



# North of Montana Association

## WINTER 2020 NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

We are a non-profit all-volunteer group of residents working to protect and enhance the quality of life in the North of Montana area of Santa Monica.

1132 Montana Ave. #516, Santa Monica, CA 90403 // SMNOMA.org // Follow us on Twitter @SMNOMA90402

### ANNUAL MEETING

*When:*  
February 6, 2020  
7:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

*Where:*  
Montana Branch Library  
17th Street and Montana Ave.

### ANNUAL CELEBRATION

*When:*  
February 22 or 29

*Where:*  
The Historic Aero Theatre  
Montana and 14th St.

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

*When:*  
First Thursday of each month  
7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.

*Where:*  
Montana Branch Library  
17th Street and Montana Ave.

## THE PLAZA AT SANTA MONICA

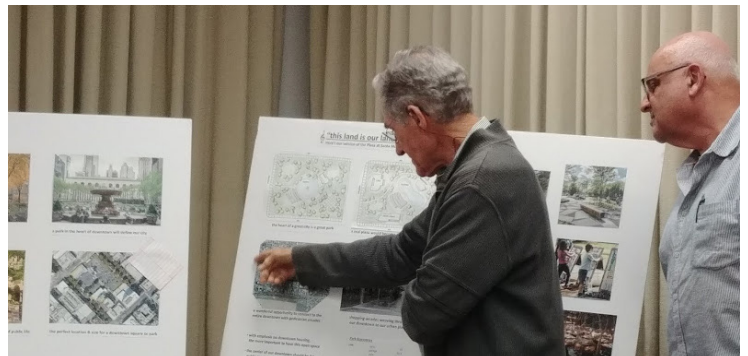
The residents of Santa Monica own the land between 4th and 5th Streets on Arizona, currently the site of a bank and surface parking lots. The City Council and its staff have been working for several years to develop this large parcel. The City has held several meetings, and planners (staff) have been working for several years to “develop” this large parcel. Residents have been told that a luxury hotel, office space, affordable housing, retail space, and a cultural center would be placed on this last piece of public land in the downtown. While City Council and Planning Commission meetings about this project have been public they have not been designed for the residents to present their questions.

The proposed “Plaza at Santa Monica” has been in “development” for more than a decade. The City acquired the land, asked for proposals from private developers, and chose the development team of DLJ Real Estate Capital Partners and Clarett West Development. The Plaza at Santa Monica currently proposes a 130-foot tall building that spans from 4th to 5th street, over 300 feet in length. The project also proposes 17,800 square feet of ground level public plaza, although this area would be controlled by the developer. The developer has said they plan to keep the seasonal ice rink. The Environmental Impact Report suggests the project will bring an additional 5,000 new car trips per day to this already difficult area to traverse.

The process to get to this point has been without robust resident involvement regarding this resident owned property are joined by Santa Monica Architects for a Responsible (SmaRT) and the Santa Monica Coalition for Livable City (SMCLC) to remedy this at the developer’s presentation at our November meeting.



Frank Stephen, Clarett West Development, explains The Plaza at Santa Monica at the NOMA Meeting. Photo by Evelyn Lauchenauer



Ron Goldman and Daniel Jansenson of SmaRT propose alternatives for the City owned property at 4th & 5th Streets on Arizona. Photo by Evelyn Lauchenauer

## THE MONSTER (MANSION) IS TAMED

On October 22nd, the City Council unanimously approved the new R-1 (single-unit residential district) ordinance limiting the size of new homes throughout the City of Santa Monica. This was the result of nearly two years of work involving members of not only NOMA, but throughout the city, including Friends of Sunset Park and the Northeast Neighborhood group. This is an important victory for our neighborhoods.

Before describing the key elements of the new ordinance, a brief explanation of how neighborhood activism is able to effect changes in our neighborhoods: Our group, NOMA, came into being in 1997 in response to concerns of an upsurge in demolitions of older homes and new construction out of scale with the existing homes. The maximum allowable home for R-1 neighborhoods at that time was 80% lot coverage. This meant that on a 7500 square foot lot, as are common north of Montana, one could build a new home of

approximately **6000** square feet, and in Gillette Regent area with 9000 square foot lots, a **7200** square foot home. This was more than twice the size of existing older two-story homes in our neighborhoods. As a result of members of NOMA working with the Planning Commission, Planning Department and City Council, maximum allowable home was reduced to **61%**, a twenty per cent reduction in size from the prior ordinance. This ordinance was in effect from 1999 until the current ordinance was enacted.

