

**LOPEZ CANYON RESTORATION PROJECT
COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY
MARCH 2010**

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BUREAU OF SANITATION**

Meeting Date: March 3, 2010
Location: Lopez Trailers

Meeting Time: 7:00pm - 8:25 pm

OVERVIEW

Fifteen Lopez neighbors, Millie Jones, Supervisor Antonovich's deputy, and two AQMD personnel attended this meeting.

LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE

Eighteen windrows are currently on-site. Feedstock averages 250 tons per day (tpd) of curbside collected yard trimmings and 100 tpd of brush from contractors. There are usually five or six windrows of horse manure based compost on-site. Each of those windrows has about 100 tons of horse manure. An average of 50 tons per week of horse manure is received weekly. Recent odor complaints were discussed. In response to these complaints Lopez staff is: tracking windrow turning to see if there's a connection to the time of the odor complaint, using an odor neutralizer, expanding the berm and planning to install a mister to spray the neutralizer from the berm, traveling around the community to detect odors and see if they can be tied to specific activities. Neighbors were asked to call the hotline when an odor is detected. Several complaints about noise were voiced and Lopez staff is looking into them. The sound consultant who did the original study will be contacted to investigating the current complaints. One resident asked if the original composting production process utilizing blowers and vacuum pumps could be revisited. A discussion followed about the problems related to bringing enough electricity to the site to power the blowers.

LOPEZ CANYON PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

The proposed horse and hiking trailhead for Bartholomew Canyon would begin in the DuBois Barn Area. The 2.5 acre area would include trees, a parking lot with an equestrian staging area and hitching post, a day-use picnic area, and trail signage. After the community approves the proposal, design work would begin and then funding would need to be secured. The occupants of the houses in the immediate area might complain about the activity and noise. Reva Fabrikant, Lopez Community Liaison, will work with a community resident to outreach to those neighbors. A vote was taken and a majority show of hands indicated consensus to move ahead with the proposed DuBois barn area trailhead concept.

'B' CANYON LANDSCAPING UPDATE

The irrigation has been installed and the hydroseed mix is growing. Trees and native plants have been ordered. A number of comments were made requesting a specific time frame for planting. In response, Sanitation stated that some trees would be planted by June.

CLOSURE UPDATE

The rainy season has slowed down progress. Work will speed up once this season ends.

TRUCK DRIVER ACADEMY UPDATE

The zoning variance has been approved and an appeal was filed. The North Valley Planning Commission will hold a public hearing within 75 days of the appeal deadline. The appeal process was reviewed.

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS Reva Fabrikant, Community Liaison

Fifteen Lopez neighbors, Millie Jones, Supervisor Antonovich's deputy, and two AQMD personnel attended this meeting. City staff introduced themselves.

LOPEZ CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER UPDATE – Khalil Gharios, Manager Solid Resources Processing and Construction Division: Jim Kurz, Operations Superintendent

There are currently eighteen windrows and we are taking in an average of 250 tons per day (tpd) of yard trimmings and 100 tpd of brush from contractors.

Q: How much horse manure is used?

A: We average 50 ton per week of horse manure. 100 tons are used in each windrow and we usually have five or six windrows of horse manure based compost.

Comment: I live on Kagel Canyon and Eldridge and during the recent Santa Anna, the smell was powerful.

Response: We are aware of the odor complaints and we are tracking the time of complaint, wind speed, and other variables to nail down the problem. Call the hotline when you detect an odor. We'd like to acknowledge the presence of two representatives of AQMD.

Addressing Odor Complaints

Last month we started receiving complaints about odors coming from the Environmental Center. Your complaints are important to us and we are addressing the problem in the following way:

- Tracking when windrows are turned to see if that timing matches the time of the odor complaint.
- We will start using an odor neutralizer once we modify the sweeper and water truck. This neutralizer is used at the transfer station and Sunshine Canyon and has been found to be very effective. This is not a deodorant, but actually neutralizes odors.
- Trucks spray the odor neutralizer around the facility, the spray is used when we sweep at the end of every workday. A mister will be used on the windrows.
- The berm will be expanded and we'll mist around the berm.
- As a proactive measure, Lopez staff will be traveling around the community to detect any potential odors and see if they can be tied to specific activities.

Q: Why have the odors started now? What has changed recently? Was it the expansion of the number of windrows and adding horse manure?

A: We've received the complaints only in the past two months and nothing has been changed. It could possibly be the rain. The weather is different and that's why we're looking at that.

Q: I've smelled it on and off for the past year. I called the hotline and it didn't work, no one answered. I called AQMD and they said call the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA). The LEA said to call the hotline. The hotline recording is about the mulch program. That's misleading because it doesn't say to leave complaints at this number.

A: When clerical staff is available they answer hotline calls, but they are not always available. You can leave a message. Messages are retrieved frequently. We will change what the hotline says.

Q: How far out are you extending the berm?

A: It will wrap around the north end of the Environmental Facility and from the other end it will extend to the access road. It will be extended by about 500 feet. The mister will be on top of the berm. The berm is currently in the design phase and we have started importing the dirt to construct it. We are investigating reconfiguring the facility to eliminate the gap that lets sound escape. We will contact the sound consultant who did the original analysis of the facility to investigate putting up sound shields.

