

The Manhattan Beach Observer

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If All Politics Are Local, Why Not a Local Election

By Gary Osterhout

At the July 19, 2016 council meeting, staff was directed to prepare a resolution to change the date of distant future Manhattan Beach elections to November. This was in response to an imposed change under state law due to our rather limited voter turnout for municipal elections in comparison with primary or general elections. This will ultimately require adjustment of councilmember terms.

Specifically, to comply with passage in California of SB 415, the proposal, if continued forward, would stipulate that members elected in March 2017 and March 2019 will serve three years and eight months, bringing their terms to an end in Nov. 2020 and Nov. 2022, respectively.

Conformity with the general or primary election is supposed to increase voter participation.

Wayne Powell writes into the Beach Reporter "SB415 requires our city move its obscure municipal election dates to statewide election dates for greater voter participation."

"I want elections as soon as possible. Not in two years, not in three years, not in six years. I want elections as soon as possible to get up to 50, 60, 70 percent voter turnout," Tony D'Errico said in a July 21 Beach Reporter article.

Mark Burton, in a July 13th Beach Reporter article said, "I'm a proponent of voter participation, and last election, the voter turnout was abysmal. This November would be the best way to do it to get a much better turnout where everyone is engaged." In the June 8 Easy Reader: "The sooner we get to an

Call to Action-Keep Sepulveda Safe!

By Eileen Neill

The article provides an update on the largest commercial development that has just come on deck in Manhattan Beach – the Gelson's superstore. The City's Planning Department staff accepted the plan submitted by the developer last month and it is now open for 30 days of public review and comment. I am not sure how such a ridiculously short period of time for review of hundreds of technically written pages by residents was deemed acceptable, but this practice seems ripe for change at the ballot box, fellow voters. Luckily, our group, Manhattan Beach Residents for Responsible Development ("MBRRD") has reviewed prior plan submissions in great detail so that we can put a somewhat cohesive comment package together, but even so, we are finding this to be a very restrictive constraint.

Here are the key takeaways so far from this project:

1. No left turn light at Sepulveda Northbound and 8th Street – While planned for by the City, it's installation is not in the current two-year infrastructure implementation plan that has been presented at recent City Council meetings. It is shown as in the design phase only. This is a traffic safety issue given the blind hill at that intersection.

2. Deceleration lane too short – The developer has incorporated a 78 foot deceleration lane. For this site, CalTrans guidelines call for a 300 ft. lane. Below are the lengths of deceleration lanes of other Manhattan Beach businesses for comparison purposes.

- 1) Pollo Loco & Hotel - 310' (Northbound @ 8th)
- 2) Manhattan Mall - 305' (Northbound dedicated lane)
- 3) UCLA Medical - 264' (Southbound @ Marine)

SILENT GENERATION

By Janet Murphy

Has anyone noticed that the voices of residents at Council meetings are primarily from the older generation? Where are the young voters? Why are they mute?

The Council decision to continue elections in March does not bode well Manhattan Beach. Voter turnout at these odd number year spring elections is not even 20%. Special interests can back candidates and put them in office without much opposition. Those who want to build towers and cover our open space with concrete are not sitting idle. They vigorously push their agenda forward. Apathy will cost us the beauty we have enjoyed in Manhattan Beach.

Look at what happened in the United Kingdom. Polls showed that only about 19% of people between the ages of 18 and 24 supported a British exit from the E.U. 59% of the UK pensioners wanted their country to leave. The pensioners won out by a margin of around 1.3 million votes. The younger generation did not get out and vote for what they saw was their future.

I am in the US “pensioners” age group and am more conservative than my children. However, I am concerned about the disproportionate number of MB residents who control what happens in our city.

I am at a loss to give a solution for getting more of the younger generation to take a real honest interest in what happens here. I do hope they wake up and realize it is their action (or inaction) that will determine their future.



The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation Great Institution or a Symptom of Something Wrong?

By Michelle Murphy

The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation (MBEF) does wonderful things for the students of Manhattan Beach. In 2015 they provided more than \$6 million in funding for K through 12 classrooms including paying for 71 educators and a host of enhancements to local schools. That sum amounted to 9% of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District's (MBUSD) total budget.

