

ACONA Meeting Notes, March 24, 2015

Following introductions the following topics were covered:

Code Enforcement

Alex Garcia, Zoning Enforcement, LA County

Tim Grover & Miguel Garcia, Building and Safety, LA County Dept. of Public Works

- Regional Planning enforces storage of inoperable vehicles, parking of vehicles in yards, over-height walls, fences, hedges (any over 6' require a permit), garage conversions, development encroaching into required setbacks, damage/encroachment into protected areas of oak trees (5' outside of drip line), prohibited signage, parking RVs in the driveway.
- Building & Safety also enforces inoperable vehicles and garage conversions; enforces unpermitted grading, unpermitted construction, junk/debris/overgrown vegetation, vacant/vandalized structures.
- Any structure over 120 sq. ft. requires a permit.
- Replacing a trap on your sink requires a permit.
- Will board up fire-damaged or vandalized property. (Usually referred by law enforcement or fire department.)
- Complaint-based: they don't act unless they receive a complaint. Complaints can be anonymous, but the county prefers to collect your name and contact information for their records.
- Multidisciplinary teams are sent out to address egregious violations.
- Cannot go into a home, but can clean up (or require cleanup of) the outside.
- Front yard setback in Altadena is 20', for purposes of fence/wall height.
- Altadena Town Council is working on addressing the fence issue via modifying the Community Standards District (CSD).
- You can trim an oak tree branch that's less than 2" in diameter (the width of a dollar bill).

Updates

Nixel and Social Media --

Capt. Chris Reed; Lt. Robert Lewis; Dty. Dan Paige

- Crime in Altadena was down 18% last year. Down 38% YTD.
- Thanks to Supervisor Antonovich, three new deputy positions were added to the station, \$10K for search and rescue.
- To sign up for Nixle, go to nixle.com or text your zip code to 888777 on your cellphone. Nationwide service, so you can type in any ZIP code to get info.
- Altadena Sheriff's Station has a Twitter account (@ALDLASD) and a Facebook account.
- Nextdoor (nextdoor.com) is a neighborhood social networking service. Neighborhood-specific; is similar to a bulletin board.
- Community Advisory Committee: meets once a month to address community issues. Want representation from each census tract. The CAC is looking for new members. Contact Captain Reed if you are interested.

Map Your Neighborhood --

Steve Reagan, MYN Committee Chair

- 42% of the people who attended the last ACONA meeting are now trained.
- 28 new facilitators trained; eight MYN meetings pending; 32 total facilitators available
- Send an email to myl@altadenacert.org to schedule a meeting.

Drought --
Elliot Gold

- We would need to have consistent rain for 3-5 years to replenish the aquifer.
- Weather statistics are available at www.noaa.gov.

Q&A:

- Cargo containers: not allowed
- Green pools: are a health concern and should be reported. The county has ways to treat the pools.
- Garage conversions: Every house has to have two covered parking spaces. If you can meet that requirement (by adding a carport, for example), you can convert a garage to habitable space, but you still have to go through the permitting process.
- Oak trees: you can get an emergency oak tree permit (for example if a tree is damaged and needs to be cut down).
- Oak trees: why can you plant a lawn under an oak tree that will ultimately kill the tree due to overwatering? You can water an oak tree during the regular rainy season (October-April) but you can kill it if you water outside of that period.
- What's the amount of time to address a violation? Could be 5 months. Citizens can follow up to get information on progress.
- Sometimes there has to be some investigation before a notice of violation is sent.
- Front yard fences can be 42" high and built without a permit. Fences 6' or higher require a permit.
- Alta Pasa Community Improvement Center has the contract to do handywork service for people who need to have work done but don't have the resources. There is an application process.