

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



GOVERNING BOARD

CLINT BIRDSONG
CHAIR
ROMANA BARAJAS
VICE-CHAIR
ASH KRAMER
TREASURER
BRYAN KRAMER
LIZETTE MONTES
CHLOE RIVAS
JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ
TERESA ROMAN
ALEXIA TERAN

GREATER CYPRESS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

1150 CYPRESS AVE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90065
E-mail: GCPNC@empowerla.org
Website: cypressparknc.com

GREATER CYPRESS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, December 8, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.
Online/Telephonic Meeting via Zoom # 868 4239 6909



DRAFT MINUTES

Board Members	Roll Call
Romana Barajas	1
Clint Birdsong	1
Ash Kramer	1
Bryan Kramer	1
Lizette Montes	1
Chloe Rivas	1
Jennifer Rodriguez	1
Teresa Roman	Present at 7:05 p.m.
Alexia Teran	absent

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Greater Cypress Park Neighborhood Council (GCPNC) Chair, Clint Birdsong. The minutes taker, Mr. Starr, called the roll: Romana Barajas (Vice-Chair), Mr. Birdsong, Ash Kramer (Treasurer), Bryan Kramer, Lizette Montes, Chloe Rivas, and Jennifer Rodriguez were present. Quorum is five (5) and was met. Teresa Roman joined later. Alexia Teran was absent.
- 1.2. Mr. Birdsong welcomed the assembled group and provided instructions on making public comment and accessing interpretation features. He acknowledged that Cypress Park sits on land formerly inhabited by the Tongva people.

[Teresa Roman joined at 7:05 p.m.]

2. Comments from Public Officials

- 2.1. Senior Lead Officer (SLO) Reyes of the LAPD noted burglaries from motor vehicles and thefts of unattended, unsecured bicycles on private property. Extra patrol had been assigned to monitor the Home Depot parking lot after a series of auto thefts. Anyone witnessing activity related to auto thefts should call 9-1-1.

He had requested improvements to the lighting in the alleyway on Avenue 26 between Huron St. and Jeffries Ave after complaints about transients drinking and loitering. Across the street, at the Los Angeles River Center, trucks had been stolen.

At Avenue 26 and Figueroa St., fights among transients coming from river and sales of narcotics had been an issue.

Taco vendors had been advised not to park at Huron St. and Avenue 26. Curbs would be painted red on Huron St. south of the intersection, where homeless people and gang members were known to congregate. Curbs would also be painted red on Avenues 26 and 27 next to Harbor Freight next to make it harder for taggers to hide behind parked cars, and to mitigate a problem with abandoned vehicles. He asked everyone to report graffiti to MyLA311.

He reported a problem with narcotics sales near illegally parked RVs on Avenue 27 between Idell and Poplar, and issues with transients and trash at the intersection of Avenue 27 and San Fernando Road, where he had requested another curb be painted red.

Reyes encouraged the community to hide items before parking and locking their cars, and to ensure all property remains out of view, regardless of its value.

There was discussion of fireworks and late night explosions.

Ms. Roman complained of public inebriation and abandoned vehicles. SLO Reyes said towing of illegally parked vehicles was still underway, and he advised to call the LADOT at (213) 485-4184 to file a report, noting the response could be delayed. He said that liquor stores could be cited or fined or could lose their ABC license for allowing public drinking within 100 feet of the store.

Reyes admitted the challenges of evaluating reports amid COVID restrictions.

Mr. Kramer asked if LAPD could guide anyone living in their cars to a safe parking site in Glassell Park. SLO Reyes said he already shared that information with people, noting there were certain rules such as that a car be operational. He said police also share information about food giveaways.

- 2.2.** Empowerment Advocate Jose Galdamez from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) reminded Land Use Committee members to complete the required Planning 101 training by the December 16th deadline.

He said PlanCheck (www.plancheckla.com) would have a presentation on the Processes and Procedures ordinance.

