



OJAI VALLEY MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

FINAL MEETING MINUTES

18 Valley Road, Oak View
Monday, February 26, 2024 - 7:00PM

Chair: Chris Cohen, **Vice Chair:** Joseph Westbury

Council Members: Barbara Kennedy, Grace Malloy, Terry Wright

Public Comments FOR IN PERSON MEETINGS may be provided using the following TWO options:

Option 1: E-MAIL PUBLIC COMMENT- If you wish to make a comment on a specific agenda item, please submit your comment to the Executive Officer at ovmac@ventura.org for that item via email by 3:30 p.m. the day of the meeting to ensure your letter is received and entered into the record. PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN YOUR EMAIL: (A) MEETING DATE, (B) AGENDA ITEM NUMBER, (C) SUBJECT OR TITLE OF THE ITEM, (D) YOUR FULL NAME. DURING PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA ITEM SPECIFIED IN YOUR EMAIL, YOUR COMMENT WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD. Please limit your written correspondence to 300 words or less.

Option 2 – IN PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT - If you wish to make a comment in-person, you must be present at the meeting location and provide your comment prior to the close of the public comment period for the item you wish to speak on. Each meeting will have sign-in sheets to participate in Public Comment at the meeting location for in-person comments.

1. Call to Order of the Meeting

Chair Cohen called the meeting to order at 6:59 PM.

2. Flag Salute

3. Roll Call

*Chair Cohen, Vice Chair Westbury, Member Kennedy and Member Wright Present.
Member Malloy Absent.*

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Member Wright and seconded by Chair Cohen. Passes 4-0

5. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Speaker 1: Ron Solorzano – Regional Librarian

Ojai Librarians – Oak View has been revamping school center. Tuesdays – Freeform/Drawing, Thursdays – STEAM Lab/Crafts and Math assistance. Homework Help is also provided Monday through Thursday at the Oak View Library.

Ojai Library – in partnership with VCWorks – Free one on one career counseling, every other Thursday 2-4 pm.

Speaker 2: Marilyn Miller

Appreciate that Caltrans is putting the multi-modal plan; it will be an adjustment, it's not done yet. It will slow traffic, think that it's important and appreciative of it moving forward.

Speaker 3: Teena Broumand

Appreciates slowing of traffic, narrowing road is pushing traffic onto Creek Rd. excessive use now. Opposed to transferring problem to nearby residents. We had another fence and trash cans crashed into at end of the road. The letters sent to waze, google maps, apple, by the Supervisor office, but there is no follow up. Supervisor Office hasn't been up to date with sending repeated mailers. We have capacity issue in this valley and its getting worse. Arterial roads are getting inundated with traffic.

Speaker 4: Christina Pacheco

One of my customers brought up Highland Apartments and currently turning them into ADUs. Don't know if this is legal? Causing some disruption; tenants are not happy. Located Highland and Ventura Ave. by Circle K, doing constant construction. Causing noise pollution. Planning Staff commented that is State law has allowed conversions of garages into ADUs with minimal permits, but she will look into this. Also Brought up at OVAC a lot of people are being affected by cancellation of homeowners insurance and costs have gone up, CA FAIR Plan, drives prices up, hope Matt LaVere can work on. Executive Officer Clensay asked to have her email this request and she will circle back with OVAC and Matt.

Speaker 5: James Clark

Caltrans project and I agree with Teena and it has made it difficult to get into our business, owns muffler shop; we've created a bike lane that goes to Arnaz; with bike lane in middle. I filmed it at 8 AM this morning and its backed up from Barber tract to Lamier; Don't see how emergency access will work. Fire trucks fire/ was against all this (he believes). Has made it miserable, but I agree there has to be an alternative because it does need to slow down. It's hard to understand why we are doing this and no potholes are being fixed. How is money being spent when we have other maintenance needs? Why spending/wasting this money, I know they are concerns about bikes then fix the bike trail, make it accessible to Oak View maybe by Sunset School.

Speaker 6: Comment from audience

A lot of people don't like this, it's a madhouse and people can't go where they need to go, trees in the middle of the road are proposed??

Vice Chair Westbury – I agree with public comment thus far.

