



PPCC Draft Minutes

August 24, 2023

Meeting was recorded for Secretarial purposes

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM and read Nina Kidd read the Community Council Mission

2. The President called roll and certified that there was quorum

Voting members present: Sue Kohl, Maryam Zar, Jenny Li, Beth Holden-Garland, Dave Card, Murray Levy, Steve Cron, Nancy Niles, LeeAnne Sanderson, Kimberly Bloom, Chris Spitz, Bruce Schwartz, Nina Kidd, Alisa Wolfson, Kevin Niles, Shirley Haggstrom, Courtney Macker, Kathy Russel, Bill Skinner.

Non-voting members present: Cindi Young, Joanna Spak, Michael Edlen, Aileen Hough, Mary Mueller.

3. **Introduction of attendees**

The President introduced Armine Sargsyan from CA Department of Insurance, outreach Analyst for a presentation about Fire hazard insurance. Ms. Sargsyan shared a presentation and informed the board about the Department of Insurance, a state consumer protection agency tasked with regulating all lines of insurance. They hold resource fairs and outreach events to inform the public.

The main issue in CA is fire insurance – availability and affordability, which is increasingly an issue. The Dept of Ins. got together with other agencies to introduce new regulations and a strategy termed “Safer from Wildfires”. If homeowners follow guidelines or home hardening, they can get discounts from insurance companies. Please see the recording of this presentation at our website and the power point on the website: <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Department-of-Insurance-Safer-from-Wildfires-PPT-4.22.23.pdf>

The President thanked Armine for her important presentation.

The President introduced Richard Fink from CA State Parks, District Superintendent II for a discussion about the role of State brush clearance in VHFHSZ communities like ours. LAFD Brush Clearance Captain, Bryan Nassour also joined the conversation. Mr. Fink informed the board that there are at least three swaths of State land in the Palisades which is not usually cleared by the state, but is expected to be cleared by homeowners nearby. Those homeowners may seek a right of entry onto state land to do that brush clearance. Per Rad Nowroozi, from State Sen Ben Allen’s Office, that can be a complex process that requires an

initial inspection, a right of entry permit, and a follow-up inspection – so it may be wise to look at these policies and perhaps think of a better method for this brush clearance.

The President informed the board that discussion with the state began when she was informed that the LAFD had cited the State for failure to clear some of its land, which was overgrown with brush and presented a fire hazard. When we reached out to the state to ask them to clear, they informed us that they do not do brush clearance. When we pressed as to why, we weren't given much other than a direction to ask homeowners to clear up to 200 feet from their property lines, and seek a permit to clear more, if they wish. That didn't seem to address the glaring need to clear state brush land in our residential areas, which posed an immediate observable fire threat. We asked for some answers, and Skylar Payab from ASM Irwin's office took the lead. Mr. Richard Fink, agreed to speak to PPCC after Skylar's outreach.

Richard Fink introduced himself as the District Superintendent for the Angeles District State Parks (including PP, Malibu, Long Beach, Castaic Lake and Downton LA), a bog and diverse region. Protecting from wildfires takes a collaborative approach and state parks as well as homeowners share that responsibility. Fuel modification and brush clearance is a challenge. The parcel of land on Via Floresta was interesting. He has researched the issue and applicable laws and spoken to LA City and County fire to see what the approach is, locally. State Govt' code 51182, compels a person who owns a dwelling in a VHFHSZ (all of the Palisades) homeowner to maintain a defensible space of 100 feet from their dwelling. 57322 is the city code that extends the 100 feet (state requires) to 200 feet (but not beyond the property line). State policy prohibits brush clearance because they have a mandate to preserve the state's natural resources. Clearance is not in their line of business – but their mission is to protect natural habitat. So, if the homeowner isn't clearing beyond 200 feet and the state cannot clear land, per policy, what do we do? Mr. Fink says, there is a permit process to ask for the right of entry into state land, identify what can be removed and what must be protected. Once the permit is issued, the private homeowner can go onto state land and conduct fuel modification in accordance to the permitted plan.

