

Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council
Safe Traffic and Transportation (STAT) Committee
Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 6:00PM

1. CALL TO ORDER at 6 p.m. by Pat Kramer, STAT chairperson. ROLL CALL: Present were: Pat Kramer, Chair; Jon von Gunten, Cochair; George Arakel, Natalie Cruz and Susan Denning. Quorum met with five STAT committee members. Also attending were: Ross Herman, VP STNC; Ricardo Flores, CD7 Deputy; and stakeholder "Tiger 97 Mustang 00 Don 04."

2. Motion to approve minutes from August 20, 2024, meeting.

(George/Susan) moved to approve the August STAT meeting minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Chairperson Report: Pat gave a summary of the 29 trees that an Urban Forestry crew de-Agriperm'd using power tools to remove over 15 years of non-permeable pavement that was preventing the trees from accessing rain water. Jon stated that he found some of the bits of AG buried in the tree wells under thick mulch and a layer of dirt. Pat also spoke about the previous emergency tree watering to just water trees by Ralphs and across from Ralphs. The security guard was very confrontational, despite Pat receiving permission from the store manager. She finally had to speak with the property manager who eventually relented and let us finish watering after much pushing from Pat and Josie.

4. LAPD Traffic Stats - recent fatality in Tujunga.

Pat reviewed stats from LAPD Traffic Officer Sal Venegas: there were four fatalities this year in Sunland-Tujunga: a Foothill/Wyngate pedestrian fatality in January, a Foothill/Tujunga Canyon Place August collision where a 72-year-old driver was killed, On September 9, 2024, a beige Honda hit a pedestrian on Oro Vista/Big Tujunga Cyn., and a pedestrian was hit by female in a pickup at Sunland and Wyngate by Ralph's. The August National Night out was a success with hundreds attending.

5. Next Tree Watering: Oct 5th by CD7:

Pat spoke with the principal at Our Lady of Lourdes school and he said he would help recruit student volunteers. Pat purchased coffee and breakfast snacks and two STAT members promised to bring hoses and help with transporting the buckets and water containers.

Ross suggested setting up at 7 a.m. to fill containers. He is proposing funding of \$350 from STNC for new buckets with lids. Pat will request more mulch for a November event.

Jon suggested investigating fully collapsible water containers for easier storage.

6. Updates from CD7 – CD7 Deputy Ricardo Flores said S-T has received \$80 million in traffic improvements, e.g., clear flashing stop signals for our LAFD Fire Station #74. The lefthand turn signal at Oro Vista and Foothill has been put out to bid but they are having delays finding a contractor. He spoke about other work CD7 has done in the past year including: various left turn pockets: Apperson, Haines Canyon, and Mt. Gleason. He acknowledged that every important Foothill Blvd. intersection has had pedestrian facilities. They are exploring ways to time traffic signals to reduce speeds on Foothill to make Foothill safer.

CD7 will send letters to homes advising of LAPD traffic citation enforcement.

Pat reported seeing a jam of >35 vehicles northbound on Tujunga Canyon Blvd. waiting to get to the traffic signal at Foothill. Ricardo said the upcoming traffic-light study should help that.

Ricardo pursued the butchering of two City trees at Great Caesar's Banquet Hall but has not heard back. Owner Hamlet says he didn't order it, but private contractor trucks were seen there. Ricardo doesn't start out with enforcement measures, but saves them for the cantankerously noncompliant.

7. Public Comments.

- Jon saw recent complaints in social media that cops are giving citations on Foothill ...instead of patrolling neighborhoods! Other residents complain the exact opposite.
- If we don't report crimes, LAPD's stat machine sends officers elsewhere More crimes get us more officers.
- Pat reported HSR is STILL progressing its budgetary process. At the last meeting which Pat attended, the public was not welcoming to the folks representing the CHSR. They didn't have answer for Pat's question about poisoning the water table or dust abatement. Pat projected environmental harm to our area and further loss of habitats for wild animals in the Forest.
- Pat has had printed postcards made to hand out to business owners/store owners at the October 5 event to try to get trees adopted and watered regularly.
- She promoted the Congress of NCs taking place downtown at City Hall on September 28th with important workshops and two free catered meals.

8. Committee Reports: Stop sign on Elmhurst.

George reported that Elmhurst drivers continue to be reckless, speeding and blowing through the stop sign. There have been three accidents on that street.

Ricardo said he's pushing LADOT hard on that area, doing his "super-best." He explained that a low pedestrian count, vehicle, and accident count don't justify further stop signs.

Ricardo's next step would be to ask Valley Traffic for slow-down signs, but speed-limit signs would come first. Susan suggested speed humps, which are planned annually and resident-driven. But they require 75% participation of affected residents. Because many roads here are critical for fire engine access, these cannot accept speed humps.

George said even though Carleen Court has small children, many drivers don't even touch their brakes at corners. Ricardo pointed out that because that area is so far from Foothill, the scofflaws are likely local residents.

Jon gave Neighborhood Watch meeting highlights.

Ricardo said they would be doing bimonthly cleanups for Big Tujunga Canyon soon.

9. Set next Meeting: Oct. 22, 2024

10. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

-Minutes by Jon von Gunten-