NWSPNC Takes Stance on Defense Fuel Support Point Proposals

The Navy recently released an Environmental Assessment for renewed fueling operations at the Defense Fuel Support Point (DFSP) by leasing the facility to a commercial operation, including their property located between North Gaffey Street and Western Avenue just south of Anaheim Street.

The real purpose of the project is to update and refurbish their refueling infrastructure. The commercial lease proposal is simply the method to get it done by having private commercial interests pay for it. In this document they assessed two different possible projects: Alternative 2 would reopen the Navy fuel dock and make 8.3 acres available for commercial development at Pier 12 in Long Beach. Alternative 1 includes all of Alternative 2 plus 207 acres available for commercial development in San Pedro. The ball fields, pistol range, and habitat set aside for the blue butterfly and gnatcatcher would not be included.

It is unclear what the commercial use would be, but could include the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure as well as potential construction of new fueling-related infrastructure and additional above ground fuel storage tanks.

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council requested and received an extension of time to submit comments and we thank those community members who did so. The NWSPNC Board submitted comments strongly opposing Alternative 1. The full letter can be viewed under Correspondence on our website at http://nwsanpedro.org/

Behind the Fence at the DFSP

By Allen Franz

Thanks to the current controversy over renewing fueling operations at the Defense Fuel Support Point (DFSP) in Northwest San Pedro, many people are more aware of the sprawling 300-plus acre facility stretching from Western Avenue to North Gaffey Street. Many have also supported continued preservation of native habitat in the site’s hillsides and canyons, which are critical to a number of threatened species like the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly and the California Gnatcatcher. Considerably fewer people are aware that the site also provides space for the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy’s native plant nursery, which over the past 20 years has propagated roughly a million plants for habitat restoration work from San Pedro across Harbor City, Wilmington, RPV, RHE, and PVE.

The largest share—about 100,000—has been applied to habitat restoration efforts at the White Point Nature Preserve in Coastal San Pedro, and Friendship Park in Northwest San Pedro has also planted an appreciable number of native plants from the nursery—as have private landowners, from the Terranea Resort to homeowners who can buy the native plants at monthly sales around the region.

What’s the big deal with native plants? They’ve evolved to survive in our climate and soils, so once the plants have a chance to get established they need less water and less fertilizer or other soil amendments—and they provide critical habitat to wildlife like birds, bees, and butterflies, many of whom depend on specific host plants.

If you want more wildlife in your yard, your neighborhood, and your community, go native!

City Controller Ron Galperin Talks Transparency, Trust, and Transformation at the NWSPNC Meeting

Los Angeles City Controller Ron Galperin spoke at the May Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council board meeting. Here is an overview of the content:

The role of the Controller is the taxpayers’ watchdog, who oversees finances, spending and operations with a focus on transparency, trust, and transformation. Transparency refers to getting the city to be open, accountable and accessible. Trust refers to ensuring city departments do their best to serve Angelenos, and calling them out when they don’t.

Transformation is about using technology and innovation for a more responsive and efficient government that works for all.

Mr. Galperin has ushered in a new era of modernizing local government using data to help make more innovative decisions. Slides were shown that explain how the city offers a user-friendly website control panel that provides raw data, data stories, data dashboards, data tools and data maps along with audits and maps.

The Industrial, Economic and Administrative (IEA) Survey is mandated by the LA City Charter for each of the City’s proprietary departments every five years. The most recent IEA Survey was released in January of this year. Included was an extensive review and analysis of the Port of LA that covered cargo real estate terminals, commercial real estate, and harbor management. Recommendations from this were a deeper collaboration between Ports of LA and Long Beach, explore opportunities to increase business and identify future opportunities, and strengthen technology and cyber security.

If interested in learning more about this and other city department information, check out this website: https://lacountroller.org/.

Seeking Civic Minded Youth Age 16-21 to Join Our Neighborhood Council

If you are 16, but not yet 21, live, work or attend school in the Northwest San Pedro area and are interested in working with city officials to protect and progress the best interests of our community, this might be a great opportunity for you. Being of public service and learning how local government works is rewarding, educational and a great stepping stone to future successes.

The application process for our next youth representative board member will be announced in August. Join our email distribution on our website and/or like our Facebook page to be sure not to miss this announcement.
It’s Not Easy Serving
By Ray Regalado, President

For those of you thinking of serving on your neighborhood council, let me give you a bit of insight. IT’S NOT EASY.