Mr. Fink showed an image of the state park land they will be clearing (on Via Floresta). He confirmed that brush is overgrown past the road (“maintenance questions, for sure”), and obstructing the PROW. There is an easement on this land for the city of LA, already, for the slope area to be drained. There is some question as to who has a maintenance obligation here, but Richard/State had spoken to City fore and they've agreed to come and conduct some brush clearance and fuel modification – from the sidewalk several feet up, in order to clear the immediate brush by the side of the road, impacting the PROW. This is on the city's interest to maintain, so they have made this arrangement as a solution to the issue. As far as clearing out other areas or vast average of bush, that is not what the state does.

The President introduced Capt., Nassour and Insp. Sutton on the call. She thanked Mr. Fink, but pointed out that there are other tracts of state land (for example in Paseo Miarmar) that also need to be addressed. She thanked him again for addressing this parcel, but pressed that

the state needs to think for a solution for other parcels, that remain combustible and close to residential areas.

Insp. Warren confirmed that there are other state parcels that are of concern. They do cite the State – but that’s all they can do. The Homeowner is responsible to their property line and/or their property line – not more. Mr. Fink said there are examples of state land close to structures that can’t be cleared, but that is the current regulation.

The board thanked out presenters, and left the discussion at more needs to be done. The President said she would upload this segment of the recording to the PPCC you tube website.

4. The Minutes for July 27, 2023 were approved as distributed.

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

the Agenda was considered as presented.

6. **Treasurer’s Report.**

Treasurer, Jenny Li, reported that the PPCC bank balance rests at \$42,702.50.

Transactions have included income of \$50 (minus PayPal fee), a \$37 charge for printing new checks (which we will no longer need to do since Jenny is transforming most of our bill pay to a technology platform/Bill Pay though the bank). We will also no longer have paper statements (no \$6 fee). There was a check to our accountant for \$800 for filings for the 2022 fiscal year. We will be doing another fiscal year filing in September.

She will present a budget in September at the start of our next fiscal year. The President reminded everyone that we will be looking for fiscal sponsors, particularly for upcoming events. She thanked the treasurer for her report.

7. **General Public Comment.** Jennifer Miner was present to inform the board about an upcoming PPDC event which would feature local elected officials, including Councilwoman Traci Park, Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath and City Attorney Hydee Feldstein-Soto. She encouraged all to attend for an opportunity to hear from these elected officials and ask questions.

8. **Reports, Announcements and Concerns.**

8.1. From the Chair/Presiding Officer

8.1.1. The President appointed two new Advisors with the consent of the board

a She appointed and received consent to confirm Legal Advisor, Rob Weber

b She appointed Park Advisor, Mike Skinner

c She appointed Tech Advisor, Ramis Sadrieh

d She re-appointed Transportation Advisor, Lou Kamer

e She re-appointed Education Advisor, Allison Holdorff

8.1.2. The President appointed and received consent to confirm Corresponding Secretary, JoAnna Rodriguez, who was present and introduced herself to the board, and received a warm welcome.

8.1.3. The President updated the board with respect to the Potrero pre-design outreach phase of the bridge project by stating that we would hear more in September from the Council Office, and outreach timeline forum the chosen contractor which will be tasked with soliciting board based and meaningful community input.

8.1.4. The President said WRAC had a few motions that may require action and/or LUC conference and community discussion.

8.1.5. The President asked the board to affirm a position with respect to the Metro CTN (<https://www.metro.net/projects/transportation-communication-network/>) matter, which we have discussed before and is being rushed through city council. We may get an opportunity to comment and request that the program be referred to the City Council Transportation Committee (recommended by our Transportation Advisor and WARC Transportation Committee Rep) for feedback from LADOPT before implementation. She asked if there would be any objection to our recommendation to oppose the program, if time requires comment before we meet again. The board agreed that they would like to continue to oppose the program, as currently proposed.

In keeping with same line of reasoning on this topic, she asked for support to oppose the adoption of City ordinance that would fast-track the implementation of METRO CTN. The board agreed again to give the EC the authority to write in opposition of the program.