MBEF solicits tax deductible contributions from individuals (over 5,000 donors in 2014/15) and corporate sponsors (Chevron and Sketchers each donated \$50,000 and Waste Management \$25,000). Each year MBEF holds a yearly wine auction fund raiser. One of the largest charity wine auctions in Southern California and perhaps the country, the 2016 Wine Auction raised over \$1.1 million for MBEF. Each year, as specified in MBEF's by-laws, the Manhattan Wine Auction contributes a minimum of one-third of the event proceeds to the Endowment Fund.

Manhattan Beach has one of the few K-12 public school endowment funds anywhere – and maybe the largest. Since 1986 when it was started on a very small scale the MB Endowment Fund has grown to its current \$13.4 million in prudently invested funds. When it passed the \$10 million mark it began disbursements to schools starting in 2014. The hope and plan is that the endowment, modeled after similar university endowments (Harvard's tops \$36 billion!) will grow and allow even greater contributions towards making our school district stellar. Its current goal is \$20 million.

There is another albeit much smaller, organization that also helps fund MB schools. MB/X Foundation was formed in 2002 to provide donated financial support for physical education and athletic programs in MB and has helped install artificial turf and repair and renovate a gym and fields at Mira Costa as well as providing grants for purchases of instruments, orchestral literature, teacher training and conferences, physical education equipment and gym mats throughout the Manhattan Beach Unified School District.

MBEF is immensely popular in our town. You've probably seen the signs that proud supporters display on their lawns. Even non-parents who own property in MB recognize our great schools as an important engine for our stratospheric home prices. What could be the fly in this ointment? How can this be anything other than unmitigated goodness?

Compton Unified School District is only about ten miles away as the crow flies or as the Tesla drives and it has no foundations or endowments. Many poor school districts can only look with envy at MB's bounty. Most school districts rely solely on the money the State of California gives them which isn't much. California ranks 42nd in the country (or even lower depending on your methodology) in funding per student. Education funding statistics are often years behind the current date but just for comparison: on average, New York, Alaska, and Wyoming each spent more than \$17,000 per student in 2013, while California, Oklahoma and Nevada spent roughly half that. California used to be in the top ten of spending per pupil but that was more than 50 years ago. Today the average California district spends \$8,339 per student, less than the nationwide average of \$11,841. Manhattan Beach spends \$9,525 per student, (including all the Foundations' contributions)



Editor's Column

One of the unresolved issues introduced at a recent city council meeting spoke about what is perceived as many residents' lack of trust in the city....This may be discussed further at the meeting on pensions scheduled for September and the recognition of our need to control our personnel costs. The issue of trust contains an element of the escalating process and reflects those who state that until we take responsibility for our compensation and our policies, we are going to have a significant increase in our pension liability. The trust of residents must be earned and perhaps one beginning step starts with control of salaries and how we spend our money..... The date of this special September meeting is September 13th.

On a more positive note residents applauded council's revised resolution regarding their earlier passed Management Rules and planned discussion of alternates. Both had been addressed at various times during previous public comments periods.

Initially, two minutes were allocated at the beginning of the council meeting during which residents may speak on any subject, including any agenda item. The objection voiced by numerous residents centered primarily on their desired preference to speak during the specific time an agenda item is being considered. This, it was emphasized, provided greater information presented by staff at the time of the hearing as well as the inclusion of council's discussion and comments...

In the discussion leading to the vote to change the Meeting Management Rules, residents

City Council Report Card					
For Report Card	Burton	D'Errico	Howorth	Lesser	Powell
Revise Meeting Manage. Rules					
Accept late file claim Petition for Underground Donation					
Vote: YES Vote: NO					

noted that the Brown Act requires that agendas for regular meetings provide "an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the legislative body of any item of interest to the public".... This includes agenda items before or during the legislative body's consideration of the item.

The primary intent of the Brown Act is that the people's business be conducted openly and transparently, after providing an opportunity to the largest number of members of the public to directly address the council before the council takes action on any item....Allowing audience members to have the option to address council on an agenda item either at the beginning of the meeting during the Public Comments period, or prior to when the agenda item is introduced, will facilitate effective and efficient meeting management, greater transparency and meaningful public participation.

The initial vote, which limited resident participation to the allocated public comment period, was changed to the option desired by many residents: Now both options were available and residents could, if preferred, choose to wait to make their comments specific to an agenda item at the time it is introduced. And in the spirit of additional generosity, Council increased the two minute speaking time to three minutes.

