

SUNLAND-TUJUNGA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
LAND-USE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2018

- I. The meeting was called to order at 7:11pm by Chairperson Cindy Cleghorn
- II. Roll Call
 - a. Present
 - i. Cindy Cleghorn
 - ii. Bill Skiles
 - iii. Elektra Kruger
 - iv. Nina Royal
 - v. Vartan Keshish
 - vi. Pati Potter
 - b. Absent
 - i. Debby Beck
 - ii. David Barron
 - iii. John Laue
 - iv. Liliana Sanchez
 - v. Cathi Comras
 - c. No public representatives present
- III. Announcements
 - a. Open House and Public Hearings re CEQA and Transportation Updates to comply with State Legislature SB 743 – Nov 29, Dec 4 and Dec 6. Have to do with the issue of “vehicle miles travelled”
 - b. Re CF 14-1635-S2, Short term Rentals
 - i. STNC submitted a CIS in Oct 2016. Should the STNC update its CIS now that new information has been released?
 - c. Updates on various City Processes/Ordinances pending
 - i. City Planning has released a 90+ page staff report regarding the ReCodeLA Processes and Procedures Ordinance. A new expanded FAQ document was released 11-29-18
 - ii. All were encouraged to take note of this. All related information can be found on the City Planning website
 - iii. Numerous NCs around the City are discussing this because it proposes reduced participation of the public/NCs/homeowners groups in decision making processes
 - d. Restaurant Beverage Ordinance (CPC-2018-4660-CA)
 - i. A staff level Hearing will be held Wed Dec 5, 10:00am, LACH, Rm 1060. Links to documents re the Ordinance and FAQs are located on the agenda.
 - ii. The Ordinance, if approved, would expedite restaurants receiving their alcohol licenses if they adhere to a list of conditions. Currently alcohol license applications take 1 ½-2 years to approve
 - e. New City Planning video
 - i. Planning with Jane Choi, walks one through the procedures the City goes through to review Planning applications. Link on the agenda
 - f. Community Plan Program Update (CF 16-0422)

- i. City Planning has submitted a new report to PLUM with updates on the status of the Community Plan Program inclusive of its schedule. The S/T et al CP Update is scheduled to begin in 2020 and will take a number of years to complete
 - ii. A number of community meetings will be held by the City during the process with various groups as well as associated NCs taking part
 - g. City Planning website's "Community Resources" tab
 - i. Links visitors to their Annual Report, Quarterly Newsletter and blog. Planning.lacity.org
 - h. ReCodeLA Update <https://recode.la/>
 - i. The City is going through a zoning code reform. Public meetings are held once a month. They are not "noticed" like Public Hearings. They take place the 4th Wed of every month
 - i. General Plan Update: OurLA2040 General Plan with an on-line survey regarding its open space vision
 - i. Link on the agenda
 - j. City Planning process re EIRs – Update
 - i. City Planning is working on a process to identify EIR consultants to add to tomorrow's City Council meeting.
 1. To date EIR consultants are selected by the developer. Tomorrow City Council will discuss taking this away from developers and having them done by independent entities as does Glendale
 2. A list of consultants will be established, the City will match up a consultant with an application
 - k. 2019 Neighborhood Council Elections
 - i. Candidate filing January 12, 2019 – February 11, 2019
 - ii. Election Day = Sat April 27, 2019
 - l. Next LUC meeting = Dec 17, 7pm
 - m. Items forwarded to the STNC Board
 - i. 6360 Foothill Bl. For a new recycling center with existing food market
 - ii. The CF 18-1000 CIS – draft Community Impact Statement support that DWP report on existing water and power infrastructure in hillside communities
 - n. Anyone wishing to have an item placed on the STNC Board agenda are encouraged to attend the Executive Committee Wed Dec 5. It is this committee that schedules items to come before the Board. Next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday Dec 12
- IV. Meeting in recess at 7:17pm, no quorum.
- V. Debby Beck arrived
- VI. Meeting returns to session 7:24pm with quorum present
- VII. Self-Introduction of Committee Members
- VIII. Cindy C. explained the LUC process as it reviews land-use applications filed in the Sunland-Tujunga area. Sometimes people address the LUC before even filing an application with the City to get a feel for the community's reception to a proposal.
- IX. 10247 Hillhaven – Demolition of a SFR, construction of a bonus density 14 unit 3 story bldg. w/2 very low income, 1 manager, 11 market rate units
 - a. Just received the Project information package. Will invite the applicant to address the LUC. Applicants are not required to present but frequently look to the Neighborhood Council's for input to help them build a better Project. In Sunland-Tujunga a majority do come to present their plans and hear feedback, seek support
- X. 7656-60 Foothill (x Apperson) – Drive-Thru Car Wash/7-11