Speaker 2 again – Marilyn Miller - *there were multiple workshops they walked the neighborhood; accessing the business, Caltrans did a lot of outreach.*

Member Kennedy shared that this will bring sidewalks as part of this project. There is a report in the back, please take a copy and email the email address noted to Caltrans to share your comments and concerns.

Member Wright mentioned not being in favor of 4 lanes, would like to see what 1 lane does to calm the traffic.

Speaker 3 again - Teena Broumand - *We have enforcement problem all over La Luna/ Creek Rd./Cuyama and other areas of the Valley. Is it possible for county to pay for additional law*

enforcement? Could the County request additional traffic enforcement? Could Sheriff's office be asked to step up?

6. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of November 27, 2023

Moved by Member Wright and seconded by Member Kennedy – Passes 4-0

7. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2024

Moved by Member Wright and seconded by Vice Chair Westbury. Chair Cohen abstained. Passes 3-0 and one abstention.

8. City of Ojai Planning Commission Update *(provided via email and pasted below):*

- The PC approved a variance request to increase fence height in the front setback of a single-family home. The front setback is the area between the street (or the public land) and the front of the main residence. Ojai's Municipal Code (OMC) requires fences and walls in the front setback be no more than 4 feet high, but also requires a fence or wall around a swimming pool to be at least 5 feet high. If the only logical place to locate a swimming pool is all or partly in the front setback, the PC must consider and vote on a variance to increase the fence or wall height.*
- Ojai staff provided an in-depth discussion of SB 9, a new state law dealing with lot splits. SB 9 is intended to increase the amount of housing by providing an expedited path to development of new residential properties, with certain conditions. It is an alternative to lot splits under the Subdivision Map Act (SMA), which has different conditions, including requiring a PC hearing for approval. After more discussion with Staff, the PC will recommend an amendment to the Ojai Municipal Code dealing with SB 9 lot splits.*
- Ojai staff presented proposed revisions to the current OMC language on Moveable Tiny Houses (MTHs). Revisions include moving the language from the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance to a separate Ordinance and streamlining the requirements for approval of Moveable Tiny Houses. The City Council had established a pilot program allowing for up to 20 MTHs over 2 years, but only 2 were requested and approved. This is Housing Action Plan Program 5 in the recently certified Housing Element of the Ojai General Plan.*
- Ojai staff also reported on progress on all 19 Housing Action Plan Programs in the Housing Element of the Ojai General Plan, with emphasis on Program 15, "Objective Design Review Standards." "Objective Design Review Standards" typically incorporate hard numbers (building height, setbacks, lot coverage percentage, etc.) but must also be structured to avoid unreasonable barriers to the development of additional residential housing.*

Action Items:

9. Request for a Minor Modification to existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Variance No. 2550 improvements to the Redemption Church of Ojai (PL23-0035).

The applicant requests a Minor Modification to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Variance No. 2550 be granted to authorize the continued operation of an assembly use (Redemption Church of Ojai) for a period of 20 years and the construction of a 5,500 square foot (sq. ft.) metal accessory building. The proposed accessory building will consist of four Sunday School rooms, two Americans

with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant restrooms, and storage space. The proposed accessory building will be used in support of the Redemption Church of Ojai and its related programs and ministries. The project site is located at 190 E. El Roblar Drive in Meiners Oaks, APN 017-0-090-320. The property is 2.78 acres and is located in the RD-9 Zone, with AC/TRU/DKS overlays.

Staff Contacts: Michael Conger, Senior Planner michael.conger@ventura.org
805-654-5038

Staff gave a power point presentation. (Attached)

Member Kennedy - seems pretty simple for a CUP.

Chair Cohen to staff – What is reasoning for this one?

Planning Staff – Jennifer Trunk – Churches in residential areas need a Conditional Use Permit, and this church has been here since 1960's. Uses evolve overtime and they wanted to construct a new building for their operations. Now is the opportunity to build up a new conditional use permit and further defines what can be done at the site with this new permit.

Member Kennedy – There was some noise levels complaints recently with the rains; Sounds like most of the activity is occurring during daytime? Any insight as to that recent complaint?

Applicant/Pastor – Yes, we had amplified sound during the rain so the kids were entertained. We weren't aware it was affecting the residents in a negative manner, and we talked about aiming speakers in the future at a different angle so they don't cause any disturbance to residents. We run a private satellite program that assisted home school programs.