A second council vote change which had been sought by many residents stemmed from an earlier majority (4-1) council vote to consider building a hotel on the city-owned land off Parkview Ave. and reflected an initial response to what they had perceived as an appropriate decision. Initially, they had been advised, the current hotel market is very strong and would generate considerable revenue to the City. Many residents opposed the concept, citing a project initiated without proper resident input, loss of parking and questions about Chevron's designated park use. Additional concerns included resulting problems with the soccer field parking, the Manhattan Seniors Villa apartments, issues of safety, loss of Mall parking overflow, and the question that developing public land for commercial purposes is more than questionable.

The residents united in their expressed concerns, submitting printed local newspaper articles, appearances before council, countless e-mails and phone calls. All this resonated and a subsequent council meeting reflected Council's applauded decision to review alternative uses for a hotel development at the Parkview site. The hotel, as proposed, was eliminated. Residents found their voice and it was heard.....

E.B.



Dispensing with Sunscreen Dispensers

A sunscreen dispenser program recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission and initially approved by a majority council, was presented as a benefit to the community---one which would provide a valuable resource to residents and visitors to Manhattan Beach. Conversely, an added element to the program was introduced when residents discussed potential concerns about liability and vandalism.

The Commission presented a comparison chart, citing different dispensers and the pros and cons of each. Boston, Mass. installed dispensers at 65 city locations, and other cities and programs further validated the approval expressed by those Manhattan Beach council members and residents who urged the sunscreen installation. Despite all the favorable reviews, a number of residents expressed their concern about maintenance, product cost and high probability of damage. They were met with opposing voices who pointed out the motion sensor control and the advantage of low per unit cost.

The Sunscreen Saga continued with ten proposed dispenser locations and the Parks Commission receiving donation commitments. A 90-day, 5-location trial period was proposed, to run through the summer months and then return to Council for discussion.

In a subsequent meeting, City Council expressed concerns—as had other residents—citing questions of permanent funding, potential risk management issues, and possibly exposing the City to liability and the commercialization of the beach.

The lengthy discussion continued with a suggestion for a future newsletter which would highlight the importance of sunscreen application and protection, (without the availability of sunscreen dispensers) and council voted unanimously not to authorize the Pilot Sunscreen Dispenser Program.



News from the Manhattan Beach Conservancy

We just finished mailing our Summer newsletter. It contains a timeline showing our organization's tireless work, starting in October of 2006, to get a Historic Preservation Ordinance finally adopted by the City in March of 2016. That's almost 10 full years.



The intent of the Ordinance is to put in place a way for MB residents to apply for Local Landmark status, and once that is received, then be able to apply for the Mills Act which is a tax abatement program designed to help people keep and maintain older properties.

Now, it seems that we are in for a long waiting while the City puts the program in place. They need to develop the materials required to apply for Local Landmark status and the Mills Act, and to set up a Historic Preservation Commission to administrate the programs. All of which sounds like it is going to take a long time.

The program is included in the City's Org chart under the Community Development Department. And we understand they are issuing an RFP for an outside vendor to complete the work. So, we wait, but will keep you informed. And if you think you will be interested in these programs

With the coming city council election, the issue of trust and at what part it was determined that the residents could be approached with all kinds of taxes and who sees the city as a source for a lot of revenue, reference may be made to a compensation study of a year or two ago: It looked at the salary ranges of all cities; Manhattan Beach was No.1 in almost every category. Compared to about 500 California cities, our City was the 15th highest paid person. Our pension costs have gone up substantially

MANHATTAN BEACH RETIREE \$100K CLUB – 2014 ANNUAL PENSION PAYMENTS

Source: <http://transparentcalifornia.com/pensions/search/?q=city+of+manhattan+beach&y=2014> (as of Dec. 2015)

