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**Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council
Board Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2008
Van Gogh School Auditorium
17160 Van Gogh Street, Granada Hills, CA**

Attendance: 72 visitors

1. **Call to Order** by Leon Marzillier, GHNNC President at 6:30 p.m. followed by Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Roll Call:** Present: Pat Casparian, Mary Ellen Crosby, Michael Deering, Sue De Vandry, Sid Gold, Michael Greenwald, Wayne Hunter, Skip Leifer, William Lillenberg, Scott Manatt, Leon Marzillier, Natasha Vetlugin, Joe Vitti, and Kathy Wagenbach. A quorum was declared to be present. Late arrivals: Anne Ziliak, Josh Jordahl, and Jonalyn Cooper. Absent: Dale Alloway, Scott Fisher,

Chair Comments: Leon discussed the imminent arrival of Councilman Greig Smith to answer questions for stakeholders, specifically the board's questions about his vote on the Mayerling development. Leon also announced that the City Council Budget and Finance Committee will meet on February 4th at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at 6:00 PM on Balboa Boulevard to discuss the Las Lomas proposed development. He encouraged all Board members and the public to attend to voice their opinion.

3. **Approval of December 17, 2007 Board Meeting Minutes. (Leifer/Gold) moved to approve the minutes of Dec. 17th, 2007. The motion carried unanimously.**

4. **Public Comment on non-agenda items:**

- Jeannie Plumb met with the Dept. of Rec and Parks about their plans for Aliso Canyon's equestrian use facility and a plan to control runoff from adjacent developments. They have not yet assigned an architect. She asked the board for help in getting this project moving.
- Cathie Bodie asked for help in opposing the Kohls store for Granada Hills.
- Becky Bendikson requested documents from GHNNC and readdressed her grievance.
- Susan Tipton, Hillcrest Plan Approval, announced a public hearing coming up next week on this.

5. **Special Guest – City Councilman Greig Smith** arrived to answer board and stakeholder questions for the next hour. Regarding his vote on the Mayerling development, there was a lengthy Q & A on why he voted against the input the GHNNC provided and also against the definitions of the Community Plan. No conclusion was reached but he did explain his rationale saying that there was an amendment made to the original Master Plan (amendment was made in the '90s), which allowed some of the flatland within the Residential Agricultural (RA) zone to be utilized differently than Resident Equestrian (RE). While he said some people called that area "the illegal cut," it was not actually illegal; that it was rezoned by City Planning with some allowances for density but with the horsekeeping provision maintained. The Councilman said that he went with the recommendations of PLUM, City Planning and the Area Planning Commission. He then produced a 1994 map demonstrating the area he referred to in the zoning exclusion.

Anne Ziliak disagreed with Councilman Smith saying the Director of Planning had said the map was not valid; also that the GHNNC's PLUM had been shown a different map for that area. GHNNC's PLUM's concern is mainly the frontage area and that this development could set a precedent for developing other RE lots that are expected to become vacant. She and the Councilman differed over which map was the valid map. The Councilman said his map, Zimas Intranet, was the one that the City recognizes. Anne called the map "tentative."

56 Mike Greenwald asked the Councilman why he disregarded the Community Plan, which
57 took many years to construct. He said that Plan designated one acre lots and that the language of
58 the Community Plan was, later, found to have been changed by the City so that it was vague and
59 more open to interpretation. Mike said his was contrary to what the community wanted.

60 The Councilman referred again to the exclusion for this development saying this acreage
61 was flat so it was designated "RE" as opposed to "RA." Smith said what drove the designation of
62 RA was the hillside on the City's Planning Dept. map.

