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Dear NIVA Members and Friends:

As stated in my meeting notice letter last month, there will be no further NIVA General Membership Meeting as NIVA has elected to disband. Last month's meeting was the final General Membership. Enclosed or attached is the Meeting Record for that meeting held on March 10, 2010 -- closing a long chapter (29 years) in North Irvine community activism. I hope in reviewing the history of NIVA, you conclude that NIVA's existence was worthwhile though its effectiveness waned towards the end in parallel with the diminishing participation of its membership. As to be expected, since NIVA's strength and influence was in its collective response, successful results were becoming harder to attain and fewer in number. This was especially true if attention and concern was needed from our elected city officials.

Here are a few examples of the status and future expectation on some of the remaining issues especially without NIVA in the picture:

1. Trabuco/SR-133 Interchange: This interchange was promised and included in the roadway improvements so as to curtail county-wide Great Park users from having to use local Irvine roadways and impacting the Santa Ana Freeway off and on-ramps at Sand Canyon and Jeffrey. However, City staff has now modified the original intent and is now taking the position that initiation of implementation should be determined by the normal traffic study thresholds used with City development projects -- a far later, if not ever expected to be technically reached, benchmark. NIVA's efforts will of course stop and as a result the most likely outcome will be a very delayed implementation -- if not deletion altogether -- of the interchange.
2. Culver /Walnut Intersection Improvement Project: Culver traffic noise abatement residential window replacement. Currently, only those homes which are 2-story backing up to Culver in The Colony will have windows replaced with double-pane if (1) the theoretical model analysis indicated the expected noise levels exceed the critical threshold and (2) they currently now have only single pane. Therefore, those residents who previously replaced windows at their own expense due to the increasing Culver traffic noise or have actual rather than theoretical excessive noise on second floor, or who have excessive noise on first floor are simply out of luck. It is my understanding that they have not been nor will they be contacted by the City. NIVA had objected to this limited discussion and disclosure and was supporting at least a meeting with all homeowners in The Colony backing up to Culver along with need for a performance of a study utilizing field measurements in more than the limited locations used in the current study. NIVA's efforts will now of course stop on this effort.
3. Culver widening Scottsdale to I-5 Project: Construction should be done in conjunction with #2 above but current City plan is to do one after the other thus extending the total period of time needed for the construction and consequently a longer impact to the community around this area and to those motorists using Culver Drive. Again, NIVA's efforts will stop on this matter also.
4. North Irvine Senior Center: NIVA fought for many years and eventually got the City to at least concede the need (though a North Irvine Senior Center had always been in the City's General Plan) and even the site of the Center. However, it is a very poor location for the majority of senior residents in North Irvine. It is not centrally located for the community to be served nor is it easily accessible. Without NIVA's continued pressure, the construction, long overdue, will most likely slip. When NIVA's effort started, I was not a senior. Now a senior, I was hoping to see it in my lifetime but I think that even that may be a little optimistic. Possibly, those of you who have teenage children may have it available in your lifetime

if you are still residing in North Irvine. Once again, 2 of those who represent the majority on the City Council have their neighborhood Senior Center (Rancho) in University Village and, therefore, could care less about another senior center especially one miles from their residences. We all pay the same property tax rate, but we don't all receive the same level of service within the City!

5. Improvement in Library facilities: Irvine is one of the cities of the County Library System receiving the least in services even though Irvine is the absolute highest paying city. In other words, we pay the most in property taxes for libraries per residence but receive the least!!! NIVA has fought this issue for more than 15 years and was at least successful in getting a consultant study performed by the City which verified the suspected deficiencies. However, the majority of the City Council has limited any improvement to simply a small modification to the University Library (a library close to 2 of the "majority" Council members). All further improvements have been put off indefinitely and not simply due to the current economic situation but rather due to a lack of sensitivity or concern. Might there be any connection with the fact that the sites for needed new libraries are not in the vicinity of these 2 Council members? Without NIVA, who will there be to remind the Council of this continuing neglect.

6. Construction of the community center for Hicks Canyon Com. Park: This park was originally planned to have a community center but funds were not available to build it when the park was first built since the funds for the building went to preserving the Irvine Historical Agricultural Park. This was a County decision since at that time the land was unincorporated. NIVA has been working for years to get the center since all of Irvine west of Jeffrey and north of the I-5 has but one community center -- a ratio far below that for the City as a whole. Without NIVA, this center will probably be postponed indefinitely. For some time now, community parks with community centers are built simultaneously with all new residential developments, e.g., Woodbury. However, the Lower Peters Canyon community wait is now going on to 10 years. Such a center would also serve Northwood which now shares its relatively small community center with Lower Peters Canyon, Northwood Point, and temporarily even Orchard Hills).

7. Improvements to community center in Northwood Community Park: Though improvements and expansion of this facility are badly needed, the timing of this renovation is of question. Since the center in #6 above does not exist, any closing -- even on a partial basis -- will result in even less available for all of the residents of the villages of Northwood, Northwood Point, Lower Peters Canyon, and Orchard Hills. Current plans call for many of the programs now being offered at Northwood to be transferred to other community centers and even closing the center down altogether for some period of time. All the while during construction, the parking lot off Bryan will be closed. It would have made more sense and be more considerate to the community to have completed the center in #6 above before starting construction on this renovation. Without an active NIVA, there will be no concerted effort to change this poor strategy.

8 & 9. Harvard Railcrossing Quiet Zone & Widening of Jamobree Underpass of the I-5: Both need the application of the squeaky wheel to keep moss (delays) from growing on these projects. They are urgently needed but NIVA won't be here to do that. Who will?

Oh well, I could go on. But why. As Elmer Fudd use to say at the end of a Looney Tune Cartoon - "That's all folks!"

In closing, I want to thank those member associations who have had active participation over the years I have been president, the actual active representatives, and especially my fellow officers of the current and past years.

Dave Melvold