NAME	PENSION	YEARS OF SERVICE	YEAR OF RETIREMENT
RODNEY B UYEDA	\$235,119.60	35.06	2011
RANDOLPH M LEAF	\$196,143.12	31.13	2010
JOHN L GRIMALDI	\$183,944.64	31.24	2010
JEFFREY L SANDERS	\$171,056.64	28.75	2009
JOHN S DYE	\$169,184.16	31.27	2009
DENNIS P GROAT	\$163,080.96	36.57	2007
CHARLES L WILSON JR	\$156,939.72	27.50	2008
NAN S RADOS	\$156,187.32	29.12	2012
ANGELO A DI GENOVA	\$155,751.36	30.32	2012
JOHN P WEBER	\$151,656.96	28.85	2012
DANIEL J ONEILL	\$149,420.76	31.40	2011
MARK D MASON	\$146,920.20	30.41	2012
SHANE S TALBOT	\$146,079.72	30.98	2008
RON A REDMOND	\$145,947.96	30.67	2004
DALE E REISSIG	\$145,393.32	29.28	2008
PAUL L MARSHALL	\$135,653.04	33.00	2004
TIMOTHY R VISELLI	\$131,665.44	29.99	2011
LANCE E BOEPPLE	\$129,432.72	30.39	2007
GUSTAVO A VALDES	\$114,954.72	29.66	2010
WILLIAM D MATSON	\$114,665.52	30.01	2008
ROBERT V WADDEN	\$112,970.52	23.82	2011
VINCENT A CAPPARILLI	\$112,057.80	29.47	2010
BARRY L PAPE	\$111,006.36	34.24	2003
RICHARD A GILL	\$110,635.44	37.86	2013
MANUEL E LOPEZ	\$108,477.96	31.06	2006
BARRY P BAGLEY	\$106,663.44	31.74	2002
JAIME D RUIZ	\$106,118.28	32.74	2009
THEODORE J MERTENS	\$104,274.24	32.57	1998
TIMOTHY M MAGDALENO	\$104,163.00	29.98	2012
KARL K HACKAMACK	\$103,873.32	39.62	1993
ANTHONY ARCE	\$103,025.40	41.89	2002
BRUCE W POWELL	\$101,147.88	34.96	2000

Not included above: GG Dolan: \$93,899; 20.10; 2009.

Picketing Prohibitions Proposed

In response to a resident's statement that he had experienced picketing in front of his home, City Council directed Staff to draft an ordinance prohibiting targeted residential picketing and to present it for Council's consideration. Following the public testimony, during which the resident stated he had felt threatened and harassed by the picketing, City Council introduced the Ordinance.

Because targeted picketing at particular homes has become a problem in many communities, Ordinances prohibiting targeted residential picketing have been adopted. This was based as the means to protect the well being and privacy of the home and to create a "buffer zone", offering minimum protection for residents from what they see as harassment and intimidation.

Numerous cities have adopted Ordinances prohibiting targeted residential picketing based on a number of significant findings. The intent of this Ordinance is to protect what the courts called "captive audience"...inside the targeted house without impacting First Amendment speech.

Significant in this issue is that the First Amendment protects picketing as a form of speech which expresses thoughts or ideas. When speech occurs traditionally in a public forum---such as the sidewalk---the government may then impose certain restrictions.

M.B.City Council limited target picketing within specified distance of a particular dwelling. A violation of the Ordinance is declared a public nuisance; a cited misdemeanor is subject to a sizable fine..... Would-be picketers would do well to include a footage measuring device along with their protest signs.



Beware The Ides of March

By Janet Murphy

How very disappointing to see MB Council manipulated by former Council members. It was not a pretty sight to see Council dancing around the subject of extending terms. How could they so easily slide into having elections in March, when it has clearly been shown that is the worst decision they could have made. The turnout is barely 20% . The incumbents and special interests are the winners. Manhattan Beach residents are the losers.

The whole point of Senate Bill 415 is to encourage larger voter turnout with elections consolidated. Yet, MB Council turned away from the best decision they could have made, to hold elections for our own Council in November 2017 rather than in March. That would put Manhattan Beach on track to have elections with the best voter turnout. The very special interests that changed the balloting to March in the first place have manipulated our Council to continue on that path. It is in their interest to put their candidates in place, which does not look like the best for Manhattan Beach's future.

Manhattan Beach has been a leader in many good causes – blazing the trail for better health and the environment. Why is Council being so cowardly and controlled in this matter? Where is the strong leadership we need and want?

It is not too late to choose to extend the terms of our Council now in order to make a better turnout at the polls in November – not March 2017!

I urge Council to stand up for what is truly right and best for all Manhattan Beach. Extend the terms of council and hold the elections in November 2017.



The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation...cont' d p. 2

El Segundo \$8,281, Torrance \$7,461 and Compton \$9,587. (See NPR and Education Week)

Compton spends more per pupil than we do? That happens because of a state mandate called Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) which supplies districts with extra money for targeted disadvantaged students--those classified as low-income, English learners and foster youth. MB will get a small bit of money from that fund but other school districts get significant amounts.

