



Issam Najm, President; Susan Gorman-Chang, Vice President; Gabriel Khanlian, Secretary; Andrew Krowne, Treasurer; David Balen, Signer; Cheri Derohanian; Jason Hector; Alex Kim; Becky Leveque; Jennifer Milbauer, Asaad Alnajjar

**Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council (PRNC)
Sustainability Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
Porter Ranch Community School
Multi-purpose Room
12450 Mason Avenue
Porter Ranch, CA**

Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Item #1 --Meeting called to order by Co-Chair Susan Gorman-Chang at 7:07 pm.

Item #2 –Welcome & Introduction

Items for future meetings were brought up and we decided to discuss these as future meeting agenda items, in Item # 11, under closing comments so we could get through agenda items.

Item #3 --Roll Call

Present were David Balen, Co-Chair Sustainability; Susan Gorman-Chang, Co-Chair Sustainability, Jason Hector, Committee Member; and Lane joined us at 7:13 pm. We have quorum.

Item #4 Comments from the Chairs

Susan welcomed our committee members as well as our guest Efrain Esparza.

Item #5 – Approval of December 6, 2016 Minutes

David made a motion to approve the December 6, 2016 Sustainability Committee Minutes and Lane seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously as follows:

Yes	David Balen, Susan Gorman-Chang, Jason Hector, Lane Semper
No	None
Abstain	None

Item #6 –Approval of March 7, 2017Minutes

We tabled the motion to approve the March 7, 2017 Minutes as we are unsure if we can approve minutes with 2 out of 4 committee members, and also if a committee member is allowed to vote on approval of minutes if they were not at the meeting. (Susan will read over PRNC Bylaws, and if they are not clear or silent on these questions, Susan will consult with Jasmine Elbarbary, our PRNC neighborhood Council Advocate.)

Item # 7 – LADWP Presentation on Net Metering

We discussed LADWP presentation on net metering for solar, scheduled for our next PRNC Board Meeting on May 10, 2017. LADWP will give a brief presentation and then do Q & A with community members. Some questions Susan wants to ask:

- How were the rates for net metering determined?
- Do the net metering rates ever change?
- Presently, homeowners must be on the grid with their solar panels. Is there a time when LADWP will do a test or pilot program allowing some residences to go off the grid as long as they have battery storage back up? Would this be helpful to LADWP to take some pressure off the grid?

Susan will circulate via email to all committee members above questions and will ask them to add any of their own. We will email these questions to LADWP before their presentation, so they will be able to answer them.

Item #8 – CF 13-1152 Ban on Fracking in city of Los Angeles

Los Angeles City Council has not taken any action on this Council File (CF) so that on January 6, 2017, a letter was issued from the Office of the City Clerk that stated this CF is now expired. (Attachment 1) Now that CF has expired, we cannot submit a Community Impact Statement (CIS) on this Council File (CF). Jason spoke about several cities and counties in California that have banned fracking including Beverly Hills and Monterrey, and also mentioned a website that listing areas in California that have banned fracking. David suggested we work at the County level; Aliso Canyon is not in the city of Los Angeles, but is in the County of Los Angeles. Susan can follow up with Jarrod Degonia from County Supervisors Kathryn Barger's office about this.

Item #9 –Leaf Blowers

Lane discussed how gas leaf blowers have been illegal within the city of Los Angeles since February 13, 1998 due to LAMC 112:004(c) within 500 feet of a residence. Gas powered leaf blowers increase the presence of airborne particles, which may cause problems for persons suffering from asthma, hay fever, or other upper respiratory ailments. Los Angeles Municipal (LAMC) Section 112. 04 (c) bans the use of the gas powered leaf blower device to minimize the nuisance and health related problems attributed to this type of equipment. 112.04(c) LAMC The following ordinance became effective on February 13, 1998:"No gas powered blower shall be used within 500 feet of a residence at anytime. Both the user of such a blower as well as the individual, who contracted for the services of the user if any, shall be subject to the requirements of and penalty provisions for this ordinance. Violation of the provisions of this subsection shall be punishable as an infraction in an amount not to exceed One Hundred Dollars(\$100)."This section does not preclude anyone from using other devices such as a gas powered vacuum device or electric leaf blower. Officers enforce Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 112.04(c) in the same manner as any other infraction. The Los Angeles Police Department has primary enforcement responsibility for this Ordinance. Community members may also register complaints with the Street Services Investigation and Enforcement Division, Department of Public Works, at 1800996CITY (Leaf blower Complaint Line). An officer who responds to a radio call and/or otherwise observes anyone operating a gas powered leaf blower within 500 feet of a residence within the City of Los Angeles, may take the following enforcement action:
*Inform the operator of the leaf blower that they are in violation of Section 112.04(c) LAMC.

Anyone can dial 311 or report online at myla311.lacity.org or call direct line to report this Monday through Friday, 7:00am - 3:30pm, (213) 847-6000, to notify them that a gardener is using a gas powered leaf blower, and there will be an investigation and potential fine. You can take a video with a phone or tablet as proof. Also, for a while LADWP was having a program where you could exchange a gas powered leaf blower for an electric leaf blower free of charge. Susan discussed how this is an

education issue, as many people don't know the illegality of gas powered blowers, and property owners should be asking their own gardeners not to use them. The gardeners use them because they think that is what their employers (homeowners) want. We discussed how we can get this information out to the public.

