



PPCC MEETING MINUTES

September 14, 2023

Meeting was recorded for Secretarial purposes

1. **Call to Order and Reading of Community Council's Mission.** Sue Kohl read the Community Council mission.

2. **Roll-call of Board members and Certification of Quorum.**

Voting members present: Maryam Zar, Sue Kohl, Beth Holden Garland, Dave Card, Murray Levy, Steve Cron, Haldis Toppel, Karen Ridgley, Kimberly Bloom, Cindy Simon, Julie Silliman, Rick McGeagh, Chris Spitz, John Padden, Kevin Niles, Barbara Kohn, Aileen Hough, Alisa Wolfson, Shirley Haggstrom.

Non-voting members present: Cindi Young, Joanna Spak, Michael Edlen, LeeAnne Sanderson, Daphne Gronich, Betsy Handler, Quentin Fleming.

3. **Introduction of attendees**

The President introduced Captain Rich Gabaldon, Captain III, LAPD West Commanding officer; Sonya Young Jimenez, Department of Recreation and Parks, Superintendent of West Region; Robert Buenrostro, Principal Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, RAP; and Jasmine Dowlatshahi, Sr. Facilities Director, Palisades Recreation Center.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes of August 24, 2023 were approved

5. **Consideration of Agenda & Upcoming Meetings.**

The Agenda was considered as presented. The President said that one of the upcoming meetings this year might be held in person.

6. **Treasurer's Report.**

The Treasurer was not present.

7. **General Public Comment.** Rich Wilken from the Palisades Lutheran Church (PLC) announced the 3rd annual all charity 5/10K run on October 24th. They are expecting 100 runners. They shared the route with the community and announced that there will be street closures from 8:30am until 11am. PLC will have people stationed at corners and will help people with road access when needed. They've reworked the track so that Pali High, Northfield and Erskin exits will be available, as well as El Medio and Muskingum. They've worked with local residents to make sure the impact of the race route is minimal. They will post door hangers along the entire race route and put door hangers on all individual homes with race info, as well as sandwich signs along the route, days in advance. Check-in is at the church – the race begins at Janaluska Road. Pali High Ambassadors will also be helping, as well as Sons of the American

legion volunteers. Rich said he would be happy to accept volunteers from the community to help monitor their streets.

Karen Ridgley, Area Four Primary Rep, thanked Rich for the great communication and the accommodation of the race route for minimum impact, as well as door hangers to inform the community.

8. Reports, Announcements and Concerns.

8.1. From the Chair/Presiding Officer.

8.1.1. The President announced again that new appointments for Advisors are being made and suggested people look on the PPCC website for a listing of Advisors.

8.1.2. The President referred to the Wildland Fire Mitigation Planning meeting arranged by CD11 (see item 8.2.1 below) and said she appointed a PPCC Wildland Interface and Fire Hazard Mitigation Committee as a result, with the following members:

- a) Dave Card
- b) Julie Silliman
- c) Rick McGeagh
- d) Cindi Young
- e) Steve Cron
- f) Sue Kohl
- g) Michael Edlen
- h) Bruce Schwartz
- i) Lou Kamer

8.1.3. See Sue Kohl's report regarding the Wildland Urban Interface meeting convened by CD11 (with LAPD, LAFD, LADOT, LA EMD, City Planning, BSS, RAP, DONE, LA County Fire, CAO's office) (item 8.2.1 below).

8.1.4. See Michael Amster's update regarding Temescal Canyon Road repairs (item 8.5.2 below).

8.1.5. The President provided an update on the 50th Anniversary Jubilee & Community Celebration, recognizing all the volunteer effort that has gone into developing the event and the monetary contributions that have been made to enable the event to be free to the public, and encompassing of more than 20 community organizations who are now taking part. She thanked CM Traci Park for underwriting the canopies, Palisades PRIDE for underwriting food, American Legion for underwriting chairs and stage, Jenny Li for underwriting set up and take down, Michael Edlen for underwriting printing costs, the Simon family for underwriting environmentally friendly water, the Zar family for underwriting a specialty coffee cart, as well as various community and board members who have made contributions including Sue Kohl, Chris Spitz, Beth Holden-Garland and Kimberly Bloom who is, along with Beth, helping with decorations. She noted that CM Traci Park, State Senator

Ben Allen, and perhaps Congressman Brad Sherman will all be on hand to help celebrate our community and give commendations. She encouraged everyone to spread the word.

8.1.6. The President mentioned a discussion with Gates Security about a pole top camera pilot or bike patrols through open spaces where she was informed challenges and opportunities, but more would come later as LAPD assesses how best to mitigate some of the concerns around our open spaces.

8.1.7. The President asked the Bylaws Committee to amend the organizational certificate process and the name of the PP Library Association and tasked them with these amendments to be presented to the board at upcoming meetings.