A formula set back in the 70's limits Manhattan Beach to using only 20% of its property taxes for education. Also in our town people hang on to their Prop 13ed properties and don't sell often so our tax base is not as large as our home prices might indicate. Other top performing districts have higher formulas and pay all their school expenses from their local property taxes and are allowed to use excess funds that are more than the basic statewide minimum level. Still other wealthy districts have imposed on themselves a parcel tax that provides them more money. Manhattan Beach has none of that. MBUSD remains at the very bottom of all funding in LA County, and is 4th from the bottom in the state of California. MBEF perhaps is a vital necessity if MB schools are to maintain their excellence.

In his 1993 initially proposed Neighborhood Bill of Rights, then councilman Steve Napolitano stated: The purpose of such an ordinance is obvious. It protects neighbors by letting them know what they can expect and what rights they have in regard to neighborhood construction. It protects builders by being a constant reminder to their workers as to their community responsibilities, especially when the general contractor isn't present at the site, and it encourages compliance through continued education. By providing this information and education to neighbors and builders, our community can be an even better place to live and build in.

...This farsighted move was historically significant. Since that time, some efforts have successfully been made to address residents' problems with construction. But problems remain and to address these, and what he has experienced in the relentless frequently intolerable impacts resulting from construction issues in his neighborhood, Dr. Richard MacKenzie has suggested the Declaration of Resident Rights, printed below.

Declaration of Rights of the Residents Manhattan Beach, California

Inasmuch as the present priorities and practiced mission of both the governance and administrative bodies of the City of Manhattan Beach are in deference to the stated mission (2012) of the City:

"The City of Manhattan Beach is dedicated to providing exemplary municipal services, preserving our small beach town character and enhancing the quality of life for our residents, businesses and visitors."

we, the residents, in light of the present profusion of construction activities and associated inconveniences within its 3.9 sq. mile area that are inconsistent with its mission, hereby ask affirmation and adoption of the following amendments to building/construction practices

1. There be no more than two active construction sites within a one block area
2. Hours of construction and construction-related activity during the week be restricted to 8:00 am-5:00 pm Monday-Friday and in accord with other worksites, there be no construction-related activities on Saturdays.
3. Building plans should be reviewed in accord with strict guideline that minimize obstruction of views and flow of ocean breezes to existing homes – those very elements that define Manhattan Beach as a "small beach town."
4. City, in accord with established safe subterranean building guidelines, to establish and strictly enforce rules about how deep subterranean excavation can safely be allowed in our sandy-earthquake-zone community. These rules may vary from one district to another, based on natural soil/sand characteristics of District.
5. Builders are responsible for clean-up and for restoring streets and neighboring properties to pre-construction condition or better upon completion of the project
6. Contractor will repair all damages caused to neighbors' homes due to construction. This will include cracks to drywall or stucco due to vibration and pounding. It will be the responsibility of the contractor or representative to document pre-construction condition of neighboring houses and related structures in a form mutually agreeable to both parties.
7. Noise levels generated throughout the construction process be in compliance with local, state and federal standards
8. City to inspect, insure and certify that dirt/soil is not added to any part of a site to allow illegal circumvention of height limitations
9. Contractor must have a designated representative on site to assure that worker's vehicles are not parked in the immediate construction area on a regular or daily basis.
10. All of the above rules and existing local, state and federal codes will be vigorously enforced by Manhattan Beach police and city staff.
11. That City certified architects photos of finished project be posted at the proposed site for at least 1 month prior to granting of building permit to allow for resident input re compatibility with neighborhood and community.



even-year election cycle, the more robust the turnout, the better.”

However the councilmembers might profess a deep concern (or crocodile tears) on voter turnout, they have not done much to encourage turnout prior to this action—and one might argue they have been responsible as much for the steady decline. And instead of more voter participation and engagement, this proposal could just obscure the number of disengaged voters, given that many will just voting for city council because they are there anyway. More numbers, but no accountability as to better results. The results mask the real objective.

As reported in a Stanford Social Innovation Review, “Improving the representativeness of the electorate, and knowledge about policies at stake, may be a more important (and realistic) goal than dramatically increasing overall turnout.”

There is no panacea that increases turnout—a mix of strategies is needed, each (on their own) with incremental effects. The impact is long-term, but will have better results.

Simply, if more people are involved with democracy and politics between election cycles, it will lead to a higher voter participation rate.

Improving the representativeness of the electorate, and knowledge about policies at stake, may be a more important (and realistic) goal than dramatically increasing overall turnout.

Even basic Wikipedia posting on voter turnout reflects: “The salience of an election (the effect that a vote will have on policy) and its proportionality (how closely the result reflects the will of the people) are two structural factors that also likely have important effects on turnout.”