When you make the decision to serve, you are taking on a role that requires determination, dedication and discipline. When elected you are part of a body that represents community. That community is made up of your neighbors, business owners, people of faith and everything in between. As a representative you should have an open mind, and a willingness to listen to all sides of an issue. This should lead to making informed decisions affecting the community you serve fairly and without bias.

However, this is not your only obligation. There are duties owed to your colleagues on the neighborhood council. One of those duties is to inform the community as to what their neighborhood council is all about. This could include letting people know about our open monthly meetings, an understanding as to the function of the various committee’s and their role, how the NC serves the community and how we carry their message back to our city leadership.

This may mean taking the message to the community by way of outreach opportunities such as movies in the park, public forums or sponsoring events. That may require us, as NC board members, to volunteer our time to staff these events, shake hands and engage. Most of the time these events take place on weekends or in the evening, a time when many of us would rather stay home and relax after a hard day or week working. But, as much as I hate to say it, that’s what we signed up to do as neighborhood council elected representatives.

In mentioning this my fear is scaring anybody off should they be considering running for a council seat in the future. Being informed and knowing what it takes being a neighborhood council representative is all I’m trying to convey.

Determination. Dedication. Discipline. Being informed is being prepared.

Receive up-to-date information in Northwest San Pedro through our Email blasts. Sign up at nwsanpedro.org. And let us know what issues are of interest to you by emailing Board@nwsanpedro.org.

President’s Corner
Ponte Vista Project Progresses

The current owners of this property agreed with many members of our community that Highpark was a horrible name for this development and they are again calling it Ponte Vista. They are working to finish of the infrastructure for the property along with the required improvements to Western Avenue and are cautiously optimistic that these improvements and the road connecting Western to Mary Star High School will be completed before school reopens in the fall.

Once the improvements to Western are done, they will begin installing streetlights and planting trees and shrubs in the parkway in the median and next to the sidewalk on Western along the front of their property. In the near future they anticipate beginning work on the open space and recreational areas. This will include:

- An approximately three-acre community park at the southwesterly entry to the development with access from Western;
- Neighborhood pocket parks located within the development;
- A perimeter trail open to the public; and
- Recreation center and clubhouse for residents.

Improvements to Western Avenue will include the following:

- Widening Western to add a third lane in front of their property;
- Adding a right turn only lane northbound on Western at Capitol;
- Adding a signal at Western and Peninsula Verde;
- Adding a second left turn lane westbound on Palos Verdes Drive North at Western and modifying the median and signal; and
- Adding another left turn lane and a third through lane on southbound Western at PCH and modifying the signal.

In the future they will also widen Gaffey north of Westmont to accommodate a right turn only lane at the southbound approach, add a right turn only lane on southbound Gaffey at Summerland, and make a number of modifications to PCH, PV Drive North, and Anaheim.

They are currently estimating that construction of the approximately 662 units will begin in the second or third quarter of 2020. Plans can be viewed on our website at http://nwsanpedro.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Specific-Plan-Design-Guide-lines-Final-ZIMAS-Version-1.pdf.

LA Waterfront Public Access Investment Plan

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council has been working with the other neighborhood councils to solicit ideas for the Port’s Waterfront Public Access Investment Plan for 2020-2025. The Port wants to encourage new ideas, new visions, and new projects that are consistent with the Tidelands Trust. More information is available at http://nwsanpedro.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PAIP-2019-Final.pdf.

A number of members of the community and several community organizations have provided us with ideas. We are in the process of compiling those ideas into project concepts and will be reviewing them at the upcoming meeting of the Planning and Land Use Committee and our board and considering recommendations to the Board of Harbor Commissioners. The majority of the ideas submitted have involved ways to better activate the waterfront with an emphasis on family and community serving activities.

You are encouraged to attend our meetings or check our website for opportunities to provide additional input to this process.

Christensen Science Center Update

LAUSD Local District South Superintendent Mike Romens and Facilities Director Peter Hastings met with the Christensen Science Center Advisory Group June 12 to further outline and discuss district plans for the site’s future.

According to Romero and Hastings, current priorities include repair and renovation to existing buildings, pavement, and grounds to accommodate a LAUSD satellite administration office and substation for LAUSD Police. Romero stated that his plan was to resume instruction of lessons related to Next Generation Science Standards during the 2019-2020 school year.

The general tone was that a relatively modest program would be implemented with a shorter time scale, and that after evaluation of those plans, expanded programs would be considered.

