

LOPEZ CANYON RESTORATION PROJECT COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY DECEMBER 2008

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BUREAU OF SANITATION

Meeting Date: December 10, 2008
Location: Lopez Trailers

Meeting Time: 7:05 pm - 9:45 pm

OVERVIEW

Sixteen Lopez neighbors attended this meeting in addition to City of LA Board of Public Works Commissioner Ernesto Cardenas, City of LA Councilmember Alarcon's Deputy John De La Rosa, Bureau of Sanitation Assistant Director Alex Helou, City of LA Bureau of Sanitation staff and community liaison and LA County Supervisor Antonovich's Deputy Millie Jones.

FIRE IMPACT: The Bureau of Sanitation expressed sympathy for all fire victims. Bureau staff worked hard assisting emergency response agencies during the fire and helping to clean up after the fire. There were no injuries at the Lopez site but approximately two million dollars in materials, equipment, and trailers were lost.

LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE: We are back to full operations although some equipment is out of service. This fiscal year we processed 38,000 tons of yard trimmings and brush. We have 17 windrows, 5 with manure, and 12 for giveaway.

'B' CANYON LANDSCAPING UPDATE: We are a bit behind schedule because we lost all of our equipment in the fire. Most of it has already been replaced.

CLOSURE UPDATE: Closure work was interrupted due to fire related loss of equipment and materials. We are now getting back on track. We have been preparing for the rainy season to prevent erosion.

LOPEZ RECREATION PARK UPDATE: Conceptual plans are done, we now need funding.

SRPCD WEBSITE: The Lopez recreation park proposal and a link to the US Composting Council are now on the site. We are in the process of updating the site.

2009 COMMUNITY MEETINGS: The 2009 community meeting schedule was distributed and is attached.

TRUCK DRIVER ACADEMY UPDATE: The next steps in the approval process involve approval of lease agreement and the Mitigated Negative Declaration(MND) by the Board of Public Works. The lease agreement is still in draft form. The draft MND has been completed and was reviewed at this meeting. Sanitation was seeking community input on the draft. Attached is a copy of the MND slide presentation. Comments and concerns will be incorporated into the MND and it will be circulated in late December or January 2009. It will then be sent to the Board of Public Works for a hearing and approval. The lease agreement will be attached to it.

Comments, questions and concerns expressed at this meeting are included below.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS Reva Fabrikant, Community Liaison

Sixteen Lopez neighbors, City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works Commissioner Ernesto Cardenas, City of LA Councilmember Alarcon's Deputy John De La Rosa, Bureau of Sanitation Assistant Director Alex Helou, City of LA Bureau of Sanitation staff, and community liaison and Supervisor Antonovich's Deputy Millie Jones attended the meeting. City staff introduced themselves. Contact information is on the last page of this summary.

FIRE IMPACT – Khalil Gharios, Manager of Solid Resources Processing and Construction Division (SRPCD)

The Bureau of Sanitation expressed sympathy for all fire victims. Bureau staff assisted emergency response agencies during the fire and helped with clean up after the fire. There were no injuries at Lopez but there was major property loss. The loss of closure related equipment, materials, and trailers is estimated at two million dollars. After the fire, staff worked hard cleaning up the site to speed up returning to normal operations. John De La Rosa was at the City's command center and commended Sanitation for their hard work and wonderful job. For example: at 2 am, Jim Kurz brought water and lights to Hansem Dam to aid the horses that were housed there. City staff was heroes and we thank them for that.

Q: What's the impact of the equipment loss on operations?

A: The loss was substantial and we're currently replacing lost materials and using salvaged equipment until it can be replaced.

Q: What time did the fire hit Lopez?

A: The first hit was Sunday morning on the upper slope near the water tank. We repaired the damage all day Sunday and left the site when we were told by the Fire Department that the fire was moving away from us. Unfortunately, the fire hit again on Monday morning and we were not able to respond quickly.

Q: What equipment was lost?

A: Pick-up trucks, cars, loaders, the hydroseeder, plumbing supplies, construction supplies.

Q: Were gas pipes damaged?

A: There was minimal damage. It was repaired immediately.

Q: Could the methane have exploded?