- a. Recently had a Public Hearing. Status = the LUC Comments only letter is with the STNC Board. The ZA is keeping the File open until Dec 10 to receive any comment letters inclusive of the STNC Comment Letter
- XI. 6433 La Tuna Cyn Rd – VHGC Project
- a. Bill Skiles is recusing himself from discussion on this Project. He is a Board Member of the Tuna Canyon Detention Station Coalition
 - b. Hearing held before the Deputy Advisory Agency/staff 11-28-18. File to be held open until Dec 5 2018 to accept further comments. Applicant has been ordered to submit an updated traffic analysis for La Tuna Cyn within one week.
 - c. Next Hearing to be before the City Planning Commission tentatively scheduled for Jan 24, 2019
 - d. Ivonne Columbaro, a resident near the VHGC Project said they have an 800+ signature petition thus far opposing the proposed 200+ homes on the golf course: We have an 800+ signature petition thus far opposing the proposed 200+ homes on the golf course.
 - i. She stated that our population in Sunland-Tujunga has grown by 41% since 2010. Tujunga Cyn Bl is our main artery to get to the Freeway from Foothill
 - ii. Many are concerned about traffic – the ability to evacuate in the event of a fire. I don't want any of us to experience what they experienced in Paradise California. The traffic study was done by the developer himself
 - 1. The study is obviously biased – no one is looking out for our position. There are a lot of flaws in it. She would like to see if the STNC could help us get an independent study for traffic. Will the City wait for such a study?
 - 2. I am hoping before Wednesday, that we can tell them that we want to do an independent study and are working on finding funding to get that
 - iii. W/their 229 homes, they claim they would have only 90 students – they also said that residents would not go up Tujunga Cyn Bl to access schools, but would “jump on the Freeway”. Schools are not accessed by the Freeway
 - e. Barbara Carter: One of the great points of contention we can really hammer on is to focus on fire hazards. The combined area including Canyon Hills that is already approved and the Golf Course. Canyon Hills has only one egress point – La Tuna Cyn at the 210
 - i. If you look at a burn-map of where the La Tuna Cyn Fire burnt, that entire area where Canyon Hills is scheduled to be built was burned to a crisp and 2 houses above it are gone along Verdugo Crestline Dr
 - 1. The tract map shows that the exit point goes right into La Tuna Cyn Rd which was closed due to the fire as well as the 210 Freeway from the 2 west to past Hansen Dam. 500 cars from Whitebird + 500 cars from VHGC.
 - 2. Whitebird evacuating onto La Tuna Cyn Rd would all be jammed up by residents exiting the VHGC Project and that does not even include current residents along Tujunga Cyn Bl.
 - 3. All their traffic studies do not address emergency access/evacuation
 - ii. They have a very bad situation with fire club – the City of LA has not approved their fire club. They are required to have 4,000 gal/min of fire club – they do not have that. In order to get that, they would have to put a tank in the hills
 - 1. A tank would have to have its own EIR. These are all things to put in your letters Had we had the La Tuna Cyn Fire with these two developments in place it would have been a catastrophe

- iii. Also fire stations are required to be within a certain distance for them to provide adequate response time which they are not by a long shot – about twice the required distance
 - iv. There are trucks parked along front of the property
 - 1. They lied: They said no trucks were parked on their property, that they were parked on the street and they couldn't do anything about it
 - 2. After the Hearing I went straight to the site and took photographs: Trucks were parked directly on the lot, parked within the parallel parking zones, some having been there since Feb, there are big barrels of diesel oil behind a truck which is a flammable material
 - v. When did they turn the water off and how many trees have died because of that, do they have a maintenance plan because the property looks abandoned.
 - 1. They lied claiming to have a maintenance plan
 - 2. After the Hearing I went straight to the site to take photographs along the length of the Golf Course from La Tuna Cyn Rd
 - 3. From one end of the fence to the other there is extensive brush, tons of broken and dead tree branches, a lot of dumping including furniture and construction materials, a fence breach with food containers/clothing
 - f. Shawn _____? _____: It would be great if we could stop this Project completely and somehow get the City/County to purchase the property as recreation space, but I don't really see that happening – they will build at some point
 - i. My compromise would be to grant them the RD5 but stop them from being granted the small-lot subdivision. They carved out the prime flat area for building – will they donate the hillside to some charity to wash their hands of any liability?
 - 1. Cindy C.: Under the new compromised proposal presented to the LUC, the MRCA proposes to take over the entirety of the undeveloped land so the hillsides would now be under the care of the State
 - 2. At the last Hearing, the Deputy Advisory Agency said they were granting the subdivision at that point, but that it will not be approved until the next (CPC) Hearing because everything needs to be approved together
 - 3. If it does not get approved at the CPC then there will be no subdivision, but according to the 8 State requirements to qualify for subdivision, this Project meets all 8. That is where the Deputy Advisory Agency left it. She emphasized the traffic analysis redo and admonished the applicant regarding maintenance
 - 4. Recommended community members seek a meeting with CM Rodriguez preferably in a community setting, but at any rate any meeting with the CM directly would be important
 - g. Bill Skiles returned to the meeting room
- XII. 7740-70 McGroarty – CUP adjustment for Remnant University
 - a. LUC recommendation letter is with the STNC Board to agendaize. Their next meeting will be Dec 12
 - i. Ara Armazian: Many of our concerns were not addressed in the LUC Draft Letter, we hope the STNC Board will accept further edits. LUC presented with a copy of their recommended edits (see attached)
- XIII. 6454 Foothill – Proposed 3,500 sq ft convenience store with fuel canopy for an auto service station

