

Council

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood

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Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Brief Summary: The Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council is opposed to returning cost and liability to homeowners for the damage to curbs, driveways, and sidewalks done by street trees.

Additional Information:

**Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council
General Membership Meeting of August 25, 2009**

Present: Adrian White (Chair), Delores Allmond (Vice Chair), Rosalie Preston (Recording Secretary), Joan Jacobs (Corresponding Secretary), Gloria Christmas (Treasurer), Adrian Valenzuela (District 2), Rey Paduani (District 3), Betty Hawkins (District 4), Llewyn Fowlkes (District 5), Willie Blackmon (District 6), Mattie Menser (District 7), Leo Youngblood (District 8), Neodros Bridgeforth (Faith-Based Representative), Eva Cooper (Youth Representative), and David Ortega (Community Organization Representative)

The meeting was called to order at 7:19 p.m.

1) Public Comment: Brenda Oates, District 8 stakeholder, pointed out the flyer she had created to let District 8 stakeholders know to call Animal Control if they become aware of roosters, chickens, or pigeons being illegally kept in backyards.

Justin Brimmer, the new Community Advocate assigned to the HGNNC, introduced himself and said he would be attending most meetings.

Rey Paduani, District 3 Representative, announced that the Southeast Station Officer Appreciation Day will be held on Friday, November 20, and all community groups are invited to contribute food for this event, which runs from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Betty Hawkins, District 4 Representative, noted that an article appeared in the South Bay *Daily Breeze* about the approval of three new cell phone towers in the city of Torrance. The HGNNC has recently addressed requests for two new cell phone towers within HGNNC boundaries.

Adrian Valenzuela, District 2 Representative, reported that a new swap meet has set up operation in the parking lot facing Vermont Avenue and just south of 163rd Street in District 1 on Saturdays and Sundays. He noted there is no allowance for parking spaces and no restroom facilities. There seems to be no verification as to whether the items are for sale legally. The organizer of the swap meet told him that he is leasing the parking lot from the owner and plans to extend the swap meet operation to seven days a week.

Arthur Cramer, District 1 stakeholder, noted that residents along 168th Street east of Vermont and west of Menlo Avenue have petitioned the City to have red curbs and “no parking” signs along the south side of the street where the street narrows and it is difficult for two cars to pass each other if cars are parked on both sides of the street. No response has been received.

8) Report from Officer Martinez on how to improve the southwest corner of Imperial Highway and San Pedro: Senior Lead Officer Robert Martinez said that illegal use of that corner of land in District 7 has been a problem for several years now and he would like some ideas for using barriers or attractive landscaping to remedy the situation. LAPD has cited the catering trucks which gather there many times. However, they can make \$2,000 to \$3,000 on a weekend and are able to pay the fines and return. Illegal DVD sales and yard sales also occur there. He has also been working with Councilmember Janice Hahn’s office. The HGNNC will take this issue under advisement.

LAPD Report: Senior Lead Officer Armando Ramirez reported that there currently are no major crime trends within his service area of 18A97. There is still illegal cruising going on which LAPD is addressing. He thanked the 135th Street Neighborhood Watch (District 4) for putting on another very nice and delicious luncheon to honor the new LAPD officers on August 17.

4) Speaker on street trees—how to get them trimmed or removed and what types of new ones to plant: Ron Tull, Urban Forestry, listed the four reasons which would cause the City to allow removal of a tree: when the tree is dead, when the tree is no longer serviceable (hollow, leaning over), when the tree is causing a medical condition (such as asthma), and when the tree roots interfere with a sewer line, curb, or sidewalk and cutting the roots would cause the tree to die. In all cases, call 311 and either an inspector

will come out to assess the situation or, in the case of a medical condition, the stakeholder will need to appeal to the Board of Public Works.

Currently, there is no money in the City budget for sidewalk repair; even the 50/50 program is cancelled. If a homeowner can pay for their own sidewalk repair which was caused by tree root damage, apply to the Bureau of Engineering in San Pedro for a Class A permit. Then call 311 and request a permit to remove the tree. Once the permit is requested, an inspector will go out to verify that the tree cannot survive if the roots are trimmed to allow for the new sidewalk and the permit will be issued at no charge.

