

NORTH HOLLYWOOD NORTH EAST NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

LAND USE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2014, 6:30pm to 8:30pm
LOS ANGELES FIRE STATION #89
7063 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Conference Room
North Hollywood, CA 91605**

ATTENDEES:

Board Members:

Florence Dorick
Inez T. Morin
Eric Freedner
Chuck Loring
Sarah Ramsawack

Stakeholders:

Fern Savannah
Teresa Mayer
Lynn Mickelson
Robert Morankich
Richard Valdez
Mike O’Gara, Pres. SVANC
Karo Torossian-CD#2
Ken Craft, CEO, Hope of the Valley

Absent Board Members:

Rubin Borges
Jeffrey Garner

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Sarah Ramsawack, at 6:30pm, with words of Welcome to everyone, and a statement of our committee Mission, and Inspiration.

The Minutes for the last meeting on September 25, 2014, were approved (and will appear on our Website).

Proceeding to the issue for discussion at this meeting the first guest speaker was introduced. Ken Craft, President and CEO of Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission gave us a detailed presentation of the anticipated plans he hopes to create at 11350 Saticoy Street, which is on the SouthEast corner of Saticoy Street at Tujunga Avenue.

Tujunga is the shared boundary between two Neighborhood Councils: North Hollywood North East Neighborhood Council, and Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council, so both Councils have an interest and concern for what happens at this intersection.

Mr. Craft told us briefly about how protections and services are available to that part of the society which is homeless in the San Fernando Valley. Craft organized the non-profit called Hope of the Valley, based on biblical principles, and strives to bring Hope, Hot Meals, Housing, Health Services, and Healing to the thousands of homeless in this valley, regardless of race, religion, or political persuasion.¹

The Union Rescue Alliance, a Christian Non-Profit organization with the San Fernando Valley location for over 40-years, which was on Saticoy Street, West of Coldwater Canyon suffered a total fire loss earlier this year, 2014. Food, showers, and shelter from risks of open exposure and bad weather was provided to thousands of men, women, children, and families, as emergency protection. The Shelter life is one level of serving the homeless. The Crisis Unit is another way to help the homeless and help them move to a productive life of independence.

The central Union Rescue Mission on skid row in Los Angeles has been in downtown Los Angeles since the 1800's, as evidence of the prolonged and difficult problem with how to help the homeless and the efforts to help them to move from poverty to a participating and productive member of society. Activities and government decisions may be currently urging the homeless to leave downtown and move North to the San Fernando Valley. This social problem is being reassessed to be more helpful to restoring people to an integrated, healthy, and independent life style.

In our San Fernando Valley, the largest agency serving the homeless is the Los Angeles Family Housing (located at 7843 Lankershim Boulevard, South of Strathern Street, in North Hollywood). Those who work in the field of helping the homeless, have found that the homeless fit into several distinct categories. That facility deals with the homeless categories of the highest risk due to alcoholism, substance abuse, and mental distresses, including violence.

What Mr. Craft proposes would deal with homeless that have lost jobs, homes, cars, families, or some other immediate crisis which is why he hopes to create a Crisis Center with very special plans. A surprising detail among the homeless is that 60% of them are women who have lost what we call the normally expected protections of home, family, job, or source of income, from whatever variety of reasons, and that these women want to get back on their feet, and be able to return to productive lives. They want to get off the streets and back into the main stream of society.

Craft has secured financial backing that can apply to the possible \$1.6 million purchase price of the subject property, and to make the needed improvements of \$1.5 million to

¹The local address for Hope of the Valley is the Thrift Shop at 8165 San Fernando Road, in Sun Valley, California, in the former location of Roscoe Hardware at the corner of San Fernando and Sunland Boulevard.

offer services and facilities to up to 90-individuals. To serve more than 30 individuals² he has the legal right to proceed without consulting the community. However, Mr. Craft is offering a facility that can offer jobs to the community, and he seeks the approval from the community before making the investment. Both Neighborhood Councils are studying this subject and will be reaching out to the stakeholders to help make a decision.

Presently Craft has created a special housing for the safety of women, and their children from environments of domestic violence.

He is currently working on a facility that is called the Recuperative Care Unit, which will be the first of its kind in the San Fernando Valley, that will be a resource to homeless patients who have had to use hospital emergency facilities, and after surgeries, that still need skilled attention for recovery, can obtain that assistance at the Recuperative Care Unit which is planned for Sepulveda Boulevard, North of San Fernando Mission Road.

The unit on Sepulveda will have a large state of the art commercial kitchen that will provide for meals for several locations, including the unit on the corner of Saticoy Street and Tujunga Avenue. At the corner that we are considering the homeless will receive, a breakfast, lunch, and evening dinner, and all the meals will come from the Sepulveda kitchen.