What are the key elements of this new ordinance? The most important change is a reduction in mass of the building. Other elements include:

- Maximum parcel coverage is now **45%** for new construction of two-story homes
- Single-story homes less than 18 feet in height may occupy 50 % lot coverage

## THE MONSTER (MANSION) IS TAMED (CONT.)

- Maximum height of new construction is reduced from 32 feet, north of Montana, to 28 feet which is consistent with the rest of Santa Monica. Height of new construction with flat roofs is now 23 feet.
- Maximum parcel coverage for one and two-story remodels is now 55% (to encourage remodels as opposed to demolition)
- Increased second-story setbacks to minimize impact on neighboring homes

- Accessory dwelling units do not count towards lot coverage

While the overall effect of the new ordinance is to decrease the size of newer homes, it is less restrictive than others found in similar cities in California. This is a moderate, reasonable approach to the problem of overbuilding in our neighborhoods. The majority of residents throughout Santa Monica have voiced their support of this ordinance. We are fortunate to have a City government which listened to its concerned residents and acted accordingly.

## MAPPING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING - NEIGHBORHOOD DISASTER READINESS

We had an Emergency Preparedness and Mapping presentation for our Euclid Street neighbors that was led by Lindsay Call of the City of Santa Monica. It was very helpful and we feel better prepared to handle an emergency.

It was a two hour presentation about what we should do during an earthquake and immediately afterwards. It is so important for neighbors to have a system in place on how they will check on neighbors, handle medical emergencies, and have an inventory of what neighbors can contribute to help each other. We were surprised by how much we learned. We thought we should automatically turn off the gas but that is NOT true. You should only shut off the gas if you note one of the four warning signs: it smells like gas, you hear a hiss, the dial is spinning fast, or you see debris blowing around near the gas meter. Keep an adjustable wrench attached/nearby where you may need to shut off the gas.

The most important points we should all remember:

- Practice DROP, COVER and HOLD ON** with all members of your household. If you cannot find a safe place to get under, go towards an interior wall and hold on. Doorways are no stronger than any

other part of a structure so do not rely on them for protection. During an earthquake, get under a sturdy piece of furniture and hold on.

- If you are in bed – stay in bed, roll on your stomach, cover your head with a pillow.
- Be prepared for it to **last up to 2 minutes**.
- Everyone should have a disaster kit that has prescriptions, extra contacts, first aid, batteries, etc.
- Everyone should have seven days worth of water.
- Shut off water** at the house main to trap water in your home. This will keep pollutants out of possible drinking water such as the water in your water heater.
- Listen to the emergency alert system at 1680 AM radio or on the NOAA weather radio** and keep neighbors informed of what they learn.

To arrange for a presentation for your neighborhood, please contact Lindsay at [Lindsay.Call@smgov.net](mailto:Lindsay.Call@smgov.net).

## NOMA'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2019

- R1 Ordinance Update that allows 45% lot coverage for all new homes in R1 neighborhoods and encourages remodels, not teardowns.
- A Successful annual Make Music Day in Palisades Park on June 21, 2019
- Vibrant discussions of Santa Monica Issues at the NOMA Monthly meetings
- Winter Celebration with State Senator and life-long Santa Monica

## TELL NOMA WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

We want to hear from the residents in NOMA. We would also appreciate more volunteers to do research, plan meetings, help with events, and attend city-sponsored events representing NOMA. Meanwhile let us know:

- What in our neighborhood gives you the greatest joy?
- What causes you the most concern?
- What needs the greatest improvement?

## CURRENT NOMA BOARD

- |                                 |                               |               |                    |              |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Nancy Coleman, <i>Chair</i>     | Jeff Brecht, <i>Secretary</i> | Jeff Gordon   | Evelyn Lauchenauer | Jim Williams |
| Danilo Bach, <i>Vice-Chair</i>  | Derrick Devermont             | Ann Greenspan | Steven Lissik      |              |
| Victor Fresco, <i>Treasurer</i> | Phillis Dudick                | Todd James    | Sonya Sultan       |              |

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*(NOMA does not share or sell email addresses)*

## ANNUAL DUES

NOMA is the City-recognized organization that represents the interest of our neighborhood. If you paid your dues in January 2018 you need not pay now.

\$30 Household

Dues can be paid online:

<http://www.smnoma.org/join-noma.org/join-noma.html>

\$50 Business

Please make check payable to "NOMA" and mail to:

\_\_\_ Additional Donation

NOMA

\_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Renewal

1112 Montana Ave., #516  
Santa Monica, CA 90403

*(NOMA is a 501(c)(4) organization; dues and contributions are not tax-deductible)*