



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

1. The March 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, Doris Sosin, and Mary Jo Stenger. Evelyn Lauchenauer was absent.
2. Guest Speakers:
 - a. Los Angeles Marathon. Melissa Lindley, Community Relations Coordinator, Office of the City Manager; Don Patterson, Assistant Director, City Finance Department (parking), Fire Chief Tom Clemo, City of Santa Monica. There are 24,000 people registered to participate in this year's LA Marathon. Runners are supporting 85 different charities and the Marathon hopes to distribute \$4 million dollars to them. There will be 300 personnel assigned to the Santa Monica part of the route and finish line. Their goal is Safety and Security. They anticipate about 100,000 people in downtown Santa Monica during the day -for the race and St Patrick's Day. They have planned a Disneyland-type operation for downtown. People driving into downtown will be directed to a parking structure or back out of town. KTLA will televise the race. The Finish Line will be closed to spectators. It closes at California.
For people living in NOMA. We will not be able to cross San Vicente or Ocean Avenue the entire day- they will open sometime after 4:30 or 5 PM. Guest permits for people who need to cross the barricades to go West between Fourth Street and Ocean Avenue are available- call Don Patterson (310) 458-8301. Parking rates in downtown will be normal after 6PM on Sunday. Bus Routes #4 and #9 will not be running.
 - b. Chris Harding, Land-Use Attorney at Harding, Larmore, Kutcher & Kozal, LLP here in Santa Monica. He represents developers, Not-For-Profits, and other clients. His comments to NOMA focus on parking, traffic, and the city's draft Downtown Specific Plan.
Parking: He disagrees with the staff report for a new parking ordinance with greatly reduced parking for new projects. He's spoken with clients and small business owners who make up 80% of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. Insufficient parking in new developments such as 1 space per 1,000 square feet for retail/office would reduce the property value, negatively impact financing, and create undesirable spill-over impacts on neighboring businesses. Developers value parking for their clients and generally want more parking than what the city requires. He does not believe that the firm proposing the ordinance has any empirical data to support its recommendations. Their ideas appear to be based on an aspirational world of mass transit which doesn't exist in Santa Monica. Until then, our parking policies must match our reality. Typically, parking demand studies determine the

need for parking for new projects. He provided one such Demand Parking Study and said he believes 3.3 parking spaces per 1000 square feet would be workable, but more for retail.

Traffic: Commuter traffic caused by poor development decisions in the past has inundated the SE part of Santa Monica. The city is now trying to fix the problem by encouraging new mixed-use residential projects. But, the city hasn't moved forward to create the Transportation Demand Management Districts specified in LUCE to reduce traffic from new projects. The City hasn't even implemented a pilot program despite his efforts to get it going.

Downtown Specific Plan: his firm represents developers interested in building large projects on 5 of the 8 sites on or near Ocean Avenue that the City is calling "opportunity sites." He defines such sites as locations within the city that the LUCE identified as key sites for city revenue that could be built higher and denser. His "opportunity site" hotel clients include the Miramar, Gehry and Wyndam. These 3 hotel clients are each proposing hotel/condo projects with towers of about 20 stories and 200 feet along Ocean Avenue from the northern end of Santa Monica to its southern end.

He would like residents to keep an open mind about the height of these projects: In his opinion, they retain significant open space, are remote from neighborhoods, can handle the traffic, and are "economic engines" that generate valuable revenues for the city.

Development Process:

There are a large amount of applications for Development Agreements ("DA"s) for new projects. The City Manager has admitted that the City does not have the capacity to process all of them. In response, the City has prioritized the list putting auto dealership and hotel projects at the top because they generate less traffic and more revenue. Unlike other jurisdictions, Santa Monica does not allow his firm, as lawyers for a developer, to play any role in the planning staff's analysis of a project or the scope of a project's Environmental Impact Report (" EIR"). The EIR process is transparent and clean to avoid legal challenges. His firm sees the staff report for a project at the same time as the public. The process of drafting a DA is one in which the staff provides the "template," from which the negotiations ensue. DA projects go through an initial float up process before the Planning Commission followed by the City Council, the EIR process, and then the final consideration of the DA and the EIR by the Planning Commission followed by the City Council.

- c. Tony Vazquez, Councilmember, City of Santa Monica. Introduced by Diana Gordon. He has a historical perspective, having been on the Council in the 90s when Santa Monica overdeveloped office space and became a regional office center. He believes there is too much development going on in Santa Monica now. There needs to be height and density limits on projects being proposed, especially for the Downtown. In order to get approval from the community, the 3 new "tower" hotel proposals need to be: scaled back in size, union friendly, and provide significant community benefits as well as public viewing platforms.

3. The Minutes from the February 7, 2013 were approved as written.

4. Actions taken since the last meeting:

- a. Motion to write City Council asking them to put the Airport Commission Recommendations on their agenda was not seconded- no action.
- b. Motion to support the Neighborhood Group's letter to David Martin Planning Director with recommendations for obtaining residents' input was passed. NOMA was added to the list of Neighborhood Groups signing the letter.
- c. Motion to ask *via* email NOMA residents to put their names on a letter to City Council recommending the dismissal of Consultant Jeffrey Tumlin was passed. Names collected and placed on the letter.
- d. Motion to draft and send a letter to City Council in support of the Staff Report recommending the initiation of a Traffic Impact Fee for development projects was passed. Letter was written.
- e. Motion to draft and send an email letter to NOMA membership and friends regarding Planning Commissioner Chair, Gerda Newbold's email follow-up to our conversation at the NOMA February 7, 2013 meeting with a response to same by NOMA Treasurer Victor Fresco was passed. Email letter was sent.
- f. Motion to submit a matching grant proposal to the City of Santa Monica for the amount of \$2,710 with Carol Landsberg, Secretary, is authorized to complete the grant and be the authorized signatory. This action is to be added to the Minutes of March 7, 2013 passed unanimously. (Grant was submitted on Monday, March 11, 2013.)

5. Reports:

- a. Treasurer's Report: NOMA received \$60 and spend \$80.
- 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.

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

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 PM

Carol Landsberg, Secretary