

## PVP Watch Newsletter – July 29, 2011

To Our Friends & Supporters

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### **California Redistricting Commission**

Well..... it appears that California voters have been "thrown under the bus" one more time. Will it ever end? When we voted to move creating / managing political district boundaries to a Citizens Redistricting Commission rather than the politically oriented California legislature, it was perceived that honesty & integrity would prevail. How naïve can we be?

Sunday's Daily Breeze (July 24) reported " South Bay: Latest redistricting proposal splits Torrance and links coast to Malibu." How bizarre? We understand that several RPV Councilmen, and likely others as well, testified before the Commission that they wanted RPV, the Peninsula linked to Coastal cities. Is this what was intended? Santa Monica & Malibu rather than Torrance and other adjoining South Bay cities? We would hope not!

Page A4 of the Daily Breeze article contained several maps depicting the proposed boundaries. There is a redistricting Commission website - [www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov) which we found to be "user unfriendly." One positive we did find was a "button" to make public comments. We urge use of this feature.

The proposed Assembly District serving the Peninsula seems to make some sense as it is somewhat geographical functional. A new State Senatorial district would include the Peninsula going North along the coast and also include Beverly Hills and West Hollywood. San Pedro, most of Torrance and Carson would be included in the now 25th District with Senator Rod Wright and the Inglewood area.

The proposed Congressional District is similar to the new coastal State Senate but the maps are not clear as to the northern boundaries. We urge EVERYONE, Democrats, Republicans & Independents, to watch this matter and make your thoughts known to the California Redistricting Commission.

It seems to us that the South Bay area would be better served by geographical boundaries that included the Peninsula, San Pedro, Torrance, Redondo Beach and northward as needed to make the appropriate census representations. The greater South Bay has similar demographics and beliefs and differs with those from Marina Del Rey northward.

### **Public Employee Pensions & Benefits**

The last Newsletter received several responses in regards to our comments regarding the teachers union and public pensions. Those comments are posted at "Response to Last Newsletter." One person took us to task that *"retired state employees in CA are being slandered by your invalid logic when you lump all public employees together."* Undoubtedly there are exceptions and the person commenting had a valid point but it seems to be well documented that the California public employee retirement system (Calipers) is out of control with excessive (over \$100,000 annually) pension and benefit programs.

Recent quotes from a Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association (HJTA) newsletter:

*\* "A spring poll conducted by the Los Angeles Times and the University of Southern California, to take one example, found that 70 percent of Californians favored a cap on public employees' pensions because of the widespread perception that pension costs have become a crushing burden to state and local governments."*

*\* "Unions have counterattacked by claiming that government pensions are actually quite modest. They argue, for instance, that the average annual pension of a state worker is under \$30,000 in California and even less in New Jersey and New York."*

*\* "When Contra Costa Times columnist Daniel Borenstein investigated, he found the average state worker retiring in 2009 with full benefits received a pension of nearly \$67,000 a year."*

It has been pointed out that not all public pensions are the same as public school educators are covered under the CALSTRS plan which is different from CALPERS. We accept that identifying ALL public employees under one big umbrella can be misinterpreted, however recent polls show that public opinion is turning against government workers because of their rich pay and benefits

-- especially pension benefits. Many cities are beginning to address the problem and state government and county governments should do so as well.

### **RPV – Speed Traps**

A recent development is an RPV resident that is making a convincing argument that Traffic Engineering Surveys for segments of PV Drive East were NOT conducted in compliance with the guidelines set out in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD). According to CA MUTCD, the result of these survey biases are:

- (a) - speed traps that have led to many illegally issued speeding tickets;
- (b) –There is an increased risk of accidents if speed limits are too low.

We understand that the following petition is being circulated with the intent of delivery to a RPV Traffic Commission meeting in the near future.

#### **REQUEST FOR PROPER SURVEY OF PVDE**

For the past four years, there have been radar police virtually every day on Palos Verdes Drive East issuing citations NOT to reckless or unsafe drivers, but exploiting a tainted traffic survey that allows for radar enforcement of an artificially low speed limit on the very wide straight stretches of the Drive. This road is unfairly targeted and the constant and consistent presence of the radar police has become a nuisance to many residents and their guests.

The current survey was improperly done leading to a large number of illegally issued citations every month. The petition asks for an unbiased survey of PVDE, which is required if posted speed limits are to be radar enforced.

