

Minutes – Regular Meeting Thursday, December 1, 2016

7 pm meeting, reception at 6:30 pm.

Montana Branch Library

1. The December 1, 2016 meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm. A quorum was present. Attending Board members were Chair Danilo Bach, Nancy Coleman, Evelyn Lauchenauer, Jane Koehler, Jim Williams, Todd James, Caryn Marshall, Victor Fresco, Sonya Sultan and Steve Lissik. Absent were: Jeff Gordon and Phillis Dudick.
2. Approval of the Minutes from the November 3, 2016 meeting. Moved by Jane Koehler and seconded by Nancy Coleman, unanimously approved as written.
3. The Treasurer's Report by Victor Fresco. NOMA is holding \$10,700.00 with a few unpaid bills outstanding .
4. Montana Avenue crosswalks and stoplights. Caryn Marshal presented for Montana Avenue Merchants re need for greater pedestrian safety along the street. City Traffic Engineer Henry Severin presented options for Montana Avenue crosswalks and stoplight upgrades. There is a need for more upgrades near schools and better night time lighting in the commercial district. Mr. Severin, recently hired by the city, asked for and received suggestions and recommendations for improvements and requested members send him any additional.
5. Ken Robin, an advocate who supports a ballot initiative for more green space and parks in the city, presented the need and desirability for a park at the soon-to-be-developed city-owned 4th/5th and Arizona site in the Downtown Community District and urged NOMA to vote in support of such a plan and members to support it while the DC Plan is in discussion. Vice-chair Nancy Coleman informed that NOMA has already been active during this process, contributing significantly to the analysis being undertaken by the Neighborhood Council of the DCP EIR, specifically on the option of a such park and other pocket parks downtown. City Manager Rick Cole, in attendance, reminded the meeting to consider the trade-offs the city and its residents will be faced with in choosing such an option. The DCP is to be discussed further and decided upon this coming spring, and members were encouraged to let their opinions be known on a downtown park at this site.
6. McMansionization in NOMA's R-1 neighborhoods. Nancy Coleman and Bob Posek of the Land Use Committee spoke on zoning concerns, R-1 lot coverage, height allowances, and other aspects of our present code that facilitate overlarge new houses inconsistent with neighborhood scale. Planning Director David Martin was present to address this issue and said he will review with staff what possibilities in the newly-adopted code exist to discourage such mansionization, was not optimistic short of a process of amendment and adoption of such changes by Council.
7. NOMA's Annual Meeting at the Aero Theatre Saturday, January 21, 2017 will include election of Board candidates, a featured panel with guest speakers on DTSM and the future of our city, refreshments, and entertainment from one of our local schools. Doors to open at 2 pm., program to start at 2:30. Members interested in volunteering should contact Caryn Marshall.
8. Committee reports and announcements.
 - i) Membership: New city mailing about NOMA and membership to go out in January.

ii) Land Use Committee: Jane Koehler on meeting with neighbors and NOMA members called by owner on variance requests for new home proposed at 701 Foxtail Drive. No significant improvements from his prior proposal. The variances will allow the structure and roof height to impose on neighbors on both sides and the canyon neighborhood below.

9. Annual SM homeless count is scheduled for Jan. 25, 2017. Volunteers can register online at www.santamonicahomelesscount.com.

10. Public Comment

Diana Gordon gave an update on Santa Monica developer NMS Properties. NMS Properties and its CEO, Neil Shekhter, were found by the Los Angeles Superior Court to have committed massive, intentional, coordinated efforts to destroy evidence re an agreement with another developer on a Westside project. The Court found an elaborate NMS scheme of forgery, altering computer metadata, backdating of Mr. Shekhter's home computer and destroying and hiding evidence. The Court found that Mr. Shekhter had committed perjury, having provided false testimony under oath to mislead the Court and cover up his own misconduct. The question is, How will this affect NMS Properties dealings with SM and should it lead to review of their agreements with the city on their many projects here?

11. Adjournment – 8:46 pm

There will be no meeting on the first Thursday of next month because of NOMA's Annual Meeting January 21.

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