

NIVA MEETING RECORD

Dec. 9, 2009

ANNOUNCEMENTS NIVA received a public notice from IUSD notifying that modernization program is to commence at Sierra Vista Middle School late this month and is expected to be completed by Sept. 2010. A meeting was held Dec 8th at the school to provide details and entertain comments and concerns of neighbors. Details of the program were not provided in the public notice.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. PA-10 JAMBOREE MEDICAL/SCIENCE CENTER COMMITTEE [LaPorte] - Nothing to report. **LaPorte will check with Steve Weis of the City regarding his findings on KIA's recent activities which appear to violate their agreement to refrain from any commercial activities at the headquarters.**

OLD BUSINESS

1. **EL TORO MCAS REUSE** - Forest Lawn sued the Great Park Corp. seeking a court injunction barring any construction at the Great Park until further environmental review is carried out. Forest Lawn was originally being considered for development of a 73-acre memorial park within the closed El Toro MCAS site but negotiations broke down between Forest Lawn and Lennar. If no memorial park is included and the land is to be used for further residential/commercial development, Forest Lawn contends this is outside the original EIR and that further environmental review is consequently required. Though NIVA has not considered or taken any position on a memorial park and its obvious benefits, there is basis for concern about further development in lieu of a memorial park. Further development would translate into greater traffic generation and congestion on local streets. To this extent, NIVA should monitor the situation carefully.

It should also be noted, that Melvold was contacted last Sept. 22nd by Susan Whittake, Sr. Associate with the Sapetto Group, Inc.. Forest Lawn in its lawsuit inquired as to whether NIVA wanted to be listed as an "honorary member" (a sort of amicus curiae or friend of the court) party to the lawsuit because of the concern about further traffic generation. However, after a review of the Court Petition and with due regards to potential liability for damages to the defendants as a result of the suit, the offer to NIVA was declined regardless of the mutual sympathy for the concerns elaborated in the Forest Lawn suit.

Per Great Park CEO Mike Elzey, construction of the first phase was expected as recently as last Sept. to get underway this year but has yet to start. Last Nov. 12, the City Council approved a construction plan with a completion of about 225 acres of the Western Sector in 2011/12. The plan included the beginning of the sports park, a palm court exhibition area, an agricultural pavilion and a farm consisting of an orange grove, and of course the infrastructure improvements and runway demolition. Even though the plan is smaller and with fewer amenities than detailed earlier this year, the area involved in the initial phase of construction is that of the Western Sector, i.e., the area closest to our North Irvine community. NIVA needs to cognizant of the potential traffic impact on North Irvine especially if the planned Trabuco/SR-133 Tollway interchange is not developed in parallel. Many of these park features are intended to be used by residents from the whole County and not just Irvine. Therefore, traffic will be spawned from throughout the County to this site. **It was agreed at the meeting that NIVA should send a letter reminding the Council of the need (per the Traffic Impact Mitigation Measures of the approved Environmental Impact Report for the Project) to install the Trabuco/SR-133 Tollway Interchange in conjunction with development of the Great Park. Melvold agreed to prepare and send the letter.**

2. **MUSICK JAIL EXPANSION** - Gov. Schwarzenegger submitted a plan to the federal judges overseeing Calif. prison system improvements on Nov. 12 suggesting the judges approve suspending some of the requirements for expansion of the system so as to accommodate 5,000 new high-security beds which include waiving

codes and environmental regulations. If approved, it might make it easier for the State (and indirectly Orange County) to commence on expansion of the Musick Jail. Monitoring of the situation by NIVA must continue.

[On Dec 11, O.C. Sheriff officials announced that due to cuts in the department's budget funding, part of Musick Jail will be closed at least temporarily to save \$1 Million annually. The closed section normally housed 256 inmates of the total 1,250 beds at Musick. Due to the decrease in inmate population being experienced, only about 40 inmates will have to be transferred to another jail to accomplish the closing. This reduction along with that implemented last February with the removal of a tent facility at the Jail brings the total reduction to 616 beds. This is an encouraging trend. Hopefully these decreases reduce pressure to expand the facility at least for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, NIVA and the North Irvine community must remain vigilant.]