A: No. It is under a vacuum so if the pipes break air gets sucked in preventing an explosion.

Q: Is Minnesota Methane working and converting the gas to electricity?

A: Yes

LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE – Jim Kurz, Lopez Operations Superintendent

We are back to full operations although some of our equipment is out of service. This fiscal year we processed 38,000 tons of yard trimmings and brush. In November, 5,000 tons of compost and mulch were sent to farmers and 200 tons were given away locally. We are marketing the mulch but there's not a lot of demand now. We have 17 windrows, 5 with manure, and 12 for giveaway. The only complaint we receive from the public is that they want more product.

The lab results for the manure based compost are available. Free mulch is currently available.

‘B’ CANYON LANDSCAPING UPDATE - Jim Kurz

We are a bit behind schedule due to the fire. All of our equipment was lost in the fire but most has been replaced except for a few parts for the irrigation system for the ‘B’ slopes that face Kagel Canyon.

Q: Is the City insured?

A: The City is self-insured and can get reimbursement from FEMA.

CLOSURE UPDATE – Rosalia Rojo, Lopez Engineering Project Manager

Closure work was interrupted due to lost equipment and materials. We couldn’t do dirt related work because we focused on the gas system. We are getting back on track and 50% of AB+ closure has been completed. We’ve been preparing for the rainy season to prevent erosion. This entails laying out sandbags, cleaning gutters and debris basins.

MISCELLANEOUS

Lopez Recreation Park Update – Khalil Gharios

We have completed the conceptual plans and now need funding. This project is part of the capital improvement program. We hope to get some money to complete the first phase, a 2-year plan.

Q: What is the funding source?

A: City funds. They are distributed based on priority, starting with safety related programs.

Q: What is the status of the LNG proposal?

A: It is currently on hold. If the hold is lifted, we will give the community advance notice.

Closure Related Documents - Rosalia Rojo

They are currently available at the Lopez site. Contact Rosalia Rojo if you’d like to see them. Members of the community relayed their upset at how difficult it has been to see these documents.

Comment: We are still waiting to see the original closure documents. We went to a government office and they could not find the documents.

A: Which office did you go to?

Comment: I don’t know.

SRPCD Website – Reva Fabrikant, Community Liaison

The Lopez Recreation Park plans have been added to the site as well as a link to the US Composting Council. We are in the process of updating the whole site. Contact Reva Fabrikant if you have suggestions on site content.

2009 Community Meetings

The 2009 community meeting schedule was distributed and is attached.

TRUCK DRIVER ACADEMY UPDATE – Khalil Gharios & Karen Coca, Environmental Affairs Officer, Bureau of Sanitation

Update – Khalil Gharios

The next steps in the approval process are review and approval of lease agreement and the Mitigated Negative Declaration(MND) by the Board of Public Works. Commissioner Cardenas is here from the Board of Public Works. John De La Rosa, Councilman Alarcon's deputy, is also attending this meeting.

The lease agreement is still in draft form and several items are still in the discussion phase. These include parking City trucks on the training facility pad and insurance requirements. The 1.5 acre pad has been constructed.

The draft MND has been completed but has not yet been circulated. We are distributing it at this meeting and asking you to share your comments on it.

The next steps for the MND approval process involve circulating the MND to the public and receiving comments. A minimum 30-day review period is required by the State. The comments are incorporated into the document and sent to the Board of Public Works for a hearing and approval. We anticipate circulating the MND, with the lease agreement attached, in late December or January 2009.

Q: Can we get an extension on the review period?

A: We are required to have a 30-day minimum review period. We will discuss the request and see what we can do.

Q: When will the review period begin?

A: It begins when the MND is circulated, hopefully at the end of December.

Comment: We are requesting a 90-day review period.

Comment: We have monthly Foothill Trails NC meetings and need more time to circulate the MND to review it.

Comment: What other proposals will come after the truck-driving academy? When will it stop? When do we get our open space and recreation?

