

## Minutes of our May 14, 2009 General Meeting

The general meeting was held at the 300 Pasadena Bowling facility.

We had about 80 residents attending. The meeting was hosted by the bowling facility; they provided the space for the meeting and provided a delicious buffet plus free bowling. Whole Foods, Blockbusters Video, and Ralph's market donated door prizes.

Our first speaker was City Manager, Michael Beck. He provided a much better understanding of the City's financial problems and the steps that are being taken to deal with these problems. He also said he and his office staff were available to assist our residents if they were they are having a problem with one of the Pasadena City's employees or departments. We have had at least one on resident call Mr. Beck and she was very impressed with the help he provided. His phone number is: 626 744 4222.

The Vice Mayor was not able to attend but his field assistant Rhonda Stone did an admirable job of filling in for our Councilman. We submitted a number of items we wanted the Vice Mayor to address at the meeting. He had Ms. Stone address each issue. The issues and his responses follow:

— Cell phone towers in East Pasadena?

—I assume that this question was prompted by recent Council discussions about sites for wireless equipment (cell towers, antennas, etc.). The outcome of the discussion is that the City Council approved restrictions modeled after San Diego, considered by most to be some of the toughest restrictions within the State. Our discretion is significantly limited by State law but we adopted requirements that push the envelope. For example, there is a 100 foot distance requirement from residential areas. One aspect of the discussion that was misunderstood was the "opportunities map". Many misunderstood and thought that the map pre-approved sites. Never the case. In fact,

Council retained the right to approve or not approve sites.

To my knowledge, there are no pending applications for East Pasadena in the public right-of-way. There is a hearing on June 3rd for a proposed cell tower on private property -- the First Christian Church - on the southwest corner of Altadena Drive and Loma Vista. (Victory Park has a tower where additional antennas were added last June.)

— Has the Councilman heard about businesses moving to or leaving East Pasadena?

—During the recession we have seen some businesses leave (i.e. Baker's Square, Hummer from the Team Chevrolet location, Wickes, and the Hastings Theater). We have also seen some new businesses locate and other expand into East Pasadena: Stonefire Grill (former Baker's Square location), 300 Bowling, California General Bank on Foothill and San Gabriel, Dick's Sporting Goods (formerly Chicks). The city and the owner are still actively looking for a tenant for the former Hastings Theater. A Noise Within - live theater group is still planning to move into the Stuart.)

My sense is that we have weathered the recessionary storm fairly well. This is a result of maintaining a modest and controlled rate of growth in the early part of the decade. We can give create to the East Pasadena Specific Plan. I am proud to say that I have not supported any variances to that plan and the few that have been granted by the Council have been done over my objection.

— What can be done to eliminate the advertising signs that are placed on front sidewalks or parkways of businesses or telephone poles around the area? These signs negatively affect area's environment.

—I hate these signs.

Unfortunately the law requires the City to witness someone place the sign

illegally. This is very unlikely since these tend to get placed in the middle of the night. All we can do is remove the signs.

Graffiti hotline 626-744-7622. Code Compliance 626-744-4633.

Councilman also commented on Pasadena's financial problems:

—My feeling is that current budget situation, though quite challenging, can be resolved through some sacrifice by our work force in the form of pay freezes or lay-offs and some creativity by our staff to reduce costs while maintaining the current high level of service. Assisting us in this challenge is the fact that the City set aside cash in excess of reserves greater than \$10 million over the past few years. This conservative approach in the past will serve us well in the turbulent near future. Longer term, the City's diverse revenue base and conservative financial management will continue to serve us well.

All that being said, I am very concerned about actions at the State level. In the past, Sacramento has taken money from cities to solve their problems. To me, these actions by Sacramento are wrong. Sacramento relieves its mistakes by burdening cities.

Now, the compliment. I'm also confident about Pasadena's near future because of the dedicated and smart staff we have on board. From City Manager Beck to Finance Director Andy Green to many others, we have good people in important positions.

The Next Speaker was Kevin Johnson, Acting Senior Planner

He gave us a general blueprint for the direction we might want to take to deal with the mansionization that has and will take place in Lower Hastings Ranch and answered questions we had and gave us suggestions on what action we must take if we want to explore the possibilities of being designated a landmark district. He and Denver Miller agreed to help us with

the update the LHRA zoning overlay. We have a committee to deal with the zoning overlay and if you want to participate please give me a call at 626 351-9472.

We meeting ended around 9:00 pm and Pasadena 300 provided a wonderful buffet that included prime rib and free bowling until midnight. A great time was had by all that attended.

Jim Brennan, President