- a. Proposed operating hours 24 hours daily. Presented 11-19. Immediate neighborhood opposition at that time. Applicant to return with site renderings. Applicant has been encouraged to meet directly with the neighbors
- XIV. 6360 Foothill - Recycling Center behind the Foothill Food Mart
- a. The Draft Comment letter has been forwarded to the STNC Board for their review and vote without further consideration by/recommendation by the LUC
- XV. Sunhill Marketplace Update – Jonathan Lonner
- a. The original application was filed in 2014 solely for a “facelift” and parking/landscape upgrade. That is almost complete now. The original application was for a Project Permit Approval and a ZA determination to move some of the C zone around
 - b. During the process of construction most of the old Ralphs signage was taken down. It was determined that signage became an issue. The old Ralph’s signage was larger than that allowed by the current SP – 100 + sq ft vs 75 sq ft max
 - i. In addition, the City wanted the Rite-Aid roof sign taken down. The applicant wanted to upgrade the existing Ralph’s and Rite-Aid pole signs along Sunland. These have grandfathered rights as they were put up before the SP.
 1. If altered in any way, they would have to conform to current code – so when there are discussions with potential bigger tenants signage becomes the biggest issue because they want larger signage
 2. They are very interested in the site, but are interested in how we are going to meet their signage requirements. Unfortunately the larger the space, the more they want larger signage
 3. There has been no signage problems with smaller tenants – the coffee shops, bakeries, laundromats looking at the 20,000 to 25,000 sq ft units
 4. When talking to larger tenants, the 1st thing they say is “We like the site, we like the sq footage, but we need to have Foothill signage so those coming off the Fwy/coming into Sunland know we are there
 5. Larger tenants say that we have been under construction for a long time so the Center has not exactly been “booming” & there is concern about how they would be perceived from a commercial tenancy standpoint
 6. All the grounds around where they are building is zoned P which does not allow any bldg or signage sq footage which could be done in a C zone so they are going through a ZC to move the C2 which is now near the bldg to the P which is closer to the street
 7. They are not anticipating doing any more building so they can move the C2 they have toward the street to rebuild the pole sign where it currently is plus add one on Foothill + monument signs at the entrances
 8. To rebuild the pole sign will require a SP exception, a waiver of a component of the SP. To do so requires making findings declaring some type of hardship. We have drafted economic findings
 9. For a hardship finding, Planning typically looks for topographical land-use findings so we also included topographical findings identifying that a tenant on the back of the property requiring visibility from Sunland would need a pole sign there
 10. There are at least three Ralph’s signs on the eastern and northern faces of the building that have been taken down during construction. Ralphs politely said they need them back up.