Item #10-SoCalGas methane monitor and Argo Scientific fenceline methane monitor

We discussed why and how SoCalGas's methane monitor which they post on their website <https://socialgas.esriemcs.com/MethaneMonitoring/> is consistently showing methane levels, in parts per million (PPM) at either a flat 2.0 or 0 while Argo Scientific fenceline monitor shows variable methane levels <http://fenceline.org/porter/data.php> as it always has since its installation & inception more than a year ago. SoCalGas stated on social media that the 0 represented times when their monitor is offline due to "maintenance or weather". If a SoCalGas monitor is offline it should not show 0; it should show offline. Showing 0 is misleading. Furthermore, a measurement of 0 is impossible on planet Earth because our natural atmosphere has 1.8 PPM of methane even in the cleanest of air, such as on a beach in Hawaii. We then discussed the flat lining of "2" PPM of the SoCalGas methane monitors, and discussed various possibilities such as SoCalGas equipment not being able to measure in decimals, or their data service rounding to nearest whole number and not showing decimals, or equipment not working properly. SoCalGas has not answered any of these questions posted by any resident in regards to the flat lined methane measurements of 2 on their monitors.

Item # 11- General Public Comments

Efrain Esparza, Outreach Specialist, joined us. He said he found us by looking at all Neighborhood Council websites and found those with a Sustainability Committee meeting posted. Efrain was born and raised in the SFV, attending Granada Hills Charter High School and UC Santa Barbara, where he was an Environmental major. He came to our meeting to tell us about the free Metropolitan Water District's workshops about Residential Turf Removal Training. (Attachment 2)

Efrain explained that Metropolitan Water District is like the wholesaler, while LADWP is like the retailer for a water system. Metropolitan Water District supplies water to several local utilities who then provide water to customers, such as our own LADWP and Glendale Water & Power. (Other areas have their own water systems such as Moorpark and Valencia.) Although the class is called "turf removal" it covers so much more than that, including information about grass free, sustainable gardens, types of drought tolerant plants, types of California friendly plants, and maintenance of drip irrigation systems, plants and low water landscapes. They do not recommend fake grass, aka Astro Turf, because that kills the soil and organisms underneath it and water just runs off it. Los Angeles has trouble utilizing rain, since our waste and sewer systems are designed to make run off go down the drains and into the ocean instead of capturing it for later use. Drought tolerant landscaping if done correctly can capture water and allow it to sink deep into the ground. Efrain explained that grass lawns use most of the water that account for the vast majority of a homeowner's water bill. Grass lawns use a lot of water.

We discussed how Los Angeles is still using some existing water wells, and they need to be replenished with fresh rain water. Some are being contaminated (such as in North Hollywood from a local landfill) and then LADWP has to come in and spend \$300 million in remediation to clean the water up again for use.

Efrain is looking for NC that would like to provide a space for such a workshop. The workshop is free of charge and given by Metropolitan Water District personnel who provide all teaching and materials. Classes are given in English and Spanish. Susan asked about Korean, and Efrain stated they don't have a Korean translator yet, but

they are also given in Mandarin. He needs a commitment of 20 people to attend a 3 to 3.5 hour workshop before one can be scheduled.

Susan stated she had attended a Metropolitan Water District class on drought tolerant landscaping, and it was very well done. Jason asked if it could be done in a 30 minute slot, and Efrain answered no it really needs the whole 3 to 3.5 hours. Efrain stated that gardeners can attend as well so that this is a valuable source of free training for a gardener transitioning from a “mow and blow” business model to drought tolerant/low water landscaping/drip irrigation maintenance business model. This is a business opportunity for gardeners.

Efrain left us with a sign up type interest sheet, and we stated we may be able to assess community interest in this during our Earth Day Celebration on April 22, 2017. We thanked Efrain for attending, and stated we were glad he found out about our Sustainability Committee on our PRNC website.

Item # 12- Board Member Comments/Announcements

Ideas for next meeting agenda include:

- Invite Uduak-Joe Ntuk, Petroleum Administrator Office of Petroleum & Natural Gas for Los Angeles to a meeting and see how we can leverage his knowledge.
- Consider starting a support of a fracking, acidization, & all unconventional extreme drilling methods ban in County of Los Angeles (since city of Los Angeles let the CF become inactive), and since Aliso Canyon is in County of Los Angeles
- Talk to AQMD regarding the settlement where only \$1 million goes to Health Study while \$4.5 million goes to AQMD General Fund and see if we can have some money come back to our community the way penalty funds have come back to residents of Torrance for a fence line type of air quality monitoring system. Dante Acosta’s representative may be interested in helping with this.
- Follow up on LADWP Customer Bill of Rights. See what input NC gave and were any changes made. (Susan will ask at Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils (VANC))

Item # 13-Meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm