

WHAT'S GOOD GOVERNANCE IN CITY PLANNING AND HOW DO RESIDENTS MAKE IT HAPPEN?

GG is the ability of residents/community groups to demand greater accountability, fairness, and responsiveness from their city officials, employees and service providers

We all have a responsibility as residents to be engaged in the planning process so that superior projects that meet true community needs/values get developed

It means we have to monitor our government actions, especially zoning and Development Agreement projects

THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF GG

- PARTICIPATION - DEMANDING EQUAL ACCESS TO DECISIONMAKERS AND AT KEY MEETINGS AND CHALLENGING GOVT EXPLANATIONS FOR ACTIONS
- TRANSPARENCY – FREE FLOW OF RELEVANT INFORMATION TO UNDERSTAND POLICIES/ DECISIONS
- ACCOUNTABILITY – HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS

EXAMPLES OF PARTICIPATION CHANGING OUTCOME

- SANTA MONICA PLACE
- STOP BUNDY VILLAGE (RESIDENT/BUSINESS/
REGIONAL ALLIANCE) AND GREEN HOLLOW
- HINES/PAPERMATE PROJECT
- VILLAGE TRAILER PARK
- BERGAMOT AREA MASTER PLAN

EXAMPLES OF TRANSPARENCY

- Demanding neutral, unbiased and complete staff and consultant reports on projects, including economic reports
- Demanding that public records requests for public information be timely/fully provided
- **FOLLOW THE \$\$:** Demanding that city enforce campaign disclosure laws in city elections

EXAMPLES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- BUSTING THROUGH THE WORLD OF DEVELOPER MYTH AND PRIVILEGE:
- IF A DEVELOPER OVERPAYS FOR A SITE (HINES/MIRAMAR), WHAT THEY OVERPAID DOESN'T DICTATE THE SIZE THEY BUILD
- DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS MUST CONTAIN VERIFIABLE TRAFFIC REDUCTIONS/PENALTIES

MORE EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPER ACCOUNTABILITY

- Unsupported claims of “financial infeasibility” to smaller, better projects must be challenged
- Overinflated, unsupported financial projections of city revenues for projects without accompanying information on drain on public services or infrastructure
- EIRS that don’t fairly evaluate project alternatives

EXPOSING DEVELOPER CAMPAIGN \$\$ AND DECEPTION IN ELECTIONS

- COMMON PRACTICE – DEVELOPERS FORM AND GENEROUSLY FUND PHONY “RESIDENTS” PACS LIKE SMQG
- THEIR MAILINGS ARE FALSE, DECEPTIVE AND AIMED AT ELECTING PRO-DEVELOPMENT COUNCILMEMBERS **BUT SAY THE OPPOSITE**
- THEY BREAK THE LAW AND DON'T TIMELY REPORT WHO'S FUNDING THEM
- NEITHER THE CITY NOR THE WINNING COUNCILMEMBERS TAKE **ANY** ACTION

WHAT'S GOOD GOVERNANCE MEAN FOR OUR CITY COUNCIL

- IT MEANS THAT PUBLICLY ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR CONDUCT;
- THEY MUST OBEY THE RULES AND NOT ABUSE THEIR POWERS;
- THEIR PERFORMANCE MUST SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN AN EFFICIENT, FAIR AND REASONABLE MANNER; AND
- THEIR DECISIONMAKING MUST NOT BE TAINTED BY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST/HIDDEN AGENDAS

Examples of Accountability

- Transparency Project – tracking developer campaign contributions to Councilmembers and disclosing them at key hearings on the developers' projects; **NMS?**
- Disclosing payoffs of ONE councilmember's campaign debt by developers with BIGGEST projects before the Council

FORCING CITY ACCOUNTABILITY

- Developer Impact Fees for Traffic Caused by their developments – from 1992 to present, city's failure to implement statute to collect – lost \$25 Million in potential mitigation fees (SMCLC raised – City response – let's look forward to future until SMCLC did PR request);
- Compliance with Developer Agreement promises – City never conducted reviews or fixed non-compliance until SMCLC did PR requests) (Other exs: St John's-no pkg lot)

NETWORKING & ALLIANCES ARE CRITICAL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

- REGIONAL MASTER PLANNING AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT REVIEW WILL HAPPEN IF WE FORM ALLIANCES ACROSS OUR BOUNDARIES WITH OTHER GROUPS, NAS; (HINES/PAPERMATE; STOPBUNDYVILLAGE)
- OUR CITY HAS A ONE-SIDED VIEW OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER LUCE – IT'S 2-WAY

PLAYING A CRITICAL ROLE NOW

- Pick a Project: Advocacy – developers have lobbyists and lawyers pitching their projects; residents need to have the same level of face to face access – individually and through groups;
- Council Election: Work to Elect Councilmembers Who are Authentic About Overdevelopment/Traffic and Are Leaders (grassroots is vital to reach voters)

What Are the Qualities Residents Need on our City Council?

- Candidates who have demonstrated their opposition to commercial overdevelopment in Santa Monica (and the irreversible traffic impacts of such development);
- Who have mastered sound planning policy, and raise the right questions about oversized projects and question cozy developer/city relationships;
- Collegiality and leadership

GRASSROOTS WORK

- Big developers will always outspend individuals and community groups;
- Big developers will always have a seat at the table (and sometimes improperly influence staff reports and facts – Hines)
- There are almost 30 DAs in pipeline now (more than in past 35 years combined)
- But residents live here and residents vote

RESIDENTS' ROLE

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

Never doubt that Santa Monicans, joining together can change our city for the better because we care more, we never give up and we aren't in it for the money.



Westside and SM Activists at City Hall Press Conference on Hines Project in March 2012

SPECIAL THANKS TO SHARON COMMINS, CHAIR,
MAR VISTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
PRESENTATION THAT THIS IS BASED ON

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE GO TO: WWW.SMCLC.NET