

MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise

Week of November 25, 2006



The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"It is said that 'power corrupts,' but actually it's more true that power attracts the corruptible. The sane are usually attracted by other things than power." --David Brin

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More Affordable Housing Thuggery by Dale Tyler



I went to the joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop held on Nov. 15. The usual supporters of affordable housing were there in support of their meal ticket. Also present was Cathy Creswell from the State of California Housing and Community Development department. She was there to deliver the message that they don't really care about Mission Viejo or the people who live here, but she simply wanted the city to promise to build 94 more low-income housing units "No matter what it takes."

http://www.sptimes.com/2006/01/28/Homes/The_house_that_Katrin.shtml

She told the council and planning commission that they must approve one or more sites that will hold such housing and that the city cannot put any requirements on what is built, even to the extent that the buildings need not meet any city standards or requirements that apply to every other development in the city.

Only one resident spoke on the matter, our own Carl Schulthess. He told the Council and Commission that we don't need or want any low-income housing in

Mission Viejo. Instead, he recommended looking at other ways to satisfy the poverty support system. Mission Viejo residents need to wake up and tell the city what they think we should do about this problem. In fact, the public, council members and commission members were invited to send their ideas and specific plans on how to solve this problem to the city at cwilson@mission-viejo.com. Ideas should be specific and must be submitted by Dec. 1.

At the start of the meeting, the city staff gave a report on the background of the low-income housing problem and identified three possible sites where we could put more low-income units. One was near the old Kmart site on Los Alisos (Site A), one near the Mission Viejo Country Club (Site B) and one on city-owned property near the Animal Shelter (Site C).

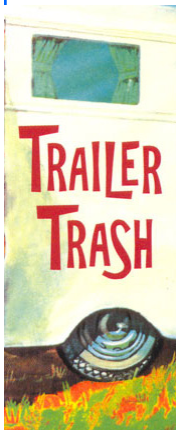
One problem with the meeting was Councilmember MacLean's refusal to discuss other means for solving this problem, including legal challenges to the state and possible swaps of housing requirements with other cities. Others, like Brad Morton and Richard Schweinberg, who are apparently more familiar with the law than our feckless City Attorney Curley, made a number of suggestions that looked promising. Also speaking up were Gail Reavis, who apparently has quite a list of alternative sites. Trish Kelly spoke against Site C, saying that there were too many low-income developments south of Oso, which is quite correct.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

J.P. Ledesma pointed out that even if we build at the maximum density on all three sites using the customary 15 percent set-aside for low-income units, we would still be short of the 94-unit goal. Ledesma suggested that we might dedicate an area for mostly or all low-income housing. If the area were big enough, we could build a high enough number of units to satisfy the state's goal.

My suggestion, based on the concept of putting only low-income housing in a designated



zone, would be to find a site in a remote area of the city, buy it (getting the money by selling the site near the animal shelter) and then construct walls around the property at least 15 feet high with a locked gate. Next, we would place 94 units of manufactured housing inside. I would estimate that we could buy used single-wide house trailers for less than \$30K each. The units could then be rented to those who qualify based on income per the state guidelines. To offset any possible

crime problem, we could put a sheriff's substation at the entrance to the property and require random inspections of units to ensure illegal activity or overcrowding does not become a problem. Another benefit would be that as the state forces more low-income units down our throats, we could simply add more manufactured housing.

