

Valley Village Homeowners Association
Board Meeting
August 14, 2017
Minutes

I. **Call to Order:** In attendance were J. Fagin, Z. Rynew, K. Kaysing, D. Apple, R. Meyer, M. Woersching, G. Shorr and E. Wilhelm. Jon Sanserino addressed the board at the beginning of the meeting.

II. **Officers' Reports**

A. **President:** Mr. Hatfield was not present.

B. **Vice President:** Fagin asked the board if a new slogan could be chosen. He stated that the current slogan, "Neighbors Working Together To Improve The Quality of Life" did not define the purpose of VVHA. He suggested "Preserve What Works, Fix What Doesn't." Members felt this motto was too vague. Wilhelm suggested that the board reclaim VVHA's original motto: "Communicate, Participate, Legislate." During the discussion a consensus was reached to use VVHA's original motto and to replace it with the newer motto in TVV and DVV and wherever else it is used.

C. **Treasurer's Report:** Meyer advised that VVHA's bank balance is \$23,241.00. Membership has dropped 4%, and now stands at a total of 278 members. He distributed a mock-up of the new membership card and members offered corrections. The estimated cost of the cards will be .15 cents each but the printer will put the members' names and membership numbers on them as part of the cost. The July 4th Parade cost VVHA \$2,517.00, while NCVV contributed \$2,000 additional funds for two marching bands.

D. **Secretary's Report:** Wilhelm advised that the May meeting minutes were approved.

III. **Committee Reports**

A. **Membership:** Wilhelm explained that three types of letters have been prepared to increase membership numbers. One will remind 2016/2017 members to pay their dues for 2017/2018; another will ask members who have not paid since 2012 to rejoin; and the third will invite new homeowners to join. The last letter will be accompanied by the June issue of *The Valley Villager*, *The Valley Village Story* and a copy of the Daily News article on the July 4th Parade. Wilhelm asked if realtors should be approached and asked to distribute information about VVHA. Apple reminded the Board that P. Sanchez used to attend Open Houses in the area and hand out VVHA information. The Board concluded it was wiser to approach the homeowner directly.

B. **Outreach & Communication:** Rynew reported that our Facebook 'likes' improved 7% last quarter. Rynew has communicated with the Valley Relics Museum who would host a VVHA attend-the-museum day. A Saturday in October was recommended with the hope that the weather will cool off. Also, he still hopes to arrange an informal bike rally.

Colfax School opens Tuesday, August 15 and the first PACE/PTA meeting will be on August 24 at 6:30 pm in the school's auditorium. Wilhelm agreed to contact Board

member J. Goldzweig and ask him to promote the values of VVHA membership at this meeting.

Shorr reminded the Board that Karen will be in charge of collecting articles for the *TVV* while she is abroad. She distributed the schedule for the next issue.

C. Specific Plan: Woersching had no new information to report. Kaysing asked him if he knew how many signatures for the Petition re: Amending the Specific Plan would be effective and he replied at least 200. Meyer indicated that at the Night Out event, he met an individual who writes specific plans for communities. He wondered if the committee would like to meet with her. Also, Meyer will promote the petition in his DVV. Wilhelm suggested that Woersching write an article for *TVV* on this issue and he agreed.

D. Hospitality: There was confusion about who headed this committee. Shorr volunteered. Wilhelm stated she'll continue to apply quarterly to LAUSD for use of the auditorium. As for food, Fagin said that when he was previously on the Board, platters of cheese and fruit were purchased at Jon's Market. For the past few years Meyer promoted local restaurants however Valley Village has a limited number of restaurants to promote. The Board agreed to return to serving platters from Jon's which Fagin will buy; Meyer agreed to be responsible for water.

E. Events: There are no upcoming new events.

F. Political Activism: Hatfield was not in attendance to make a report.

IV. New Business

A. Valley Village Security Patrol Effort: (This issue was addressed at the beginning of the meeting so Mr. Sanserino could leave early.) Jon Sanserino, who lives across from the Valley Village Park, has promoted on Nextdoor.com a plan to hire security patrols. He needs at least 200 members to reach the affordable rate of \$1/day. He currently has 100 interested parties and is looking for block captains to rally their neighbors in support of his project. The armed guard service he hopes to use will charge \$35/hour and uses marked cars. The guard service will handle the accounting, charging a quarterly fee. Sanserino asked for assistance exposing this project. Meyer agreed to include the project in the DVV. Shorr said she will consider an article in *TVV*.

B. Establish a Security Committee: Kaysing asked if such a committee should be organized or could VVHA become more involved in deterring crime. The Board frowned upon a committee formation but Apple mentioned that she had many publications on the creation of Neighborhood Watches. Apple agreed to provide the information to Kaysing who will write a "Neighborhood Watch 101" article for *TVV*.

C. Digital Billboards: Woersching submitted a copy of a motion approved by NCVV that asks the L.A. City Council to exclude specific items in its revised Citywide Sign Ordinance. **Motion:** Woersching proposed; seconded by Apple.

