

Silver Lake Neighborhood Council  
GOVERNING BOARD  
SPECIAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING (Draft) Minutes  
Thursday, April 20, 2017,  
7:00 p.m.  
Ivanhoe Elementary School  
2828 Herkimer St  
Los Angeles, CA 90039

**1.Call to Order**

The meeting began at 7:01pm with 8 Board members present.

**2. Roll Call**

Attending Board Members:

Anne Marie Johnson, Co-Chair  
Jerome Courshon, Vice Chair  
Scott Plante, Co-Chair  
Patty Jausoro  
Douglas J. Loewy  
Terrence Jackson, Treasurer  
Betsy Smith Isroelit  
Barbara Ringuette (arrived late)  
Hanna Anderson, Assistant Secretary (arrived late)  
Taryn Poole

Non-Attending Board Members:

Adam Somilleda  
Nicholas Somilleda  
Caroline Pham  
Antonio Stifano  
Elizabeth Torres  
Rusty Millar  
Heather Carson  
Glenn Harrell  
Tracey Woolfolk  
Stacey Boucher  
Bob Lisauskas

**3. Welcome, introductions and rules.**

Silver Lake Neighborhood Council Co-Chair Anne-Marie Johnson introduced the meeting and explained how it would work. There will be no actions at this meeting, she said. This is a listening meeting.

She noted that *Adam Miller, Neighborhood Advocate for Council Member David Ryu, Fourth District (CD4)* and Dawn from the Department of Water and Power (DWP) are here.

The draft minutes from this gathering will go to City agencies. It will benefit the DWP to receive your comments verbatim. Council Members David Ryu and Mitch O'Farrell have said that they believe in transparency and inclusion, she added.

There will be two minutes for audience comments. We believe in energized and excited communications but not abuse. We will remind you of kindness. If you speak out twice we'll have a recess and remove you from the room, she warned. The meeting will end at 8:25pm.

This meeting is for the walking path. If you bring up other issues, Johnson said that she will shut you down.

You're talking about the dam, asked a Woman? Johnson said correct. This project was announced in February by the Council Member and the DWP. This is a walking path on the southern dam, closest to Dwayne and West Silver Lake Drive. There is a gate. It's in the 2000 Master Plan. They announced on March 22 that this was moving forward.

How do you get to the walking path, asked a stakeholder. There's a security gate for DWP that provides access, replied Johnson.

They also announced some form of the detour path, is that included, asked the stakeholder. Johnson replied yes. Does everyone remember the detour path during the construction, asked Johnson. This was along West Silver Lake Drive, This is the Telsa Ivanhoe path.

(Note: Hannah Anderson and Barbara Ringuette arrived by 7:11pm)

#### **4. Discussion Item Only: (NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN)**

**The potential installation of public walking paths on the southern dam of the Silver Lake Reservoir and closer to the Ivanhoe Reservoir. This Special Meeting is being held to provide information only. The goal is to listen to those who are interested in the walking paths of the Silver Lake Reservoir Complex. We will be discussing walking paths *ONLY*.**

#### STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS:

*Karen Singer:*

She has been a Silver Lake resident since 1998. She heard about the chain link fences for the walkway. DWP tried something like this in 2010. That plan for Tesla has parallels with the Grassy Hill plan. This plan should be abandoned. It's a public safety hazard. It's a trap that will encourage crime. It's the same for the new path.

It would encourage muggings as walkers trapped would be on an enclosed space. The southern walkway also has coyotes. What would you do if a coyote approached you? The Fire Department has issues about reaching people on this path. If the enclosed Tesla path was a public safety hazard, the same can be said for the new grassy hill plan.

*Robert Woolrich:*

Why spend tax dollars for something unneeded?

He likes beautification by landscaping and removing fences. But this plan puts up fences. It's ridiculous and ugly. This corner is described as the jewel of Silver Lake. The ridge of Grassy Knoll is a wildlife corridor.

Council Members O'Farrell and Ryu said transparency and community outreach would be their guide. Those most impacted by change would be given the greatest consideration. This is deemed too controversial to gain consent.

Few knew of this plan. This is their first change to make good on promise of transparency.

*A Woman:*

How much will this cost? Who will pay for it?

*Michael Stallcut:*

He has been a resident of Silver Lake for 30 years. He is looking forward to the new paths. This represents new opportunities to make use of open space and new use of reservoir grounds.

Many of these objections raised tonight were also made against the meadow. That's turned out to be a nice open space that we can use. This will be the same.

The south end plan is different from north end path. It won't look into people's homes. If we say no to this, we're saying no to more open space and new parkland in our community. That's a strange thing to say.

*Hugh:*

I've been talking at City Hall. People will be able to see what this area looked like in 1890 near near reservoir. It was rolling hills, a green place with Native American settlements and animals. There is only a little belt left, the reservoir.

There's not a lot of trees there. (It was a redwood forest). Can't we leave a little space for animals? Everybody's welcome here. Let's leave a little space for wildlife and green life.

*Josh Sussman:*

He's been a resident for about 4 years. Concerns by residents most affected should be considered heavily. He lives at bottom of the path. This will represent an increased security risk in an already affected area.

His car has been robbed 3 times. His house has been broken into. You could only see into his house from the top of the ridge. That increases security risk for me and my family. That's a huge issue for me.

There doesn't seem to be any transparency about this. He heard about this meeting from a neighbor. He said that he is also struggling to find the purpose for this path. You have to weigh costs and benefits.

*Sandy Kay:*

She lives on Grand Street. It sucks. She's talked to O'Farrell and others.

This is a great thing but it's crowded in Silver Lake. It's ridiculous. People don't care about us. It's the only way to get from the 5 or 2 freeway to the 101 freeway. This would be great except that people can't figure out how to route people around Dodger Stadium.

She expressed concern about noise pollution. She can't concentrate in her house. There are 4,000 cars a day passing by. During the Clinton Administration there was funding. DWP spent it on environmental reports and a sound wall.

Johnson repeated her instructions for how the meeting would work and its purpose for the many people who arrived late.

(Note that Adam Miller, Neighborhood Advocate for Council Member David Ryu, Fourth District (CD4) ([adam.miller@lacity.org](mailto:adam.miller@lacity.org) 323-957-6415, 213-473-7004) left the meeting at 7:26pm.)

*Michael Matheson:*

He thanked the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council for having this town hall meeting. He was Chair of the Reservoir Committee for 5 years. He didn't miss a single meeting. He is shocked to learn about this so late. The City replied to him by saying that they've been working with the Reservoir Conservancy about this. He said that that group doesn't represent him. This was approved by 3 groups but residents weren't informed. What happened to transparency? The process, he has a problem with this. There has been no community input. This is a fait accompli. I'm not happy. There was applause.

*Jerry Harrison:*

He's lived in Silver Lake since 1980. He likes the walking path. It's magnificent. We take advantage of it every day despite early concerns. This thing about a path on the dam is baffling. I agree that I don't see a purpose for it. He said that he didn't know about it. He expressed security concerns.

He feels that other projects are more important: Restoring the detour from Tesla, you immediately felt like you were in the wood. There is also talk of eucalyptus grove. It would be a delightful walking path.

*A Woman:*

I wasn't sure which path you were discussing. Now I know and I have an opinion. Being ignorant never stopped me.

There is a sense that lots of community language is being thrown around without taking account that there are real people around the lake who's needs must be taken into account. There is a human being who needs peace and quiet, she said referring to the man who's been robbed.

The idea that we were not consulted and I'm totally shocked. She added that anybody who wants to walk there will get the stench from the dog path so it won't be worth it.

*Mike:*

He said that he had concerns about crowds, traffic, noise, and harming animals.

He was aware of walking path plans. Anything that doesn't disturb animals won't be so bad. However, he is opposed to walking through the eucalyptus grove.

Johnson pointed out that a path through the eucalyptus grove was never mentioned at the March 22 at meeting. Various audience members responded that it wasn't agreed, it was dictated.

A Woman asked whether there is a picture of the proposed path? Johnson said there are no renderings. We are just receiving information from the audience so that the minutes can be given to City agencies.

*Sally Herman:*

She said that she has been a resident for 15 years. She lives right along the walking path. She's been burglarized so she is concerned about safety. She doesn't think a southern path should be high priority. Maintenance is her concern. The lack of maintenance on the southern end makes me think there won't be maintenance for new path. Adding more responsibility to an agency that doesn't take care of what's already there isn't a good idea. This doesn't seem like a really well hatched plan.

*Michael Matheson:*

Is anyone here from the Reservoir Conservancy, Silver Lake Forward, or the Council Districts? Noting that those organizations weren't represented (Adam Miller, the field representative for CD4 had left the meeting by this time), he said they didn't think this was important enough to send someone here to represent their views.

Janicz Curren said this is the first time I've heard that there are resources to have improvements. Why has there been no sidewalk for 30 years? I question their use of priorities.

*Carolyn Cooper:*

She has been a resident since 1985. Her son grew up at the Silver Lake Recreation Center. She said it would be helpful if we saw a rendering. I've been at every single DWP meeting about the Reservoir issue, she said. She wants to see how would the fencing be on the south end? She wonders about the landscaping? Maybe add trees to avoid views into properties, she suggested. It would be helpful if we saw different visions. Right now, we're using our imaginations for how this will look.

She believes that the Recreation and Parks Department will take care of the recreation center and that DWP will take care of the reservoir. If the path is constructed by the DWP, would the DWP maintain it?

*Sarah Ellenburg:*

This is her first Silver Lake Neighborhood Council meeting. There was applause. She lives south of the reservoir, close by. Her kids are growing up at the recreation center. My first instinct is to feel positively about this project. Her son crawls under the fence now to fetch balls in that area.

*Lorraine Sails:*

She is a homeowner who loves the idea of walking paths so that more people can access the area everyday. It would be such a lovely thing for our community to enjoy. She also said that it was horrible to hear about the break-ins. We use shutters and blinds so people can't see into our house. She wants people to see the beauty of the reservoir. She supports the path.

*Valerie Bonne:*

We live right on the reservoir. She said that she is in support of the walking path. She is a big proponent of removing the fence, which is not aesthetically pleasing. In Los Angeles we don't have many opportunities to have good nature areas. She wants to be a voice for opening up and enjoying nature.

*Carolyn Cooper:*

O'Farrell said we're going to address opening the south side of the reservoir, she said, referencing her meeting notes. No one at that meeting addressed that. That was out of the blue. It was "shitty". Politics is like that. You're going to do what you're going to do (referring to the DWP).

Regarding the dog park, she said that she lives across the street from the dog park. She wants the fence in front of the dog park replaced. It's rusted and nasty. There has been no response from the City about this. What will happen here? She's right about the maintenance. There is no accountability. Get the men out and let the women handle it.

*Josh Sussman:*

A reasonable expansion of paths would be great. But this path has all of these issues, especially security. There is a group of people who live at the bottom of the south reservoir. He said that he would use shutters if he

felt that that would protect him. However, this creates a new vantage point against security. He said that he'd called the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) yesterday to see what they would do. They said they lack resources and won't do anything. These issues will be exacerbated by this path.

*A Woman:*

She said that she is a second generation Silver Lake person. Reservoir use should be open and balanced. Coyotes are an issue. People talk about Silver Lake being a world class destination. The landscaping is really lacking. How can you have a world class path the way it is now? It needs to be reassessed.

*A Man:*

I like it.

