



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CUPERTINO-SUNNYVALE

Summer 2015

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The Cupertino-Sunnyvale VOTER

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This newsletter is posted on our website: cs.ca.lwvnet.org.

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MEMBERS ADOPT NEW LOCAL STUDIES

A highlight of Annual Meeting was the interest shown in the topics adopted by members as “issues for emphasis”: **Local Development** and **Local Campaign Finance**. Many members and a few guests signed up to work on one or both topics. This is the first time in many years that our members have chosen to undertake work on public policy at the local level of government. This provides us with both challenges and opportunities – to enrich our League and deliver meaningful service to our communities.

Work on our new local “issues for emphasis” will start with informing ourselves, as with any League pursuit of a new topic. That will involve not only dialogue among ourselves, but also with community leaders and other knowledgeable citizens. Then, we will likely reach out to include a larger cross-section of the community through a combination of public meetings, public communications, and community dialogue.

Although the exact scope and trajectory of our work on these issues will evolve over the next months, the following activities constitute our initial plans:

Local Development– Become familiar with current development projects and issues in our two cities and the processes for citizen input, so as to be in a position to advocate on behalf of the LWV or to foster community dialogue. Educate League members and the public about development and encourage citizen participation.

Local Campaign Finance – Examine the past and present requirements and practices in our two cities regarding campaigns for local offices, such as city council or school boards. Explore whether there are concerns about local campaign finance in our communities and whether there are proposals for change.

Separate email updates on this work will be sent periodically, and future issues of the VOTER will include coverage of our activities.

There will be room for more people to become engaged in this work throughout the next year. So, if you have input or energy to contribute to these new endeavors, please reach out and let us know, league@cs.ca.lwvnet.org



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I was pleased with the turnout at Annual Meeting. Members conducted the business required of our organization and then, along with many guests, heard interesting presentations on building development in our two cities from Rod Sinks and Dave Whittum. See pages 4 and 5 for Holly Lofgren’s report on the presentations.

We will be busy working on the two “Issues for Emphasis,” Local Development and Local Campaign Finance, adopted by members. Linda Davis will be heading the studies in Sunnyvale and we are looking for someone to do the same in Cupertino. I was happy to see that so many signed up for these committees. If you would like to participate in these studies, please let me know, president@ca.cs.lwvnet.org.

At a recent LWV Santa Clara County Council meeting, I learned of other opportunities to participate in state and national studies: Constitution, Money in Politics, and Higher Education in California. If we have enough members attend the informational and educational meetings on these subjects, we will hold consensus meetings on the topics.

Stay tuned, this will be a busy year.

Roberta

ANNUAL MEETING

The Cupertino-Sunnyvale League’s Annual Meeting was held on Saturday May 30 and was attended by 18 members and 10 guests.

During the business meeting, members adopted the proposed budget, adopted all existing county and local positions and approved two new “Issues for Emphasis”: Local Development and Local Campaign Finance. See page one for a description of these studies.

Members also elected the following officers and directors of the organization:

President	Roberta Hollimon
Vice President	Susan Hough
Secretary	Michael Lusk
Treasurer	Serge Rudaz
Directors	Linda Davis
	Bruce Kendall
	Jason Spiller
	Katharine Turner

Following the business meeting we heard presentations on new development in Cupertino and Sunnyvale from Cupertino Mayor Rod Sinks and Sunnyvale Councilmember Dave Whittum. See pages 4 & 5 for a report on their talks.

Board Briefs

At its May meeting, your board:

- Learned that the Community Appeal was mailed on March 27 and \$1,445 from 23 donors had already been received.
- Received a thank you letter from the Fremont Union High School District for the 20 copies of Guide to California Government donated by our League.
- Agreed to post our non partisan policy and positions on our website.

Member News

Welcome new member Holly Lofgren.

Community Appeal

Thank you to the following for your donations to the League:
Harold Brown, Hilde DeMarco, Leonard Doberne, Bruce Kendall, and Dianne and Regis McKenna.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

Sunnyvale’s second community workshop on the Civic Center project is planned for Saturday, July 25, from 9:00 – 12:00 at the Sunnyvale Community Center located at 550 E. Remington Drive. Give your input on how indoor and outdoor spaces should be used to enhance City services and support community use.

The City would like your input on a draft Vision Statement, Success Criteria, and Needs Assessment for the project.

To stay informed about the Civic Center project, simply send an e-mail to MyCivicCenter@sunnyvale.ca.gov.



LWVC CONVENTION REPORT FROM PRESIDENT HELEN HUTCHISON

My sincere thanks to all of you who made state convention *Let the Sun Shine In* such a success! Attendance exceeded expectations, speakers were inspiring and thought provoking, and workshops provided great information and training!

More thanks to all for the wonderful support shown at the convention for:

- coming in such strong numbers
- participating so actively and passionately
- showing such strong confidence in the direction the LWVC board is taking!

Here are a few of my take-aways from the convention:

- The League in California is vibrant and ready to take on current issues

- The League exists at multiple levels, but we are one League with one membership
- The League is as relevant as we've ever been
- We in the League deal with the hard questions—whether public policy or within our own organization—and we attack them head-on.

