



**Minutes - Regular Meeting Thursday, February 7, 2013 7-9 pm
Montana Branch Library**

1.) The February 7, 2013 meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM. A quorum was present. Attending were all Board members: Danillo Bach, Patricia Bauer, Victor Fresco, Albin Gielicz, Todd James, Carol Landsberg, Evelyn Lauchenauer, Doris Sosin, and Mary Jo Stenger.

2.) Guest Speakers:

a. Planning Commissioner Chair, Gerda Newbold and Planning Commissioner, Susan Himmelrich as well as Jory Phillips: City of Santa Monica Deputy Director, Special Projects, Planning and Community Development.

Jory Phillips: The City is looking to reduce the amount of land occupied by cars. The cost of parking isn't free - it is passed on to the owners, renters, businesses in the building and ultimately, the customer. It gets paid for by the community. They are focusing on developing alternative transportation to cars. In the last Planning Commission meeting, there were a number of objections to the parking ordinance. It will:

- Damage the unique and fragile character of our neighborhoods
- Drive out business customers who need to park in order to shop
- Relies upon flawed data - survey by consultants
- Discriminates against elderly, handicapped and young families with little children who need cars for errands, etc.
- Did not include resident input
- Be impossible without a plan for traffic management

Consultants conducted a study of different areas of SM that reflects what's going on here. The Montana Ave study was focused on apparent underuse of private parking lots during peak times and indicated a need to target this issue with signage, parking sharing, off street regulations and preferential parking. It is intended that this will make business parking work better. Factors to be considered are price and convenience - park once and walk around to do errands. He said, **"IT IS VERY IMPORTANT that you WRITE TO US, giving us your views about development, traffic and zoning."**

To email or call Jory: jory.phillips@smgov.net or 310 458-8955.

Gerda Newbold: We are not reducing existing parking but are looking to reduce the rate of growth of parking in new construction. We know certain people are always going to drive and there are certain trips that must be taken. We know that traffic is connected to free parking. And we don't think Montana is going to change significantly. However, this does **not** mean Montana Ave has been taken off the consultant's "transit corridor" list. (Please note – very important - Montana Ave is not on the "transit corridor" list in the LUCE - which is the document that should be followed) And there have been **no changes** to the pending parking proposal.) To email or call Gerda gnewbold@gmail.com (310) 458-8341

Sue Himmelrich: The LUCE should be our Bible and the LUCE helps neighborhoods. There are about 300,000 people in Santa Monica every day and we need ideas to help solve the problem.

To email or call Sue suehimmelrich@gmail.com (310) 451-2193.

General points of discussion from members and attendees:

*Density is the problem, not parking spaces: We must have parking for employees, customers, friends, clients, etc. If there is less density, then there will be less traffic. It is not the number of parking spaces that creates the traffic; it is too much uncontrolled development and its resultant density.

*The Montana businesses want it to be a village street and to slow the traffic on the street down. Parking is an issue - the lots aren't very deep from the street to the back. There isn't enough room for parking behind many of the buildings.

*Communication is a problem - there is a need for City officials to find common ground with residents and businesses. We cannot do this without a reasonable system for input. This 2- 3 minute, one-way stuff does not work. There needs to be a number of conversations among equal partners- perhaps in workshop format where these conversations can take place. Comments need to be considered carefully on their own merit, not pigeon-holed into pre-fab categories selected by paid consultants BEFORE the meetings.

* We have an intact mid-20th century city that's only 20 minutes from great places like the Getty. We must conserve it

*Development needs to be compatible with the mass, design, and scale of the environment around it.

*The process needs to be one that includes inductive thinking and takes into consideration the historical, culture, and social relationships involved. DAs are spot zoning and this does not preserve character.

b. Paul A. Silvern from HR&A Advisors and Dr. Martin Wachs, RAND Corporation.

Paul A. Silvern: He was not here to make any specific recommendations - just give baseline information. They did a study of the SM Airport in 2011 looking at the economics, employment figures, and tax revenues for that year. That year, it was an almost break-even situation - **not including Capital expenditures.**

Martin Wachs: The future of the SM airport is presenting an enormous controversy for the City. The visioning process is going on now. There are only a small number of airports in the US like SM airport. They looked at the non-aviation possibilities for the 1 acres to enhance the quality of life in SM. Before anything can be actually done, access to the airport will have to be improved - traffic, parking and bike access.

3.) The Minutes from the January 16, 2013 were approved as written.

4.) Reports:

a.) Treasurer's Report: There has been no activity. A DRAFT budget was submitted for review.

b.) Neighborhood Watch: If we want to invest time in this program, they will come out and help us learn how to start and maintain it.

The motto: IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING. This program is also good for emergencies of all kinds, such as severe weather, earthquakes, or attacks.

5.) Future Agenda Items: Will do via email - lack of time

6.) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 PM

Carol Landsberg, Secretary