



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

**Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council (PRNC)
Sustainability Committee Meeting
Tuesday, 17 October 2017
Porter Ranch Public Library (PRPL)
11371 Tampa Avenue, Porter Ranch 91326**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Meeting called to order
 - Susan Gorman-Chang called the meeting to order at 6.02PM, and welcomed five board members (herself, David Balen, Jason Hector, Hassan Memarian, and Lane Semper) and a stakeholder (Erin Mendoza)
2. Welcome/Introductions: New Committee Members Hassan Memarian and Minute Taker Frances
 - Susan welcomed Hassan Memarian, note-taker Frances Pollock, and stakeholder Erin Mendoza, RN.
3. Roll Call/Quorum
 - A roll call was performed and a quorum was declared.
4. Comments from Co-Chairs
 - David Balen is coming off the Sustainability Committee to dedicate more time to the Homelessness Solutions Committee. Hassan Memarian will join the Sustainability Committee
5. Approval of Minutes from August 1 and September 5 Sustainability Committee Meetings
 - David Balen made a motion to approve the August 1 minutes; Jason Hector seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
 - David Balen made a motion to approve the September 5 minutes; Jason Hector seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
6. "These Come From Trees" Stickers
 - Susan first saw these "These Come from Trees" stickers at UCLA. She ordered several; however, they may have been lost or stolen in the mail (as they were mailed during a period of postal robberies). The next PRNC meeting will include a motion to reorder them.
 - These stickers remind people to think about things prior to wasting paper. One morning, interested people could meet at the Starbucks to distribute these stickers around the Porter Ranch Town Center Shopping area. Erin suggested distributing these stickers via the boy/girl scouts; everyone thought that was a great idea.
7. Community Solar in The Heights
 - The Heights Community of Porter Ranch is considering the installation of a solar panel farm on a 12,000 square foot lot. Peter Heidenfelder, President of this HOA, wrote to the PRNC, Jason Stinnett (of the LADWP), and Lauren Faber O'Conner (Chief Sustainability Officer from Mayor Garcetti's office) hoping they could help with this project. They requested they contact people at LADWP, contractors, and anyone who may be able to help. As there are five solar divisions within the LADWP, it is sometimes difficult to know which division to deal with.



- This 12,000 square foot plot is extra land that did not fit into their development and is not suitable for a home.
 - First the HOA should bring in a contractor to get an estimate of the costs. As this solar farm will be within an HOA, that HOA must receive the proper entitlements, and [possibly] a re-zoning of the area (via the City Planning Department). It was determined that Lisette Covarrubias, City Planning Associate, City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, who works with neighborhood councils, may be the best resource to explain the situation and deal with the entitlement and [potential] zoning change. Her telephone is 213-978-1321. Susan will reach out to Peter and give him the telephone number.
 - This new solar farm will most likely be a part of the city's feed-in program, as it will generate more power than what will be used by the HOA. Jason revealed that his dad's community has a solar farm that takes care of the common area's utilities.
 - Lane recommended that this project not be rushed; instead, bring these ideas to the HOA and contractors. Hassan felt that this is still a brainstorming session. He added that the LADWP would be an excellent resource, as they have been through this process many times before (including several feed-in projects in Lancaster, Palmdale, and towards Mammoth Lakes). In addition, solar farms are less of a liability, as there is no chance of leaks or roof damage.
 - Lane added that [sometimes] ground-based solar panels affect the resident turtles. Now, people pick-up the turtles and relocate them to a safer location.
8. Leaf Blower
- It was suggested that perhaps Lane would like to write a short article on LAMC 112.04, which prohibits the usage of gas-powered leaf blowers within 500' of a residence (effective February 1998); electric leaf blowers remain legal. In addition, perhaps someone could write a letter to Lisa Hart, a member of the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance (NCSA) reviewing PRNC's support of this issue.
 - The Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance workgroup focuses on three issues:
 - a. Enforcement
 - b. Rebate increase
 - c. Support Exchange Programs at dealers
 - Pasadena has banned gas-powered leaf blowers and Santa Monica bans all leaf blowers.
 - Although one could post something on Next Door's social media section, as well as via the 311 app, it is the LAPD's responsibility to enforce this ban. However, the LAPD has more important work. Hence, the ban is not regularly enforced.
 - Volvo and Fiat have already pledged that they will eliminate gas-powered cars, and only make electric cars or hybrid vehicles in the next few years.
 - Lane added that plug-in heaters are also illegal in Los Angeles, yet that ban is rarely enforced.
 - David Balen received negative reaction from his fellow Renaissance HOA members when he attempted to enforce the gas-powered blower ban. Many gardeners complain that the electric leaf blowers can only operate for 70-minutes and are not strong enough. Jason recommended that they have two or three extra battery packets, as you keep with a power drill.
 - It was recommended that those in favor of the ban work closely with the people who sell the gardening equipment; perhaps these vendors can convince their clientele of the advantage of electric over gas. Lowe's and Home Depot sell all blowers side-by-side. Someone recommended completely banning the sale of gas-powered leaf blowers.
 - Erin recommended that these instructions and policy be printed in Spanish as well as English.
 - Another suggestion was that perhaps PRNC could go to the Daily News and post something about the victims of the largest gas leak, and encourage the elimination of gas-powered leaf blowers.
 - Jason recommended a letter to City Councilman Paul Koretz (who represents Encino, Bel Air, Westwood, and West LA) requesting submittal of a new motion to city council.