Visit our Flickr Convention Set to see great photos of delegates, speakers, and more that you're welcome to use!

Ways to stay involved post-convention: join email newsletters and Yahoo Groups, connect on Facebook, and comment on the blog.

You can find information on speakers, workshops, special events, caucuses and more on the Convention blog and we are sharing the convention materials on the members only site. Keep the momentum going!

LWV COUNCIL REPORT FROM PRESIDENT ELISABETH MACNAMARA



Council 2015 was a resounding success. League leaders came together to learn, to share and to plan for the next two years and beyond. Organized around a theme of celebrating our past and embracing the future, Council presentations focused on the opportunities created in a world that has fundamentally changed. Over the past decades, new generations of Americans have grown distrustful of the ability of institutions, public and private, to solve community problems. At the same time, they still want to belong to a community in which they feel their voice is heard and matters. The revolution in communication technology has changed more than just the speed with which we communicate or can access information. It has changed the way individuals engage with one another in the 'public square.'

For the League of Women Voters this change creates a crisis in our democracy while at the same time offering a tremendous opportunity to become that community through which a new generation comes together to make its voice heard. All we need is a change in our own mental attitude and a plan to adapt to new forms of civic engagement. At the LWVUS we have been working to engage more people using the new communications tools like social media and e-activism. The good news is that our message, especially around those core democracy

issues that have, over the past decade, become the battleground for control of American government, is resonating. We are demonstrating that there is much more support for the League's work on voter protection and election reform than is reflected in our traditional membership numbers. The number of people engaging with LWVUS online has increased dramatically. More people are signing up to receive our email, to take action by sending our message to decision makers, and promoting our message through their own social media networks.

This is good news for more than the LWVUS. As League leaders heard, seizing the opportunity that the crisis in our democracy presents for an organization with 95 years of experience in Making Democracy Work® for all Americans, by increasing our outreach and improving our own League network truly offers a winning plan for a 21st Century League. The League was founded to educate and activate 23 million new women voters so that they could exercise their vote in an informed, independent and rational manner. To this day, increasing participation by informing voters and reforming the system is the mission of the League. If we keep that mission always before us, what we are learning is that the people we need will come, the work we do will get done, and, more importantly, democracy will work for everyone.

DEVELOPMENT IN SUNNYVALE

Holly Lofgren

Dave Whittum, Sunnyvale City Council Member, reviewed the various development plans currently being updated. He suggested residents subscribe to 'enotify,' enotify.insunnyvale.com, to see if any development is happening in their area. He also suggests that Sunnyvale residents pay attention to the Mountain View Voice.

Peery Park Plan, 407 acres, will they add 2 million new square feet of office space? (The city already has applications for 1.5 million square feet!).

Moffett Park, 1156 acres, developer Jay Paul has another application in for a large development. The application is to develop a 47 acre parcel into five eight-story office/R&D buildings, four parking structures and an amenity building for a total floor area of approximately 1.65 million square feet and 80 percent floor area ratio.

The Moffett Park Specific Plan adopted in 2004 provides for ultimate build out of a total of 24.3 M sq. ft, which represents an increment of +8.7 M sq. ft. to what was existing at that time in 2004. This 24.3 M sq. ft. equals 18.9 M sq. Ft. assigned to specific parcels and 5.4 M sq. ft. unassigned i.e. "development reserve." Most of that 2004 development reserve has since been used.

Lawrence Station Plan, 629 acres and new high density housing is being planned.

The **El Camino Precise Plan** (ECPP) is under re-write. The last ECPP dates to 2007. Whittum noted that 25% of all Sunnyvale retail sales tax comes from businesses on El Camino and we would be unwise to put that at risk in the course of tinkering with the ECPP. He noted that the ECPP provides for a "minimum setback from El Camino Real of 35 feet for larger buildings," and to "modulate building facades to relate to typical structures along El Camino Real," specifically, to "break up building masses over 100-feet in length," at odds with the new hotel on El Camino.

Onizuka is the bright spot in all the development plans, because Foothill DeAnza College District is building a satellite campus site there on 9 acres; 4.6 acres belongs to the City and its use is still undecided.

The jobs count is increasing in Sunnyvale, but we still do not have as many jobs as we did in the year 2000, according to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) as cited in our Housing Element. He feels this is complex issue and noted that 60% of Sunnyvale workers are employed in Sunnyvale or nearby. (Sunnyvale 25.6%, San Jose 17.7%, Santa Clara 11.1% Cupertino 5.2%, and Los Altos 1.4%).

Whittum said residential development impacts schools and traffic. He said that 40% of the electorate will vote with this in mind. He reminded the audience that the state requires cities to zone to allow for a certain amount of new housing, and that the City's Housing Element is in compliance, and provides sufficient zoning for an additional 5,849 units vs 5,452 ABAG required Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA). Our RHNA number of 5,425 from ABAG has already been planned for and this requirement has been met. He noted that state law does not permit decision makers

to consider consequences to schools due to development, specifically "A state or local agency may not deny or refuse to approve a legislative or adjudicative act, or both...on the basis of a person's refusal to provide school facilities mitigation that exceeds the amounts authorized."