For more information about the details of the current survey and the merits of the petitioners' complaints email Barbara Hartl at [PVDEspeedtrappetition@cox.net](mailto:PVDEspeedtrappetition@cox.net)

Interesting is that PVP Watch recently learned of a website "speedtrap.org." Some remarkable data as it seems we have more *speed traps* in RPV. One is Eastbound on PV Drive South, across from the Wayfarers Chapel where the speed zone changes from 45 MPH to 35 MPH. While there is a sign posting the speed reduction to 35 MPH, it is easy to miss and we understand that the Sheriff frequently stakes out this location.

While the RPV Council believes in aggressive traffic control (don't forget they have their Mayor license plate frames), the question is whether RPV residents want to be known as "Speed Traps" city rather than for Trump National, Terranea, Abalone Cove and our other beautiful venues.

### **RPV – Ladera Linda**

RPV City Hall was successful in eliminating the Montessori school at Ladera Linda. Not only did they do away with a most wanted facility used by many RPV residents but also eliminated an \$80,000 annual revenue stream as well. Latest from City Hall is to spend some \$100,000 to determine the best use of the Ladera Linda facility. There is some speculation that the Land Conservancy desires to move its offices there. Hello; is anyone out there listening?

### **RPV – Revenues / Expenses**

The RPV Council approved the FY 2011 / 2012 fiscal year budget at the June 21st meeting. Some highlights:

Projected Revenues - \$23.2 million..... Budgeted Expenditures - ~\$18.8 Million

Current Reserves - General Fund - \$9.3 million / Council Restricted - \$10.5 Million + \$5.8 million in funds restricted by law and other external agencies. - - - Total Reserves - \$25.6 million.

Some Annual Expenses:

PVIC - \$140,000 / Channel 33 - \$100,000 / View Restoration - \$325,000

Land Preserve - \$500,000 / Information Technology - ~\$700,000 / PV Drive South - \$500,000  
Consultants ???

And as expected the majority of the RPV Council, Long, Stern & Wolowicz, with Campbell & Missetich dissenting, voted to extend & increase the unneeded & unwarranted Storm Drain User Fee for another year.

### **Lower Point Vicente & Annenberg**

As many Peninsula residents have undoubtedly observed, Annenberg continues it's 1/2 page advertisement in the PV News promoting what is now being identified as Discovery Park at Lower Point Vicente. Although the name has changed, it appears little else has changed in regards to design and purpose of the Annenberg project at Lower Point Vicente.

The following has been copied from the RPV website and provides current status:

*"As reported on the City's website and to the City Council at its June 21, 2011 meeting, since the December 21st City Council meeting, City Staff and the Annenberg Foundation have had informal conversations with OGALS and NPS for the purpose of preparing and submitting a formal LWCF application for the proposed project, as well as to determine the project's appropriateness as it relates to the existing Program of Utilization (POU). Based on these discussions, on March 25, 2011, the Annenberg Foundation submitted a preliminary draft application to OGALS, and subsequently to NPS, that partially responded to the questions listed in the LWCF application to facilitate the on-going discussions."*

*"At the time the preliminary draft application was submitted, OGALS expressed a concern with the City's desire to post the "draft" application on the City's website because the "draft" application was incomplete and the document was a preliminary draft intended to be reviewed by OGALS as part of an informal consultation process. Furthermore, OGALS was concerned that any future changes to the document could cause public confusion, since no formal application has been submitted. After discussing this matter with the City Council Sub-Committee, the City believed that it was best to respect OGALS' concerns at the time and not post the incomplete preliminary "draft" application on the City's website."*

*"City Staff was informed on July 18, 2011, that OGALS now supports having the City make the preliminary draft application available to the public. OGALS has indicated that at this time, no formal opinion or comment has been made on the draft preliminary application as it is incomplete, and OGALS will need all supporting documentation before making any determination on the application. As such, as originally planned, the City has posted the preliminary draft application on its website."*

Observations are that the majority of RPV residents are opposed to having the Annenberg facility at Lower Point Vicente. We wonder..... why does the RPV Council not put this on the November ballot? Are the residents not capable of making a good decision?

Those wishing to read the draft report, copy & paste the address below to your Internet Browser.