*Sarah Ellenburg:*

She said that she lives just off the reservoir. I think a path would be great. There was a similar discussion with concerns expressed about the meadow. It's been an amazing addition. Historically, Los Angeles has the least amount of park space of any major US city. She reminded the audience that we are part of a larger community. She expressed concern about open space for our children. She said is confused about what the fundamental concern is here.

*Greg Baxter:*

He said that he's lived by the reservoir for 3 years and been a Los Angeles resident for 30 years. He is concerned that we didn't know they were building paths. That frightens me. The idea of Silver Lake as a world class destination is also scary. Things need to be addressed as a community, not as politicians. As a resident, I want a voice. Are they really building it? I have no clue.

Johnson urged the audience to sign up for the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council newsletter. Also, come to our monthly meetings here. The next meeting is May 3.

Baxter asked whether there will be a dam at the south end of the park? Where will the other one be? Johnson explained. It's the diversion. This was reported by the DWP at the March 22 meeting, she said.

*Brian Welch:*



He said that he is a homeowner. I thought this meeting was going to have information. It just seems lots of people with opinions without any DWP information about the path. He looked online and saw nothing. Why are we meeting when there's no information. I was at the March 22 meeting. It was mentioned in passing. There's been no more information since then except a flyer about this meeting that he received this morning. He requests that if you want to have a discussion, we should have information.

Johnson explained that sometimes it's more important for agencies to get gut reactions from communities. It's better to be ahead of the 8 ball, trying to get something changed before it's approved by a City agency. How do I know whether I'm ahead of or behind the 8 ball, asked Welch.

*Karen Singer:*

This is one of the outrageous things about the proposal. I spoke with Susan Rowghani (the DWP Director of Water, Engineering and Technical Services (susan.rowghani@ladwp.com)) at the end of the March 22 meeting and asked about the plan. She replied that it was a request from one group and will be completed by June. This plan includes 2 major fences. Doesn't that require State approval?

She said that she's not against walking paths but this path presents issues. They want to put fences up, not take them down. This is a wildlife corridor. We see the coyotes at night on the ridge. No study has been done about this to my knowledge.

*A Woman:*

She said that she is concerned that there was no drawing. She heard through neighbors that this was a done deal approved by the DWP and Council Member Ryu.

Referring to another plan for a path, she said that everyone loved it. It would have a view. For this plan, where is the drawing and what is the process going forward? Will we have input from people living adjacent to the path?

*A Man:*

I've actually seen a drawing of the path. It was posted on the walkway on Armstrong Street. Johnson said it's not there. The DWP didn't post any renderings around the reservoir, she added.

*Craig Rosenbloom:*

He said that he's lived in Silver Lake for all of his life, 50 years. We're all confused. His biggest concern was that he was at the March meeting where Council Member O'Farrell discussed transparency. It sounds like a done deal. Yet, I didn't know about it until tonight. I'm hoping that there is possibility to put this off and come up with better plan, he said.

*Karen Singer:*

She quoted Susan Rowghani (the DWP Director of Water, Engineering and Technical Services (susan.rowghani@ladwp.com)), who said that the idea was that it would go forward and be done by June. But if there's no consensus, it would have to go through the Master Plan. Karen expressed concern about the two 8-foot tall chain link fences. What impact will this have for wildlife? That path is used by coyotes. This is definitely not a done deal. This idea so flawed and ill conceived, it shouldn't even go in the master plan. On the Tesla path, you can jump into traffic in an emergency. Not here.

*Frieda Shen:*

She comes from New York City. I know about fearful security. This pathway has some problems. After someone gets mugged, there will be cry for lights and other security. Empty space can be filled by your own head.

She spoke about the maintenance issue. It's striking how badly it is maintained near the dog park. Spend the money there. We have lots of green space. Don't take money away from existing green space.

The process was just shit. She's attended all the dwp meetings. At very end of that meeting to be told about the path. That doesn't work for me. I love walking paths and the meadow. Bobcats are using that corridor, she noted.