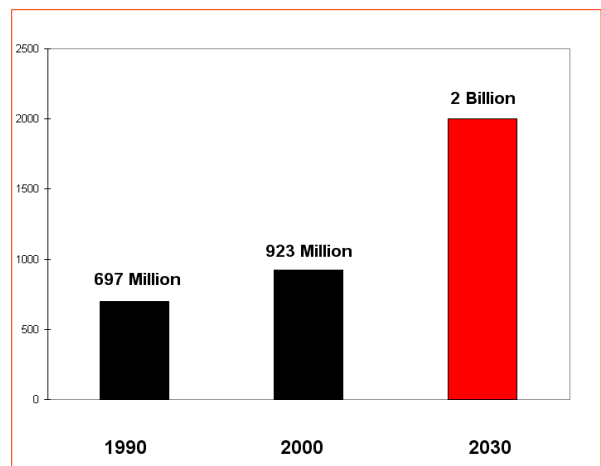
One problem I see is that this type of concentrated low-income housing has the potential to become a slum, but careful supervision and restrictive occupancy rules that the residents would have to agree to in order to move in should prevent this.



Also, if in fact the residents are teachers, police and firefighters as is promised by the purveyors of poverty, then there would be an even lower likelihood of problems. Another problem is that the city would have to come up with all of the money for this project, although we might be eligible for money from the state. The rents that the residents pay would mostly cover the continuing expenses of operating the area.

We might even be able to get a non-profit to operate the site on behalf of the city. It is also possible that not all of the units would be rented because of the lack of qualified candidates. In that case we would still have met the state's goal.

I would only support this extreme alternative if the city council does not have the strength to challenge the housing code in court. It would put the city in the position of being a socialist provider of housing, quite the opposite of what I and most other Mission Viejo residents believe. It might be just what we need to point out the stupidity of the state's housing code.



THE GROWTH OF SLUMS WORLDWIDE

www.worldfuturefund.org/.../Slums%20Chart.htm

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am opposed to low-cost housing anywhere in Mission Viejo, but my objections may be different from yours. The area where I live is still a lovely community but at great cost to the homeowners who try to preserve a nice neighborhood despite the effects of "affordable" housing. My personal reason is strictly from a selfish viewpoint: the value of my property will drop dramatically due to the NEW "affordable" homes that in very short order will also become blight in this beautiful

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)
city.

As an involved homeowner, I see firsthand every day how people who can afford only low-cost housing respond to the benefits of their state-assisted "handout." They leave a trail of dirty diapers, not-always-empty six-packs of beer, partially eaten fast food, containers and plastic water bottles, and they never pick up after their pets, kids or guests. They EXPECT someone else to clean up after them.

In an effort to maintain a decent, respectable-looking neighborhood, we pay someone to walk the property each day and pick up trash from our lawns and parkways. Trash left by lazy, inconsiderate benefactors of state-assisted, low-cost, affordable housing shows how little they think of their homes, neighbors and city. Every single week, our property manager walks the property, writing violations for bent and broken screens, trash on patios that extends above the fence line, bed sheets used as window coverings, brooms and mops on decks, as well as empty boxes, broken furniture and sliding closet doors. We also see every conceivable kind of discarded appliance left sitting in the common area because people are too lazy to call Waste Management for a bulky item pickup and just do not give a damn! Occupants ignore broken, falling-apart homeowner-owned patio fences and covers because they cannot afford or are just too lazy to fix them.

We pay our management company extra to have violation letters sent after a certain number of infractions (40), and we exceed that number every single month. We've started having special hearings to keep up with the violations and prevent the area from becoming a slum, which it would quickly become without an active board of directors! Many decent, taxpaying, homeowners have sold and are in the process of selling their homes and moved away because the slackers are ENTITLED to own their own home and do as they damn well please without considering anyone else.

The state-assisted benefactors give no thought to the people who actually worked and PAID for their home, sacrificed to come up with a down payment, went without a new car, new clothes, etc., in order to pay back their loan, worked two jobs and worried over paying property

taxes and association dues. They EARNED every penny and never once EXPECTED the state, county or city to subsidize them. All this was done while taking care of their own kids!

Every single day the offspring of low-cost, affordable-housing recipients are without adult supervision, causing vandalism, (21 sprinkler heads snapped off in one day!), broken split-rail fences, eggs thrown on cars, trash, graffiti, foul language, disrespectful actions towards residents and vendors, theft, broken car and home windows and intimidation of younger children. These kids create a danger to drivers in the area as they ride their skateboards, bikes and old desk chairs down the hilly city and private streets.

