Ponte Vista: Ensuring the Project Makes Sense for the Harbor Community

By Ray Regalado, Chair, NWSPNC Planning and Land Use Committee

As winter ends and we look forward to our backyard gardens coming into bloom, taking walks around our neighborhoods and hanging out at our favorite coffee spots and restaurants. We find ourselves visiting with our neighbors and making new friends as we go from one place to another running our errands.

Residents of San Pedro and surrounding communities enjoy their parks, beaches and waterfront. Harbor residents enjoy their community and are engaged as their community grows and changes.

A major housing development is currently being planned to be built on a 61.5-acre parcel of land once owned by the military. Located on Western Avenue, across from Green Hills cemetery, 245 single-family homes sit abandoned. The property is currently zoned a combination of single-family (R-1) and Open Space.

NORTHWEST ADVOCA

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHWEST SAN PEDRO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL • APRIL 2013

San Pedro, CA 90731
638 South Beacon Street, Box 688
Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council
Attn: POSTAL PATRON

 It’s Traffic, Traffic, Traffic

Traffic is the single biggest issue people talk about when Ponte Vista comes up. As well it should. Ponte Vista means at least a 20-percent increase in traffic on Western and a significant impact on 16 out of 56 intersections.

It’s probably more. The baseline traffic was counted in September 2010, when the economy was way down. Traffic counts both before and after showed higher counts.

Mitigation plans for the 16 admitted-impact intersections are odd in that some of these districts access from Harbor City and Wilmington in order to provide more green light time for Ponte Vista and San Pedro traffic.

The biggest issue for the NWSPNC

Each year, the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council honors a student who has performed outstanding community service with a $500 award.

Anyone who is between the ages of 16 and 22 is eligible to apply. The applicant must live, work, and/or attend school within the boundaries of the Northwest Council, or have performed part of their service in that area, or provided service to those who reside in the area.

The application may be downloaded from www.nwsanpedro.org. Copies may also be picked up at the major high schools in the area as well as Marymount College.

The deadline for submission is May 20, 2013.

Should you have questions regarding this award, please E-mail board@nwsanpedro.org and include your name and a phone number where you may be contacted.
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President’s Corner
By Diana Nave, President
A lot is going on in our community! First, a big thanks to those of you who have attended our meetings or contacted us with your concerns about issues in our community.

Much of our focus has been and will continue to be on the proposed Port Vista Development. Approximately 175 individuals and groups submitted comments on the Draft EIR for this project, including NWSNPC. We have also developed and submitted comments on the proposed Specific Plan accompanying article on Port Vista for more information and take our survey to let us know what you think.

Recently, the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Skate Park at Peck Park was held. What a festive day with so many skaters turning out to demonstrate their skills. We anticipate that the actual work will begin in the next couple of weeks and completion is scheduled for the fall of 2013. The project has moved forward very quickly due to the great support from the Department of Recreation and Parks, San Pedro Skate Park Association, and Councilman Buscaino.

Ports O’ Call is on the move! The Port has entered into exclusive negotiations with the LA Waterfront Alliance to redevelop Ports O’ Call. Right now they are seeking input from the community on what we want to see there. The first community meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., April 2 at the Warner Grand. The port has a new website, www.lawaterfront.org.

In recent actions, our board requested that the Department of Transportation study the configuration of Miraflores and Gaffey to see if there is anything that can be done to improve the flow of traffic at this tortured intersection and recommended changes along Miraflores. Northwest San Pedro has been plagued by an increase in burglaries. I hope you will take time to read the article on crime in our community and consider becoming a cyber block captain.

As you can see, there is a lot going on in the community. We need your involvement. We want to hear your concerns and ideas. Please like us on Facebook, join us at our monthly meetings, consider joining a committee, or submit your thoughts to board@nwsanpedro.org. If you are not on our e-mail list, please sign-up at www.nwsanpedro.org. We use that list to provide alerts between formal newsletters.

Meet the New NWSNPC Board Members!
Cassidy Felterberger
My name is Cassidy Felterberger. I am 16 years old and a student at San Pedro High School.