That VVHA support the motion submitted by NCVV opposing the addition of five provisions favoring new digital billboards and preserving existing billboards. (copy of complete motion is attached.)

Discussion: Kaysing suggested that the motion's wording be more positive than NCVV's. The motion passed with no opposition. Woersching will prepare a letter to Councilmember Krekorian and the Planning Land Use Committee.

D. Member Assignments: Kaysing expressed frustration at the lack of participation by some Board members.

E. 11748 Riverside Drive: Shorr advised that she had researched the complicated intrigue over a block of properties on Riverside and Blix where a remodel of an insurance agency office was underhandedly transformed into a synagogue. Neighboring residents believe a religious school complex will be built. The Board acknowledged the upsetting situation but felt this wasn't in its purview of duties.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Next Step: Welcome to Valley Village Sign at Starbucks Laurel Cyn. & Burbank: Apple reported that the NCVV would like to see a "Welcome to Valley Village" sign positioned on the Riverside Drive median under the 170 Freeway. Kaysing maintained that Starbucks must be held accountable to its commitment to place a sign at the southwest corner of Laurel Canyon and Burbank. Shorr would like to continue pursuing this second project.

B. HPOZ: Kaysing asked what the Board could do further to assist homeowners to establish HPOZ zones. The consensus was that the homeowners had to pursue this on their own. A flyer could be mailed to the homeowners in the neighborhoods that qualify.

C. Galaxy Car Wash: Kaysing asked if the Board would agree to sending a letter to Councilmember Krekorian expressing discontent that a 4-story building with 2 levels of underground parking will be constructed at the southeast corner of Whitsett and Chandler. Woersching suggested that the letter be addressed to our California Assembly representative. Kaysing avowed that such a structure offended the VV Specific Plan and will draft the letter for approval by the Board.

VI. Old Business

A. Update on Search for Officers Insurance Policy: This item will remain on the meeting agendas until it is resolved. Wilhelm will remind Goldzweig that he offered to find an insurance company that offers a Directors and Officers policy.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 9:27 p.m.

Attachment

Motion

The Valley Village Homeowners Association urges that the following provisions be removed from the revised Citywide Sign Ordinance (CF 11-1705):

1. The City Council will not permit the introduction of digital billboards outside of sign districts.
2. The takedown ratio for the removal of regular billboards in exchange for the erection of new digital billboards in sign districts will prohibit a range of 2:1 to 8:1 but stay at the 10:1 ratio recommended by the City Planning Commission.
3. Digital on-site, business identification signs will not be permitted.
4. Digital billboards may not be located on City-owned property.
5. Amnesty will not be granted for 900 plus existing billboards that lack building permits.

Background

Since 2011 the Citywide Sign Ordinance has been under restudy. In late 2015 the City Planning Commission approved a proposed ordinance that was a compromise between billboard companies and the individual communities of Los Angeles that want a reduction in billboard blight. The Commission's ordinance permitted bright, flashing digital billboards only in sign districts located in high-intensity commercial zones. Furthermore, a company that wanted to erect a digital billboard would have to take down ten times the square footage of traditional billboards elsewhere.

On May 30, 2017 the Planning Committee of the City Council (PLUM) approved instructions to the City Attorney and the Planning Department that would substantially weaken the Planning Commission's recommendations. Digital billboards would be permitted both within sign districts and outside them, on any land-zoned commercial, which would apply to most major streets and intersections. The approval process would be through the conditional use permit procedure, where approval is easier compared to a zone variance. Instead of a 10:1 takedown ratio, PLUM's proposal would institute a sliding scale for 2:1 to a maximum of 8:1, with the differences in the scale based on the payment of a fee by the sign companies into a Billboard Blight Reduction Fund. Rather than to take down billboards, the fund would be used for streetscape improvements, public right-of way improvements, public facilities improvements, transportation safety or other transportation-related improvements. Billboard companies would pay more in order to take down fewer signs. However, the fee would be paid only once and then it will enable the billboards retained to continue generating income over long periods of time. In summary, the PLUM proposal would allow digital billboards just about everywhere in Los Angeles.

In addition, the PLUM proposal would also allow digital on-site signs that identify businesses on a premise. These bright, flashing signs would radically and negatively alter the character of communities. There has never been any discussion about a policy to permit digital on-site identification signs. Rather, the Planning Commission intentionally

separated policy discussions of off-site and on-site signage. PLUM also included a provision to allow digital billboards on City-owned property, which would add to the sign and billboard clutter in Los Angeles. And amnesty would be granted to the 900 plus existing billboards that lack building permits.

These proposals by the PLUM Committee would result in the City going backward with regards to controlling billboard blight. Permanent exceptions would be added to the ban on new billboards enacted in 2002. Digital billboards would harm community character and introduce light pollution into communities in Los Angeles. These impacts will offset any benefits from a reduction in the number of ordinary billboards, which are slowly being reduced anyway by attrition resulting from new construction and building alterations.