While LA Family Housing on Lankershim will provide for the categories 3 and 4, the high risk homeless, the Crisis Center will focus on categories 1 and 2, with protection, planning with case workers for job seeking, and skill and behavior classes, with the goal of a stay from 30- to 45 days, into permanent jobs and housing. They will not be loitering in the community. As long as the homeless individual follows their case plan they could actually reside at this location up to six months.

They will have purposeful reasons to obtain a pass to leave the premises and they will have access to the Metro Bus line #169 which has a local stop at this corner, and goes East to Vineland Avenue, and West to Warner Center for job seeking, medical appointments, or family visitations.

Mr. Craft will not allow any visual blight to the property, and the surrounding community area will be monitored to be sure no individual violates the rules of eligibility for the Crisis Unit.

The office of Paul Krekorian, CD#2, City Council Member finds that the facility will have appropriate security, and rules for eligibility to be part of the Crisis Center, and will serve this lowest category of need with the required shelter, of homeless individuals who are actively seeking an opportunity to get ahead to independence. Craft has obtained

² He can By Right provide for 30 individuals, but for a larger facility he needs a Conditional Use Permit from the City Planning Department.

adequate funding, and CD#2 is confident that the safety of the residential community will be protected. Also, it is very important to *learn the many conditions* that will be applied and that must be maintained to avoid prosecution and revocation of the permit.

Those conditions and the conditions that this Neighborhood Council may apply will be part of the agenda for the next Land Use committee meeting on this subject. These conditions are enforceable and any report of violations can lead to having the city prosecutor handle revocation to bring the Crisis Center into compliance.

The meeting was opened to many questions and answers on this subject of the Crisis Center from both board members and attending stakeholders.

The second guest speaker was Mike O’Gara, president of the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council. He spoke with extensive experience of what could happen with a different plan for the homeless. In the former building of the Roscoe Hardware on the corner of San Fernando Road and Vineland Avenue, there had been the experiment with moving BY RIGHT to shelter 30-individuals. These individuals did not have any directional guidance, and only received food, clothing, and nighttime shelter. During the daytime hours these individuals were loitering in the community and sleeping in the Sun Valley Park. Their presence in the Sun Valley Park, was perceived as an unsafe area for mothers to bring their children to play in the Park. Mr. O’Gara noted that tonight, while we were attending this committee meeting that there were some seventy homeless (70) individuals spending the night in the Sun Valley Park. The 30-bed experiment **By Right** was a negative experience.

The Crisis Center for the Homeless is an improved effort to help the homeless, and with the training and guidance that can be obtained by those who qualify, they are planning to succeed on a different level, that can also be measured for successful results.

Due to the lateness of the hour, with some 4-5 minutes remaining, some of the items on the committee agenda had to be tabled or omitted. We needed but did not get to ask the stakeholders for their opinions to the information.

However, based on this second Land Use Committee meeting that focused on this proposed Crisis Center, we did ask the question for a head count of the board members at the meeting. It was stressed that this count is not a decision and that at the next committee meeting we will have another opportunity to learn and formulate a informed decision. With the Final Vote there will be a Recommendation to present to full board for their approval on this matter, to support or not to support the proposed Crisis Center.

Those board members who voiced a yes/support were Florence Dorick and Chuck Loring. Those board members who voiced a no/no support were Inez T. Morin and Eric Freedner. With the tie in the vote, it was up to the chairperson to cast the tie-breaking vote. Sarah Ramsawack voted yes. The head count was 3-yes, 2-no, and 0-abstain.

It was noted that this meeting, October 23, 2014, observes the second anniversary of this Land Use Committee for our North Hollywood North East Neighborhood Council.

Due to Thanksgiving being on the fourth Thursday, there will be no committee meeting in November, and since December is the holiday month, there is no meeting in December, then we anticipate the third meeting of this committee for this important subject to be in January 2015.

Every person was thanked for their participation and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by

SARAH RAMSAWACK
Chair Person of the Land Use Committee
North Hollywood North East Neighborhood Council
#818-765-2202

P.S. I want to sincerely thank every person who reads this record of our Minutes for the Land Use Committee for Oct. 23, 2014.

Thank you for your care and concern for our community, and **I sincerely hope you will plan to attend the next committee meeting.**

We need your questions, and we need your opinions as we work together to serve our community. Your voice is important in helping to make the decisions for the next decade for our community.

Thank you again.

And please go online frequently to the website for our Neighborhood Council.

www.nhnenc.org

SARAH
#818-765-2202