63

64 Questions/Comments by Stakeholders:

- 65 • Beverly Lane asked how Councilman Smith felt about Las Lomas. Councilman Smith
66 said he is opposed to it; that it is the worst project that could happen to Granada Hills.
67 When asked who supported it, he said there are four major supporters: VICA, the LA
68 Chamber, Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Trade Union. He added that a
69 vote takes place on February 4, 2008 by the City's Budget and Finance Committee. They
70 will review Councilmember Alarcon's motion to give it special treatment.
71 (Councilmembers who support this are: Alarcon, Reyes, and Huizar).
- 72 • Anatole Nassad asked about the timeframe for street repairs and maintenance. The
73 Councilman explained that the City only has enough money in the budget to repair 150 –
74 170 miles of streets per year, even through they need to repair about 220 miles to "break
75 even." He noted that the City does a miserable job of fixing City streets and that they are
76 constantly falling behind. To get the most for their money, he said the City devised a
77 computer system where they choose those street needing only minimal repairs as
78 opposed to doing major street repairs. This costs the City less money and time but
79 results in the streets being an embarrassment.
- 80 • Kim Thompson asked why developers aren't asked to repair streets when they are
81 building new developments. Councilman Smith said they are starting to put that into the
82 process, but that the streets must be right next to their sites.
- 83 • Debi Orrico asked why his office didn't help the residents when they reported an illegal lot
84 split on Los Alimos. Smith said he didn't know anything about this particular issue. Orrico
85 then said that was hard for her to believe because they have an Interim Control
86 Ordinance.
- 87 • Birgitta Sedihn asked for help with fighting a proposal by Verizon for a new cell phone
88 tower in front of her property on Sesnon. She is concerned about the risk of it causing
89 cancer. Smith said the risk of cancer is not something the City can consider when
90 opposing a cell phone tower. Anne referred the stakeholder to the Bureau of Engineering
91 and suggested fighting it on the basis of "aesthetics." Councilman Smith then asked the
92 stakeholder for her information so his office could follow up on it later.
- 93 • Linda Romney asked for help from the Councilman on the community's appeal against
94 Kohls. She said it violates all laws and regulations in place. She talked about a largescale
95 opposition to the Kohls but the Councilman questioned whether the signatures on the
96 petition were legitimate. He said there was more support for the Kohls than against. On
97 the topic of square footage, Smith said the Kohls' store meets the current requirements
98 by being under the 100,000 sq. ft. limit. He then asked the stakeholders if they liked the
99 new Target store with the updated architecture on Balboa. There was loud disapproval of
100 the store from stakeholders present. Smith said his question regarded the architecture
101 and that if that they felt away about the store, they should have made their voices heard
102 before it was built.
- 103 • Maria Fisk, Old Granada Hills Residents Group and GHSNC, asked why the Councilman
104 doesn't consider a smaller format for the Kohls store. Smith said Kohls would not build a
105 smaller store in this community because of the demographics. He then said he is not
106 representing Kohls but rather, Granada Hills, which he said was largely in favor of the
107 store. Maria asked why the Councilman has opposed what the neighborhood wants.
108 Councilman Smith referred to technical issues in the design of the store.
- 109
- 110 • Jim Summers, Chair of GHSNC, asked the Councilman why he has not met with him on
111 this issue. Smith said he had. Summers said that was not true. The Councilman then said

112 that he had met with representatives from his NC, but not specifically with him. He then
113 proposed a meeting with Summers and asked him to bring any new info he had on this
114 subject.

- 115 • Gary Holmen asked about the future of soccer and baseball fields at the MWD facility.
116 The Councilman said he had a meeting several months ago with DWP and had identified
117 two possible sites for the fields. One is a temporary site; the other involves a longterm
118 lease. The decision currently hangs on an EIR over the reservoir. His office is currently
119 negotiating a longterm solution. Michael Greenwald asked the Councilman to include
120 GHNNC in these meetings.
- 121 • Larry McLaughlin reported problem with horse trails being closed off and in some
122 instances, blocked off by developments. He talked about gates opening and closing in
123 the wind and the possibility of lawsuits if horse or riders fall in cement culverts,
124 specifically at the top of Zelzah. The Councilman said he would look into this.
- 125 • Jeannie Plumb said the GHNNC needs help particularly with planning issues where the
126 language is vague and is being manipulated by developers. She asked the Councilman
127 for help with keeping the language specific enough to tie it down lot sizes saying there
128 was never an intention to allow “donut holes” accessible from the road in the Mayerling
129 area.
- 130 • Mike Greenwald asked for the Councilman’s view on Prop S, specifically why the citizens
131 of L.A. were being told that Prop S is a tax decrease, when in actuality, it promotes an
132 “illegal” tax. The Councilman said he was not advocating it but that if Prop S doesn’t
133 pass, it would require a largescale cutting of City services. He said that the tax is not
134 illegal; that every city and state except Los Angeles is paying these new taxes now. He
135 noted that the conversion time for the tax if it failed would be about two years and at that
136 time, it would begin to affect city services.
- 137 • Councilman Smith concluded his comment session by saying that his greatest effort now
138 is to build an environmentally-clean place for trash and to close Sunshine Canyon. As far
139 as Prop S., he said that he spoke with Mayor Villaraigosa and agreed to support Prop S
140 to be on the ballot as long as the Mayor withdraws support from Las Lomas and agrees
141 to promote the RFP for renewable trash systems in the City in connection with Renew
142 L.A.

143

144 6. **Treasurer’s Report** – Scott Manatt distributed information on the budget. Financial
145 Officer Pat Casparian discussed the report he compiled regarding current and projected
146 expenses.