If tree roots have caused a water pipe to leak, the homeowner may be able to get a permit to remove the tree. Homeowners who have trees which drop sap can ask to have them evaluated for safety reasons. Mexican fan palms are an invasive species. For this reason and due to the fusarium wilt affecting date palms, the City no longer plants palms as street trees. Urban Forestry supports tree preservation whenever possible. Asphalt can be put onto the uneven places between uplifted sections of sidewalk, to make them even. The City now has a record of every street tree and this list went online in April 2004 and is updated. The Million Trees program encourages new tree planting and provides trees free of charge.

Tree trimming funding is very limited. The tree trimming cycle in the HGNNC was every seven years and now is every thirteen years. The Department of Water and Power does some tree trimming so that their lines are clear. However, if they only trim one side of a tree, let Urban Forestry know, as this could damage the health of the tree.

2) Approval of the July 28 Membership meeting minutes: The minutes were approved as corrected. Motion: Christmas Second: Paduani Vote: 14-0

3) Treasurer's Report: No DONE monthly funding status report since May has been posted, as the Department is still waiting for the Controller to complete her audit. There may be no rollover of funds left from the 2008-2009 budget. The summary of HGNNC expenditures from July 1, 2009 to present shows that a total of \$9,251.84 has been spent. A copy of the 2009-2010 HNNC budget for \$85,000 was also provided. The treasurer's report was approved on a motion by Leo Youngblood, second by Willie Blackmon, and vote of 14-0.

The discussion of whether to try a postcard mailing to stakeholders was postponed.

It was moved by Leo Youngblood, seconded by Joan Jacobs, and passed 14-0 to allocate up to \$700 for the use of the hotel conference space and luncheon for those Board members and stakeholders attending the September 12 Board retreat/goals setting meeting.

It was moved by Leo Youngblood, seconded by Delores Allmond, and passed 14-0 to allocate up to \$500 for a facilitator for the September 12 Board retreat/goals setting meeting.

5) Board consideration of City Council proposal to charge L.A. City residents to repair their own tree-root damage to curbs, driveways and sidewalks: After discussion of the draft ordinance 05-1853, which would return the cost and liability for damaged curbs, driveways, and sidewalks to homeowners, as was the case from 1911 to 1973, it was moved by Leo Youngblood, seconded by Rey Paduani, and passed 14-0 to oppose the proposal.

It was moved by Neodros Bridgeforth, seconded by Gloria Christmas, and passed 14-0 to file a Community Impact Statement for this proposed ordinance.

6) Report on the Harbor Alliance of Neighborhood Councils and decision on guidelines for HGNNC vote on HANC issues: It was moved by Gloria Christmas, seconded by Willie Blackmon, and passed 14-0 to authorize the three designated HGNNC representatives to HANC to take a position on issues which come before the Harbor Alliance and to then report back to the Board on those decisions. The HGNNC does not need to have taken a position before the HANC vote on the issue.

7) Update on creating a Tony Hawk skateboard park in District 8: Leo Youngblood has been trying to contact Erika Velazquez of Janice Hahn's office about taking further actions towards creating a skateboard park

at 116th Place and Towne Avenue with the help of the Tony Hawk Foundation. The HGNNC sent a letter to Councilwoman Hahn on October 29, 2008, and she responded with her support on February 9, 2009, but there has been no further action taken.

9) Announcements: The HGNNC received a letter from Officer Phillip Bobo thanking Chair Adrian White and the Board for their participation and financial contribution to the success of the August 4 National Night Out at Southeast Station.

The Harbor Area Planning Commission will hear an appeal on the Zoning Administrator's decision regarding the height of a proposed pole sign, the hours of operation, a reduction in parking spaces, and the traffic issues of the proposed Lowe's at 661 W. Redondo Beach Blvd. on Tues., September 15.

Chair Adrian White suggested that local car cruising clubs and motorcycle clubs be invited to speak at a future meeting where they could present their ideas for suitable locations to carry out their clubs' activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes taken by Rosalie Preston