Public Comment:

1. **Laura Rogers** – represents other residents from mobile home next door. The notice was sent and agenda received just a few working days before this meeting. Would like more time/extension to review to understand the project. Concerns about use of building noise pollution.
2. **Heather Erickson** – wants more time to review plan of 5500 sq. ft. and where the church plans to build the new structure. Need full transparency from church/not supportive of variance.
3. **Anne Simpson** – got notice from church/would like more time to review this project to assess the project, wants to have the structure moved as far from residents as possible.

Cohen clarified role of the OVMAC is and that we are advisory, and that this is not a decision maker hearing. Asked Staff to clarify next steps with the project.

Planning Staff - Next steps is where we do a full analysis with our zoning code, and then we will prepare our staff report to be reviewed by the Planning Director at a virtual hearing via zoom, typically on Thursdays. This is a formal hearing. The staff report with staff's recommendation based on conditions of approval will be posted on website 1 week before hearing. The Planning Director decision is appealable to the Planning Commission. This project is exempt from CEQA (environmental analysis).

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Vice Chair Westbury – How far will the building be set back from the rear property line?

Planning Staff – the existing trailer is currently 5' from S/B property. The new building will be 20 feet from the rear property line.

Vice Chair Westbury – can we move the building and put it on east side? Or westside? Perhaps further away from the adjacent mobile home park?

Applicant/Pastor – there is a playground and garden area; had eye sore and wanted to clean them up but also keep the existing recreational field intact; thought the proposed location of the building would act as a barrier for sound from the recreational field that may travel to the residents.

Vice Chair Westbury – thinks church does a good thing just knows that OVMAC is to stick up for community.

Applicant/Pastor – We understand the concern about close neighbors. We have planted trees sometime ago to address noise complaints that will hopefully grow and act as additional buffer.

Public Comment from Dodd Delvy – Lives with Laura; it's an interesting consideration with building blocking rec field; could it be moved over parking?

Applicant/Pastor – can't lose any parking.

Dodd Delvy – I have concerns about shadows being casted on our property as a result of the placement of the building.

Applicant Agent – We did a solar shade study and will not have any effect on the residences.

Dodd Delvy – or how about story poles? (DD)

Applicant/Agent - We have a program that can put the 3D modeling w/sun/date/time can be shared with public.

Chair Cohen – what drives the 20' setback?

Planning Staff – 10' setback is required by code but the applicant doubled the setback to 20 feet to allow for more distance from residents.

Vice Chair Westbury – how will 1 truck come unload? These are donations; Costco donations, etc.

Applicant/Pastor – deliveries once a month and during the day.

Member Kennedy – any evening classes?

Applicant/Pastor – could be, youth group.

Member Kennedy – could we reduce hours of operation? I think we should add hours of operation, 9 pm weekdays 10 pm weekends

Member Wright – quick question about landscaping; Does it meet the drought tolerant standards?

Chair Cohen – thoughts? They planted trees

Dodd Delvy – Can they carry the trees over to the corner after the trailer goes away? What about noncompliant lights?

Planning Staff – lighting is legal non-conforming but if they have hood, then they're compliant just needs to down shield the lights.

Applicant/Pastor – hasn't considered new lighting

Member Kennedy – color scheme?

Applicant Agent – grey or tan with white roof.

Motion by Kennedy, 2nd by Westbury, to recommend approval with condition regarding the proposed hours of operation, plus encouraging engagement with neighbors and providing the additional information we discussed here such as the solar shading study. Motion approved 4-0.

10. Announcements and Updates

11. Councilmember Comments

Member Wright – Concerned about all the conflicting Caltrans signage all up and down the SR-33; we really need to have them remove signs that are no longer needed. Also would like to see some signage to explain the demonstration project.

Executive Officer noted that the Demonstration Project is still under development, and signage will be posted.

Member Kennedy expressed dismay at the fact that Caltrans didn't do another meeting ahead of the demonstration project coming online.

Member Wright asked Executive Officer Clensay to look into the portion of the Ojai Valley Bike trail that was patched up by OVSD after their spill to find out when asphalt will be placed.

12. Adjournment:

Next Meeting will be held on **Monday, March 18, 2024** at 7:00PM IN PERSON at the Oak View Community Center

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM