



City of Laguna Beach
Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 28, 2011, at 4:00 p.m.
Community Center, Community Room, 380 Third St., Laguna Beach, CA

Staff: Steve May, Director of Public Works/City Engineer

Note: See the attached "Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force Meeting Notes and Action Items" as prepared by William Lawson for detailed notes of the meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:09 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Verna Rollinger, Norm Grossman, Bob Borthwick, William Lawson, Louis Longi, Carl Nelson

Members Absent: Kelly Boyd, Charlie Quilter, Susan Hamil, Eric Jessen, Karl Koski

3. AGENDA REVIEW

No actions on this item.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft minutes for the meeting of 9/14/11 were approved with notes attached thereto by William Lawson, and with changes to the attached notes per Jessen's email of 9/22/11.

5. TASK FORCE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Reports from subcommittees and discussion.

Barbara Metzger will do final assembly of report for presentation to Council on November 15, or possibly December 6.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m. to the regular meeting of Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. at the Community Center, **Laguna Room**, 380 Third Street, Laguna Beach, CA.

Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force

Meeting Notes and Action Items

Meeting Date: September 28, 2011

Meeting Location: Laguna Beach Community Center

Meeting Opened at 4:09 PM

Meeting Adjourned at 5:45 PM

1. The LCFMTF meeting was called to order by Task Force Vice-Chairman Bob Borthwick at 4:09 PM.
2. Roll call was taken and recorded by Bob Borthwick. All Task Force members were present except Eric Jessen, Kelly Boyd, Charlie Quilter, Karl Koski and Susan Hamil. Steve May, Dir. of Public Works/City Engineer, and Public Member Barbara Metzger were also present.
3. The Meeting Agenda was reviewed and approved without changes. The Draft Minutes of the September 14, 2011 regular Task Force meeting were approved with changes per comments e-mailed by Eric Jessen on September 22, 2011, by unanimous consent.
4. Task Force Discussion Items were discussed as follows:
 - a. Infrastructure Sub-Committee Report and Discussion:
 - 1) Discussion of the Infrastructure Sub-Committee's revised Recommendations was initiated by Bob Borthwick, and Steve May distributed copies of the September 23, 2011 version of that document which was in two parts: 1. Recommendations, and 2. Appendix (Discussion and Background).
 - 2) Verna Rollinger said that she felt the Long Term recommendation, Item 1 b), is beyond the scope of the Task Force. Carl Nelson suggested that we still offer the information and let the City Council decide. Norm Grossman said that the original plan for this Long Term recommendation was for the storm conduit to be constructed in Ocean Avenue, not in Broadway.
 - 3) A Task Force member asked why we had not included the K-rail alternative suggested by Dr. Frank Weirich in our recommendations. The consensus was that K-rail could not be mobilized and put in place quick enough to be effective as a defense against downtown businesses being flooded.
 - 4) Carl Nelson suggested that Item 3 a), ("Accept the fact that a 10-year capacity will have to suffice for [the] near future."), be moved to the Preamble of the Recommendations. This appears to have some merit and will be done by Bill Lawson in the next revision.
[Action Item a.]
 - 5) Louis Longi reflected on the reasons the project failed to get approval in 1999. Vern Rollinger said that there was a lot of resistance by downtown businesses, and now that the money is gone the project is also gone, so we should not bring it up again in our recommendations.
 - 6) Norm Grossman offered an alternative wording in reference to Item 1 b), and that being "There is a [long term] solution, but serious funding, economic impact (cost/benefit is not there) and environmental considerations that would have to be overcome."

Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force Meeting Notes and Action Items

