
MEETING MINUTES

**North Tustin Advisory Committee (NTAC)
Wednesday, October 18, 2023
7pm @ Tustin Unified School District boardroom**

I. CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE

David Feldberg called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with the flag salute led by Pat Welch.

- *NTAC members in attendance:* David Feldberg, Kendra Carney Mehr, Mike Fioravanti, and Pat Welch.
- *County of Orange attendees:* Arturo Cervantes and Denis Bilodeau

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Mike Fioravanti made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2023 meeting. Kendra Carney Mehr seconded the motion. The committee then voted to approve the minutes with all in favor.

III. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

No committee business was discussed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Item #1

Tabled at the September 20, 2023 NTAC meeting pending additional conclusions from the traffic study required by the County.

Project: Project: PA23-0052 Use Permit for Expansion of an Existing Educational Institution

Owner: David R. and Stacey Jackson

Agent: Chad Jackson

Representative: Justin Tucker, Traffic Engineer, RK Engineering Group, Inc.

Location: 12421 Newport Ave (APN: 401-191-02) and 12381 Newport Ave (APN: 401-191-25)

Proposal: A Use Permit to allow for the Fairmont School, located at 12421 Newport Avenue, to expand their operation into the adjacent Christian Science Church, located at 12381 Newport Avenue, expand the enrollment capacity from 320 to 420 students, and make interior modifications to the existing school and church buildings. The two lots will be merged under single ownership and no new buildings are proposed.

The Committee Members asked several questions of County staff and the Applicant's consultant who prepared the traffic study. David Feldberg inquired about the various trips documented in the study. Kendra Carney Mehr asked about safety and whether a queuing study was performed that considered traffic turning right from the church parking lot and making an immediate right into the school parking lot/drop off zone. Mike Fioavanti clarified that the traffic was not just school traffic but also general traffic on Newport Boulevard. Pat Welch asked whether there were any recommendations to address the traffic concerns relating to Fairmont's school use.

The County staff present explained that the traffic study showed the proposed use satisfied the County's requirements and shared that there would be a mitigation monitoring program to address potential queuing on the street.

The following individuals provided public comment:

- George Jimenez, a neighbor, stated concerns regarding the existing number of students, any expansion to the number of students permitted, and the current traffic and safety issues relating to illegal U-turns at Newport Avenue and Vanderlip, illegal parking, and congestion. He also asked the school to purchase his property and turn it into a parking lot.
- Richard Nelson - lives near the end of Red Hill, represents the Foothill Community Association. Opposes the Project unless there are mitigations - 1. Address overcapacity on Vanderlip and 2. Address the illegal u-turns from Northbound Newport.
- John Sandoval: A neighbor, expressed concern regarding the danger of illegal U-turns, further concerned the fence proposed to surround the school will make the neighborhood look like a prison, and disputed the applicant's statements that they have worked with the neighborhood for expansion and improvements. Expressed further displeasure with the noise from the PA sound system and late music with a loud base.
- Dean McCabe: He lives on the adjacent street behind the school and is concerned about vehicle stacking from the church onto Newport Avenue to turn right again into the school. He is also concerned about parking and illegal U-turns.
- Russ Tanner: He lives near Holt and 17th, drives down Vanderlip all of the time, and drops off one of his children at Fairmont. He stated that there are many students who attend Fairmont and have siblings who will attend so 100 new students will not happen overnight and does not mean 100 more cars. He understands the concerns but thinks this can be addressed. Has had kids at Fairmont for 12 years. Traffic issues are law enforcement matters not the school's responsibility. Kids are excited about the expansion.
- Colin Andrews: He stated he lives directly behind the school. He expressed concern that the school has grown over time, he cannot avoid certain times and fights traffic at all schools in the surrounding community, enforcement of traffic laws is not happening, Sheriff is watching but not doing anything. The traffic is bad for evening and weekend events, and that cars are blocking driveway on Cameron Street behind the school. He acknowledged that despite studies, cannot control individual drivers.
- Paula May - She stated she lives kitty corner across from the church. Observed that the parking lot was really empty and is now completely full all of the time, can see how people are trying to leave but can't get out on Newport so they try

to leave on Vanderlip. Residents are having to accommodate Fairmont's traffic and not the other way around. Lots of cars blocking residents' parking.

- Harold Dilbeck: A neighbor, complained that there was not enough information provided to the NTAC to make a reasonable decision. He further complained about the traffic, the noise, and the parking. Mr. Dilbeck provided a memo with signatures from several other individuals, complained about the traffic study, complained about the parking, the stacking, and attempted to discredit the traffic study. Expressed a concern that excessive speed through the school zone is also a problem - stated he wants to eliminate the reduced speed sign near the school as well.

Mr. Jackson responded to the neighbor concerns. He stated that the wrought iron fence surrounding the school does not look like a prison fence, asserted that traffic on Venderlip is not caused by parents, the vast majority are northbound on Newport and then turn left on Vanderlip go through the church, stack in front of the school, working to address obstacles in the bike lane. He further indicated that there is no working PA system at the school, only a single speaker used for flag salute, pointed toward the school, not the residents, once a week. He acknowledged there is a parking deficiency if the church is used concurrently with the school, but said there is no parking deficiency otherwise.

The Committee members received the comments and responses from the applicant. The County represented that a traffic study was still ongoing. Due to the number of concerns regarding the traffic and parking, the Committee asked for consideration of the item to resume upon completion of the traffic study.

Mike Fioravanti moved that the Committee recommend the County approve the Use Permit. **Kendra Carney Mehr** proposed a friendly amendment to further recommend the County extend the time for mitigation monitoring to 18 months or until three months after the school reaches its full capacity; that the County review the safety concerns relating to the right turn from the church parking lot into the school parking lot/drop-off zone, and that the County request law enforcement monitor the Newport/Vanderlip intersection for illegal U-turns. **Mike Fioravanti** accepted the friendly amendment. **David Feldberg** seconded the motion. Mike Fioravanti, Kendra Carney Mehr, and David Feldberg approved the motion. Pat Welch opposed the motion. Motion approved.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mike Fioravanti made a motion to adjourn. **Kendra Carney Mehr** seconded the motion. The remaining committee members present all voted in favor. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

*Meeting notes compiled by Kendra Carney Mehr (Secretary)
October 20, 2023*