3. **NORTH IRVINE LIBRARY** - On Nov. 14, the new Tustin Library was dedicated. Tustin belongs to the Orange County Public Library System [OCPLS] the same as the City of Irvine. The new 32,000 sf library is not a regional library as in the case of the Heritage Library in Irvine which is only 21,900 sf in size. Besides the normal library functions, a regional library also serve as a depository for County records and, therefore, its total size is misleading in comparing libraries. This new library will serve Tustin along with the Wheeler Library on Irvine Blvd. near Jamboree.

Though Irvine population has increased 2-fold since 1980's, only the 10,000 sf Wheeler Library has been constructed in the same time frame. However, because of its location on the border between Irvine and Tustin, it serves Tustin along with Irvine as mentioned above. By today's standard, the City is deficient by 98,000 sf of library space! At build out, the City will be deficient 129,000 sf. This deficiency continues to be neglected by the City of Irvine primarily due to the lack of concern on the part of the majority of the City Council. Even though the current economic environment obviously hinders any immediate action, no long-term planning to address the deficiency has or is taking place. Instead, the city leaders are simply ignoring the situation leaving it to future elected officials to address.

Inquiring of the City as to any progress with the County in discussions on capital funding of new facilities, City Assistant City Mgr. Wally Kreutzen reported (Dec 4 e-mail) that there is nothing new to report. The City still has not received the final consultant study report from the County. The week before, the City again requested a status report from the OCPLS Library Advisory Board Subcommittee and was told that they are still awaiting a final product from the consultant. Though probably not intended as a stall, the consultant study report is delaying any progress on this effort with the end result being no progress on arriving at a fair and equitable solution to Irvine being under-served by the OCPLS.

Melvold met with Kreutzen on Dec 8 to discuss the matter further at which time Kreutzen disclosed that he is in discussions "behind the scene" with Supervisor Bill Campbell to move the matter along. He stated that Campbell is receptive to a change in the financial arrangement more favorable to Irvine since he recognizes the serious consequence that would befall the OCPLS, and specifically to the "receiver" cities, should Irvine opt out of the OCPLS. (Campbell resides in Villa Park which happens to be a receiver city.) Some sort of change is envisioned in which a fund is established for Irvine which would be used for capital improvements in library facilities in Irvine.

Melvold met with Supv. Campbell on Dec 19 at which time Campbell mentioned that he accompanied Irvine Councilmember Choi to Sacramento to discuss with State officials the possibilities of funding sources for a metro library at the Great Park. Campbell also indicated an understanding, even if not commitment to resolve, the existing and ever-growing neighborhood library deficiencies in Irvine. Melvold hopes to have further discussions with Campbell on this issue over the next several months.

4. **NEED FOR REVISION OF CITY'S MASTER STREETSCAPE PLAN** - NIVA was informed that the effort was reassigned to David Law in 9/09 and that it has been put on hold until at least summer 2010.

5. **MASTER COMMUNITY PARK PLAN REVISION** - The City held a community meeting in the evening of Oct. 19 to discuss the proposed expansion and modernization of the community center at Northwood Community Park. Community input was sought regarding the design, size, availability, parking standards, construction pro-

cess and the needs of the community. Preliminary plans were shared. The details of the City presentation and noted public comments were to be discussed at the meeting. Unfortunately, no one present at the NIVA meeting was present at the recent community meeting, so no details could be provided.

In an Oct. 24th article in the O.C. Register entitled "Irvine to spruce up community parks", the plans and construction schedules of improvements to community centers in existing community parks and the creation of altogether new community centers in new community parks was disclosed. NIVA had been aware of the absence of any plans for construction of the long overdue Hicks Canyon Community Park community center in the 5-year horizon of the City's recently approved Capital Improvements Projects [CIP]. Recall, the normal funding of the Hicks Canyon center was "borrowed", so to speak, to facilitate the preservation of what is now the Irvine Ranch Agricultural Park at Irvine Blvd. And Jamboree. It was realized, therefore, that funding for the community park center will have to come from some other source sometime in the future. It has now been over 10 years since that "loan" was made and as of now, nothing has been done to "pay back this loan" so that that particular area of the City would not have to continue to be deprived of a neighborhood center. City staff had, prior to the most recent CIP approval, indicated that funding would be forthcoming to expect start of design in 2013-14. Obviously, that "commitment" has been rescinded or at least delayed. Now North Irvine is looking at some time beyond 2014 for even start of design. North Irvine, in comparison to the rest of the City, is deficient in terms of community centers. It is an older community with a large portion of the residences being more than 30 years old. West of Jeffrey and north of the I-5, even though there are 3 community parks, there is but one community center. Disappointing and disturbing is the fact that at the same time the City has approved in the CIP the construction of centers (to be completed in 2013 or 2014) at the new Oak Creek and Quail Hill Community Parks -- far newer parks serving relatively new communities. NIVA must continue to object to this long-term neglect or it will continue to experience delays in the construction of the overdue center.

