road which does the repair work.
- Nina asked why they chose this location. Steve's partner, who runs their S.F. Road facility, said their customers have asked if they could get a retail operation in this area. Parts, regulators, valves, etc. is what they will sell. Their customers cannot find anyone to supply these parts in the area. Their prices are lower for fuel and will service their existing customers. Propane is \$1.99 per gallon as of this time. (It's \$3.50 a gallon elsewhere).
- Dean asked about hours of operation: They will be: 8:00 – 5:00 M-F and 8:00 – 3 p.m. on Saturday. They will also be open on Sunday depending on the business.
- Debby asked if they were going through the process of preparing more diagrams on their access to motor homes entering and leaving the lot. Steve said they had already

gone through the process with the Planning Dept. and were going to use the preexisting access. She added that she didn't think it was a retail business.

- Elaine did a poll of attendees with propane tanks. Elaine said she was the only person with a large propane tank on her property (300 gallon). She then asked some questions about how they would service her tank. Steve said they would not as it was a competing company that owned it.
- Regina asked if they own the property: They don't: they have a 10 year lease. They have \$10 million in coverage in insurance. Their company is worth \$40 - \$50 million. They supply L.A. World Airports and that's why they have high coverage.
- Abby noted that they are dealing with hazardous materials. She believes the Specific Plan needs to be amended in conjunction with this plan. She pointed out that the City Planner can deny this project and she observed that without a circulation plan, the application is not complete.
- A neighbor asked for the number of propane stations that have blown up in the last 5 years. Steve said nothing has in L.A. He added that they have never had an incident in 20 years.
- Lloyd asked about their fencing. Steve said it was going to be changed, moved 3' back, and it would be in sections.
- Joe asked about the trailer in the parking lot which needed to be moved per the City Inspector. Steve said that it is empty; they use it to haul materials.
- Christine asked what their plan is with alternative fuels.
- Debby asked for a rendering of their signage.
- Tomi thanked them and told them she was sorry they had gotten so far along before finding out that there were issues that needed to be dealt with. She told them that the community is pushing to get rid of industrial type uses. She asked stakeholders to send their comments to Milena.Zasadzien@lacity.org at the City Planning Department regarding any issues or concerns they may have. She then reviewed the list of issues discussed and said that a letter will be sent to City Planning.

CD2 Update: Daniel said they have spoken with representations from Target who are working with the Mission Community College District to use that site. CD2 is talking with the brokers for that site, as well.

Field Deputy Mary Benson reminded the board that on May 8th, Councilmember Krekorian will honor the people who came to Sunland to help during the flooding. The Bureau of Street Services enforcement division will speak about the Clean Team, a revitalization of community participation. She added that there is a \$1,000 reward for the information leading to conviction of people dumping objects or trash on the street.

5. Early Notification re: 8505 Foothill –Tomi announced that the Mobil Gas Station at Floralita and Foothill has put in an application to install a car wash in addition to what they have on the site now.

6. Comment letter to CD7 regarding the proposal for Lopez Canyon Truck Driving Academy – Cindy and Abby will work together on this letter.

7. **Hillside Ordinance** at City Planning Commission 4-22-10. **(Beck/Zimmerman)** moved that “**The STNC LUC support the 4-20-2010 letter written by Attorney Bill Eick on the Hillside Mansionization Ordinance.**” The motion carried with one abstention by Elaine Brown.

8. **Early Notification** – Proposals for development on High Cliff Trail will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Cindy said Ed Condit, a neighbor, has several concerns about this. Cindy is waiting for him to send his comments. The ENV comments are due by April 22.

9. **Save the Verdugo Hills Golf Course** has a Facebook page and is posting environmental concerns and asked that people access their page and become a fan. They have 515 fans right now.

10. **Approval of minutes** – None presented.

11. **Public Comments** – non agenda items and announcements:

- Cindy noted that a presentation is being organized on new regulations for septic systems and that FTDNC board members and local stakeholders will want to attend this presentation coming up at the next LUC on May 3.
- Nina stated that she has concerns about Home Depot which still owns the former K-Mart site. Daniel and Abby both addressed her concerns.
- The next STNC Board meeting is Wed., May 12, 2010 at North Valley Neighborhood City Hall, which will include the installation of the new board with City Councilmember Paul Krekorian.
- Abby talked about a baby bear that was seen in Sunland recently in someone’s pool.
- Debby Beck has plenty of free dirt if anyone wants it.

12. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Pat Kramer, Kelly Services