And it is this “salience,” the ability of residents to understand and impact policy, is where I find our local government to fall short.

There is only so much time an average resident can afford to keep track of what is going on with the city. Thus, we rely on these leadership sources to provide us a clear message of issues, alternatives, and choices by which we can make an informed decision. But what we generally receive is little analysis, an overload of useless information, and City Hall public relations spin or drama. The “Open City Hall” surveys have been either phrased poorly or in a manner

City Hall Update

The Manhattan Beach Mall expansion court case is scheduled for October 12, 2016, at 9:30 am---Dept. 86-- (Judge Amy Hogue) Los Angeles Superior Court, 111 North Hill St., Los Angeles, Ca.

In discussing the Downtown Specific Plan and its guide lines to maintain what residents view as its remaining downtown charm, it has been suggested that the key is SCALE. This means retaining some of the small shops, keeping construction to scale, preventing one huge store to replace the small shops, imposing restrictions on ground floor use, on height and size.

Construction Hours Modified

Ordinance No. 16-0007, as adopted, will amend the Municipal Code to provide a process for allowing modified construction hours on a case-by-case basis. Hours for construction activity under limited circumstances may, upon request, be modified by City Council. Noise disturbance criteria will be considered and conditions to mitigate any adverse impacts may require prior notice to residents and businesses in the vicinity. The Director may modify hours for interior construction on commercial property under limited circumstances.

Hours regulating construction activity are:
Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

to achieve City Hall-desired results. Our finance/budgeting process are arcane and unfocused.

Blame the candidates, too. Bill Victor aside, did any of the candidates this last election really distinguish themselves from the others in respect to past meaningful issues championed or conventional assumptions challenged? Does any candidate last election or any other even provide a crystallized vision for the future beside perhaps some ephemeral "small town" preservation support that seems perverted as soon as the next developer steps to the podium or Community Development makes another "discretionary allowance?"

For the most part, the campaign issues we get presented are straight out of the highest responses to the bi-annual resident satisfaction survey, with assistance to seniors thrown in (even though there is no evidence our seniors are underserved) because seniors vote the most. And if there are any definitive positions taken by candidates, most are quickly forgotten.

Further, joining the municipal election with state and national elections only serves to bring political partisanship to our local vote, where we have been relatively free from such influences in the past. It is not difficult for animated members of a national or state campaign to want to use their efforts to elect supportive councilmembers. Nor is it difficult to envision that local candidates will attach themselves to whatever national/state candidate or party seems popular at the time. More extra-local special-interest groups are also engaged at that time.

It will also be more costly for local candidates to get their message to the likely electorate for a national election than those voters they know are engaged at the local level. That expense could be chilling against a desire for a more robust slate of candidates.

Our local issues will be obscured by national and state issues (and propositions), such that we will lose our unique local flavor in this aspect of our civic life as well.

The solution is that our leaders need to be progressive in increasing turnout by engaging and empowering public participation, through meaningful community outreach and involvement.

The last time voter turnout was taken up by Council was

4) Sketchers - 160' entry, 80' exit (Northbound @ Longfellow)

5) Target - 160' (Northbound @ Manhattan Beach Blvd.

6) Panda Express - 78' (Southbound @ 1st)

3. On-site parking below Code - The parking remains 20% below city parking code requirements. Per the code, a grocery store requires 1 parking spot per 200 feet. However, for the food takeout section, the parking code is stricter, 1 space per 75 feet. According to the developer's study, per MB code, this would require 171 parking spaces. They are supplying on 135 spaces. This equates to a 21% reduction from city code. The developer employed off peak traffic data (instead of on-peak traffic data, which is during rush hour) and shared use as rationale for supporting their request for a reduction from code.

4. Insufficient on-site employment parking - Employee parking remains at 16 spaces considered on-site while the developer has leased 20 spaces at the parking lot across the street from the post office on 10th in between Sepulveda and Dianthus. Leased parking does not count towards parking code. Additionally, leases can be broken, so this is not a permanent solution. Lastly, there are already businesses in that location and we have observed that lot is often full currently, often with cars for the post office that is located there.

5. Sepulveda too narrow on stretch that encompasses the development site - Sepulveda is very narrow (i.e., 10 ft. each direction instead of CalTrans guideline of 12 ft. minimum for a CA state highway) at the intersection of 8th and Sepulveda. Our traffic engineer subcontracted with a specialist to conduct a radius study to support our contention that the turning radius is 2 insufficient and we are awaiting that study, but expect it to confirm our suspicions that delivery trucks of varying sizes will require two lanes to turn into the site both from the North and from the South. Deliveries are expected 6-days per week for several hours each day.

6. Sepulveda Northbound Left Turn Lane onto 8th Street Too Short - The left turn pocket on northbound Sepulveda at 8th Street is about 90 ft., which is not big enough for more than one large, and maybe two small, delivery trucks. For comparison purposes,

2010. Despite knowing that resident engagement and involvement a long-term perspective was needed, our council decided that the best they could do is to authorize return postage on vote-by-mail requests, as if the cost of a stamp prevents Manhattan Beach voters from casting a vote. But at least they rejected one re-elected incumbent's suggestion that the solution was to hold a voter registration contest with Hermosa.

We have no real media forum for bringing out choices and alternatives or developing community vision in the absence of City Hall/council leadership. The Beach Reporter is suspect from the outset given the amount of advertising revenue they receive from City Hall, and their reporting is rarely proactive.

The Daily Breeze, in their local endorsements, never mentions those candidate attributes usually attended to by the media, such as transparency, accountability, intelligence, trustworthiness, or vision. Instead, the endorsements seem to have been written based on the candidates' own representations in their campaign materials. The Easy Reader does the best, though past surveys show few in M.B. really read the Reader.

It also has to be accepted that we have a large percentage of residency churn in Manhattan Beach, in that we have a sizable number of our population that is only around for a couple years. Not only does it make it difficult to engage such short-termers, but that also skews the general election-to-local election turnout percentages.

While the change to a November ballot will likely be in motion before this article is read, I would prefer to remain with the March election or, absent that, to a June election. November is way too active for any local benefit (consider also the relative lack of School Board resident participation given that Board's November election).

From my perspective, until we demand better from those in position to assist with voter engagement, not merely turnout, we can pretty much accept anemic resident engagement. Which, unfortunately, could easily lead to a more autocratic and authoritarian City Hall, and less of a resident-run city.



other left turn pockets on Northbound Sepulveda are:

- 1) Marine - 240' for residential
- 2) Manhattan Beach Blvd. - 200' for commercial
- 3) 6th - 100' for residential
- 4) Boundary - 100' for residential
- 5) Longfellow - 90' for residential
- 6) 2nd - 90' for residential

7. Alcohol and neighborhoods don't mix - There is an 'eatery' designed for the store from which Gelson's plans to serve alcohol in a bar-like setting. A recent Wall Street Journal article which specifically referenced Gelson's (July 15, 2016) contained the following two statements:

"Ms. Murray, a 58-year-old retired Boeing executive in Long Beach, Calif., often meets her husband, David, at the supermarket (Long Beach Gelson's) on his way home from work. Their twice-a-week happy-hour shopping ritual often includes a little time relaxing in the bar, where they bounce dinner ideas around with their favorite bartender, Ray. Usually, they order drinks and nibble on a fresh mozzarella Caprese salad along with a lobster roll, a \$26 tab. "It's the 'Cheers' of grocery," she says."

"Bars stretch out the time shoppers, especially 20-somethings, spend in the store. That helps new shoppers get to know the store, even if they had planned to make just a quick stop."

MBRRD is not sure the additional time for non-shopping and/or drinking patrons is being factored properly into the parking estimates as more people linger, then there is less parking available. Importantly, we are very concerned about the additional traffic and pedestrian safety (remember that narrowed sidewalk!) risks from buzzed or outright inebriated "shoppers". Approximately 30 residents participated in a protest to the Alcohol Beverage Control ("ABC") department out of concerns for the serving of alcohol on site. This protest is currently being evaluated by the ABC.

What is truly disheartening is that the City Planning Dept. staff has accepted the developer's Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") where the developer essentially says that while there are multiple significant impacts on the community, they have incorporated measures to 'mitigate' those impacts to where they are no longer significant. This development, roughly 35,000 square foot in size, is very large for our city and it is surrounded on three sides by a single family

residences. For the Planning Dept. staff to accept the developer's parking and traffic solutions as adequate to mitigate the significance of the impact of this project without a full Environment Impact Report ("EIR") is deeply troubling to us. Many cities require an EIR on development projects of a certain size, but Manhattan Beach does not for ANY project of any size. An EIR would be a deeper project review that would incorporate independent assessment of the impacts to the community apart from the developer's paid consultants.