Candidate filing for Region 8 NC elections would be open from 12/12/2020 to 1/26/2021. An info session was scheduled.

Ms. Roman said she was unable to access trainings in Spanish. Mr. Galdamez agreed to send her information. Ms. Roman said she had reached out to Monica, but hadn't received a response. Mr. Birdsong said the delay was "ridiculous." Galdamez agreed to work with Monica. Birdsong said if necessary, he would schedule an emergency meeting with translation so she could satisfy her training requirements.

- 2.3.** Chris Johnson said he was with the Bureau of Engineering at the Department of Public Works. He provided updates on the Taylor Yard project. The implementation feasibility report had been 2.5 years in the making and would be released within the next couple of weeks, after which there would be an opportunity for public discussion; later it would move to City Council. Biweekly meetings were being held onsite at the G2 parcel with participation by Toxic Substances Control. The City had signed a letter of intent (LOI) to form a partnership of the Mountains, Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA), the State Parks Department, and the City Parks and Recreation Department for the 100 acres that comprise Taylor Yard and the Bowtie/G1 and G2 parcels. An agreement would be formalized in the "next few months."

Paseo del Rio would be the initial phase, where a pathway along the Bowtie and G2 would be constructed. This element had been approved by City Council. It would provide the public with access to the river and would remediate contamination on a portion of the site it covered. According to Johnson, Bowtie was to be "delivered" by State Parks, and G2 by the City. MRCA was managing the "public engagement" element.

Brian Baldauf said he represented the MRCA and that he intended to provide regular updates at RVNC meetings. The City was in the process of hiring a design team. The MRCA's request for proposal (RFP) for a design team would be published in the next few weeks. The winner would be expected to participate at NC meetings and provide opportunities for "authentic engagement" during the pandemic.

Ms. Barajas said questions from the community routinely went unanswered or were deferred, and she asked if there would be a main point of contact for the community. Barajas noted that when the partnership was announced, the Community was listed as a fourth partner.

Mr. Baldauf said they intended for the public to have an easy time reaching the project lead. Q1 would be complicated, though, with 5 to 6 projects around Taylor Yard. Some questions would need to be forwarded to the area experts, who, he assured Ms. Barajas, were "connected and working together." He said a planned hire at Paseo del Rio was to be the community's direct contact.

Regarding the "fourth partner," Baldauf said they would hire a community engagement team and wanted to create a community committee, which would be selected by their team and would be serve as the nexus to the community and its concerns.

Ms. Barajas stated that at the meeting she had attended in Santa Monica, the grant had stated that the fourth member of the partnership had to be the community. The community wanted to be more involved, she said, instead of nonprofits preselected by the other three partners that didn't include actual members from the respective communities. Baldauf said the RFP included hiring consultants and NGOs as well as community members, who would organize and work throughout the community. One of their goals was to be a "legacy of support." He agreed to announce the job openings at Neighborhood Council meetings, and said they would regularly attend GCPNC.

Mr. Birdsong said the January agenda would include a more in-depth discussion, including with Kelsey Jessup of the Nature Conservancy.

Stephanie Campbell from California State Parks said she would attend that meeting.

3. Public Comments

- 3.1. In general public comment, Juan Corral stated that he hoped Mr. Baldauf and Ms. Campbell would be prepared to discuss the plan to mitigate the dust that had been observed and recorded spreading from the project site to area schools, which had been in session with special needs children at the time. He said he had shared video with the project leads but had not received a clear reply, only "a lot of finger pointing." In 2 years, Corral said, he hadn't seen evidence the community could "trust them."
- 3.2. Ms. Rodriguez said LA Más was offering fresh produce for free, across the river on Blake Avenue.
- 3.3. Greg Mendoza said he was the new owner/operator of Grocery Outlet at 5461 N Figueroa St., which was to open on December 10th.
- 3.4. Nichole Torres announced that on December 17th, Mujeres de la Tierra would distribute 150 diaper/hygiene kits for babies. Mr. Kramer agreed to be her point of contact for the Cypress Park community.
- 3.5. Ms. Barajas announced an assistance program lottery to grant \$800 to waiters impacted by COVID; the application window would close on December 11th.
- 3.6. Erica Miramon asked if the current pandemic restrictions would prevent people from visiting food giveaways on foot. Mr. Birdsong said he wasn't sure, though he suspected people should still be able to walk up. Ms. Rodriguez agreed, and noted there was not any official enforcement in any case. Mr. Birdsong suggested she reach out to Ricardo Flores in CD1 or Veronica in the Mayor's Office.
- 3.7. Ms. Montes asked about the toy giveaway described at the November meeting. Mr. Birdsong: said the list of children and ages had been submitted and that he understood a reply would be received once information came from Mattel.