6. **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** - The Calif. Supreme Court turned down the City's appeal of SCAG's mandate that Irvine build more than 21,000 new affordable housing units by 2014 -- roughly 40% of the allocation to all of Orange County even though Irvine has but 6% of the County's population and 8% of the land. This is important to residents of North Irvine since the majority of the remaining open land for housing lies in North Irvine. This number of housing units far exceeds that currently envisioned for Irvine and would therefore result in major intensification of housing. The latter translates directly into greater congestion, traffic, and impacts on local government provided services. In recent time, to gain cooperation of the Irvine Company to build a percentage of affordable housing units in their developments, the City has exempted the affordable housing units from the normal obligation of providing funds towards parks and at the same time reducing parking requirements and roadway improvements. The end result will be a high expectation of significantly level of negative impacts on existing and new city facilities. North Irvine has already been identified to be deficient in parkland & park facilities, library and senior center facilities without any additional residential intensification. It will be of serious interest to see what steps or actions the City now proceeds in response to the Court decision. NIVA membership is cautioned to stay vigilant.

7. **NORTHWOOD MILITARY MEMORIAL MONUMENT [Zelinko]** - Public hearings were held on the proposed memorial by the Irvine Community Services Commission [CSC] and City Council on Dec 3 and 8, respectively. The proposed memorial would replace the existing park sign in the Northwood Community Park at the corner of Bryan Avenue and Yale Avenue. Key features of the proposed memorial are: (1) A new monument sign with memorial plaque honoring military branches; (2) A lighted flag pole; (3) A paved walkway; (4) 3 seat walls; and (5) five 3'x3' pedestals inscribed with names of fallen military personnel from the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. The design has changed from that previously proposed by the supporting group. (NIVA is not a proponent of this project.) The original monument occupied 7,500 sq ft area and had a curvilinear wall 74' long by 8' tall. The new design will occupy 2,300 sq ft and have a wall that is only 38' long and 4.5' high. The City had previously allocated \$150,000 in 2007 towards this project. The current total cost is estimated to be \$210,000. Additional funding is expected to come from private donations with some donations in kind such as labor and/or materials. \$17,000 has been received in private donations so far. It is not expected that additional funds will be needed to complete the project. The memorial could hold the names of upwards of 10,000 fallen (7,500 on the pedestals plus balance on 2 panels of the wall) while the current number stands around 5,300. Annual costs, estimated roughly at \$5,000 to add additional names, is expected to be covered by private funds. The supportive community group worked for several months with Mayor Kang and City staff members Stacy Lauenders, Debra Mears,

and Steve Haubert to come up with the revised design. Staff and the CSC recommended approval of the project as now proposed. At the Dec. 8 hearing, the Council unanimously approved the project. The project schedule as follows: Drawings and plans prep now underway with finalizing of plan check by early January; permits issued by end of March; 4 months of construction; opening and ribbon-cutting in early September. **It was agreed to leave this item on the agenda until completion of construction and opening of the memorial.**

8. **NORTH IRVINE SENIOR CENTER** - At the Nov. 19th meeting, the Senior Citizens Council [SCC] considered and approved the staff's recommendation of the schedule of monthly meetings (dates and locations) for 2010. Even though NIVA had sought and received token acceptance of scheduling an occasional meeting in North Irvine (the April 16, 2009 meeting was held at Northwood Community Park), the schedule returns to all meetings to be held at the Lakeview Senior Center in Woodbridge. Obviously, the value of holding meetings throughout the City in consideration of affording relatively equal accessibility to the overall City is not appreciated by either staff or the members of the SCC.