MND Presentation and Review – Karen Coca

Introduction

The purpose of the CA Environmental Quality Act is disclosure of all environmentally related information concerning the proposed project. I am here to present a draft of the MND and to listen to your thoughts and comments. I will make available all of the information and documents that I currently have on this project. The clock has not started ticking on the MND review period. This draft represents my understanding of the proposed project. The circulating copy should reflect your comments, concerns in addition to proposed mitigations. The circulating copy will be written reflecting the questions, concerns, and mitigations voiced at this meeting.

The MND starts with an initial study of the proposed project. We write this study based on information we receive from people at the site, operators, AQMD, permits and the like. We determine the impacts of the proposed project based on this initial study. The baseline used to determine impacts is the present situation at the site, before implementation of the proposed project. The document is called a Mitigated Negative Declaration because mitigations are added to reduce potential impacts to less-than significant. Contact Karen Coca if you'd like to see any of the documents mentioned in this presentation.

All of your comments will be reviewed and responded to in the MND. Please send additional comments to Karen Coca, or Reva Fabrikant.

The slide presentation (included as an attachment) presents a summary of the MND. Please read it, as the rest of these minutes will reflect comments, questions, and discussions from this meeting and will not summarize the information presented.

Environmental Impacts Discussion

Aesthetics

- The berm that will be constructed is a mitigation designed to obstruct views of the project site and minimize noise.
- Truck driver training will only take place during weekdays.

Air Quality

- We're still working on modeling the system. It will be based on the worst-case scenario of maximum possible use with 8 diesel trucks operating 8 hours a day. Actual use will be less and will be adjusted before the MND is circulated.
- All vehicles currently on the site comply with diesel smoke rules and proper maintenance requirements. The same will be required of vehicles from this proposed project.
- The closest home is the closest sensitive receptor. That is 2,400 horizontal feet and 600 vertical feet from the site. Impact analyses will consider this home's location.
- Requiring the use of LNG trucks by June 2009, one year from the start of operations is a mitigation designed to minimize air emissions. This will bring emissions well below any significant impact.

Q: What if they don't have LNG trucks by 2009?

A: This is required in the lease agreement. The City monitors compliance with the lease agreement. There are clauses in the agreement requiring corrections. The current date needs to be changed, it is incorrect.

Q: Why do they need a year?

A: Trucks are being donated so they were given one year to change to LNG. The change-out date is based on the originally anticipated start date, June 2008. It will be changed.

Comment: One year use of diesel trucks will create negative impacts to air quality. Why not require that ONLY LNG trucks be used from the start?

Comment: They should be required to use LNG trucks from the onset of the program. There's no reason to wait. They should not be allowed to start operations until all trucks are LNG.

Q: Where will the trucks fuel? Where's the nearest LNG fueling site?

A: We don't know. We'll look into that. The City operates several LNG fuel stations but the training academy does not have an agreement with the City to use any of them. They will be required to find a fueling station on their own or use a mobile fueler.

Q: How will the air emissions from one year of diesel trucks be mitigated? You should study all sensitive receptors such as schools during recess when kids are outside, elderly facilities and their air systems, summer when kids are outside.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- Strict rules prohibit any fluid infiltration into the landfill's waste. The proposed project may use portable toilets. There will be no sewer connection at the project site.

Noise

The City is very interested in hearing your comments on noise.

- The lease agreement requires using the same directional alarms as the ones currently used by Lopez City trucks and setting them to the lowest setting.
- No truck driver training will be allowed on Kagel Canyon road and Lopez Canyon road.

Q: What studies have been done on the noise level? Do you study what the noise level would be if all the back-up alarms and trucks operated at the same time?

A: We used the environmental center's noise study and might do another one. We understand it is a concern.

Comment: We want specific noise limits for the back-up alarms or a requirement that the alarms be the same as those currently used by City trucks at Lopez.

Comment: I'm concerned about the lack of specificity in the MND. We need further noise studies.

Comment: We want to see specific dB readings on the noise levels. They should be required to operate the trucks and back-up alarms at the lowest possible dB level.

Comment: The dB test should be done while all trucks are operating at once.

Q: Will the noise berm be built before project start-up? I want to see the layout and size.

Q: How much noise are we talking about?

Q: What's the significant noise impact on Kagel Canyon?

