

CITY COUNCIL MEETING RECAP — 3/23/2021

Providence Mission Hospital Increases Security

Providence Mission Hospital officials presented a four-point program designed to enhance security at the facility. Modifications include the installation of additional security cameras and additional security patrols. These measures were taken in response to an attempted carjacking that occurred in October 2020. There is some speculation that the hospital's increased number bed for substance abuse patients is increasing negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. Hopefully these measures will help.

George Weiss: *I will be working with residents in South Laguna to seek their recommendations for additional measures that will help keep the surrounding neighborhood safe.*

City Council Meetings To Reconvene At City Hall

The City Council unanimously agreed to reconvene meetings in person with City Council members and staff. The public will be allowed to address the City Council in person, however there will be no seating for residents in Council Chambers until the city reaches a higher level of Covid safety. Until then, residents may tune in to Channel 852, get online to watch the meetings, or listen to the meeting via the telephone (see the LINKS tab on the navigation bar for further sign-in details).

George Weiss: *Im looking forward to returning to the City Council Chambers for meetings. It is a step back to normalcy and the much-needed, in-person participation of residents in city governance.*

City Council Provides Community Assistance and Cultural Arts Grants

The City Council voted unanimously to provide \$250,000 in grants for community assistance organizations and another \$200,000 in funding for arts organizations. Arts organization grants are approved by the Arts Commission, while the Community Assistance Grants are approved by the City Council.

George Weiss: *Many arts organizations received funding from both grant programs. I have recommended that art organizations receive grant funding only from the Arts Grants programs so that funding decisions are being made equitably. I have made other suggestions that will make applications more transparent and accountable for the funds being spent.*

Free, Live, Public Music Event – May 2

Laguna Beach Live will hold a live music event at no charge on May 2 at Parking Lot 10. See this URL for more information: www.lagunabeachlive.org

Canyon View Drive Private Gate Issue Remanded Back To Design Review Board For Further Public Hearing and Appeals

The City Council voted 4-1, with Councilman Blake dissenting, to remand this issue back to the Design Review Board. In 1993, a large private gate was installed. Many residents testified that the gate created a safety and public nuisance, while the developer wanted to keep the gate as-is to maintain the exclusivity of his residential project. Visit the City website to see when future action and further public testimony can be given to the Design Review Board regarding this matter.

Design Review Board Grants Approvals On 1001 San Jose Residence

The City Council voted 3-2 to uphold a 5-0. Design Review Board decision to allow this residential project to move ahead, but with many variances. The foundation for this residence was laid in 2015 , but one part of it was 21 inches higher than the approved plans. The homeowner sued the contractors and won a settlement of \$1.37 million, ostensibly to bring the project into compliance. Instead, the homeowner later sought approvals without mitigating the site. The Design Review Board granted these approvals in 2020. Appeals based on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) were dismissed.

OTHER NEWS

Rivian Theater Plans Passes Key Appeal, Moves Forward

The proposed Rivian Theater passed another milestone when the time for filing an appeal to the Coastal Commission for parking elapsed on Wednesday, March 25th. Since the theater has not been operating per its City-issued conditional use permit, a Coastal Commission appeal could have been filed regarding its grandfathered-in parking.

***George Weiss:** I spoke with one party which has appealed many projects in Laguna Beach. While this group felt Rivian was not in compliance with the City's Local Coastal Plan, they decided to forgo an appeal. The Rivian project promises to provide a tremendous amount of good for Laguna Beach and that an appeal could jeopardize the restoration of the theater. Thanks to this group for its forbearance and cooperation.*