8.2. From Officers and Chair Emeritus

8.3. From At-Large and Area Representatives

8.3.1. Murray Levy asked for the Castellammare/Tramonto project be agenda'd for discussion, early, at the next meeting. He reiterated his, and the neighborhood's, concern surrounding bluff instability on this building location which is an active landslide. The President reported that she had discussed this with Jeff Khau at the Council office, is unsure what can be done at this late stage, but pledged to alert the LUC and have more discussion at the next meeting. She agreed that this was urgent and crucial. Chris Spitz, At-large Rep compared the situation to the Via de las Olas bluffs which are also an active landslide, and said it is concerning, but a position cannot be taken without LUC review. Murray urged the Council not to ignore this! Steve Cron pledged to take this matter up with the LUC, prior to travelling in September.

8.4. From Organizational Representatives

8.5. Alisa Wolfson, Education Rep Alternate asked for the board's help in securing a crossing guard for Canyon Elementary. Allison Holdorff said the office of Board member Nick Melvoin was also in support and doing all he can to secure this hiring. The board agreed to help advocate for this position.

8.6. From Government Offices / Representatives

8.6.1. LADWP, Deborah Hong, Sr. Community Relations Representative and Andrew Christopher, Inspection program Coordinator reported on power pole inspections of all overhead power poles in the Palisades. Please see the presentation on our website: https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Power-Line-Inspections-PPCC.final_.pdf

These inspections will begin on August 28th and run through the end of October.

They are a careful visual inspection of facilities and structures, using binoculars and measuring devices as appropriate. They record the status of power pole and making note of potential upgrades and repairs in order to promote the health of the power systems managed by LADWP. The inspections are done every 3 yrs., and there are 4000 poles within the PP that will be inspected (on public roadways and in backyards).

The contractor is Osmose utilities. These contractors will always have Osmose ID badges that will; be visible, they will be wearing hard hats and will always wear highly visible vests. They will have Osmose branded trucks and will always be willing to present credentials, if asked.

No traffic or lane closures are expected and no anticipated power outages. Each pole inspection will take approximately 30 minutes. Access to power poles on private property may be required. In this case, the homeowner/resident can ask for identifying credentials, or even ask to speak to an LADWP representative to verify the inspection or the Osmose worker. Note that neither the contractor nor the LADWP rep will ever ask to walk through the house, rather they will ask to walk around the home.

Contact Andrew.christopher@ladwp.com or Deborah.hong@ladwp.com for more info or questions.

The President thanked the presenters from LADWP.

8.6.2. Rad Nowroozi, Sen Ben Allen announced that the Office of Sen Ben Allen has funded a \$1M grant to PP YMCA per a request for revitalization efforts at Simon Meadow. They also secured \$6.5M for SM mountains, developing more protected green space. He announced that the legislature is within the final three weeks of this year's session when important decisions will be made on Bills. Sen Allen is hoping for approval of his SB867 – climate and wildfire prevention bond. This will fit nicely within the discussions of today because there may be some money for state land brush clearance. They also have their eye on a redistricting bill that would have an oversight committee that would review district lines each 10 years. Ben Allen will also soon be at Palisades Farmers Market. He thanked the President for her assistance on some of these matters. The President thanked Rad and asked about the State bill that would prohibit retail stores and their employees from enforcing

shoplifting laws, given the high-profile smash-and-grab robberies in LA. Rad said he would have to explain the intent of the bill, and report back another time.

- 8.6.3. Michael Amster from Councilwoman Park's office reported that he had examined El Oro Lane which is a small but critical road for evacuations. He brought BIE out to the road, which identified slope/sinking issues with the road and proposed an interim and long-term remedy. He encouraged others who have similar critical but faulty streets in their neighborhoods to bring them to his attention so he can alert the BOE and assess the safety.

Regarding resurfacing the parking lot road at the Rec Center (strip of Toyopa from Alma Real to the Park), he has been told there is no budget for resurfacing the street but there may be an opportunity to fill the potholes on that city street, which was left unattended/unslurred after the improvements made to the Rec Center parking lot in the lead-up to Potrero opening.

Regarding Via de las Olas bluffs and the conditions of the sloping bluffs. BOE is a few weeks away from completing their investigation, but that is forthcoming. They will report to Rec & Parks regarding recommended action.

Temescal Canyon Rd (TCR) is a top priority for the Council office. There is a motion expected at City Council tomorrow to secure funding for substantive repairs. Amster has approached BOE regarding the pinch-point in TCR which has resulted in a reported backlog of traffic. Michael disagrees and would like to create a stripping strategy that would preserve two lanes of traffic in both directions of TCR. He asked the PPCC board to support that position.