Transportation/Traffic

- The maximum number of people on the site at any one time will be 32.
- Students will be required to park on Paxton Street at the Park n' Ride location. Instructors will shuttle students up to Lopez.
- The training curriculum requires students to drive in different conditions including rural driving.
- The lease agreement requires that only instructors can drive the trucks on the haul road and off the Lopez site.
- The lease agreement also requires that the trucks be included in the BIT program, which is the CHP required truck maintenance and inspection program.

Q: Are the trucks brand new?

A: No, they will be donated.

Q: Aren't older trucks more polluting?

A: All trucks are CHP certified.

Comment: The community requested that in addition to current mitigations, driving not be allowed during school transportation hours.

Comment: The residents who live near the roads that are used for training need to be notified of this project and the possible impact. A 2-3 mile radius around the impacted area is preferred. We are concerned about the cumulative impact, not just about the individual trucks.

Comment: Elderly people live in Blue Star mobile home park. They are sensitive receptors and when driving is done in this area it will impact them. The traffic study should state where trucks cannot be driven based on the ratings and conditions of specific roads in this area.

Cultural Resources (not included as a slide)

- This is not a historical site and there is nothing unique here.

Geology and Soils (not included as a slide)

- Earthquakes are a concern in this location. Since landfills perform better in earthquakes than engineered or natural slopes this site will not be negatively affected by a strong quake. The shaking causes settling so no permanent facilities are allowed on a landfill.

Utility and Service Systems

- The academy will have to provide their own hookups and services.

Mandatory Findings of Significance

- This refers to looking at the area as a whole and the possibility of the proposed project having a significant affect on it.

General Comments and Questions on the MND

- The mitigation measures should be clearly called out in the MND.
- What does the fire/police protection line mean? It needs to be clarified.
- On the bottom of Page 6 in the draft MND the following phrase should be deleted: “to the west and north of the Lopez Canyon site”
- Q: Which rural roads will be used for training? Will the people who live there be notified?

A: We don’t yet know which roads they will choose.

Comment: We need to be informed which roads will be used.

- Q: If the East Valley Yard is used for LNG fueling would those neighbors be informed?

A: As has already been stated the City has no agreement with the lessee to allow them to fuel-up at the East Valley yard. In addition since the East Valley Yard currently fuels 125 trucks, adding 8 more would be insignificant. Why should neighbors be informed of an insignificant change?

Comment: It is the cumulative affect that’s important and that concerns us. Each little bit that’s added increases the impact until it becomes significant.

- Concern was expressed about the emergency response plan. There are significant impacts as shown by the recent fire with debris blowing into Kagel Canyon. How will the trucks be removed from the site? How will everyone get out?
- Clarify the size of the berm. I’d like to see draft plans for the berm.
- The zoning for this area is open space, not industrial. A truck-driving academy does not belong in an open space zone.
- Q: Can you set a maximum on the number of trucks that will be parked on the pad overnight?
- The terminology relating to closure on the top of page 8 in the MND is very confusing. Define closed, closure and post closure monitoring very clearly.
- I suggest you redo and redraft the MND so that the community can review it again. We need a public hearing to review it.

- The following concerns were expressed by Millie Jones, Supervisor Antonovich's deputy:
 - The language needs to be tightened.
 - More specifics are needed.
 - There is too much wiggle room.
 - Some of the things I heard at this meeting were misleading and that concerns me.
 - The lease agreement should be tied into the MND.
 - Further study is needed.
 - Who did the noise study and what credibility is there to it?
 - There are a lot of unanswered questions.
 - I urge you to provide a 90-day extension for ample review time.
 - LNG vehicles should be required at the start of operations.

General Questions on the Project Proposal

Q: Will the lessee get the land for free or will they be paying?

A: They will not pay the City, but they will be required to train City employees for free.

Q: How many years will the project last?

A: They will be given a 5-year lease with renewal options.

Q: How will the community be notified about extensions and changes to the lease agreement?

A: The lease will become publicly available at a Board of Public Works Hearing. We'll inform the community of this date 1 week before the hearing

Comment: This is not enough time to review the agreement. The Foothill Trails Neighborhood Council needs more time.

A: We can give you 15 days to review the lease before the hearing.

