

PVP Watch Newsletter – April 21, 2010

To Our Friends & Supporters

Peninsula Schools

Well.... Here we go again. Public groups that will not talk with one another thus forcing litigation. The PV News reported (Mary Scott / April 8th / pg1) concerning two properties on PV Drive West in Palos Verdes Estates (PVE) owned by PVP schools since 1938. PVPUSD decided **March 10th, 2005** to pursue the sale of this property. At that time Board Members were Gabriella Holt, Ellen Perkins, David Tomblin, Barbara Lucky & Dora de la Rosa. Staff was directed to take appropriate actions to pursue this sale.

The Palos Verdes Home Association (PVHA) after one initial mediation session with PVPUSD refused to further discuss the matter stating that a clause in the deed had the property reverting to the PVHA should the school district find it no longer wants / has need for the properties. The other side of this issue is that it is reported that these Reversion Rights expired in 1980. So far, the Palos Verdes Estates Council has sat on the "sidelines" doing nothing to assist in resolving the issue.

Unfortunately the April 1st edition (page 13) of the PV News had an advertisement "*Open Letter to the PV Peninsula Citizens*" misstating the situation. What is really appalling is that two members of the 2005 school board, Ellen Perkins & Gabriella Holt are now a PVE Council member (Perkins) and PVHA board member (Holt) and apparently are doing nothing to get their respective bodies to the negotiating table with the school board for something they once voted in favor of. If the two other bodies will not discuss the long lingering issue how can PVPUSD resolve the matter other than to let the court decide. PVPUSD continues to have no apparent need for this property other than possibly creating a parking lot for PV High.

All are aware that PVP schools have serious budget deficits. Should the school board sell these unneeded properties for residential development with the funds going into the PVPUSD construction / maintenance account? Or should the PVPUSD just relinquish the land (which they are apparently not legally required to do) to PVHA / PVE. Remember the school board has a responsibility to maintain fiscal accountability to all Peninsula taxpayers and residents. What are taxpayers / residents opinions? Let us hear from you. PVP Watch will post responses. Send comments to opinion@pvpwatch.com.

RPV

In response to the last Newsletter, we received the following responses from Mayor Pro Tem Tom Long & (note this one) Larry Clark, *Immediate Past Mayor of Rancho Palos Verdes.*

We were not aware of the Immediate Past Mayor of Rancho Palos Verdes title and it does seem a bit pretentious.

Tom Long:

"Gentlemen, Thank you for sharing your concerns. To be more accurate in your reporting you might want to note that the council identified building RPV's first city hall to replace the decrepit 50 year old army barracks as a tactical goal. While no one can be certain that the army barracks will collapse in an earthquake, I doubt any competent engineer would put his or her stamp on a report saying the army barracks are safe. Having servicable public buildings that are safe in times of emergency may just be a "feel good want" but it is rather unwise to think we can do without them. There are probably many cities in Haiti that still have better civic centers than our army barracks and trailers. In sum, why don't you think of treating government as something that is there to help rather than as "the enemy," Perhaps then you will understand the need for improving government's capabilities."

Tom Long Mayor Pro Tem, Rancho Palos Verdes

You Guys ALL NEED SHRINKS,,, YOU'VE LOST IT BEYOND BIG TIME....

Larry Clark

Immediate Past Mayor of Rancho Palos Verdes

Larry Clark's loss on the hotel occupancy tax increase (10% to 12%) as well as his disdain for Marymount College seems to have clouded his views on RPV's important issues.

As readers will recall, the last PVP Watch Newsletter (March 22nd) addressed the desire by some, Tom Long, City Manager Carolyn Lehr and others to build a new City Hall. Their logic, as confirmed by Long's message, was that the building was 1950's era and therefore not safe. Are they aware that a large portion of RPV was constructed in the early 1960's. Are they aware of what usually transpires, homeowners upgrade and modernize their properties? What a novel concept!!!

March 25th RPV City Hall suffered a water line leak. What was City Manager Lehr's response, send all employees home for the day with the following statement as reported by the Daily Breeze "this is what we're experiencing – aging infrastructure." A typical RPV City Hall solution, replace the building because of a water pipe leak. Why not just replace the pipe?

Note Long's comment that no "*competent engineer put his or her stamp on a report saying the army barracks are safe.*" again demonstrates a lack of comprehension by those at City Hall. How bizzare that Tom Long, an attorney, is unaware that there are structural engineers who practice their expertise in this field making decisions concerning structures like the RPV City Hall.

As is usually the case with Tom Long and his associates, they believe more government is the solution rather than being the problem. During the past few years this Council has created more resident unfriendly ordinances such as limited RPV parking, treating residents / landowners disgustingly as well as increasing resident fees without reason. Are RPV residents aware that it now costs over \$2,000 (was ~\$1,350) to file an appeal to a City Hall decision? It now costs \$98 annually for a home office business license; usually a telephone and a computer. While the Council was increasing fees they also gave City Manager Lehr a 10 % salary increase and extended her contract to 2014.

In so far as the Councils stated goals are concerned, many are questionable and of little benefit to taxpayers.

RPV Marymount College

Interesting is that a few, particularly the CCC / ME (Concerned Citizens Coalition) have long opposed, for any reason, Marymount modernization plans. Some of the most vociferous objections have been the likelihood of "*raucous student partying and wild drivers racing up & down the PV Dr. East switchbacks.*" Apparently some residents are remembering their own misspent earlier days.