The SCC also approved a recommended resolution to go to the City Council suggesting a revision to the SCC bylaws. Basically, the change would be the elimination of a Sept. 2007 change which had a provision for 2 of its members to be appointed at-large through a recruitment process selected by the collaboration effort of 4 specific organizations serving the senior community. These were the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Chapter 1480, Friends of Outreach, NEDA Persian Group, and Irvine Chinese Evergreen Senior Association. The 2 at-large members selection will revert to the original method of a recruitment process headed up by City staff. As to a reason for the change back is not known but be mindful that elections occur only at the 2 existing senior centers and placing a "hardship" on north Irvine residents desiring to vote.

Melvold has inquired of Debra Mears of the City's Community Services Dept. by e-mail as to the outcome of the meeting mentioned in discussion last July to be pending with The Irvine Company regarding the approaching trigger point for funding and start of design of the North Irvine Senior Center. No response had been received prior to the meeting so details were not available to be provided. *[As no response received by Dec. 18, a second email was sent to Mears at the city.]*

9. **HARVARD RAILCROSSING QUIET ZONE** - Melvold inquired of the City as to the status on the project which was previously expected to get underway at Harvard by mid-2010. NIVA received a response from Shohreh Dupuis, Transit and Transportation Manager for the City, that the construction at Harvard is expected to start in early 2011. **That is a delay of at least 6 months** since last reported by the City to NIVA. Obviously any delay is not good for those who try to sleep near the Harvard Ave. railroad crossing.

An Oct. 31st article in the O.C. Register reported on the efforts of the City of Tustin in working with the OCTA to implement a similar quiet zone in Tustin in conjunction with the Red Hill railroad crossing. In this case construction is scheduled to start in April or May 2010 -- more than 7 months earlier than that at Harvard. Since the City of Irvine initiated its effort at the same time or earlier than Tustin in working with the OCTA, it is disappointing to see Harvard scheduled later than Red Hill. Whether this is due to delays contributed in part by Irvine City staff or simply OCTA's prioritizing, is not know for certain. **A contact will be made by Melvold to Darrell Johnson, Programs Executive Director of the OCTA.**

[Subsequent to the NIVA meeting, OCTA announced that the planned Metrolink service increase by 32 more weekday trains beginning next summer has been scaled back to only 12 more trains due to shortfall in revenues.]

10. **CULVER DRIVE/WALNUT AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT** - NIVA was informed by the City, the property management company Regency and supposedly the owner of the Heritage Center is Magen Simpana.

11. **WIDENING OF JAMBOREE UNDERPASS OF I-5 FREEWAY** - Melvold had a discussion with Asst. City Mgr. Kreutzen on Dec 8 regarding this project. A 16-month delay was indicated last June in the expected construction for this project. The cause as disclosed is associated with a delay in a parallel project. It seems that the City of Tustin has postponed the scheduled construction of the Von Karman over-crossing of the I-5 Freeway due to the economic downturn. Funding of the Von Karman project was to come from the residential development on

the closed Tustin MCAS. The Von Karman bridge was supposed to be in-service prior to start of construction of the Jamboree project so that north-south traffic would have an alternative route. No official indication has come from the OCTA as yet on any delay of the Jamboree schedule. Kreutzen was reminded that NIVA is concerned about the possibility of construction work occurring simultaneously on several of the north-south arterials and the consequence to traffic congestion and transfers to the remaining north-south arterials, specifically Yale Avenue in Irvine. The construction projects include:

- (1) The extended construction for the Jeffrey railroad under-crossing;
- (2) The two Culver widening projects between Walnut and the I-5 Freeway;
- (3) The Jamboree I-5 under-crossing widening project; and
- (4) Even the Sand Canyon railroad under-crossing project.

Melvold will inquiry of the OCTA regarding the possible delay of Von Karman and its potential consequence on the Jamboree project.

12. **CULVER DRIVE (SCOTTSDALE TO I-5 SB OFFRAMP) PROJECT** - At its Dec 8 meeting, the City Council approved under Consent Calendar the required project report which is to be sent to the Caltrans. City Council approval of the report was needed in order proceed with the final design phase of the project. No prior notification or courtesy copy of the report provided to NIVA in advance of this action. A copy has been subsequently requested of City staff. As the report refers to the traffic study but does not provide the study itself, it might be worthwhile to review the actual analysis itself especially pertaining to the modeling of (a) the effect of the bus stopping in the NB traffic lane and (b) the adequacy of the Culver SB left-turn into the Heritage Plaza regarding estimated flow magnitude per lane and pocket length.