The advisory group has been tentatively scheduled to meet after the beginning of the next school year, when principals and teachers have been given a chance to review and comment on the plans.

Other proposals being considered include elective classes for Johnston Day School students, and a resumption of professional development courses for Local District South teachers. The administration and police offices are planned to occupy two of the four rooms available, with the others available as flexible instruction space.

An outdoor classroom is also planned, to create more immersive and interactive lessons within the proposed STEAM curriculum.

Planning Update

There are a number of developments currently in the planning stage that will alter the San Pedro skyline and increase opportunities for housing, restaurants and other businesses, especially in our downtown area.

If all of the projects currently under consideration are built, there will be nearly 3,000 new residential units, primarily apartments, along with additional restaurants and other commercial space. Many proposals include several units restricted to low and very low-income families.

More information about these projects can be found at http://nwsanpedro.org/planning-and-land-use-committees/. If you are interested in planning and development, consider attending the planning and Land Use Committee meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at San Pedro City Hall.

There is an update on Ponte Vista/Highpark in a separate article. Other projects in various stages of planning and development include:

- 550 S. Palos Verdes – ground floor commercial and 375 rental units under construction should be finished by early 2020.
- Earth and Centre – 24 houses under construction; currently for sale.
- 1803 South Mesa – 23 units under construction; expect to begin sale soon.
- 333 West Seventh – 32 units under commercial; anticipate groundbreaking by end of year.
- Harbor View House – adaptive reuse with 100 apartments, gym, two lane bowling alley, and two 35-seat restaurants, waiting for determination by city.
- 511 Harbor (Grinder Restaurant) – just submitted plans to city for 137 units of which 16 are for low income families.
- 448 West Fifth – proposing eight stories, 100 units over commercial, ranging from 520 square feet studios to 1,250 square feet, three-bedroom units, plans not yet submitted to city.
- 533 Nelson (Johnson Tower) – proposing 23-story building with 48 units; ground level commercial, top floor restaurant, city submittal not yet complete, no public hearing required.
- 847 West 10th Street – 19 single-family small lot subdivision, awaiting city hearing.
- 576 West Sixth, Hope on Sixth – project of the First Methodist Church next door, five stories; 25 units of supportive housing with wrap around services provided by Harbor Interfaith and 25 units for low income families.
- Courthouse – a new developer, Genton Cockrum, has been selected and is currently in exclusive negotiations with the county, possibly 250 units.
- 462 West Ninth – six-story mixed use, 91 affordable units currently tied up in court.
- Proposed 80-room hotel at Sixth and Pacific, approved by city for 67 rooms, developer is appealing to the area planning commission.

In addition, a number of restaurants are in the process of expanding or being developed:

- Sardine 1101 South Pacific – a coffee shop in front and bar/entertainment venue in the rear. Anticipate opening soon.
- Buonos – 222 West Sixth, anticipate opening soon.
- La Bluette – 335 West Seventh, now open.
- Rafaello’s – moving to Seventh Street – under renovation.
- Siren’s – moving to Seventh and Mesa – expect to open soon.
- Niko’s – expansion underway.
- Brewery – Problems with DWP resolved; anticipate opening in October.
- Tram’s – plans to open a new restaurant with outdoor dining at the old Canetti’s site on 22nd Street, agreement is going to Board of Harbor Commissioners.

Port/Waterfront

Construction on the Downtown Plaza and continuation of the Promenade are expected to begin this fall.

San Pedro Public Market should obtain lease from Port in early 2020. The initial phase will be 60,000-square-foot build- ing and 5,000-seat amphitheater. Anticipate move of Fish Market into new facility, demolition of remaining old buildings and construction of remainder of promenade in 2021.

Alta Sea – 180,000 square foot Center of Innovation through renovation of three warehouses to be completed by end of 2019 will result in job creation.
Assistance League of San Pedro-South Bay

A representative of the Assistance League accepts the neighborhood purpose grant check from the NWSPNC.

The Assistance League of San Pedro-South Bay sends a huge thank you to Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council for your generous donation to our Operation School Bell program. Your donation will help us provide local elementary and middle school children with school appropriate clothing, shoes, and jackets.

We have been clothing school children through this program since 1988, and we are proud to have provided needed clothing to 1,624 LAUSD students from 53 elementary and middle schools during the current 2018-2019 school year. Students from San Pedro, Wilmington, Lomita, Carson, and Gardena have chosen new clothing through this program.