- 7) Carl Nelson said (in effect) our Final Report should have a **summation** of what the Task Force has done. If nothing is going to be approved, then nothing can be done and it would remain a 'social' problem [for the City]. The information that the Task Force has assembled should be presented, but doesn't have to be presented as something to be done right away. The details can be worked out later.
- 8) Steve May suggested the Task Force recommend that the City explore options for improving flood control in the downtown area...in the long term. Verna Rollinger asked Steve to write out his opinion and to send it to the Infrastructure Sub-Committee. *[Action Item b.]* Norm Grossman should do the same thing. *[Action Item c.]*
- 9) Norm Grossman said that the Final Report should present the feasible recommendations first, then other long term or less feasible recommendations could be presented in a separate document *[the Appendix?]*. Plans for the next couple of years should be presented first. Carl Nelson suggested that a one page summation be prepared with background information for any Near-Term (or Long-Term) recommendation so that they could be clearly recognized. Norm reiterated that he didn't like the current arrangement of the Infrastructure Sub-Committee's recommendations. Carl indicated that there isn't much in the Sub-Committee's recommendations that is a 'Near-Term' solution to the City's flooding problems.
- 10) Regarding Recommendations for Reaches 4 and 5, it was made clear that everyone in those two reaches would have to have walls and stop gates along Laguna Canyon Road and have them in place prior to the beginning of flooding for that flood protection method to be effective.
- 11) Norm Grossman asked a question about how accurate [FEMA] flood maps are and Carl Nelson and Bill Lawson responded with some discussion of that topic.
- 12) Bill Lawson indicated that he is willing to rearrange the Infrastructure Sub-Committee's write-up and will place the most feasible, Near-Term solutions [recommendations] first. *[Action Item d.]*
- 13) Norm Grossman also said that the Final Report should also specify the existing flow capacity of each of the Laguna Canyon Channel reaches.
- 14) Steve May indicated that flood frequencies (i.e. 2-yr. 10-yr., etc.) are not easy to understand or determine. Any reference to such flood frequencies may require additional explanation.
- 15) Vern Rollinger indicated that all Long-Term items should be studied further and that our recommendations should state that.
- 16) Bob Borthwick recommended that the Infrastructure Sub-Committee combine Reaches 4 and 5 into a single reach (Reach 4) and that subsequent upstream reaches be re-numbered. The Task Force agreed that the change would not affect the other Sub-Committee's write-ups; therefore, Bill Lawson will incorporate this change in the next revision of the Sub-Committee's Recommendations. *[Action Item e.]*
- 17) Barbara Metzger pointed out that there is a City Ordinance against clearing or improving channels in the Park area upstream of El Toro Road and referred the Task Force to the Natural Watercourse Regulations in the Zoning Code.

Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force

Meeting Notes and Action Items

18) Steve May suggested that the words "erosion protection" be used in lieu of "erosion control" in the Task Forces' Recommendations.

19) In a brief discussion of flooding along El Toro Road, Carl Nelson said that the direction of flow was from the creek to the roadway, and not the other way around. Observed debris on fences along ETR shows the depth and direction of flow that occurred in the December 2010 flood. Steve May indicated that he felt that this information had little relevance to the mission of the Task Force.

20) Verna Rollinger said that it is her understanding that Eric Jessen will prepare a report on the presentation made by Kevin Onuma (OC Public Works) at the May 19, 2011 Laguna Beach Business Club Breakfast, and that that report will be included in the Appendix of the Task Force's Final Report. *[Action Item f.]*

b. Public Safety and Awareness Sub-Committee Report and Discussion:

1) Barbara Metzger indicated that the Public Safety and Awareness Sub-Committee's report was covered in the September 14, 2011 Task Force Meeting and that there have been no changes since then.

c. Downtown Specific Issues Sub-Committee Report and Discussion:

1) Norm Grossman said that the Downtown Specific Issues Sub-Committee's report has also not changed since the September 14, 2011 Task Force Meeting.

d. Final Report Preparation Discussion:

1) Norm Grossman indicated that he doesn't think that the "three-sections" approach being proposed for use by the Infrastructure Sub-Committee will work as there is too much overlap between sections. Norm also reiterated that he felt the arrangement of the Task Forces' Final Report should be 1. Executive Summary; 2. Background; and 3. Recommendations.

5. Public comments were as follows:

a. There were no Public Comments made.

6. Items for Future Agendas are as follows:

a. The Agenda for the next Task Force meeting should be similar to that of this meeting, but with emphasis on the preparation of the Final Report.

7. The following Action Items were assigned or continued:

a. Carl Nelson suggested that Item 3 a), ("Accept the fact that a 10-year capacity will have to suffice for [the] near future."), be moved to the Preamble of the Recommendations. This appears to have some merit and will be done by Bill Lawson in the next revision.

b. Steve May suggested the Task Force recommend that the City explore options for improving flood control in the downtown area...in the long term. Verna Rollinger asked Steve to write out his opinion and to send it to the Infrastructure Sub-Committee.

Laguna Canyon Flood Mitigation Task Force Meeting Notes and Action Items

- c. Norm Grossman was also asked to write out his opinions on the Task Force's Recommendations and send them to the Infrastructure Sub-Committee.
- d. Bill Lawson indicated that he will rearrange the Infrastructure Sub-Committee's write-up and will place the most feasible, Near-Term solutions [recommendations] first.
- e. Bob Borthwick recommended that the Infrastructure Sub-Committee combine Reaches 4 and 5 into a single reach (Reach 4) and that subsequent upstream reaches be re-numbered. Bill Lawson will incorporate this change in the next revision of the Sub-Committee's Recommendations.
- f. Eric Jessen shall prepare a report on the presentation made by Kevin Onuma (OC Public Works) at the May 19, 2011 Laguna Beach Business Club Breakfast, and that that report will be included in the Appendix of the Task Force's Final Report.

8. The LCFMTF meeting was adjourned at 5:45 PM, and will reconvene on Wednesday, October 12, 2011, at 4:00 PM.

Meeting Notes and Action Items Recorded By: William E. Lawson, PE, LCFMTF Recording Secretary

From Handwritten Notes Transcribed on: October 5, 2011