Like most students, I play sports including swimming and water polo. I got stuck up late doing hours of homework, and I love spending time with all of the amazing people that I have grown up with.

In November of 2012, I had the opportunity to become a member of the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council as it’s youth seat. Through the council, I have been able to take my leadership skills a step farther than many people my age while making decisions that impact everyone, including the youth, in our community.

I am grateful for this opportunity and proud to represent the young people of Northwest San Pedro.

West Basin Railyard Project On-Track
A new intermodal storage railyard will improve a vital link between the Port of Los Angeles and the Alameda Corridor.

Construction of the $137.7 million railyard project at Berth 200 in San Pedro as the West Basin Railyard, will generate about 2,000 direct and indirect jobs.

When completed, the new yard will move cargo more safely and efficiently, reduce truck traffic on roads and freeways and improve regional air quality while strengthening the Port of Los Angeles’ position as the nation’s No. 1 trade gateway.

The Berth 200 railyard project also enables track space at the TraPac container terminal to serve as TraPac’s future on-dock rail facility.

With completion of the $305 million in rail, roadway and terminal improvements at TraPac over the next three years, TraPac will join the other seven container terminals at the Port of Los Angeles that offer seaports the speed-to-market advantage of on-dock rail.

The project is expected to reduce harmful emissions by 593,935 tons over a 20-year period, eliminate 2,300 daily truck trips from the Long Beach (710) and Harbor (110) freeways.

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NWSNPC Committees
Budget and Finance
Recommends budget, reviews funding requests.

Youth and Outreach
Deals with youth, education, and community engagement.

Elections and Bylaws
Deals with elections and bylaws matters.

Community Issues
Deals with traffic and transportation, parks, community beautification, and other issues not covered by specific committees.

Planning and Land Use Committee
Deals with planning and land use issues.

Port Committee
Deals with port-related issues and advises our representatives on Port Community Advisory Committee.

Safety and Security
Deals with community safety, emergency preparedness, and evacuation planning.

If you are interested in being a member of any of these committees, please e-mail your contact information to board@nwsanpedro.org.

The NWSNPC Governing Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Peck Park Auditorium, 560 North Western Avenue
Rancho LPG Update

At our request, Councilman Buscaino has introduced a number of motions at city council regarding the Rancho LPG tanks and rail cars that serve them. In response to one of these, the City Administrative Officer recommended two actions:

1. That the city amend development potential options for community outreach effort and preparedness exercise with city departments and stakeholders in the San Pedro area including the neighborhood council.
2. That the city develop a list of inspections conducted by non-city agencies so that city agencies could request automatic notification of inspection deficiencies.

This report has generally been regarded as disappointing. Nevertheless, we are pleased that there has been a great deal of attention to preparation.


A possibly more important action has just been issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, notifying Rancho LPG of potential enforcement action under the Clean Air Act. Among its findings are the following:

• Failure to identify and assess its rail storage area for Tier II reporting.
• Failure to adequately evaluate potential seismic stresses on the support for the emergency flare.
• Did not appropriately address the consequences of a loss of the city water system in the event of an earthquake.
• Failure to inspect Tank 1 according to required timetables.
• Deficiencies in emergency response plan.


We are indebted to Janet Gunter and the San Pedro Homeowners United for their diligent work on this issue.

Crime Up and Down in Northwest San Pedro

It’s good news, bad news on the crime front! The good news is that crime in San Pedro is the lowest it has been since 1960! The bad news is that burglaries and thefts from motor vehicles are plaguing Northwest San Pedro and many of them are preventable.

In the first two-and-a-half months of 2013, Northwest San Pedro had 26 residential burglaries and 35 thefts from motor vehicles. The thefts from motor vehicles, 23 were from vehicles where the doors were left unlocked or the windows were down! Of the burglaries, many came through side garage doors or open rear windows. Please help reduce crime by taking precautions!

Another way you can help is by becoming a Cyber Block Captain. CBC’s agree to be responsible for contacting all of their neighbors in a designated area, e.g., a block or three blocks, whichever they choose. If LAPD encounters a problem in that immediate area they will contact the CBC who in turn is responsible for notifying all of their neighbors whether by phone or e-mail, or even in person, whatever combination works in that area.

