



FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK

A California nonprofit corporation of Sunset Park residents • Box 5823, Santa Monica, California 90409-5823 • (310) 358-7117 • FriendsofSP@yahoo.com

MAY 2012 NEWSLETTER

Layout by Bill Josephs

FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 9, 2012

1:30 to 3:30 PM

Mt. Olive Church, 14th & Ocean Park Blvd.

Speakers

Randy Little — Public Landscape Manager
Beth Rolandson — Senior Transportation Planner
Jason Parry — Santa Monica Planning Commission
David Goddard — Santa Monica Airport Commission
Rob Rader — Santa Monica College Trustee
Artis Williams — Santa Monica Police Department


Refreshments, Music, and Door Prizes


Vote for the 2012–13 Board of Directors



In order to vote, you will need to be an FOSP member by May 30th, ten days before the election. A membership form is on the last page of the newsletter. Current members can renew their memberships at the meeting. If you received this newsletter by mail, the mailing label will have the date when you last paid dues.

Airport Update May 2012

Airport Commission – Airport Visioning

The April 23rd Airport Commission Airport Visioning Workshop included a legal agreement review regarding how various Federal/City agreements impact potential future options for various airport land parcels, an overview of the City's proprietary powers with regards to its jurisdiction over future airport uses, an economic analysis of SMO, a presentation from Cal Poly Pomona's College of Environmental Design regarding ideas for repurposing airport land, and summaries of the results from both the CASMAT and OPA online surveys. The Powerpoints are posted at www.FriendsofSunsetPark.org/Airport/

City Council – Airport Visioning

The May 8th City Council study session included a Powerpoint presentation by consultant Daniel Iacafano regarding the Santa Monica Airport Phase II community discussion groups, posted at: <http://www01.smgov.net/cityclerk/council/agendas/2012/20120508/s2012050804-A-3.pdf>

Community Preferences for the Future

- Residents repeatedly urged that the City's Airport must be operated in a manner consistent with the City's core values of environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- A large number of participants protested that the current operation of the Airport is unfair because it benefits a few to the detriment of many.

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Airport Update, continued from page 1

- Residents demanded that the City government must “stand with the residents” and fight, if necessary, to protect their interests and quality of life.

The main preferences were that 1) the Airport must be aligned with the City’s core environmental values, 2) the Airport must be transformed into a better neighbor by reducing noise and enhancing safety, 3) airport infrastructure and design should be improved to protect safety and enhance neighbors’ quality of life and afford greater amenities to surrounding communities, and 4) community trust must be restored through increased transparency, better communications, more sharing of information, and unbiased analysis.

Staff’s Responses to Community Preferences

Although the City owns and operates the Airport, its operations are governed by federal law, and the City has various contractual obligations to the federal government, including the 1984 Agreement, grant agreements, and the post-World War II transfers of Airport land from the federal government to the City.

The 1984 Agreement expires in 2015, and the City claims that the last of the grant agreements expires in 2014, but the FAA contends that the last grant agreement does not expire until 2023. And, the FAA claims that the City is obligated by the post-War transfers to operate the Airport “in perpetuity.”

The City Council resolved in 1981 to close the Airport when possible, but the City then negotiated the 1984 Settlement Agreement with the FAA, obligating the City to operate the Airport until 2015. The federal government and the aviation industry would oppose any attempt to close the airport.

The City adopted a number of ordinances in the late 1970’s to restrict operations. Five of the ordinances were challenged in federal court, and four were upheld. A fifth ordinance, banning jets in order to reduce noise, was invalidated because some jets are quieter than some piston aircraft. Recently, the City attempted to ban Class C & D jet aircraft in order to reduce the likelihood of runway overruns, since the SMO runway is shorter than current design standards requirements for C & D aircraft. The FAA challenged the ban, and its challenge was upheld by both the Ninth and the D.C. Circuit Courts of Appeal. So, apparently neither the FAA nor the courts will allow the City to ban jets based on noise or runway safety. And, these cases demonstrate the FAA’s tenacity in opposing access restrictions, as well as the federal courts’ deference to the FAA.

According to staff, a closure fight would consume significant time and resources for the City, while the federal government and the aviation industry have far greater resources than the City. In addition, the results of litigation are never certain. City staff believes that it may be possible to reach a compromise in order to obtain a mutually acceptable (if less than perfect) resolution.

Staff Recommendations for Phase III

- Address concerns about transparency, communications and trust.
- Prepare more detailed assessments of the possibilities for transforming SMO into a model, “Green” Airport.
- Evaluate the potential for making the Airport a better neighbor and contributing a greater community benefit.
- Evaluate possible design improvements for non-aviation land.
- Continue on-going dialogue with the FAA to assess possibilities for reducing adverse impacts of Airport operations sufficiently to make voluntary resolutions a viable alternative to a legal battle over airport closure.

Public Comment

46 people signed up to speak during Public Comment.

The FOSP Board comment indicated that although the consultant’s summary didn’t cite exact percentages, 81% of the participants’ comment cards indicated that they wanted a “change” in the airport status. These numbers line up with the two community surveys that were conducted by CASMAT and OPA, which showed, respectively, that 82% and 84% of participants wanted either elimination or reduction in airport operations.

Even with this data, the Staff report failed to support recommendations that would really make significant improvements in the negative impacts of SMO. Noticeably absent in their report was the option of shortening the runway by eliminating the use of the western parcel of land, not covered by the 1948 Instrument of Transfer and, therefore, is not covered by the “perpetuity” clause. Also not included was the City’s ability to change the character of the businesses at the airport, as all current leases expire in 2015.

The FOSP Board urged the City Council to direct staff to explore measures that would truly mitigate the negative impact of SMO, including investigation of 1) best practices at other airports, 2) the City’s authority as land owner and proprietor to control airport property leases and to change the use of the western portion of the runway, 3) possible expansion of green space, including parkland and playing fields, and 4) adopting a “no net new trips” policy for all future airport options. FOSP Airport Committee Chair Cathy Larson wrote, “As 2015 approaches, we want our City to stand with the residents. The opportunity arises and the airport is ripe for a change.”

Council Action

Council member McKeown proposed a 6th recommendation – that the staff define the city’s legal authority to close the airport if negotiations with the FAA fail to reduce the impacts of airport operations on residents.

Council member Davis proposed a 7th recommendation – that the City work with other governmental agencies to examine the potential health impacts of airport operations at SMO.

The Council adopted the seven recommendations and directed staff to proceed with Phase III of the Airport Visioning process.

Local School Update

Grant Elementary – The annual Science Expo is scheduled for May 23rd. Principal Alan Friedenbergl plans to retire in June after 39 years as a teacher and principal, including 17 years at Grant. A celebration is planned for June 10th. The May 26th Santa Monica Symphony concert is being dedicated to Mr. Friedenbergl, who will lead the orchestra in “The Star-Spangled Banner” at the beginning of the concert, in the Civic Auditorium. (The symphony rehearses at Grant.)

Will Rogers Elementary – The Rogers STEM Expo (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) was held on April 25th. It included student and class project displays and multimedia presentations, as well as interactive science, engineering, and math exploration and investigations. Workers recently installed on the school roof 490 solar panels, which will produce about 200,000 kilowatt hours per year.

John Adams Middle School (JAMS) – During the modernization project currently underway, the construction will feature solar chimneys, improved day lighting, air quality and natural ventilation, maximized energy efficiency, storm water treatment, and reduced water use. The fire alarm system will also be upgraded to a fully automatic system

Angela Woo, the Director of Instrumental Music at JAMS, was acknowledged at the 2012 California All-State Music Education Conference for her recent induction into the John Philip Sousa Foundation “Legion of Honor.” The award recognizes outstanding band directors from the United States and Canada who have maintained school concert band programs of excellent musical quality for at least twenty years. In addition, Ms. Woo was also elected to be the Conductor of the 2014 CBDA California All-State Junior High Honor Band.

Santa Monica High School – Santa Monica High School’s “Car Team” students of Team Marine won 1st Place out of thirty-five high schools in the 2011–12 QuikScience Challenge, a regional environmental science ocean stewardship

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Common Ground Update

The Common Ground HIV organization is currently refurbishing its new facility at 2401 Lincoln Blvd. (Lincoln and Cedar). Common Ground (CG) was previously located for about ten years at 2012 Lincoln Blvd. (Lincoln & Bay).

During those ten years, four community meetings were held by the SMPD Neighborhood Resource Officer at the request of residents; the city’s Human Service Division sent a letter to the City Council in 2005 that described ongoing problems between Common Ground clients and nearby residents; and Police and Fire Department logs show 38 “calls for service” at 2012 Lincoln for the past three years. Most of the problems seemed to be caused by the free needle exchange program and the homeless youth program that served youth up to age 25.

At an April 25th community meeting to review a new Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA) for CG’s new location, a Bay Street resident described ten years of being subjected to sexual harassment by CG clients; of trying to keep her dog from eating human excrement that CG clients left in her neighborhood; of being afraid to let her children play in the front yard or walk to school; of finding used needles in the street, in the gutter, and in her front yard; and of Common Ground staff’s inability to control the behavior of their clients.