[http://palosverdes.com/rpv/planning/Annenberg/DRAFT\\_RPV\\_Appl\\_for\\_Public\\_Facility.pdf](http://palosverdes.com/rpv/planning/Annenberg/DRAFT_RPV_Appl_for_Public_Facility.pdf)

## RHE – Horse Ordinances

Rolling Hills Estates is moving forward towards revising their ordinances re: horse keeping to allow the physical characteristics of the property to have a greater bearing on the number of horses that can be kept, as opposed merely to raw square footage without regard to terrain and practical usability. The horse community is supportive of these revisions and it is expected that the recommendations of the RHE equestrian committee will go before the Planning Commission for approval in the near future. Stay tuned!

### Newsletter Responses

Reader comments are welcomed and should be sent to [info@pvpwatch.com](mailto: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. That so many have sent their comments has made the Newsletter more interesting and we appreciate the input.

We have been reminded that not ALL subscribers are aware of the PVP Watch website; [www.pvpwatch.com](http://www.pvpwatch.com). Lots of good info posted there.

### Responses to the last PVP Watch Newsletter

Isn't it great how money can change the concept and thinking of so many people. If I'm not mistaken the original Annenberg project was to place an animal shelter on the property, and now all of a sudden, since the majority of the residents didn't like the ideal of an animal shelter, it has become a Griffith park clone, except on a smaller scale. Does that mean only diminutive animals will be displayed therefore limiting our exposure to miniature excrement and smells emanating from the miniature zoo environment that will be created. Will we get a miniature merry-go-round instead of the standard size one in Griffith park? Come on people, open your eyes. I don't know if the Annenberg proposal has been presented to the public in its true form, but don't you think that it should be prior to going forward. Once this happens then shouldn't the residents have a real say so via the electoral process to either approve or reject the whole idea. Do you think the Annenberg foundation is doing this out of the goodness of their heart. No way, they get to run all of the concessions etc., as they do at their other facilities. It's not for the 10 bay animal shelter, it's for the \$\$\$\$\$ to be made.

Sincerely

Prefer to remain anonymous else I'll have PETA on my doorstep.

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Check with the Public Employees Retirement System in Sacramento and you will learn that retired state employees in CA, ,are being slandered by your invalid logic when you lump all public employees together. "For every dollar paid in pensions 64 cents comes from investments, 21 cents from employers, and 15 cents from members." Worse: 78 % of state retirees earn 36 thousand dollars or less in retirement annually. You are slandering retired state employees, when you speak of "all public employees." You might be looking among County and City retirees, even Federal, not at State Retirees.

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From your intro.....it appears that there is a problem with teachers having earned retirement pay. Not being a teacher yet having teachers for friends, neighbors, and just acquaintances.....what do you propose they should live on after having committed 25 to 30 years + to teaching our children ?? Let's attack the legislators who merely work as assembly, etc. for a measly 4 years who are entitled to the BEST of all healthcare programs and retirement that would knock our socks off.....as well as city chiefs.....etc.

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Dear Council members , City Manager and Parks Staff:

I saw that the City Council has just voted to seek an alternative location for a skateboard park instead of Lower Hess Park.

I would like to remind you that this was the same promise that you gave us **dog park supporters** a number of months ago and **nothing has progressed** on that per my discussion recently with Katie Howe of the Parks Dept. I still think that the County's former Palos Verdes Landfill site would be a great location for both a dog park and skateboard park, but if that does not prove to be a possibility, I would hope that your recent vote on the skateboard park does not mean that you are going to place a higher priority for a skateboard park than a dog park within RPV city boundaries.

As you recall, the last we heard from Mr. Knabe's office about this location was that the County was finishing a new dog park elsewhere in the County that was to be completed about now and

that they wanted to wait a year to evaluate the operation of that dog park before reviewing the possibility of constructing another . That would mean that they may consider the Landfill site in mid 2012 about a year from now. You may want to communicate with Mr. Knabe about the possibility of both a skateboard park and a dog park at the Landfill site. I think that both uses would be very complementary in that families could bring both their dogs and kids who skateboard to the same location and share parking and possible restroom facilities I would also like to remind you that the City Councils of both PVE and RHE also sent a strongly worded letter to Mr. Knabe in support of a dog park at the Landfill location.

I firmly believe that there are many more dog owners that would benefit from and use a dog park than skateboard riders. That being said, I am also strongly in favor of a skateboard park on the Peninsula as well as a dog park. We raised 3 boys here and I know that they would have loved to have had a skateboard park in the area.

Please do not just pay lip service to these issues and I would hope that you would give instructions to your staff to play a more active role in actually evaluating potential sites for both of these uses.

#### 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. Those who have topics of community interest are encouraged to bring those issues to PVP Watch.

The Editorial Committee