If you are willing to be a Cyber Block Captain, contact Officer Lopez at (310) 726-7920.

Welcome, New Business! Bodyroce CrossFit

Three long-time friends—Ernie Torres, Larry Ramirez, and Tony Bo- garo—opened Bodyroce CrossFit following their passion for fitness (and their passion for fun). This gym is San Pedro all the way. The owners all grew up here. The met while playing baseball when they were kids and attended middle school and San Pedro High School together. Although these three have diverged in different directions—Ernie has a master’s in kinesiology, Larry teaches special education, and Tony is a longshoreman—their friendship and love of fitness brought them together again. They started training together in the mid-2000s. As more friends gained interest (and muscles), they created a group and started holding boot camps at local schools.

In 2010 Ernie and Larry found the CrossFit movement and quickly realized its unique potential. Bodyroce is community-based; everyone knows everyone, and they inspire and motivate each other. Bodyroce plans to give you and teaches you everything. The program appeals to people of all ages (as young as four) and all fitness levels. Everyone works out together each at their own fitness level. They manage to sneak in lots of fun, too—a night out at Porta O’ Call, Halloween costume workouts, Ugly Sweater Workouts, for example.

Larry said the best part of opening the gym is, “Seeing people grow; going from being unable to do a single workout to seeing their facial expressions change, their bodies... everything changes.” Ernie added, “Seeing the look on someone’s face that’s afraid to do a handstand and then is able to do it. Seeing someone push themselves to a limit that they never thought they could hit.” Bodyroce CrossFit is located at 167 North Bandini.

San Pedro Community Plan

After nearly six years of discussion, the San Pedro Community Plan has been approved by the City Planning Commission. Next it will go to the PLUM Committee and then to the City Council for final approval. NWSPNC actively participated in its development.

The plan lays out the following vision for San Pedro “…a stable community that provides a high quality of life for its residents; one that builds upon its distinct natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and proximity to the Port and waterfront, while retaining the community’s small town feel and multi-cultural character.”

It encompasses a wide range of topics including land use and housing, parks and open space, urban design, infrastructure, mobility, arts and culture, and business and includes specific implementation programs.

Of particular concern to our council was the proposed language regarding Fonte Vista. Although this property is outside of the San Pedro Community Plan area, we nevertheless wanted to include our vision for that property in the plan.

Another of our concerns was much of the unsightly development along North Gaffey and the lack of good buffering between industrial, commercial, and residential areas. The plan now contains some very specific standards that can be enforced as future development occurs in that area.

All three neighborhood councils were also concerned about the proposed increase in density at 25th and Western. This was deleted in the final plan.

Finally, we unsuccessfully proposed that the zoning where the LPG Tanks are located be changed from Heavy Industrial to Medium Industrial. A complete copy of the plan can be viewed at http://cityplanning.lacity.org/CPU/SanPedro/ Environmental_txt/SanPedroDraftCommunityPlan.pdf?utm_source=Newsletter+56&utm_campaign=Newsletter%252B&utmcampaign=Newsletter52&utm_medium=email. A powerpoint overview of the plan is available at http://nwsanpedro.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Presentation-to-CPC-03.14.13- SanPedro-Community-Plan.pdf.

Do you know an area of your community that needs some clean up or maintenance? NWSPNC has an agreement with the Beacon House to perform some community work. If you are aware of something in need of attention, on public property, please e-mail your suggestion to: board@nwsanpedro.org. Be sure to include your contact information in case we need to follow up.
Spay Neuter Project of Los Angeles Launches Free Spay and Neuter Program for Pitbulls

The Spay Neuter Project of Los Angeles (SNP LA) operates its non-profit, low cost clinic at the Harbor Animal shelter in San Pedro on Gaffey Street, offering affordable spay and neuter services to our community’s pet owners in an effort to reduce animal shelter intake and the needless euthanasia of healthy animals.

In December, SNP LA launched a free spay and neuter promotion aimed at helping pitbulls, one of the most misunderstood and negatively mythologized dog breeds. Today, pitbulls make up half of the population of dogs in Los Angeles’ 12 animal shelters.

Around 75 percent of municipal shelters euthanize pitbulls immediately upon intake. Sadly, in the Los Angeles area alone, 200 pitbulls per day are euthanized.

Thanks to the generous funding of a local private donor and in partnership with Pedro Pet Pals, SNP LA is offering free spaying and neutering to all pitbulls and pitbull-mixes, along with a free rabies vaccine and a free DA2PP vaccine for each lucky pitottie.

So far, over 140 pitbulls have been spayed, neutered, and vaccinated. SNP LA hopes to continue offering this much needed pitbull program for this beloved and often misjudged breed.

SNP LA has spayed and neutered over 72,000 pets since 2007. High volume spay and neuter services, which SNP LA provides at its three Los Angeles clinics, is the only proven solution to pet overpopulation.

To learn more about SNP LA’s mission to provide affordable spay and neuter to all Los Angeles pets or to become a volunteer in our clinics, you can visit SNP LA on the web at http://www.snpla.org.

Save the Date!

Job Fair

Thursday, May 9, 2013
9:00 am to 12 noon

Sponsors:
The California Credit Union • The Beacon House Association
• UrbanWest • Los Angeles 15th District

SAVE THE DATE!

Job Fair 2013

Urso Air Systems: ‘The Heat Is On’

Urso Air Systems is the hottest new business in San Pedro. As the economy took a turn for the worse, Urso not only sustained his company, but grew it little by little. Last June, they opened the first HVAC showroom in Southern California at Gaffey and Battery.

“Having a showroom allows me to show our new equipment in a physical form. Customers can come in and touch them when they want and check them out. I am the only heating and air conditioning company in Southern California with a showroom,” said Urso.

Urso’s heating and air conditioning projects run the gamut of major commercial building installations to residential filter change and quick thermostat adjustments.

Urso says that he holds himself to the highest standards and wants to make sure that every job, no matter how big or small, is done right and every customer is happy.

Urso’s dream to one day have “a fleet of Urso Air Systems trucks” started with a nudge from his older brother to follow in his footsteps and open his own business. At the time, Urso was 24 years old and worked as an HVAC mechanic at Northrop Grumman in Manhattan Beach. Determined to make his goal a reality, he worked nights at his day job and spent his days building Urso Air Systems.

“I have always been interested in the mechanical industry. After high school I attend Universal Technical Institute in Arizona and received my degree in HVAC and refrigeration. I worked for a handful of really good companies that taught me the industry, but after a while I eventually got bored with each job. I started Urso Air Systems and after a few hard years of work I took a leave of absence from my job and never looked back.”

Please join us in welcoming Urso to Northwest San Pedro. It is at 1215 North Gaffey Street; telephone (310) 833-7200.

What Causes the Flares at the Oil Refinery?

Flares are an integral part of the refining process and they are key safety devices used to ensure the safe disposal of flammable gases.

The crude oil refining process generates gases as a result of the production process. These gases are transported through the refinery by a piping system.

In short, such as an electrical power dip (like the type that causes electric alarm clocks to blink 12:00 at home), can cause operating equipment such as a pump or compressor, to shut down.

Sometimes when equipment is shut down due to power interrup- tion or other unplanned cause, the gases in the pipeline will build up and cause increased pressure in the line, which must be safely relieved.

This pressure is relieved by approved safety devices that are connected into the flare system.

The safety devices send the prod- uct to the flare to ensure that no unburned, flammable material is directly released into the environ- ment.

The flares safely burn the excess gases which is preferred from a safety and environmental standpoint when compared to releasing them directly to the atmosphere.

While flaring is necessary as an emergency, it is environmentally safe and sound safety measure, refineries try to minimize its use.

Free Bulky Item Pickup

Do you want to get rid of a sofa, old carpeting, or extra lumber? Did you know that the city will pick these items up for free? Just call 311 and ask for bulky item pickup to schedule an appointment.