



Newport Beach Women's Democratic Club

Advocating for Democratic Values

in Newport Beach and neighboring communities

PO Box 11761 | Newport Beach, CA 92658

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NBWDC Governmental Activism Committee Report

By Kathleen Andrews, Committee Chair

Newport Beach City Council Recap - February 25, 2020



[City Council meeting agendas and videos are located here.](#)

Kathy's Commentary

The main topics of discussion at this week's meeting of the Council were the optimism among those fond of preserving Banning Ranch post-\$50M donation, and that the city is making steps toward providing some funding for a commercial builder to construct permanent residential housing for the currently unhoused.

Both Karen Tringali and yours truly had small portions of our allotted 15 minutes of fame during **this meeting**. It is the **first study session I've ever attended**, and **only the second time I have made comments to the council**. Read on:

Study Session:

The topic of the study session was Newport Banning Ranch. Three members of the board of the Banning Ranch Conservancy made a presentation. The donation of \$50 million by a Newport Beach couple has been a game-changer, in making the Orange County Coastal Park closer to **being a reality**. O'Neill asked if the current plan includes any residential units, and emphasized the 4300 housing units the state is requiring. Banning Ranch replied that the Coastal Commission has designated most of the area as **not able to be built upon at all**. O'Neill **pushed back** and asked, if the Coastal Commission staff were replaced with other people, and then would reverse

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
Margaret Mead



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the ESHA designations, would the plan include any housing, and the Banning Ranch staff reiterated that **most of the area has been designated ESHA so development can't be made on the land**. During public comments, Kathleen Andrews got brave and said enthusiastic things about how as the population of OC goes up, the value of open space as open space also goes up, and expressed confidence that the city can increase the number of residential units and keep the open space.



Main Council Meeting:

Celebrating the Corona del Mar Residents Association, started in 1987, recognized Karen Tringali for serving in that organization over the past 20 in every one of the **Association's many leadership roles. Including for the past 14 years in the CERT program. She was given a very large certificate which uses the word 'whereas' frequently, and she said a few words of appreciation to the Council. The Resident's Association was a springboard for her involvement in other community organizations in the broader Newport Beach. She spoke of the collective will to make things better, working with Council and all city staff.**

Oral Reports from Council:

Herdman sits on the OC Vector Control Board, and April 20th starts Mosquito Awareness Month. Went to a meeting with Harley Rouda on aviation issues, along with six FAA representatives who flew in from Washington DC. Talked about forming a task force with the goal of relief from **overflight noise and pollution. He's hopeful of receiving cooperation from the FAA and even the OC Board of Supervisors.** He attended a meeting of the Corona Del Mar Residents Association.

Dixon attended the 2020 Water Quality policy meeting. Attended a re-dedication of the Newport Island Park. Had a ribbon-cutting ceremony today.

Muldoon attended a 104-year birthday party celebration: Ms. Eleanor Reicher, the oldest resident of the city.



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Brenner mentioned she joined Costa Mesa's Amicus brief to support preventing Corona virus at the Fairview Development center. Wrote that this past weekend. UCI's Institute of Traffic Studies would like to work with the City to improve traffic. Met with ad Hoc homeless committee: working on partnering with the county on the behavioral health aspects of homelessness. Attended OC Tax luncheon. Will meet with an organization called HomeAid next week.

Duffield: City did not make the work list for dredging our federal channels in 2020, he's hopeful to get on their budget for 2021.

O'Neill: Attended the hearing yesterday on the Costa Mesa Lawsuit/injunction of transporting corona virus patients to Fairview Development Center. Spirit Run coming up. Thursday Feb 27th in the library Friends Room meeting on Youth Homeless.

Muldoon wants to save the Newport Winery, which is now known less for growing wine than being a place for people to go to drink wine, and threatens to go out of business due to fines. Suggests **modifying the winery's hours, etc.**

Item 4 on agenda is for updating the Newport Beach Municipal Code for Short Term Lodging. The ordinance has been referred back to the subcommittee. All verbal and written comments about short term lodging has been forwarded to the subcommittee.

Motion on Lido Island hedge heights passed 7 to 0, to adopt the ordinance as written.

Public Hearing on Item 17, to amend the city Municipal Code to adopt the 2019 Edition of the California Fire Code. Adopted by Council 5 to 0, with **O'Neill recusing himself due to real property interest.**

Current Business:

City has come up with a Proposed Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Permanent Supportive Housing Project: showed example of a project called the Cove, which is in Newport Beach for veterans, also a 75-unit housing project which will open shortly in Santa Ana.

Vote to what kind of permanent supportive housing to build, based on the types of homeless in the city: many of them are elderly. Envision about 60 units, plus physical therapy and other services.



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City has no parcel of land to donate, so want to find out what financial commitment the city may want to make to allow a private developer to undertake the project. Suggest sources of funding may include the low-income requirement.

At the end of the RFQ process staff will return to Council with qualified developers. This action does not approve a project at this time.

Muldoon asked if the permanent supportive housing wouldn't solve the camping issue, what is the purpose? City Manager asked that this would be a longer-term solution, looking ahead. City is still also looking for housing of short-term homeless.

Muldoon wants to see this happening with private grants, on private property, rather than city money intended for immediate concerns. Supports the action, but wants to see go in the direction of private funds. Herdman asks if funding source might be from the Housing Trust.

Avery notes this is humbling in all that it will take to make this work. Acknowledges this project will take 3 or more years, so important to start now. Said other kind words about partnership to **make this critical work to be done, and he's supportive of the effort, agrees it's incumbent on the city to undertake the project.**

O'Neill says focus is on seniors, but ought to also be on families and veteran homeless. Suggests total commitment ought to be about \$3M, with half for permanent, and half for a shelter. If it's more, need a rationale on why it's more, and how much more.

Vote: 6 to 0, with Dixon absent.