11. Ralphs made it clear with the ownership that part of their reason for the investment they have put into this build has been because they had pre-existing signs
 12. All of these entitlement components are not administrative, but require some level of Hearings. We believe Planning will be supportive even though they have not reviewed the findings yet b/c we are not adding any sq footage, etc.
 13. We believe we can file for an urban infill CE exemption
 14. Pati P.: I did see the Rite-Aids sign coming down. I do know roof signs are no longer allowed in LA unless they are grandfathered and use the same casings so are there going to be roof signs at all?
 15. Jonathan L.: If you remember in the new design there are 2 large walls that come up mid-building on each side and I anticipated some of the smaller 75 sq ft wall signs flush to the building there
 16. There will be no other wall signs, no other roof signs on top. They want to move the Rite-Aid sign, re-do the pylon sign in the same location but rather than just be for Ralphs be for all larger tenants
 17. Discussed signage as it appears in La Crescenta/La Canada
 18. Ralphs refuses to take down their remaining sign due to fear of losing it. A different sign had been taken down during construction, was intended to be put back up, received the required permit, was put back up and then had to be brought down because it had lost non-conforming rights
- c. We wanted to come out as this puzzle comes together because we wanted to make sure the items are acceptable in terms of design & location – that the same level of communication we had on the original Project is the same as we have now
- i. Construction has been a long process. We want to be sure you have a Community Center that you can be proud of and will utilize. We want to hear any thoughts – positive, negative or otherwise – so they can be incorporated into the Project
 - ii. We did have a preliminary meeting w/the Council Office to talk about what they thought. They had some design ideas for the signs. We asked that they get those to us in writing – once we talked to you we would get back to them
 1. Debby B.: I am curious whether the Council Office gave you any ideas since they don't talk to us
- d. Q: What type of tenants are being approached?
- i. Jonathan L.: The leasing guys don't talk to me about that. I think that the list that was done (see attached) is right about the type of stores that they are talking to both with larger and smaller tenants
- e. Q: Is there going to be a restaurant or store in the old Sizzler building?
- i. Jonathan L.: They love the corner as a restaurant – maybe as a 21st century type of restaurant whether quick-serve or sit-down. Some of the restaurants on the list are the kinds of restaurants they have thought about
 1. They are not concentrating on the Sizzler site for now – we are focused on getting the signage package approved and tenants in
- f. Maryellen Eltgroth: Are the cell towers on the backside new?
- i. Jonathan L.: No, they have been there since +/- 1995
 - ii. Maryellen E.: Will you be adding any more?

1. Jonathan L.: We have no plans to touch any of those, but also have no plans to add any more
- g. Debby B.: I am a big proponent of River Rock b/c it was the original bldg material here in Sunland-Tujunga & our most historic bldgs are a combination of river rock w/field stone or anything else. You mentioned they are going for the “local look”. Field stone or river rock would add a little of that look
 - i. Jonathan L.: They finished the landscaping on the back. It is not only whiskey grass as part of that infiltration area, there is this winding river rock at the base of it so it might work over there
 - ii. On the other side I think it would be lost at the base – but we are not eliminating anything so we will put these in the alternative designs
 - iii. Debby B.: If/When the Sizzlers/Cocos are integrated into the rest of the Project, if they had some river rock as well it would help integrate the whole thing
 - h. Mark Seigel: Is there any possibility that Sun Thrift will be asked back at a reasonable rent?
 - i. Jonathan L.: I don’t know – I would be happy to ask. One of the things we ran into with Sun Thrift is that thrift stores are actually prohibited on our site per the SP. We had looked at a multitude of ways to keep them
 1. We tried ways to move them around the construction, but it didn’t work out. But if it is important I will ask
 2. Q: Is there a lot of people in the community that really like
 3. C: It is important. People like shopping in Thrift stores or whatever. They tend to go in there every once in a while
 4. Jonathan L.: Ok we will explore that
 - i. Q: What are the rental rates/ranges going to be?
 - i. Jonathan L.: Once the larger national tenants are in, we will be looking for different types of smaller tenants to fill up the space that goes for an unknown quantity like a sandwich shop that can’t pay a commercial rate – but I am happy to follow up on that.
 - j. Pati P.: The area that used to be an elevator in the original design – what is it now?
 - i. Jonathan L.: Just a loading dock. One of the things that we had in the original plan was the loading dock accommodating two pretty large trucks servicing both the lower and upper levels of the larger bays
 - k. Pati P.: If you have a restaurant, it has to have totally different insides, so nothing is set up to be a restaurant? If a restaurant wanted to move in all that would be put in at that time?
 - i. Jonathan L.: Yes. Nothing has been put in for a potential restaurant because e.g. a subway does not need a grease catch, it needs a toaster oven, etc.
 - l. C: My main fear is I won’t use the place especially if there is no general merchandise store like Target where you can get socks or whatever and units will remain empty. We have subway sandwich stores, we have a lot of Starbucks – we need diversity so I hope you will keep the rents at a level that will get that
 - m. Debby B.: Re the Thrift Store – could it also be treated as an exception to the SP? Have a “finding” for that? Obviously there is community support for that
 - i. Jonathan L.: It is something that we can look at. Among the issues with regards to that is whether there really is a hardship for the type of use otherwise prohibited, but we can talk to Planning about it
 - ii. Debby B.: Has anyone talked to the Thrift Store that was there?

