

OJAI VALLEY MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Draft Summary of Meeting of March 16, 2009

Chair Russ Baggerly called the meeting to order at 7:00. Council members present were: Terry Wright, Todd Wilson, Mike Zielsdorf, Russ Baggerly, Jim Combs, Florencia Ramirez, and Jerry Kaplan.

Under Public Comment, Catherine Lee discussed activities of the Oak View Civic Council and the Ventura County Community Foundation.

Under MAC comments, Florencia Ramirez noted that the Oak View Park and Resource Center is raising funds for a garden by conducting a "secret garden" tour of Oak View properties on April 18th. Jerry Kaplan noted that he had requested an emergency MAC agenda item regarding a proposed public meeting that is no longer scheduled. Jerry said he created an Ojai Water Coalition.

Reporting for the Ojai Planning Commission, Troy Becker said that two meetings had been cancelled for lack of business, and that the City is still working on the outdoor merchandise display issue.

The summary of the meeting of February 9, 2009 was approved unanimously on a motion by Terry Wright, seconded by Jerry Kaplan.

The first item of business was discussion of whether to install stop signs and/or No Parking zones on El Roblar. Steve Offerman noted that this issue started with complaints of parked cars obstructing visibility at the intersections of Alvarado and Poli. The County Transportation Department had recommended that No Parking zones be created at these intersections to improve visibility. This would result in elimination of 7 parking spaces, however Nazir Lalani of the County Transportation Department said that stop signs at these intersections would not meet State standards relating to traffic and pedestrian volumes and accident history, and, that if Stop Signs were added then 40-foot long No Parking zones would need to be created in front of the two stop signs to prevent obstruction of the sign which would result in the loss of 4 parking spaces.

Jerry Kaplan asked Russ Baggerly to recuse himself from participating in the MAC discussion because he lives in the area. Steve Offerman said that County Council had determined that because the MAC is strictly an advisory council, that State laws pertaining to financial conflict of interest don't apply to the MAC. Jerry Kaplan said that he had toured the area and noted several observations. Florencia Ramirez said that she had studied the purpose of stop signs and that they are for establishing right of way, and that stop signs are known to lead to speeding away from the signs, noise, and other problems, and she believes they are not the answer on El Roblar and leans toward leaving conditions as-is. Todd Wilson said he had toured the area, noted the existing No Parking zone at Poli, and concluded there is an intersection sight distance problem at Alvarado. Terry Wright requested a report from law enforcement.

Officer Dave Webb of the CHP said that following the request from Supervisor Bennett's office, he had deployed the radar trailer and conducted radar enforcement on several occasions. He said that most traffic moves at 38 MPH or below and that speeding is perceived because of the narrowness of the street, that there is not a history of accidents, and that the purpose of stop signs is to control intersections. Sheriff's Officer Jim Popp said that traffic generally moves well

on El Roblar, that most traffic travels at 30-35 MPH, and discussed the Sheriff's role as primarily responding to crime and secondarily performing traffic enforcement, and he encouraged citizens to call Ojai Dispatch at 646-1414 regarding crime or safety issues. Susan Christianson said that the Alano Club needs on-street parking for their members.

Jerry Kaplan made a motion to remove the existing No Parking zone at Poli St. The motion was seconded by Florencia Ramirez and approved 4-3 with MAC members Baggerly, Wilson, and Zielsdorf in dissent. Jerry Kaplan made a motion to leave El Roblar as-is. The motion was seconded by Florencia Ramirez and approved 6-1 with Jim Combs in dissent after requesting more information on actual traffic speeds.

The next item was zoning setbacks and flag lots. Steve Offerman discussed the Zoning Ordinance standards noting that some flag lots could have a front yard-to-rear yard relationship rather than the traditional rear-rear relationship. Phillip Sherman noted that the Zoning Ordinance allows garages to be built within three feet of a rear property line, and how this impacted his front view. Phillip presented a proposed modification of the Zoning Ordinance to not allow garages less than 15 feet from rear property lines if they adjoin a neighboring front yard. Russ Baggerly suggested that Mr. Sherman's recommendation be referred to the Planning Division. This motion was made by Jim Combs, seconded by Terry Wright and approved unanimously.

The next item was an update on the Matilija Dam Removal project presented by Supervisor Steve Bennett. Supervisor Bennett discussed the major components of the project, noting that because the dam is nearly filled with sediment, without the project sediment will soon impact the Lake Casitas water intake, while the Dam Removal project would construct a number of major features to protect the Casitas water supply and that these features would be funded by state and federal agencies rather than local rate payers. He outlined the project's benefits to fish and the environment, flood protection, recreation, and tourism. Jerry Kaplan said the presentation was very informative.

The next item was discussion of the MAC's mission. Jerry Kaplan made a motion to continue the item and discussion of future agenda items to a special meeting. The motion died for lack of a second. Russ Baggerly said that the MAC's mission has been firmly established over the last twenty years of MAC's operation. Jerry said he has discussed the issue with MAC members from the 1970's, and read from one of the "Whereas" clauses in the MAC resolution. Steve Offerman noted that the "Whereas" clauses are a preamble setting forth the legality of the MAC, and that the actual terms of the resolution come under the resolution sections following "Now therefore be it resolved, determined and ordered." Steve Bennett presented a revision to the MAC resolution intended to resolve questions of the MAC's purpose, noting that an overly broad MAC role could conflict with ongoing regional endeavors by the County and other agencies, and that the County's newer MAC's have resolution sections saying that the MAC agenda is set by the Planning Director and County Supervisor.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.