9. South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD): Making Sense of Sensors Conference, September 27-28

- Susan recently attended this two-day conference; her 21-pages of notes are at prnc.org/calendar (click on September 27), where they learned about methane monitors, etc.
- The recorded video of this two day conference can be found at:
 - Day 1: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/library/livewebcast?ms=iiWae9f6iJo>
 - Day 2: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/library/livewebcast?ms=eQpgu6VPGAw>
- Ankur Patel from the LAUSD contacted schools to discuss teacher training and the sensors. Castlebay Elementary is interested in participating whereas Porter Ranch Community School is not. Perhaps if schools are interested, they could ask PRNC for a Neighborhood Purpose Grant (NPG).
- A similar program provides sensors to the students via the Kids Making Sense and Air Visual Pro program. This enables the children to review particulate matter (PM) in the air and learn about pollution. This training opportunity is for students from the 5th grade and up. This teaches the children that science is about things that we cannot see.
- Sadly, six Castlebay teachers have died from cancer. Lane suggested renaming this training program after a Castlebay teacher who died of cancer. Jason mentioned that Castlebay could name something whatever they want. They may not want to call attention this issue. Perhaps via an NPG.
- At \$20k, Toll Brothers is the biggest contributor to the Castlebay Lane Elementary School. While selling homes, Toll Brothers tells prospective buyers that Porter Ranch's air quality is okay.
- Wednesday, October 25, Ankur Patel will have a conference call with Susan, Jason, and Alan to discuss the sensors, as well as their costs.
- At this time, Leeor Alpern, Senior Public Information Specialist from SCAQMD joined the meeting.

10. Net Zero Porter Ranch Dashboard

- Susan's reported that the Office of Sustainability has a dashboard that shows what percentage of homes and businesses go solar, gallons of water saved, which areas have draught-tolerant lawns, how many have participated in the LADWP energy audit, number of leaf blowers, etc. Perhaps we could do that for Porter Ranch? PRNC cannot name the businesses, as that may exhibit favoritism.
- For the solar portion, the first step would be to collect data; it is yet to be determined the source of this data. Much of this data may be available from Jason of the LADWP and/or via a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. As many of these energy benefits are installed by the city, Asaad Alnajjar could also be an excellent resource. Leeor may be able to acquire data by zip code. He also recommends reaching out to Metro for their data on commuters. The second step would be to integrate this data for the best visual presentation (pie charts? Flashing lights? Etc.).
- The Porter Ranch fire station was going to have a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate their new [and very useful] solar panels. In the event of a disaster, this station will be functional and non-dependent upon the city's power grid.

11. Publicity Ideas for Sustainability Committee

- Perhaps a CSUN student could volunteer to create the dashboard? Porter Ranch resident and CSUN Professor Loraine Lundquist may be a resource. Perhaps PRNC could connect with the Sustainability Club at CSUN; they could meet together at a Starbucks to exchange ideas.
- David Balen has connections at Shepherd of the Hills (where they are currently burning gas torches); perhaps he could reach out to them? Leeor mentioned that the LA Archdiocese is active in the sustainability industry. Perhaps via the Shepherd of the Hills, there could be a connection?
- Perhaps there are other entities within Porter Ranch? Leeor recommended connecting with other area neighborhood councils. Jason recommended reaching out via the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils



(VANC). Lane engages with other proactive sustainable neighborhood councils and continues to enlighten parties, which at times includes VANC.

- Hassan added that public knowledge is very good, but it needs to be broader. 20% of Europe's power is generated by wind-power, led by Scotland, Germany, and the Baltic nations. USA is very far behind. Lane added that Texas (previously dependent upon petroleum) is becoming a rock star when it comes to wind power. Georgetown is now completely powered by solar and wind.
- Hassan added that we should learn how to use the resources that we already have. There is much waste in this industry. Little hand-held solar powered gizmos that you place in your car window are worthless. He may bring samples to the next PRNC meeting.
- Window film is a very good idea. However, it is best to have that professionally installed (to avoid bubbles). Jason added that the Sustainability Committee could recommend to PRNC that they encourage window films as part of a rebate program. Perhaps they should start with LADWP (as the gas company is a publicly traded, for-profit utility).
- Hassan mentioned that he has a friend/former co-worker who has written numerous articles on window film. Lane recommended having this person address the PRNC. However, as this person has their own company, PRNC cannot advocate for a business.

12. Looking forward to 2018

- The following events will take place in early 2018:
 - March 2018 Net Zero Porter Ranch Town Hall
 - Saturday, April 14 Porter Ranch Earth Day

13. General Public Comments

- Saturday, December 2, beginning at 8.30AM, will be the 3rd Annual SCAQMD Environmental Justice for All: a Conversation with the Community" at the Center at Cathedral Plaza, 555 West Temple Street. This conference is part of the Environmental Justice Community Partnership (Environmental Justice Activists, Community Advocates, Health Professionals, Academic Researchers, Government Officials) which aims to strengthen SCAQMD's relationship with stakeholders who want to improve our region's air quality.
- This event is free, yet advance registration is required at <https://ejconference2017.eventbrite.com>. Complimentary meals and parking will be available. Spanish translation will be offered.

14. Board Members Comments and Announcements

- Lane asked if Leeor could talk with someone at Councilman Englander's office.
- Jason added we could encourage Councilman Englander's staff to lead the sustainability alliance. As long as the sustainability efforts are put forward, the PRNC and their Sustainability Committee does not care who takes the credit.
- Los Angeles Clean Technology (LACT), funded by the LADWP, is also working on sustainability issues.
- Leeor mentioned that all information on SCAQMD's Facebook page is shareable.
- Leeor added that PRNC President Issam Najm might serve as the official representative to SCAQMD. This will probably be a motion at the next (November 8) PRNC meeting.
- Jason recommends moving forward with the dashboard. As an example, the city controller's dashboard is amazing.

15. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

- Susan adjourned the meeting at 7.48PM.