

NOMA MEETING VIA ZOOM  
MINUTES  
MAY 6, 7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Coleman at 7:00 PM.  
43 members in attendance.

*Board members present:*

Nancy Coleman, Danilo Bach, Victor Fresco, Jeff Brecht, Phyllis Dudick, Jeff Gordon, Ann Greenspun, Todd James, Evelyn Lauchenauer, Elizabeth Lerer, Robert Posek, Patrick Sarkissian, Sonya Fox Sultan, Jim Williams and Steve Lissik.

**Deputy Police Chief Darrick**

The **OIR Group** report came out today, which is an evaluation of circumstances almost a year after the May 31 riots in Santa Monica. The report will be reviewed at the upcoming city council meeting on May 11. Deputy Chief Darrick, was not able to speak to the issues at this time. His contact number is 310.458.8460 and his email is [darrick.jacob@smgov.net](mailto:darrick.jacob@smgov.net).

Jim Williams asked about the new Safety Commission. Who they are and what do they do? Deputy Police Chief Derrick provided the names and said that their recommendations will go to the City Council and the City Manager. They will in turn work on those policies with the City Attorney. They will look at the process, review, and take any personnel complaints.

**Resource, Recovery and Recycling Department**

**Chris Celsi**, Manager of the Resource, Recovery and Recycling Department in Santa Monica, shared the latest information from this past year, as Covid has affected their department. They had an increase in residential building material discards as more people stayed home and were building and repairing. Bulky items and illegal items were on the rise, seen as construction increased. Many things were not recyclable but they are sensitive to businesses trying to recover. There was lots of garbage left out. Commercial building was down. The City Yards are being retrofitted.

Chris Celsi can be reached at 310.458-2223 or [recycling@smgov.net](mailto:recycling@smgov.net), or [chris.celsi@smgov.net](mailto:chris.celsi@smgov.net)

**Ann Hoover**, a long time NOMA member and an advocate for sports fields for Santa Monica youth, talked about the SMMUSD and their construction using voter-approved bonds. Specific schools talked about were Roosevelt, Franklin and McKinley. She mentioned the historical resource policy as suggested to administration. **Roosevelt's** pick up and drop off of students has changed to the rear of the school (smaller area than previously) and some residents feel that traffic may adversely affect them. Early TK and EK areas will be moved. The basketball courts will be reduced in size from their previous space. There is a move by some to preserve the open green space in front of the school, where many congregate. Efforts are in place to increase more outdoor learning, and provide more flexible learning space.

Current plans are to fence the open green space in the front of **Franklin**. The tennis courts are gone.

**Carey Upton, Chief Operations Officer of Maintenance and Operations at the SMMUSD**, stated that the school board meetings are open to the public, and he encourages those with concerns to speak up. He thanked those who have supported the bond issues for the process of school modernization to take place.

Susan Samarge Powell, spoke about the “vertical alignment” concept in schools, from birth to eighth grade. An attempt to use Headstart and federal money at Franklin would not work, there is not enough room for all the children proposed, so those federal funds could not be used. Charts and graphs were displayed during this discussion.

### **SB and SB 10**

Nancy Coleman mentioned there is dissension in the State Senate vis a vis communities regarding SB 9 and SB10, bills which will wipe out R1 neighborhoods.

### **City Council Member Phil Brock**

Phil Brock addressed many current issues. He asked those in attendance to pay attention to the city budget being discussed at the upcoming city council meeting on May 10. It is very important. He has engaged in a budget study session and has also visited many local non-profits working with the homeless population, like the Salvation Army, our City Shelters, West Coast Care and the SM Fire Department. He mentioned a fellow city council member who was out with her family at a local restaurant, when a disturbance ensued. An incident took place near her with an unsettled person. It was an unsafe scene and the family left. These disturbing instances are occurring more frequently and are everywhere. City Council involved with forming solutions to these issues.

**City Council** will return to in-person meetings to City Chambers on June 8. Staff will be working on a calling-in protocol.

### **Parking Structure #3**

Demolition of Parking Structure #3 on Arizona and 4<sup>th</sup> goes to the Coastal Commission soon; comments can be submitted. Some of the neighboring businesses would like to delay this for 18 months until businesses revive post Covid.

### **Coco Robots**

These are small robots utilized to deliver food via sidewalk trips. They utilize a camera with operators offsite in Santa Monica and Westwood. During Covid, restaurants’ food deliveries had sky-high costs and these robots would cut their delivery costs by 50%. This is a trial for businesses and the robots do not keep any camera footage. They have mainly been used in the Downtown area. Residents are divided pro and con on this new device.

### **Street Cleaning**

Council member Brock recommends twice per month street cleaning, this is a budget issue and they would not have to hire anyone new. Currently LA has the same policy. Other budget goals are to decrease homelessness, increase support to mental health, and to increase public safety.

### **City Manager Interviews and Department Leadership Turnovers**

These may take place May 4-15, and then May 22 for final interviews. Three weeks after the new City Manager takes office, there will be another interview for the Police Chief. There may be an interview for another Fire Chief, if our current one gets hired for another job. There may be a search for a new city attorney. Phil would like to “Rebirth our Town”.

### **Housing Element**

The city is looking at 4-story overlays. The City Council opposes SB 9 and SB 10, as is, as voted previously. With SB 9 and SB 10, single family properties (R1) could end up with 6-10 units in the transit zones. Increased property values could destroy any sense of community in the city: increases in property value leads to re-appraisals, taxes go up, and resident owners flee. Phil liked the city’s previous TORCA element where people could rent to own. There needs to be ways to create support for affordable housing, like Section 8 has. There is NO funding for the proposed almost 9,000 RHNA units. (How about state funding?) Phil would like to preserve the R1 neighborhoods. **Infrastructure needs to be addressed.**

### **Commissions**

Commissions are a “voice close to the residents”. Due to the reduced budget, they may be reduced to meeting 4/times/year and may become less meaningful. City council decisions should not all be rubber stamped and the oversight from these commissions is useful.

**Non-union and payroll:** We have 14 more city attorneys than Pasadena.

Ann Hoover reminded Councilmember Brock to go over previous budget cuts to see if there are some reversals that may occur that might be restored, ie. school-crossing guards, etc. There was an obligation to use schools as parks, what is the status of that, especially given the school district’s current building plans?

Sonya Sultan asked what happened to the funds that were targeted for affordable housing? Will they be restored this year? Councilmember Brock said they were deferred and were not restored last year. Councilmember Brock to investigate.

The meeting concluded at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Greenspun  
NOMA Board Member