*Teresa Cordiliano:*

She's having an out of body experience. Most people didn't understand that this is happening. Can the DWP person here explain this to us? What the heck happened? It seems like a tremendous waste of time. We could use a couple of facts. Can this be done in a way that works for everyone?

Johnson explained that the appropriate person from DWP to answer is not here. We reached out to the DWP and Council Districts 4 and 13. Dawn is not the appropriate person. She will send minutes to key players.

Cordiliano asked can you tell us what you know? Johnson said we know nothing. Cordiliano replied I give up. Johnson said there has been no report presented to the Board yet. Our Reservoir Committee has not received a report from DWP. We received lots of complaints. We wanted the Board to have a meeting. Cordiliano asked, during the month between March 22 and now there's been no information? Johnson said none.

*Ms. Casabella:*

She lives on Rockford Road in a 100 year old house. The City Planning Department requires homeowners to present paperwork if they want to do anything. I really don't understand. You don't get to not make a plan or a drawing. That's not the way this City works. How does DWP get a pass on that?

*A Woman:*

How do we know the fence will be 8 feet tall? That's not in the plan.

*A Woman:*

She's lived here 44 years. I like the idea of the paths. I think it's cool. Silver Lake is not beautiful but I like the idea of the paths.

*A Man:*

He lives on West Silver Lake Drive, directly across the street from the reservoir. I enjoy the idea of open space, he said. He supports further paths and development for all to share. He doesn't want tall fences and lights. Is any of this real?

*A Woman:*

We're all in favor of more paths and green spaces. However, lack of transparency is inexcusable. For them to say we'll build this in 3 months is ridiculous. Where is Council Member O'Farrell? Where is Council Member Ryu? It's inconceivable to me, not acknowledging the neighborhood and issues of neighborhood such as gridlock. People who don't live here don't know. I take offence.

*Howard Peterson:*

There's been a lack of transparency. We already have paved roads at the Silver Lake Reservoir. There is no reason for an 8 foot fence. There is no final decision.

## END OF STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

*Hannah Anderson:*

She wants to see a final plan.

*Barbara Ringuette:*

She concurs with stakeholders about the lack of transparency. She wants to see representatives here. I hope that everything said tonight gets to the people making decisions.

*Patty Jausoro:*

There have been a few groups trying to create transparency. One of the groups approached the Board to discuss this. It wasn't allowed on the agenda. Some of the groups were at a big meeting last night. Maybe that's why they aren't here tonight. There have been efforts by some groups for inclusion and transparency.

Johnson replied that last night's meeting was an Occidental College meeting, not a Silver Lake Neighborhood Council meeting. People who want to speak before our Board go through advisory committees for non-emergency situations.

*Jerome Courshon:*

There were great points made tonight. This isn't a done deal, as far as I'm concerned. There really hasn't been transparency. We all learned about this as a done deal just a few weeks ago. We got lots of feedback from the community. DWP said we don't feel we have consensus so it will go into the Master Plan for the future. There is enough objection so this must be evaluated fully. We had enough of this with the previous Council Member for Council District 4. It has to stop.

*Doug Loewy:*

I appreciate all the comments. If the City can send letters about repaving the streets in minute detail, why not more detail about this?

*Terry Jackson:*

The Council offices and the DWP have made a conscious effort not to reach out. This is not an accident. This process needs to be fixed. There was applause.

*Taryn Poole:*

She expressed concern about the concepts and the wildlife. She's been here 25 years. She expressed concern about increased crime.

*Betsy Isroelit:*

She thanked everyone for coming. I'm embarrassed, she said. She explained that she coordinates the newsletter yet she didn't know about this and didn't understand it until tonight. She is upset that CD13 didn't tell her. They are ignoring you.

## **5. Announcement**

Johnson thanked people for attending. She urged them to sign up for the newsletter.

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 8:28pm.