Comment: Two people in Kagel Canyon complained about hearing dozers and other machines.

Response: This noise wouldn't be from the Environmental Center since rubber tires are used there.

Comment: I hear engines humming loudly all the time.

Response: We'll send staff out to investigate the source of the sound.

Q: Is the facility worth all this effort?

A: Yes. We want to make sure all your concerns are addressed and have the best operating facility.

Q: What's in the Odor Neutralizer?

A: It's organic. An EPA report states that it is environmentally friendly. The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) will be placed on the Lopez Community Website.

Comment from AQMD: It can be challenging to hone in on a neutralizer that works and won't be detected independently of the odor. The product used in Sunshine Canyon (the same one that will be used here) is a neutralizer that won't be detected. On the other hand, masking agents usually has a smell of their own and are detected.

Comment: One evening the odor was particularly strong.

AQMD Response: That could be due to wind direction. If the wind can't be detected then odors can become more of a nuisance because they just sit there.

Lopez Response: Tracking wind direction is part of our new odor response plan. It will be done 24 hrs/day.

Comment: This happened when there was wind.

Q: Is there an instrument that meters odor?

A: We wish there was. The best one is our nose.

Comment: In the original design, a significant feature was the pump to filter air and increase efficiency. The decision was made not to use the filter and pump because we were told there was no way to get power there. That system should be revisited.

Response: That system was a maintenance nightmare and its potential problems outweighed our attempts to make the system work.

Follow-Up Comment: Since the methane collection system uses a vacuum system why can't the same system be used at the composting facility?

Response: The vacuum pumping system doesn't work the same way at the composting facility. The blowers are located at the composting facility site and therefore the power would have to be where the blowers are, at the composting facility. The required amount of electrical power to the compost facility and associated equipment will make it very hard to maintain.

Follow-Up Comment: If it can be done for the methane pumping which goes around the whole landfill it could be done for the compost. What you're saying doesn't make sense. I can buy that you lost budget and couldn't afford the power, but I don't buy that you couldn't bring power to the facility.

Response: The Department of Building and Safety expressed safety concerns due to the weight of the equipment.

AQMD Comment: We issued a temporary permit. Was there a study generated when the permit ended that addressed the power issues? Can the City prepare a site plan showing the power to the flare station and what the constraints are to bring power to the composting facility?

City Response: Yes, we will do that.

LOPEZ CANYON PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER UPDATE – Khalil Gharios

At the previous meeting, we said we'd come back with a design for the proposed horse and hiking trails in Bartholomew Canyon and through the buffer area. The proposal shows the DuBois Barn Area where we'd plant trees, mainly oaks, have a parking lot with an equestrian staging area and hitching post, site a day-use picnic area, and have trail signage. It would occupy 2.5 acres. The existing fire road could then be followed into Bartholomew Canyon. This is an economical option and design work could be started after we get the community's buy in. Once the design is completed, we'd need funding for construction. The occupants of the homes across from the fire road and proposed parking area might complain about the activity and noise. The community needs to work with the neighbors to secure their approval. The streets include Terra Vista and Terra Bella.

Q: Have you talked with them yet?

A: No, we haven't.

Q: Did you consider an alternative area?

A: This is the best area to connect with the trail. It's the only flat area available. The rest is hillside.

Q: Have you ever reached out to this area and invited them to community meetings.

A: Yes, Reva Fabrikant, community liaison, worked with Chris Hughes who delivered Lopez newsletters door-to-door. Information has also been mailed to them about specific meetings that focused on issues that could concern them. There's been no response and they have not come to meetings.

Q: Is the area 50-50 for parking and the picnic area?

A: Yes

Q: Why such a big parking area?

A: Design standards require 53-60 feet per trailer. We are required to follow these design standards to accommodate trucks with horses.

Q: Will the current park at the landfill entrance stay?

A: Yes

Q: Don't the 'Rim of the Valley' trails go through the landfill? Couldn't your trails connect to those?

A: We are not familiar with the 'Rim of the Valley' trails. We do know that the Bartholomew Canyon trail goes to the mouth of 'A' canyon.

Comment: Marlene Rader has information on these trails and will provide it to the City at the end of the meeting. We'd like the City to look into connecting to these trails. The 'Rim of the Valley' trails exist but are not fully dedicated. If the City builds the trailhead then some community members will work to have those trails dedicated.

Response: We will look the 'Rim of the Valley' trails and see if they could be connected to our trails.

Millie Jones, Supervisor Antonovich Deputy, Comment: Supervisor Antonovich supports connecting trails. The Northwest Valley Trail Plan is in the works. He is working with the City Council Districts in that area to expand the plan eastward and connect with the 'Rim of the Valley'.

Sanitation asked if there was consensus requesting them to work on the trail head. If that direction were taken then the community would need to work with Sanitation to reach out to the neighbors whose homes are near that area. They would be invited to the next Lopez Community meeting that will focus on this topic. A vote was taken and a majority show of hands indicated consensus to moving ahead with the trailhead/parking area/picnic concept. Linda Hornick will work with Reva Fabrikant to reach out to the houses neighboring that area.