8.1.8. See the report by Dave Card, Chair Emeritus, for a Potrero update (item 8.2.3 below).

8.1.9. The President did not give a Metro TCN update.

8.1.10. The President reported that the Bulgari Hotel project has been defeated and the zone change has been rescinded, largely due to community opposition in a vocal manner.

8.2. From Officers and Chair Emeritus

8.2.1. Sue Kohl, Vice President, reported about the Wildland Interface and Fire Hazard Mitigation Committee which CD11 convened for the benefit of Brentwood and Pacific Palisades (communities and areas in the VHFHSZ). Many city and county departments were present and spoke in great detail about coordination between all first responder agencies as well as the LA City Emergency Management Department and LA County Fire. PPCC asked to be included in future convenings and is learning how we can be part of citywide Fire Councils. All were encouraged to sign up for Notify LA, and informed that landlines are important for city evacuation notifications. Technology is being implemented to foresee the movement of fire (dependent on velocity and wind conditions), and to react based on that information. It is important to know neighbors and to collaborate on information-sharing and with special needs individuals who may need extra care. Fire roads are not to be used, as they are for fire resources to be moved into place in order to protect communities – please do not use those in an emergency. AT&T was also present to discuss a possible cell tower that can be used for emergency bandwidths at the Getty Villa (private entity). We exchanged contact information with the presenters and will hear from them before the plans advance.

SLO Brian Espin (LAPD) reiterated that reception can be very spotty in the hills. They rely on AT&T emergency bandwidth (First Net) and would support better connectivity in the high fire severity zones in the hillsides. LAPD works with LAFD (at the Incident Command Post) and decides the direction and flow of evacuation. They also work with LADOT for route planning and road direction (“contra flow” planning).

The President informed the board that this conversation will be ongoing and that we will be part of the evolving conversation surround fire safety, as Pacific Palisades is entirely in VHFHSZ. We asked for Fire Council information, evacuation drills, information-sharing improvements and more. The President has formed a committee to continue pursuing these conversations and bring resources and information to the community. The President said there is the promise of more discussion about communication, maps, crucial emergency information-sharing, etc.

8.2.2. Beth Holden-Garland, Secretary, reminded the board to buy drums of water for emergency use and also updated the board about September 30th celebration decorations and items for kids.

8.2.3. Dave Card, Chair Emeritus, reported on a PCH Task Force meeting. With regard to the Potrero Canyon Bridge project – the draft report from BOE was sent to the Board of Public Works and it will be agendaized within the next two months. The report includes the scope of work, the funding, the contractor/consultant and more. The lateral trail to Temescal Canyon Rd. is advancing in coordination with bridge and coastal access developments. PPCC and the Palisades community are still waiting to hear from CD11 as to the contractor chosen to conduct Outreach for the pre-design phase. Lou Kamer (PPCC Transportation Advisor) also reported that discussion about fixing the light rotations and signage at PCH and West Channel Rd. is continuing. He also reported that he has continued to press for reactive lights for the stretch of PCH that is in Pacific Palisades so that traffic flow can adjust to volume and result less often in gridlock.

8.3. From At-Large and Area Representatives.

8.3.1. Murray Levy, Area One Primary Rep, led discussion with respect to the Castellammare/Tramonto development project in hillside streets in Area One. He confirmed that the hearing is scheduled for November 15. He shared pictures and commentary about the dire circumstances surrounding the hillside, which is the site of an active landslide, and attested that for the past 50 years, the hillside landslide has been moving. In the last slide, it wiped out four streets, and the city built the bulkhead. The developer proposes to build four massive houses and Murray asked the PPCC to re-write and resubmit the letter requesting a full EIR for the project. The PPCC board agreed this could and should be done, and the sense of the board was that this development seems perilous and should be monitored as a development of possible concern. The President agreed to work with Murray to pen a more robust letter, recommending a full EIR for the project. She also noted that the PPCC LUC is keeping an eye on this matter and has indicated that it is happy to conduct a fair and open community meeting regarding the matter, should that become appropriate.

Murray also noted that the CA Coastal Commission has imposed Special Conditions 8 and 9 on the project. The landowner must assume the risk of extraordinary land circumstances and geological hazards. It also requires the property owner to record the deed restriction, providing notice of potential hazards to potential buyers. Murray made the point that existing residents must also live with hazards, and they feel unsafe.

Murray also noted that the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan (CP) provides for a basis by which this community can protest this proposed construction. The President read from the CP [see <https://pacpalicc.org/index.php/about/community-specific-plans/>] and confirmed the language cited by Murray. She said she'd be happy to have the LUC work on this thread to see what can be done.

Area One resident Christopher Ekstein also spoke in support of Murray's presentation and request for support from the board and the community. He and board members expressed the

opinion that strong vocal commentary from the Area One community and their robust appearance at the November 15th hearing will be instrumental, irrespective of PPCC action. Resident Marcia Vogler also commented that resident opposition is present and important. Chris Spitz, PPCC At-large Rep, agreed that an additional PPCC letter was appropriate to write and expand upon the position previously stated, and that LUC review (with all sides present) might be appropriate with a public LUC meeting and a recommendation made by the Committee to the PPCC board. Steve Cron, LUC Chair, agreed that there was time to do this prior to the November 15th hearing, if the Area reps and the relevant HOA were to ask for the LUC to take this up.