- 3.8. Ms. Roman described the essential work of the food giveaways and the social distancing precautions they were taking. She invited donations of blankets and socks for the elderly.

4. Chairperson's Report

- 4.1. Mr. Birdsong noted that Ms. Roman's funding and Ms. Teran's ethics trainings had expired, which were required to be eligible to vote on funding matters.

5. Treasurer's Report

- 5.1. Approval of the November 2020 Monthly Expenditure Reports

Mr. Birdsong moved to approve the November 2020 MER. **Ms. Barajas** seconded. There were no public comments or board discussion. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6 yes. Ms. Rivas and Ms. Roman were ineligible, and Ms. Teran was absent.

- 5.2. Mid-year budget update

Ms. Kramer shared updates verbally and by screen share. She noted that food and drink was still in the budget and could be shifted to other areas, and \$5,000 was set aside for elections, with more than \$16,000 remaining. She invited stakeholders to review the documents on the website.

6. Consent Calendar

- Approve November Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Kramer moved to approve the Consent Calendar. **Ms. Rodriguez** seconded. The motion carried with all 8 members present in favor. Ms. Teran was absent.

7. Action Items

- 7.1. Discussion and Possible Action: Neighborhood Purpose Grant for up to \$3,600 to Manos Que Sobreviven

Oscar Gaytan and Alberto Galvan described their "Christmas with Hope" event for children from Northeast Los Angeles who had lost a parent or family member to COVID-19, to take place at Irving Magnet Middle school. They sought a grant of \$3,600, half of the overall budget, which would help cover decorations, hot meals, and a book gift for 500 students total. Galvan said the Principal at Irving Magnet had given the "green light" on the plan. It would be drive-through only with no walk-ins allowed. Kids would be identified in advance, with the help of their schools (Aragon, Nightingale, Loreto, and Sotomayor.

Mr. Galdamez advised that an NPG application would not be approved with references to religious holidays. Mr. Galvan agreed they would change the application to read "holiday" instead of "Christmas."

To Ms. Barajas, Galvan said if families were unable to come by car, they would find a way to distribute the gifts to the children with the help of the schools.

After further discussion, **Ms. Barajas** moved to approve the NPG with the change from "Christmas" to "Holiday." **Ms. Montes** seconded. In public comment, Erika Miramon said she supported the program as a "benefit to the community."

Another stakeholder, Esme, spoke in favor. She said students would like to receive a little gift, that it could be "priceless."

The motion carried with all 6 eligible members present voting yes. Ms. Rivas and Ms. Roman were ineligible, and Ms. Teran was absent.

- 7.2. Discussion and Possible Action: Community Impact statements in support of the following Council Files:

Ms. Kramer announced that the next three CIS motions had been discussed in advance at the Land Use Committee.

7.2.1. Community Impact Statement – CF 14-0268-S13 Tenant Harassment / Ordinance
Consider the HCIDLA’s proposal for a Tenant Anti-Harassment Ordinance.

Ms. Kramer said enforcement of the ordinance would cost “a couple dollars per unit.”

Ms. Barajas suggested the ordinance should extend to properties not covered by the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO), including room rentals, and should provide guidelines not just to HCID but to the LAPD as well. Ms. Montes said all forms of tenancies should be included, citing the example of garages. Ms. Roman said businesses should be covered as well.