A recent addition to the anti Marymount crowd is Gail Lorenzen / Neighborhood Watch leader who sent (April 19th) a message to the Neighborhood Watch email list, perhaps violating the intended use of that list, which was full of misrepresentations and untruths. A fact that she did get correct is "*The DMV cites that, "drivers 15-19 have the highest accident, injury, and conviction rates of any age". They indicate, "The risk of a fatal accident of those 18 years and under is 2.5 times that of the average driver, and 3 times higher for injury accidents than average drivers."*

Some Marymount students may be 18 but the likelihood is that most are older and more mature. Perhaps the anti Marymount folks should look closer at their neighbors with 16 / 17 age high school drivers as this is where the problems reside. Have residents already forgotten the tragic death of Professor Kammoun by a 17 year old Peninsula High student just before Christmas? In so far as the rest of Neighborhood Watch hit piece is concerned, it's too bad that some do not make the effort to get the FACTS. We have posted the Neighborhood Watch piece at

www.pvpwatch.com / Current Issues for all to read.

For those interested in FACTS, the following data are ACTUAL statistics:

As of March 16th, there were 547 Marymount students.

320 reside in the "dorms" on PV Dr. North. There is a shuttle bus that transports most students to the PV Dr. East campus. There are some who drive and comparative statistics are not available.

There are 101 students residing in Peninsula & San Pedro / Zip codes 90274, 90275, 90731 & 90732 which provides a "local" total of ~420. This leaves approximately 130 students who drive

but live beyond the Peninsula / San Pedro area. This does not seem to be an overwhelming number of Marymount students driving PV Dr. East likely at different times Monday thru Friday.

The Neighborhood Watch newsletter also made the allegation "*there have been a significant number of drug and alcohol arrests in and around their San Pedro residences, as well as other off campus crimes attributed to students. By bringing the students onto the campus, they are essentially transferring the crime into RPV.*" I would hope that there are facts to support this accusation and that this is not but another spurious allegation.

Some have remarked "why should RPV provide any services to Marymount? Marymount does not pay taxes." Well we investigated this question and this is what we found: Current Marymount property taxes in RPV total \$44,752 annually. The current developed campus portion including \$8,397 in Storm Drain taxes, total \$26,656. The unimproved land portion taxes total \$18,096 (\$26,656 + \$18,096 = \$44,752). In addition Marymount pays \$1,122 In PVPUSD parcel taxes. Presuming new buildings and improving others will increase the assessment value, going forward Marymount property taxes will likely increase which should raise revenues to RPV.

It has been pointed out that RPV's General Plan includes *'The City shall encourage the development of institutional facilities to serve the political, social and cultural needs of the community.'* RPV City Councils have long violated their responsibility to Marymount (and others) and the option left to Marymount is the initiative process.

Now to the Initiative; this process is the result of failed government which in this instance is RPV. As we have previously reported, RPV has long "kicked the can down the road" failing to make timely decisions in regards to Marymount and others as well.

At a special meeting on March 31st, the RPV Council decided against the appeal initiated by CCC / ME (Concerned Citizens Coalition) concerning the Marymount modernization plans and approving most of the Marymount plans previously approved by the Planning Commission last September. Still pending is the athletic fields. However, this was after the initiative was announced and we can only speculate what the Council might have done if the initiative process had not been initiated.

The initiative signature gathering process will soon end and completed signature documents will be submitted for validation. PVP Watch will keep Peninsula residents posted on validation results.

For more information go to www.pvpwatch.com. / Current Issues page and click on *Marymount Plan.* Concerning the Marymount initiative, we urge all interested to read the Initiative in its entirety. Click on <http://www.marymountplan.com/facts/initiative/> for the Marymount initiative.

Newsletter Responses

Reader comments are welcomed and should be sent to info@pvpwatch.com. Newsletter responses are posted with names removed and no editing other than obvious grammatical changes. These are subscriber thoughts and opinions and PVP Watch does not vouch for those opinions.

We have been reminded that not ALL subscribers are aware of the PVP Watch website; www.pvpwatch.com. Lots of good info posted here.

Responses to March 22nd Newsletter and other subscriber comments:

Great job!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Keep up the good work.....thanks

THANKS, ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO READING THIS.

Annenberg Dog and Cat show has taken on a life of it's own and now seems unstoppable as with every seeming small approval it takes a step closer to fruition. Why can't our City Council and Planning Commission just say 'NO!' This is so wrong on so many levels.

If we allow construction upon Point Vicente's beautiful, open, publicly owned undeveloped land, one day we'll wake up and realize it is gone, there is no turning back the clock.

The very fact our civic leaders have allowed this 51,000 square foot Dog and Cat show to continue to be driven by Annenberg thru city channels shakes my confidence in just how much value our civic leaders place upon our open, undeveloped space and question if they truly realize just what a valuable commodity our open space really is. A fact fully recognized by Annenberg.

PVP Watch – Newsletter List

A reminder to ALL PVP Watch supporters. Should you change your e-mail address, don't forget to advise PVP Watch of your new address. We suggest that pvpwatch.com be added to your computer address book to assure delivery of PVP Watch Newsletters.

PVP Watch – Contributions

PVP Watch thanks the many subscribers who have contributed to PVP Watch. Those desiring to make a modest contribution, please send checks to PVP Watch PO Box 7000-22 Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

Subscribers

The PVP Watch e-mail list continues to grow. For those who wish their addresses removed, please send notice to info@pvpwatch.com.

PVP Watch strives to bring current issues to www.pvpwatch.com. Those who have topics of community interest are encouraged to bring those issues to PVP Watch.

The Editorial Committee