- 8.6.4. Zach Gaidzick, from the County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath's office and announced that she has been voted in as the Chair of LAHSA. She is excited because she intends to bring accountability and data driven results to LAHSA. Additionally, Supervisor Horvath has introduced two critical motions (passed unanimously) to support our striking workers in the entertainment industry. Specifically looking at ways LA County will be able to support the workers themselves as well as the numerous industries affected by the ongoing strike. The Supervisors also passed a resolution calling for the AMPTP to come back to the negotiating table and bring an end to this strike so people can get back to work with a fair contract.

- 8.6.5. LAPD SLO officer reported typical summertime increase in crime surrounding car break-ins on and near PCH or main arteries. Burglaries are about the same as last year (46 – year on year). He asked that people email him with questions but not to always believe what they read online about Palisades crime. He suggested that when there is an increase in foot or car traffic, there is an increase in crime. He reiterated that holiday weekends, summertime, more traffic at the beach translates to more crime, traditionally. Steve Cron observed that more than half of the crime on his report is on PCH rather than in the neighborhoods above. SLO Espin said he'd have

to look at those numbers to give an accurate picture of percentages. The president asked him to bring us that information when he can.

8.7. From PPCC Committees, Advisors and WRAC Representatives

9. Reports from PPCC Committees:

9.1. Dave Card reported that the Three Chairs Committee (David Card: Committee Chair, members: Chris Spitz, Maryam Zar) met and nominates Betsy handler for the 2nd Alternate position for Area 5. The board affirmed the nomination. Betsy was welcomed to the PPCC board.

10. Old Business – there was no old business

11. New Business

11.1. There was discussion and a motion regarding Temescal Canyon Road restriping as proposed by CD11 in order to preserve two lanes of traffic in both directions.

The following motion passed:

The PPCC has profound concerns with the way TCR has been re-striped, and in light of recent natural disasters (storms close to home and fires in Hawaii) as well as the start of school, we believe the current striping of TCR compromises public safety – with drivers now attempting to skip lanes and drive along the yellow median or make unsafe U-Turns in the middle of this fast-paced road, creating perilous traffic conditions for all. CD11 informs us that there is enough space along the road to create interim lanes that would provide for two lanes of traffic in both directions. Therefore, we encourage LADOT to collaborate with CD11 on a better restriping scheme that would save two lanes of traffic in each direction.

We urge any lane restriping change to incorporate one bicycle lane in each direction on Temescal Canyon Road.

Further, TCR is an Avenue I “Significant Road” for which both LA City Municipal Code and LADOT guidelines support the implementation of a short-term Transportation Control Management Plan during prolonged, disruptive events. TCR is a major feeder to and from Pacific Coast Highway for which signal timing at the intersection is limited to a 67 second green phase to limit overflow congestion on PCH. Therefore, PPCC urges Caltrans to consider allowing a temporary (or permanent) increase in signal timing at PCH during peak periods, as well as incorporation of the #3 lane to accommodate a safe left turn onto S/B PCH.

11.2. There was discussion and motion to support Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky and Councilwoman Traci Park in urging the Director of City Planning to pause the approval project of the project by rescinding the process of initiating a zoning change to accommodate the design and construction of a hotel in Bel Air, referred to as the Bulgari Hotel Project, on 9712

Oak Pass Road in Benedict Canyon. See: https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2021/21-0777-S1_caf_8-16-23.pdf

The following Motion passed unanimously:

PPCC urges the Director of City Planning and the Department of City Planning (DCP), to consider rescinding the initiation of a General Plan Amendment (GPA) for the Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project, Case No. CPC-2018-1506-GPA-VZC-SP- SPP-SPR, located at 9704 - 9712 West Oak Pass Road; 9800, 9801 - 9815 West Wanda Park Drive; and 2534 North Hutton Drive, in the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan Area, in order to halt the development of this project in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within the Benedict Canyon, where the impact on local wildlife and community fire safety are likely to be irreversible.

12. Adjournment – the meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM

For additional information see www.pacpalicc.org or e-mail info@pacpalicc.org