However, the head of the city’s Human Services Division announced at the April 25th meeting that she would accept CG’s version of the agreement with some stipulations, even though dozens of residents living closest to CG’s new location at 2401 Lincoln stated publicly at the meeting that it’s far from adequate and that they would not sign. They had asked for commitments that the free needle exchange and homeless youth programs would not be located at 2401 Lincoln, that operations would be limited to regular business hours, and that a security guard be hired. None of those were included in CG’s version of the agreement. The only two residents who were willing to sign the GNA that night said that they lived on Beverly, some distance west of Lincoln Blvd.

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Senior Exemption – Measure R

On February 5, 2008, the voters of Santa Monica and Malibu approved by 73% the Measure R parcel tax, which combines and replaces the previous Measures Y and S parcel taxes, contains a CPI-U adjustment, and allows those senior citizens who qualify to be exempted from the tax if they:

- Are 65 years old by June 30, 2012
- Own and occupy their property as their primary residence
- Annually apply for exemption

Seniors who applied for and received the exemption will be sent a 2012–13 Renewal Form in April, which needs to be completed, signed & returned by June 30, 2012.

First-time applicants may:

- Call (310) 450-8338, ext. 70263 to request an application or
- Print the application from the school district website: <http://www.smmusd.org/fiscal/pdf/1213ApplicMeasR.pdf>

Completed and signed applications must be returned, along with required proofs of age and property ownership, to:

Santa Monica-Malibu
Unified School District
1651 16th Street

Santa Monica, CA 90404-3891

ATTN: Measure R Senior Exemption

Applications must be received and/or postmarked by June 30, 2012.

Library Branches Expand Hours

Santa Monica Public Library Branches expanded their public hours on April 13th. The three neighborhood branches – Fairview, Montana, and Ocean Park Branch Libraries – are now open on Fridays from 12 NOON to 5:30 PM.

Branch Library Hours: 12 NOON–9 PM. Monday through Thursday; 12 NOON to 5:30 PM on Friday; 10 AM to 5:30 PM on Saturday; closed on Sunday.

Main Library Hours (remain the same): 10 AM–9 PM Monday through Thursday; 10 AM to 5:30 PM on Friday and Saturday; 1–5 PM on Sunday.

All Santa Monica Public Library facilities are wheelchair accessible, served by the Big Blue Bus, and offer bicycle parking racks.

For more information, contact the Santa Monica Public Library at (310) 458-8600, or visit the Library’s website at smpl.org.

School Update, continued from page 3

competition sponsored by USC and Quiksilver Inc. Since the beginning of the school year, “Car Team” students have worked to convert a donated 1971 red convertible VW Super Beetle into a 100% electric vehicle. With their zero emission car awaiting its final step (installation of the battery pack), the students’ “lesson plan on wheels” will soon be showcased across LA County to promote cleaner alternative transportation. Team Marine is poised to be among the first teen groups in the USA to complete a lithium ion battery pack electric vehicle that will run over 100 miles on a single charge. Team Marine has also competed successfully in the Edison Challenge, Solar Cup, and the LA County Science Fair.

Current Election Information

League of Women Voters of Santa Monica

<http://www.lwvsantamonica.org/elections.html>

May 21st was the last day to register to vote in the upcoming primary election. May 29th is the last day to apply for an Absentee Ballot. June 5th is Election Day.

For information and questions about voting or voter registration, visit the Registrar Recorder County Clerk’s website at www.LAVote.net or phone 1-800-815-2666.

For answers to frequently asked questions, go to the League’s FAQ’s page at <http://lwvsantamonica.org/FAQs.html> or phone 310-692-1494.

Common Ground, continued from page 3

The CG Executive Director had told the FOSP President on April 18th that he had twenty residents lined up to sign the Good Neighborhood Agreement. When asked how many of them live within one block of 2401 Lincoln, the answer was “one.”

A GNA is required for social service agencies in Santa Monica that receive city grants for providing homeless services. As of May 4th, CG had not yet provided a signed copy of the Good Neighbor Agreement to the Human Services Division. While Human Services has not set a specific deadline, CG is not expected to open until sometime in June, and the Human Services Manager expects to have a submitted copy of the GNA prior to their opening.

2012 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Today’s date _____

I will help with:

- Airport Committee
- Annual Meeting
- Crime/Safety/Graffiti
- Emergency Preparedness
- Membership Committee
- Neighborhood Mailings
- Planning and Development
- Santa Monica College
- Traffic, Parking, Pedestrian Safety
- Website/Internet

Membership Dues:

- \$30 Regular Household Dues
- \$50 or \$100 for Sponsor
- \$10 Minimum Household Dues
- Additional Donation

(Please check):

- New Renewal

*Please make check payable to
“Friends of Sunset Park,”
and mail to:*

FOSP, P.O. Box 5823, Santa Monica, CA 90409

What I like best about living in Sunset Park: _____

My greatest concerns are: _____