As summarized, the project will consist primarily of the following:

- (1) Widen Culver by adding 1 NB lane between Scottsdale and I-5;
- (2) Reconstruct the I-5 SB on-ramp;
- (3) Construct drainage improvements at the Scottsdale/Culver intersection;
- (4) Pavement construction on east leg of Scottsdale into Heritage Plaza; and
- (5) Modify existing traffic signal at Scottsdale/Culver intersection.

Funding for final design was approved in the Fiscal Year 2009-10 Annual City Budget. Final design is scheduled for completion by Dec., 2010. Cost of the project is estimated to be \$1.8 Million and has previously been approved in the City's Strategic Business Plan in Fiscal Year 2011-12. ROW acquisition and construction are anticipated to begin in 2011. Construction is expected to take about 4 months and not require closing of the Culver NB lanes. However, there will be required closures of the I-5 SB on-ramp and the Scottsdale entrance to Heritage Plaza during construction. As a result of the Culver widening, setbacks on the east side in Heritage Plaza will be affected. The setbacks at Denny's and Sumo Restaurant will be reduced from 51 to 40 feet and 63 to 60 feet, respectively.

The remaining outstanding issues as previously expressed by NIVA include (1) the reconstruction of the west side drainage and improvement of the Scottsdale entrance to the Colony, (2) the need for a bus turn-out on the NB Culver at Scottsdale to take the bus out of the traffic lane when stopped, and (3) continued concern about the adequacy of the Culver SB left-turn pocket at Scottsdale. It was agreed that efforts should be continued with the City staff during design stage to work on these issues. However, discussion followed on the necessity of active participation on the part of the Boardmembers of The Colony HOA in discussions with the City staff and in communications with The Colony residents since The Colony area is the most impacted and has the most to lose and/or gain from various modifications. Without The Colony's recognized significant presence, chances of successful changes would be slim at best. **McFadden agreed to participate and to seek more active participation of The Colony's Boardmembers and residents.**

13. **ORANGE GROVE PRESERVE** - The orange grove, which existed at the SE corner of Jeffrey and the I-5 but is now pretty much lost due to neglect and lack of water, was envisioned to eventually be an orange grove preserve. It was to be within the Jeffrey Spine so to speak though technically not Spine land. Questions arise as to the City's current plans for this developing eyesore, whether the City has any plans, or whether the City has ceased planning for this site. In contrast, the City of Tustin has spent a considerable sum developing a preserve in the new Citrus Ranch Park located at Jamboree and Portola Pkwy. for the last lemon grove in Tustin to recognize the agricultural history and to assure the future of the preserve. Irvine is currently developing plans for an

orange grove in the Great Park. Does this mean that the site on Jeffrey has been abandoned and left to be an eyesore within our community? Considerable money and effort has and will be expended to develop the entire Jeffrey Spine. It would not be acceptable to have this blighted section in the middle of the Spine. **It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the City inquiring about the disposition of the previously envisioned orange grove and the lack of landscaping currently at this location especially in light of the extensive landscaping performed on the I-5 by the Caltrans.**

14. **NIVA'S FUTURE** - A discussion on the need and viability of NIVA in the future. McFadden gave a financial report. The Nov. 24 balance in NIVA's account is \$2,288.46. He reported on the payments received from the association membership. Of the 20 invoices sent out payment, 15 associations paid. Of those in arrears or having not paid to date for 2009, Northwood Horizon has informed NIVA of their dropping membership. Racquet Club has not responded to any of numerous mailings and phone calls. Both were therefore officially dropped and mailings curtailed per decision at the Sept. 2009 meeting. Northwood 2 and Windwood have yet to respond. **It was agreed that any further attempts to collect dues in arrears (i.e., dues for Year 2009) from these 2 associations would await the outcome of next month's meeting.**

NEXT MEETING - The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 13, 2010. It will be held at the Colony Clubhouse. Included on the agenda will be the annual report, election of officers, and discussion and possible decision on the future course of action to be taken by NIVA.