Q: We need to see the lease to comment on it. It needs to be part of the MND.

A: It will be attached to the MND.

Q: How much time notice would we get for the lease renewal?

A: We will get back to you on this.

Q: Who is the lessee? Where do they get their money?

A: El Proyecto del Barrio is the non-profit organization that will run the program. They have been operating for 20-25 years. Their original truck driver training site is in Long Beach, on the teamster union site. The teamsters do not play a role in the Long Beach site. El Proyecto receives money from State and Federal sources. The current training facility in Long Beach has almost a 100% passing rate. The training is top-notch. It would normally cost a student \$4,000 to attend, but this training will be free and paid for through grants.

Q: Can we get information on El Proyecto?

A: John De La Rosa will get the information and we'll make it available to you.

Q: Who will do the teaching?

A: Retired teamsters.

Q: 24 students will be attending the classroom throughout the day. Will they be staggered (morning and afternoon)? How many trucks will be used for 24 people? Where will the classrooms be located?

A: The classes are staggered in Long Beach. 12 students are taught in each session. They start with classroom training and then go to driving. Four trucks are used per session. An instructor sits next to the driver and two students drivers sit in the back. They receive lots of behind the wheel time. The program here will start with one session and at full operation they will have two sessions. Thus, a maximum of eight trucks will be operating at any one time. Classrooms will be on-site.

Q: Is there a required amount of training?

A: Yes

Q: Will the berm be built prior to the start of the driving?

A: Yes. It will be the same thickness as the berm on the compost facility.

Q: Will City trucks be parked on the pad?

A: Yes. It will be the 18-wheelers that are currently on Lopez.

Q: Who insures the instructors and students?

A: The lessee does and it's required in the lease agreement.

Q: What are the actual insurance liabilities? There could be lawsuits up here if there are problems. What is the overall liability of the non-profit?

Q: How do the teamsters, the non-profit and the City responsibilities play out in this project? What's the relationship between the players?

Q: When is the current estimated date for final closure?

A: The plan was 2010, but the fire pushed us back to 2012.

Comment: So the first recreational use of Lopez will be in 2042. That means that the trucks could be here until 2042.

Q: Since it's the dissipation of the gas that determines when Lopez can be opened to the public when does the clock actually start on closure?

A: It is incremental, the clock starts based on when a particular area was closed.

Comment: So the closed area can be used for industrial purposes but not recreation. That's curious.

Q: Toyon closed in 1985 yet it's constantly in use. How come it works there?

A: The area that's used is outside the actual landfill area, it's buffer area. People cannot go into the fill area.

Comment: But people are walking all over there, not just in the buffer area.

A: We'll look into that. It shouldn't be happening.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES COMMITMENTS MADE DURING THIS MEETING

1. Identify and inform the community of the nearest LNG fueling site to Lopez.
2. Inform the community 1 week before the lease is heard at the BPW.
3. Inform the community about how much lead time they'll have when the lease is up for renewal.
4. The lease agreement will be attached to the MND.
5. John de la Rosa will provide information about El Proyecto and it will be made available to the community.
6. Several meeting attendees mentioned that people walk around the publicly closed parts of Toyon landfill. Sanitation will look into that.

CONTACT INFORMATION

HOTLINE PHONE NUMBER: 818-834-5122

Jim Kurz 818-834-5128 James.Kurz@lacity.org

- mulch availability

Karen Coca Karen.Coca@lacity.org

- MND comments and questions

Reva Fabrikant 866-950-7382 Reva.Fabrikant@revafab.com

- general questions

Rosalia Rojo 818-834-5111 Rosalia.Rojo@lacity.org

- appointment to see closure related documents

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2009

2009
LOPEZ CANYON RESTORATION PROJECT
COMMUNITY MEETING SCHEDULE

March	Newsletter
June 17, Wednesday	Tour & Meeting Tour 7:00pm - 7:40pm Meeting 7:45pm - 8:30pm
September 9, Wednesday	Tour & Meeting Tour 6:30pm – 7:10pm Meeting 7:15pm - 8:30pm
December 16, Wednesday	Meeting 7:00pm - 8:30pm