1. Jonathan L.: Not at all, it hadn't even occurred to us until you guys brought it up to us tonight that there was that much interest in the store based on how many people brought it up
- iii. Cindy C.: We have a community that works around the SP by e.g. calling a Thrift Store a "Vintage" store. The issue would be the drop-off of items, the maintenance, etc.
- n. Cindy C.: Regarding the signs. Have you taken a look at the signs at the Ralphs in La Crescenta including the monument signs? And the signs in La Canada. It is not easy to see the stores inside that town center and I wonder if the City would consider signage along the Sunland Bl. Perimeter that is at eye level. You can see an example of this at the Foothill Bl and Los Angeles Crest intersection. Its important to be able to see what stores are located in the center
- o. Cindy C.: What is the next step now? Have you filed for this? When will we see the actual stage in which we will be able to participate?
 - i. Johnathan L.: I think in January. We have been meeting with Planning to finalize so that you will receive the information package. We will be happy to come back to work out any specifics
 - ii. Cindy C.: It would be nice to see the renderings of the colors and maybe some of the signs
 - iii. Cindy C.: Will there be a complete sign plan for the center accomplished through this application process?
 1. Jonathan L.: Yes, that is the plan. We are almost there
- p. Pati P. has results of a survey she handed out (see attached)
- q. Pati P.: In talking to the people in charge of leasing the units – I tried to get him to come out 2 months ago but he wasn't really ready. He said he didn't want to take up too much of this meeting's time. He was the one who actually suggested the survey
 - i. I did make it available on Facebook & announced it at different land-use meetings. We got 132 back. There was a lot of chatter on Facebook. He mentioned something I never heard of which is good because we need variety
 - ii. From the start he told me that in getting a promotional in soft goods tenants is a viable option although density for many of the uses on the list is not there – he is trying to play off the 210 Fwy and looking into SH and LVT
 - iii. He has not approached smaller users yet – he is working on getting in the anchor first – the large boxes filled first which will create a draw for the smaller shop users
 - iv. Kohls did turn down the site. They are closing and downsizing their stores in this area right now – they did close their one in Fallbrook in 2019 (?)
 - v. Chase Bank is interested – that is the only thing he said there. They don't really want to commit to the public and then nothing happens
 - vi. Movie houses are out of the question. The issue w/theatres is 1 of economics. Most theatres want to be *paid* \$150/sq ft FROM the landlord – the landlord has to pay the theatre to come here – that comes to a couple million dollars
 - vii. Ralphs exclusively prohibits any tenants that sell meats or conducts use as any kind of market so no Trader Joes etc.
 - viii. Rite-Aid exclusively prohibits any kind of pharmacies
 - ix. Sizzler is off the market right now – they want to get everything else done first
 - x. They hope to look at their accession plans further

XVI. Approval of Minutes

- a. **MOTION:** by Pati Potter to approve the October 28, 2018 STNC-LUC Meeting Minutes as amended 2nd by Vartan Keshish Vote: 3 Ayes, 3 Abstentions by reason of absence
- b. **MOTION:** by Pati Potter to approve the November 5, 2018 STNC-LUC Meeting Minutes as amended 2nd by Nina Royal Votes: 4 Ayes, 2 Abstentions by reason of absence
- XVII. CIS for CF 18-1000 – see attached Motion and proposed CIS
 - a. **MOTION:** by Elektra Kruger to approve the proposed CIS for CF 18-1000 as presented 2nd by Nina Royal Discussion:
 - i. Bill Skiles
 - 1. The whole first sentence of the CIS is too long, is not at all necessary
 - ii. Bill Skiles/Pati Potter
 - 1. The entire CIS is too long – I would fall asleep reading it. All you need to say is you are supporting it
 - iii. Elektra Kruger
 - 1. You need to say why you are supporting it
 - iv. Cindy Cleghorn
 - 1. The CIS could be a statement of support with Elektra K.'s words as a backup
 - v. Vote: Unanimously approved. Cindy C.: To be submitted to the STNC Board as modified
- XVIII. Public Comments
 - a. Mercedes De Castillo
 - i. Said she set up a Facebook page on which 75 local artists posted beautiful pieces of art. I thought it would be awesome to do a local art festival. I am here to get a temperature gauge from you guys. I would like to have a local art festival in the Home Depot parking lot
 - 1. I thought it would be an amazing place, but I do know that it has been a debatable place in this community. I have talked to the corporate office of Home Depot and they said they would love to support it
 - 2. But they said I would have to have community support. So I am letting you know that this is something I would like to do and where I want to do it
 - 3. Cindy C.: We can put this on a future agenda to discuss further
- XIX. Meeting adjourned at 9:36pm