Ms. Kramer moved to submit CIS in support, as above, with the noted recommendations to include non-RSO units, room rentals, and other types of tenancies, as well as business tenants. Ms. Barajas seconded. There was no public comment and no further board discussion. The motion passed unanimously by all 8 present. Ms. Teran was absent.

7.2.2. Community Impact Statement – CF 20-1360
County of Los Angeles Service Commitment Funds / Homelessness Efforts - County Funding Agreement / Homelessness Roadmap Sheltering Plans
Allocation of \$9.32M in county funds into homelessness efforts

Ms. Kramer described the motion as a matter of the County owing the City money that needed to be allocated by year’s end, or it would go into the County fund. Board members expressed concern at the lack of detail. **Ms. Kramer moved to write the CIS in support, as above, with the condition they spend some money in District 1, specifically in Cypress Park. Ms. Barajas seconded.**

In public comment Ms. Guerra spoke in favor of helping people experiencing homelessness. To Ms. Barajas’ question, Ms. Kramer said she did not know how the money would be administered. Mr. Kramer suggested the emergency shelter in Echo Park could benefit from additional funding.

The motion passed unanimously by all 8 present. Ms. Teran was absent.

7.2.3. Community Impact Statement – CF 18-1246
Vacation Rentals in Non-Primary Homes / Ordinance
Ordinance Changes recommended to City Council:

1. Increase the citywide cap from 3,625 (the equivalent of 0.25 percent of the current housing supply) to the equivalent of 1 percent.
2. Change the geographic unit subject to concentration caps from Census tracts to community plan areas, and increase the cap from 0.25 percent to 1 percent. [(= 805 units in NELA)]
3. Increase the maximum number of days per calendar year a Vacation Rental may be rented from 30 to 90 days.
4. Specify that the required 250 feet of separation between Vacation Rental units in Type 1 buildings be per block face.

Ms. Kramer said she felt “strongly” that Airbnb was the reason rents were going up in Los Angeles. She said the motion to “quadruple the cap” during a historic housing crisis seemed off base. Ms. Barajas agreed. Ms. Rivas agreed and added that Airbnb led to gentrification. Ms. Montes said the Council Motion would increase the number of “businesses we do not want in Cypress Park” and would not help address the housing crisis; rather it would lead to more luxury housing. **Ms. Kramer moved to write a CIS in opposition to the Council File, as above. Ms. Montes seconded.**

In public comment, Ms. Guerra spoke to the “oppression and harassment” being experienced by tenants.

The motion carried by a unanimous vote of all 8 present. Ms. Teran was absent.

7.2.4. Community Impact Statement – CF 20-1314

Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) Affordable Housing Incentive Program / Guidelines / Land Use Regulatory Control Revisions

Ms. Kramer moved to postpone the item in order to bring it back to the Land Use Committee. Mr. Birdsong seconded.

Ms. Barajas asked to include [in the Land Use Committee agenda] the new apartments planned for San Fernando Road near the dog pound, a TOC project that Councilmember Cedillo was opposing, trying to “use this ordinance.” **There was no opposition to the postponement/committee referral.** Ms. Kramer said it would be on the agenda for January 5, 2021 at 6pm.

7.3. Discussion and Possible Action: Consider a letter to CD1 that requests consideration of the G2 and Bowtie parcel (subject to toxicity reports) as part of the temporary and long-term planning for relief efforts for our unhoused neighbors with the following bullet points:

- We appreciate all that you've done to help the unhoused with services like mobile showers, laundry, waste disposal for RVs, safe parking. However, services are not enough to deal with the scope of the homelessness crisis.
- We understand that it's difficult to find land for housing because your districts are the most densely populated in the city.
- We also are aware that the G2 and Bowtie areas, large expanses of land, are in the preliminary stages of development and might offer some relief for this lack of space.
- We would like you to look into the feasibility of using these areas to support our unhoused neighbors in both interim and long term ways.
- Decisions about feasibility should be based on interpretation of soil analysis data by both city agencies currently working on the project AND unbiased 3rd party organizations. We would like to know the stages of soil remediation that would allow for habitable space over time.
- We believe that a safe space for our unhoused neighbors would allow for better communities overall. For the unhoused: clean water, restroom facilities, showers, security, etc. For other stakeholders: the assurance that outreach and case management is happening in a more thoughtful direct way than the current, ineffective, and conflicting paths of helping folks out of homelessness.

Mr. Kramer said the letter originated from the Homelessness Committee. He had held an informal telephone conversation Jose Rodriguez and Katie Skelton, where Mr. Rodriguez said CD1 would fall “woefully short” of its goal of 6,000 homeless housing units.

He said Kelsey Jessup had volunteered to speak with the SELAH Homeless Coalition about engaging with homeless folks at the LA River.

He said the proposed “sanctuary camp” would bring resources like drinking water, toilets, and showers to the population rather than the current “dispersed” way that CD1 was making those resources available.

He noted that Mr. Rodriguez had emphasized the importance of community support for such an effort. He pointed to the danger of toxins in the area soil and the noted they did not want to place people in harm's way.

Mr. Kramer said the shelter on Riverside was an example of an imperfect match, due to prohibitions against pets, for example. The sanctuary, he argued, would allow for thorough case management. He said City Controller Galperin's database of city-owned properties was of interest, and a tool to get City Council onboard.

Mr. Kramer stressed that the Bowtie parcel was the current focus.

Ms. Kramer spoke in favor of the proposed letter. Ms. Roman advised that neighbors should be consulted, including area businesses.

Mr. Kramer moved to write the letter as agendized.

Mr. Birdsong said the RVNC should have a conversation with the community as to why city-owned land was not already going to be used for housing. He suggested reviewing every City-owned parcel and inquiring with CD1.

[Ms. Rodriguez left the meeting at 9:41 p.m.]

Ms. Kramer seconded the motion.

Ms. Barajas moved to postpone to the January General Board Meeting. **Ms. Montes** seconded. Mr. Birdsong argued against the motion to postpone.

In public comment, Juan Corral said he supported postponing because the motion was “too quick” and “premature.” Brendan Charney spoke in favor of the motion to postpone to get community buy-in, though he supported the idea of looking for existing spaces that were safe and without soil contamination issues. He added that one should never abandon the opportunity to turn land into open green spaces.

Kelsey Jessup said discussing temporary and long-term housing was important and that the Nature Conservancy wanted to be a partner. She mentioned the Los Angeles Regional Open Space and Affordable Housing Collaborative.

Mr. Birdsong declared the motion postponed by unanimous consent to the January meeting.

7.4. Discussion and Possible Action: 2021 Neighborhood Council Elections Planning

Mr. Birdsong said he would schedule a meeting for Ms. Roman and Ms. Rivas to get together, which others could attend. December 21st at 7 p.m. was mentioned for an election planning meeting. Mr. Galdamez said DONE would reach out for a one-on-one with election chairs and outreach chairs.

7.5. Discussion and Possible Action:

Community Clean ups to be sponsored by CD1: Dec 12, 10-noon @ Cypress/Division to Cypress/Future. PLEASE EMAIL ash.gcpnc@gmail.com if you would like to help out as we are limited in the number of people who can attend

Ms. Kramer announced the clean ups had been canceled. She suggested reaching out to Ricardo Flores to see how to request a clean-up team for a specific area.

8. New Business and ideas for future meetings

Ms. Barajas requested that the City property next to the dog pound be agendized. Mr. Birdsong asked Ms. Kramer to place the discussion on the Land Use Committee agenda for January.

9. Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- Governing Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 12, 7:00PM

Mr. Birdsong noted the above.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Birdsong adjourned the meeting at 9:59 p.m. without objection.