Q: Would there be an advantage to looping the trails?

A: Yes. An easement would be needed for that. Steepness of the hillside might be a problem. Sanitation will work with CD 7 on providing an easement for the trails.

Q: Does the property owned by the City, off Kagel Canyon road, have a name?

A: No

Q: Could a parking lot go there?

A: It's not a good place because it's too steep for horses.

Q: Are the trails for hiking and horses only?

A: Yes

Q: What law prevents the City from selling buffer area near the landfill as surplus land?

A: Selling City land is not something we deal with and therefore we are not familiar with those processes and laws.

'B' CANYON LANDSCAPING UPDATE - Jim Kurz, Operations Superintendent

The irrigation has been installed and everything is growing. We will water in the summer. The trees have been ordered. We are looking to buy bigger oaks but they are hard to find. We are ordering native plants so they can be grown to maturity and then get planted. The hydroseed mix is growing.

Q: Is it only the hydroseed mix that's growing?

A: Yes. The original landscape plan had no trees over the fill area. We've identified areas that are not over fill where we can plant trees.

Q: Are sycamore trees included? They should be because they are native.

A: We don't remember which trees are included in the original plans. We'll bring the landscaping plans to the next meeting to review the types of vegetation that were included. If possible, we'll put the landscaping plans on the website.

Q: What is the time frame for landscaping? Can we get one?

A: We are in the process of landscaping. It takes time because the plants need to be grown before we can plant them.

Q: When will you plant? At the last meeting you were hoping to plant by the end of spring and it's already March.

A: We did find a vendor and still hope to plant in the spring.

Q: Can you establish a time line?

A: We'll plant before June.

Q: Can't Lopez amenity funds be used to purchase bigger trees?

A: Council District 7 controls those funds. Big oak trees are hard to find because they don't transplant well. It is better to buy then small and young to give them time to adjust to the area.

Q: What is the time frame?

A: We will have some trees planted by June. We've lost staff due to budget issues and that slowed down work.

CLOSURE UPDATE – Jim Kurz

We have not been able to do a lot of work due to the rains. One rainy day slows us down by one or two weeks since we need to wait for the soil to dry out. It's a slow process, but the pace should pick-up as the rainy season ends.

TRUCK DRIVER ACADEMY UPDATE – Khalil Gharios

The zoning variance has been approved and an appeal was filed. The North Valley Planning Commission will hear the appeal within 75 days of the appeal deadline. The Zoning Administrator will be there to present her decision. Notice of the hearing date will be sent out. If the decision is approved then it's final. If they disapprove then the applicant can appeal to City Council.

Comment: We're told the variance is temporary but that could be changed.

Response: The variance has a sunset clause.

Comment: But then you can apply for an extension.

Comment: The closure plan needed an amendment to allow the facility on the landfill, so when that one is over you'll be able to apply for another amendment.

Q: We are told that over 1,000 applications have been received, how will they all be accommodated? Will the number of students at the facility be increased to accommodate all applicants?

A: No. At this time the number of students is limited in the lease agreement.

Comment: This is too open ended.

Q: What's the status of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)?

A: If the zoning variance receives final approval, we will ask the Board of Public Works, at one of their meetings, to approve the MND and Lease Agreement. This meeting is open to the public. If the Board approves, then the process continues to the Mayor and City Council. The City Council meeting is open to the public.

Q: Who is paying for the facility?

A: A state grant.

Q: How can the truck driver academy be stopped? It looks like the only way that could happen is if the person who proposed it stops it.

A: If the Council or the Mayor decide they want to stop the project they can.

MISCELLANEOUS

Q: Are any trucks or equipment, other than the water trucks, fueled with LNG?

A: All City collection trucks that drive in the Valley run on LNG fuel. That includes the trucks that bring us yard trimmings.

COMMITMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY

1. The hotline will be changed to reflect the fact that it's both an information and complaint hotline.
2. City staff will investigate the noise complaints regarding humming machinery.
3. The odor neutralizer MSDS will be placed on the Lopez Community Website.
4. The City will prepare a site plan showing the power to the flare station and the constraints involved in bringing power to the composting facility. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
5. The City will investigate connecting the hiking and walking trails to the 'Rim of the Valley' trails.
6. Reva Fabrikant, community liaison, will work with Linda Hornick, community resident, to reach out to the homes bordering the proposed trailhead area.
7. Sanitation will work with CD 7 on providing an easement for the trials.
8. The landscaping plans will be brought to the next meeting to review the types of vegetation that are included.
9. If possible, the landscaping plans will be placed on the SRPCD website.
10. Some trees will be planted on B canyon by June.

CONTACT INFORMATION

HOTLINE PHONE NUMBER: 818-834-5122

Website: <http://lacitysan.org/srped/index.htm>

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NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, June 2, 2010

Tour 6:30 pm - 7:10 pm

Meeting 7:15 pm - 8:30 pm