Operation School Bell is the signature national philanthropic program of Assistance League, developed to clothe children who might otherwise be unable to attend school because they lacked the necessary clothing for school attire. Our mission is to provide school clothes and shoes to underprivileged students, with the goal of helping kids feel good about themselves. At each shopping event we hold, we are delighted to see the smiles on children’s faces as they choose their favorite shirt, jacket, or dress. In one of many thank you notes we’ve received from students, a second grade boy proclaimed, “It (the shopping event) was the best day of my life.”

Assistance League of San Pedro-South Bay also provides dental care for local qualified children up to age 21. We are currently serving 345 children at our dental center located in San Pedro, and we welcome additional Denti-Cal eligible students. Our center, located in San Pedro at 1441 West Eighth Street, is open three days each week.

Assistance League of San Pedro-South Bay has been serving this community since 1936. Our programs have changed over the years to keep with the needs of the community we still serve. We welcome new members who are looking to help others. Our members have found personal satisfaction in what they do, and they have become members of a new community of friends and colleagues. Please ask about our programs or about membership when you visit our post office and gift shop at 1441 West Eighth Street, or call us on (310) 832-8355.

Be an Agent of Change

The launch of Pride on the Port of Los Angeles on June 15 was a huge success with an estimated 3,000 in attendance throughout the day. Positive energy, coupled with a sense of love and hope for a more inclusive future, united the crowd.

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council was honored to host a vendor booth to chat about the great works that can be accomplished at the Neighborhood Council level. Attracted by our “Ask How Can You Be an Agent of Change” message, energetic attendees visited us throughout the day.

Neighborhood Purpose Grants Issued to Three Local Organizations

What organizations are eligible to receive a Neighborhood Purpose Grant?

An NPG is applied for by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on an LAUSD public school to request a grant from a Neighborhood Council that will benefit the community or serve a public purpose.

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council accepts applications once or twice per year and this year we are pleased to announce the issuance of grants to those three very worthy organizations: Assistance League of San Pedro, San Pedro’s Packages for Patriots, Bay Cities Alliance for Pride on the Port.

San Pedro’s Packages for Patriots

San Pedro’s Packages for Patriots is a volunteer-led, nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of the brave men and women serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. They support Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen by providing letters, care packages, and comfort items to the deployed.

This is the dream of Mike Walker, owner of San Pedro Automotive, a Toyota repair shop in San Pedro. Mike and his wife Shirley Vojkovich, have been sending packages to our men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan for several years. Mike wants to do as much as he can to support the people that are fighting for our freedom.

These men and women that are serving our country so bravely, just need to know that we have their backs. Something as simple as a small package, a note, and email, can make the difference to these men and women and keep them going until they can come home and see their loved ones.

Any items that you’d like to donate can be taken to Mike Walker, San Pedro Packages for Patriots at San Pedro Automotive located at 1208-C North Gaffey Street, San Pedro.

For more information on the history of this program and how you can help, visit their website at sanpedropackagesforpatriots.com.

Pride on the Port of Los Angeles

Ryan Blaney accepts the check on behalf of Pride on the Port of Los Angeles and Bridge Cities Alliance.

By Aidan Garcia-Sheffield, President-Chairman of Bridge Cities Alliance

On behalf of Pride on the Port of Los Angeles (POPLA), and Bridge Cities Alliance (BCA) non-profit, I thank you.

The neighborhood council system was set up to connect a large network of citizens covering many demographics in our city where we were being represented by 15 city council people and one mayor. While democratic, it was decided that “We the People” could potentially lose voice, and so the Neighborhood Council system was born.

I admire and have served in neighborhood council, a system that lends voice locally to everyone. The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council (NWNSC) has done a great thing by giving a Neighborhood Purpose Grant to BCA.

San Pedro, a community represented by many, is rich in diversity. LGBT+ face battles that most people, the main communities we belong to, may not face. We do not seek special rights, only equal rights. Gay pride is not a moment where we ask others to be LGBT+, but where we celebrate our fight for liberation and equal rights.

In granting BCA an NPG, NWNSC granted funds to an entire community event that is inclusive, caring, and promotes equality. There are many events that neighborhood councils participate in and we are proud to be one of these. In our celebration we have supported many local businesses and nonprofits, for example the Battleship USS Iowa. We invite you all to come out and share in the celebration of equality, because every day we are human, and this is truly one thing we ALL have in common.

The 311 call center can provide general information relating to city programs and services, can submit city service requests as needed, and can connect callers with city departments making it easier to do business with the City of Los Angeles.

One Call to City Hall

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