Another troubling factor is that there does not appear to be any agenda items for the Planning Commission on this project in order for it to get a full hearing with public input. It appears that this project will go before the Planning Commission with a recommendation from the Planning Dept. staff 3 likely to simply accept the developer's MND (which is signed by the Community Development director, but which was pretty much 100% created by the developer) with only the comments provided by the public by August 22nd, the 30-day comment period deadline, as input. The City is only actively soliciting comments from residents who live within 500 ft. of the proposed development, even though its location on Sepulveda will impact all residents (and non-resident drivers) who traverse Manhattan Beach.

MBRRD has expended thousands of dollars in both legal and traffic consultant fees in order to develop our challenge to this ill-conceived project. We have accumulated a war chest and are continuing to actively fundraise in order to see through what we believe will ultimately be a legal battle. Additionally, we have begun a petition to require an EIR for this project. Updates to the city approval process, the project and our efforts can be found on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1646139085619784/?fref=nf>). We are reaching out to the community for support, both financial and for our petition. If you are interested in supporting MBRRD financially, please let me know at jejneill@earthlink.net. If you are interested in signing our petition please put the following link into your web browser: https://www.change.org/p/manhattan-beach-residents-for-responsible-development-gelson-s-will-have-significant-impacts-demand-an-eir?recruiter=78851454&utm_source=petitions_show_components_action_panel_wrapper&utm_medium=copypink&recuruit_context=copypink_long to access it and do so prior to August 22nd. Lastly, please take a look at the Paragon plan submission materials, which are posted on the City's website at the following link (<http://www.citymb.info/city-officials/community-development/planning-zoning/current-projects-programs>) and provide comments to Eric Haaland (ehaaland@citymb.info) prior to August 22nd.

We have to work together to maintain the quality of life that we pay so dearly for and to ensure developers are made to adhere to City and other relevant codes regarding parking and traffic safety.

please drop us a line.

In the meantime, we invite you to email us and we'd be happy to send you a copy of the newsletter. Also, we expect to be at the Hometown Fair, so look for us there. We are planning to have something fun and historic to do at the booth involving a map of the City. We will be located right near your booth.

And follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and visit our website.

You might even want to join our organization. Just go to www.mbconservancy.com and click Join.

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Ed. Note: Observer articles reflect the views of the writer and do not speak for those members with differing opinions. The Observer provides a voice to those who wish to express personal comments on local Manhattan Beach issues.

City Hall Calendar

Sept. 13th City Council:

Special meeting

Oct. 12th, 9:30 am

Mall expansion court case

The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation...cont' d p. 6

I recommend that anyone interested in this topic begin by reading at MBEF's website <http://mbef.org/> .

MBEF seems to be a great boon to our town. On their website they describe their task in part as: "MBEF helps fill the gap between what the state provides the district and what it costs to provide a well-rounded, quality education for students." My fear is that MBEF is so good at fulfilling its mission that the rich and therefore powerful citizens of our town have less reason to try to fix the problem of state wide education funding.

MBEF has two full time and two part time positions. When I posed the question about the will to fix funding state-wide to Executive Director Farnaz Flechner, she reassured me that this wasn't the case-- that it wasn't an either/or situation and that MBEF members have been active in lobbying the state for more and smarter funding. Ms. Fletchner, who has spent much of her career working with and on behalf of underserved students in California, admitted that our education funding problems are not a priority in the state and do not appear to be close to any kind of solution.

Still I wonder if all the volunteer zeal MB has for its schools and last year's \$6 million had been used to educate the state's voters about how woefully underfunded education is in California perhaps extensive lobbying might lead to changes in our state's priorities? But in the meantime our current students in MB's schools would have suffered and the notion that the state can find a fix that works might still be a pipe dream.

The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation appears to be needed, vital and well appreciated by almost everyone in town. Sometimes I just wish that old slogan could become reality.

It will be a great day when our schools have all the money they need and the Pentagon has to have a bake-sale to buy a bomber.



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Manhattan Beach, CA 90267-1149
(310) 379-3277 Email: yourmbra@gmail.com

() Enclosed is \$30.00 annual (2016-2017) Membership Fee.

() Yes, I (we) would like to assist.

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| () City Hall Watch | () Computer Assistance |
| () Fund Raising | () Membership |
| () Communications | () Telephoning |

Name(s) _____

Address _____ (Zip) _____

City _____ Phone(H) _____ B) _____

E-mail _____ Fax _____