City Council members, think about what you are doing. You still have time to change the outcome of the "affordable housing" issue and do the right thing by your city.

V. Dunn
W. Drudy
Mission Viejo



The Buzz

November 22

At a Planning Commission meeting a month before the election, Planning Commissioner Brad Morton speculated about the future makeup of the commission. He said the Nov. 7 city election might bring about major changes. Because commissioners are appointed by council members, three new council members would likely mean three new commissioners. Despite all three incumbents winning (or appearing to win in the case of Lance MacLean), Morton was probably correct about major changes.



For the benefit of those who don't follow Planning Commission meetings, the commission-

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

ers are Brad Morton (appointed by Gail Reavis), Neil Lonsinger (Trish Kelley), Richard Schweinberg (John Paul Ledesma), Chandra Krout (Frank Ury) and Richard Sandzimier (Lance MacLean). Morton recently sent an email to the council, indicating his disinclination to continue serving on the commission. Lonsinger will likely not be reappointed by Trish Kelley because he ran against her. Krout recently resigned from the Planning Commission and will not serve out the remainder of her term.

★★★★★

Krout's resignation doesn't surprise some of those who attend Planning Commission meetings. Krout's disinterest has been noticeable.

In recent months, she's been frequently absent or late to arrive. She complained that the meetings were too time-consuming, and she appeared unprepared – as if she hadn't read the agenda packet. A Mission Viejo resident of three years, Krout had no previous history of participation in city issues.

Frank Ury as a self-proclaimed conservative Republican appointed Krout after she changed her voter registration from Democrat to Decline To State – likely at his urging. Will "Republican" Ury attempt to replace Krout with another lifelong Democrat – Diane Greenwood? The Republican-Democrat issue is not of great significance on the commission, but Ury seems to have pulled the wool over the eyes of his Republican brethren that he's still in the fold.

★★★★★

One of Greenwood's campaign workers circulated yet another nasty email last week regarding campaign donations to the incumbents. Among other issues about his own choice of candidates, he failed to mention that Greenwood, Bill Barker and Justin McCusker benefited from a \$5,000 donation from Steadfast to the Political Action Committee supporting them. What was the motive of Steadfast, considering the current council approved their affordable housing project by a 5-0 vote last year? Don't forget that Steadfast tried to buy its way out of the affordable requirement with a push

for an in-lieu fee. Ury and MacLean favored the in-lieu fee, but Reavis, Ledesma and Kelley voted against it. Steadfast evidently believed it could improve its odds of wriggling out of the affordable units with a vote from Greenwood, Barker or McCusker, should any of them win a council seat.

★★★★★

In a rehash of the council election, blog staffers asked why anyone would vote for Greenwood, who currently trails MacLean by 96 votes while the last of the provisional ballots are being counted. Most people explained they would rather have anyone but MacLean on the council. This sentiment is stunning, considering Greenwood is likely the most contentious candidate who has ever run for Mission Viejo City Council. Residents apparently would prefer constant upheaval to MacLean's arrogance and bad decisions.

★★★★★

Problems continue in the Capistrano Unified School District. Almost immediately after the election, The Orange County Register reported the district will make major cuts this year and next. When three new board members are seated at the Dec. 11 board meeting, their first job will be "trimming" \$9.4 million in midyear budget cuts. An additional \$9 million in costs must be eliminated after the first of the year according to interim Supt. Charles McCully. Just in case the new board members don't have enough challenges, the district will also revisit school boundaries. Following the recall attempt of all seven trustees in 2005, the district smoothed things over with parents through such peace offerings as maintaining reduced class size. Information emerged that the administration was trying to look good at the expense of digging into district reserves. If the sale of the administrative Taj Mahal in San Juan Capistrano is not already under serious consid-



D.H. MARSH