147

148 7. **Presentation by Boy Scouts** on tree planting: A Life Scout working on his Eagle Scout
149 project announced a tree planting event to take place on Feb. 16 at Bee Canyon. Fifty
150 large trees (donated by BFI) will be planted starting at 9 a.m. GHNNC will also be
151 working with Tree People to distribute 200 trees on the same day of the event.

152

153 8. **DONE Report:** Rep. Amelia Herrera - Robles spoke about the imminent City Clerk
154 elections to take place in 2008. While these will not affect GHNNC, there will be a
155 moratorium on elections in 2009. So instead of holding an election in 2009, GHNNC
156 board members will be asked to extend their terms to 2010 when the next City Clerk
157 election will be held. If board members cannot fill that term, they can resign and be
158 replaced by a board nomination, prior to the official election. Amelia said that there will
159 need to be changes to the GHNNC bylaws in conjunction with new stipulations. One
160 change will be to add an “At Large” seat to satisfy the new stakeholder definition. She
161 suggested that the board revive the Ad Hoc Bylaw Committee to make sure the bylaws
162 revisions are made. Amelia announced a DONE training to take place on February 23 at
163 8 a.m. at the Marvin Braudy Center in Van Nuys. The training will be aimed at new board
164 members and will provide a City Attorney’s overview on serving as a board member, as
165 well as a training on Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities and a new Treasurer’s
166 training.

167

168 9. **Discussion and possible action on MTA bus route line 237** – Kim Thompson
169 reported on a proposal to eliminate bus route 237 in the Valley due to budget cuts. The
170 hearing takes place next week. She will attend. **(Vitti/Gold) moved to support Kim’s**
171 **attendance to oppose the elimination of bus route 237. The motion carried**
172 **unanimously.**
173

174 **10. Committee Reports:**

- 175 • *Parks & Beautification* – **(Crosby/Leifer) moved, “That GHNNC allocate up to \$500 for**
176 **the Spring egg hunt on March 15, 2008 from her available budget.” (Crosby/**
177 **Vetlugin) then amended the amount to \$600.00. The amended motion carried**
178 **unanimously.** Mary Ellen also announced that the poppies planted last year are about to
179 bloom in Bee Canyon Park.
180
- 181 • *PLUM* – (Ziliak) moved, **“That the GHNNC Board approve the installation, use and**
182 **maintenance of a wireless communication facility on the rooftop of 11900 BALBOA**
183 **BLVD (ENV-2007-5451-EAF:ZA-2007-5450-CUW:) with the following condition:**
184 **Either move the proposed equipment shelter to a non-visible location or screen the**
185 **shelter with the same material used to screen the antenna.” The motion carried**
186 **unanimously.** Anne said the proposed cell phone tower is on top of the Howes Market.
187 The Committee reviewed their proposal and felt it would look okay if they moved the
188 equipment box. Anne also announced that Hillcrest Christian School will hold a
189 conditional use permit hearing on Feb. 2nd and there will be a Feb. 4 meeting at St.
190 Nicholas Church on Las Lomas at 6 p.m.
191
- 192 • *Public Safety* – Michael Greenwald spoke about the installation of a speeding sign on
193 Balboa and a long awaited traffic signal at Knollwood, which Councilman Smith’s office
194 will fund.
195
- 196 • *Outreach* – Sue DeVandry presented the first GHNNC newsletter which has received
197 many compliments from the community. She also spoke about the tree giveaway event,
198 which will provide outreach to the community.
199
- 200 • *Communications* – Aaron DeVandry, website master and newsletter editor, thanked the
201 board for their help with the newsletter.
202
- 203 • *Nominating* – Michael Greenwald reported on the six vacant board seats, (Districts 1 and
204 2, Neighborhood Organization, Small Business and Worker, Student, and Resident
205 Associations) two of which they may have candidates to fill.
206
- 207 • *Ad Hoc Office* – Leon Marzillier said there is no news on an office site. He is still working
208 with GHSNC to find a joint office. Mike Greenwald asked Leon to put an item on the Exec
209 Committee agenda on the need for an office or meeting space.
210

211 **Board Member Comment on non-agenda items**

- 212 • Jonalyn Cooper noted that Shepherd of the Hills Church is looking for community service
213 projects for March.
- 214 • Wayde Hunter gave an update on Sunshine Canyon revealing a possible lawsuit
215 involving the City.
216

217 **Meeting Adjourned:** 9:04 p.m.

218 Minutes by Pat Kramer, Apple One, modified by Skip Leifer, Recording Officer