8.3.2. Steve Cron, Area Two Primary Rep, gave a substantive update on Highlands Trail Head bathroom improvements as a result of PPCC and community advocacy over the years. He shared pictures and reported that after 4.5 years of effort, there has finally been some movement on improvements so that the bathrooms are now clean and presentable, and will soon be operable.

8.3.3. Chris Spitz, At-Large Rep: Update on the status of SB 423 deferred.

8.3.4. Julie Silliman, Area Seven Rep, informed the board about the upcoming Rustic Night celebration on the night of September 30th, to raise money for Rustic Canyon Park.

8.3.5. Rick McGeagh, Area Seven 1st Alternate, reported about brush clearance in the Will Rogers neighborhood of Area Seven.

8.4. From Organizational Representatives.

There were no organizational updates.

8.5. From Government Offices / Representatives.

8.5.1. SLO Brian Espin, LAPD, shared data with the board, per the questions asked at the last meeting, regarding the concentration of crime in specific areas. He reported that, in fact, most crime is often occurring along PCH and in the more public areas of access. He shared that crime in the Palisades has seen an uptick and investigators are searching for patterns and perpetrators. He reiterated that the new Captain is not reducing any resources for the Palisades and that patrols continue to visit hot spots and are available to respond to radio calls as best they can.

8.5.2. Michael Amster, Field Deputy for Brentwood and Pacific Palisades from CD11

reported that Quimby funds were being allocated to bathroom upgrades and playground construction at the Palisades Recreation Center to comply with current codes.

He also reported that tomorrow at City Council there will be a motion introduced by CM Traci Park for approval of \$400,000 from the “anti-gridlock transit improvement funds” for repairs and restoration of Temescal Canyon Road (TCR) by the end of October. There was a question as to whether that will be enough finding for the drainage repairs planned for TCR. Michael informed the board that \$400,000 is expected to be enough for the full repairs. He also reported having worked with Area Four reps and Asilomar residents as well as Tahitian

Terrace residents to find a solution to branches and debris that presented a fire threat. This debris has successfully been cleared out.

Michael also reported having worked with members of the DRB, Barbara Kohn and Donna Vaccarino, to find new members for the Brown-Acted, and specifically appointed, DRB, and can report three new members who are expected to join the board, two of whom would fill specialty roles required by statute.

Michael also informed the community that a small nonprofit called the SAB Center has proposed to construct an affordable housing research facility in the Castellammare neighborhood of the Palisades. He reported that the Council Office plans to hear them out, and believes that it can work, but would like to hear more. He has arranged a meeting on site for next Friday (9/22) and encourages as much input as possible. More information will be made available. The President suggested more info be made available to the board at the next meeting, following the site visit.

8.4. From PPCC Committees, Advisors and WRAC Representatives – None

9. Reports from PPCC Committees.

9.1. PCOC report: Update on signs and proposed order of priority (see link below) for communication with CD11 and RAP, urging them to amend or restore the signage this community asked for, and install as appropriate at the George Wolfberg Park at Potrero Canyon. See full report: <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Park-Rules-Sign-Revision-Issues.pdf>.

9.2. Three Chairs Committee report (David Card: Committee Chair, members: Steve Boyers, Maryam Zar): Update regarding 2nd Alternate applications for Area 8 and At-large. See also: <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/PPCC-At-lrg-Area-8-Alts.-Notice-2023.pdf>.

9.3. LUC report (Steve Cron or Howard Robinson reporting on recent discussions regarding Castellammare construction project): See discussion in item 8.3.1 above.

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business.

11.1. Motion to oppose the “100% natives” proposed ordinance in City Council. Motion made by Dave Card (Chair Emeritus and Chair of the Palisades Forestry Committee, a PPCC Organizational member) and jointly seconded by Beth Holden-Garland and Chris Spitz. Motion:

“Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) opposes the motion in L.A. City Council File 22-1469, on the grounds set forth in the accompanying Position Paper, summarized as follows:

- a) The proposed motion will result in less biodiversity, more monoculture. A mandate prohibiting the planting and sale of any non-native species in all of the City of Los Angeles (urban, suburban, commercial, governmental, and residential properties) is far too radical and damaging.
- b) It risks the health of the urban forest by the concentration of too few tree species. There are not enough native tree species to sustain our urban forest.

- c) Some natives do not adapt well in city environments. Yet cities are not devoid of diverse species, and can even benefit regional ecosystems.
- d) We encourage the planting of more native species. And we support conserving our wild open spaces and creating more parks. However, biodiversity includes all trees and plants, not just natives.
- e) Restrict invasives, not climate appropriate trees and plants.”

After discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

12. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.