Regarding transportation, he said he feels the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) should focus on the north county cities not exclusively on San Jose. He noted that 22% of Sunnyvale residents live within a half mile of the Mathilda Sunnyvale-Saratoga corridor.

Whittum said he endorsed the Public Land petition which would give voters the opportunity to vote on the sale of Sunnyvale's public park, civic and recreation land. He mentioned that the city does not have a good long-term institutional memory, due to term limits and staff turnover. Requiring voter approval of park land sales will improve the quality of thinking in City Hall. He strongly feels that numbered sets of the city council should be eliminated. He also stated that Sunnyvale residents need to be much more engaged on all the subjects mentioned above.



Dave Whittum and slide of development in Sunnyvale

DEVELOPMENT IN CUPERTINO

Holly Lofgren

Cupertino Mayor Rod Sinks reported that developments in Cupertino include the Apple II Campus and the Main Street Campus. The proposed development at Vallco has been set aside until a consensus of the community can be reached. This is a 50 acre project. He said the community wants something at Vallco that works. The developer (Peter Pau of Sand Hill Properties) spent \$400 million for the site and desires enough financial reward to move forward. Sinks said that experts say that Vallco cannot be successful with only retail as Valley Fair overshadows it. Experts say it must be mixed-use (some housing) to be financially viable. Rod said that the Cupertino City Council has the Main Street Developer (also Peter Pau) is on a 'short lease' and that the council has placed restrictions on its development.

Sinks commented that he likes Mountain View's approach to development – they allow for so many feet of development, they look at many projects and they allow the developers to compete, choosing the best projects.

Sinks said his challenges are schools and transportation. SB50 limits development fees for schools. As far as transportation, he is trying to build a coalition between Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos and Saratoga (the Mayor of Sunnyvale has not yet joined his group) regarding Highway 85. He feels that paving the median on Highway 85 just serves as an artery to serve the City of San Jose. His group has filed a lawsuit against paving the middle lanes. He wants to see the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) work on real solutions for the north county cities.

Sinks noted that the Flint Center garage at De Anza College is seismically unsafe and will need to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$20 million. It has the potential to become a park and ride and improve the VTA bus turn around.

He said that change is inevitable. To make our community great we need to think what is of value to us and then form a compromise.



Rod Sinks and map of transit corridors 10 years ago.



PLAN FOR WHAT YOU WANT OR WHAT YOU NEED?

Roberta Hollimon

At a recent meeting titled, "Change, Growth and Planning," Don Weden, retired Principal Planner, Santa Clara County Planning, said that we are facing major changes in demographics which are the most significant in our lifetime. Big changes are coming and they are coming fast. His message was, "If you can't stop the train, tell the train where you want to go."

Weden went on to describe the forces driving change. One is population growth. In the next 50 years there will be an additional 320,000 people in the county. This is the equivalent of two Sunnyvales and growth will be primarily in the north valley. The greatest increase is in the 65+ years of age category and is 66% of growth. Presently 1 in 8 residents in the county are over 65. In 15 years it will be 1 in 4 over 65. "The future looks gray." We need to plan for an aging population. There is a basic assumption that we all will be able to drive as we age. Statistically, the last 10

years of our lives we will not be driving. If we don't plan for this, seniors will be trapped in suburbia. We need transit access for seniors.

Weden offered several options to guide the change: we can accept growth, we can resist growth, we can mitigate growth, or we can guide growth.

Do we plan for what we want: low density, drive to wherever we want to go, or do we plan for what we need: increased mobility options and reduced dependence on the automobile with well-planned density? We need focused density not scattered density.

Weden says, "Maintaining our quality of life, while adapting to these major changes will require responsible, visionary local land use planning—and community attitudes that support well-planned, appropriately-located, high density new development." With planning we can have livable green urban neighborhoods.

RECKONING WITH RESPONSIBILITY IN DRY TIMES: A PERSONAL WATER STORY

By Robin Meadows



Ten years ago, I received a letter from the City of Fairfield notifying me of an unwelcome distinction: my household was one of the biggest water users in town—a “Top Ten Percenter,” the letter said—at 1,291 gallons a day. The letter included a bar graph that shouted my extravagance, but came with a handwritten note that was unexpectedly kind. After stating that a family of four like mine typically uses 400 gallons a day indoors, the writer nonetheless tried to make me feel better by saying our use was “fairly normal, especially considering the summer’s unusually high temperatures and the fact that grass requires a lot of water.” The letter ended with an invitation to call or drop by for water saving tips.

I was mortified.

I was also surprised. As I explained when I called, the lawn was one of the first things to go when we moved in. The city said the real culprit was probably an underground leak, and sent a technician out to check. He showed me that the needle on my water meter whirled even when I wasn’t using any water, confirming the leak. And the meter still spun after he turned off the water supply to my house, showing the leak was on the city’s side of the pipes.

The city repaired the pipe, my water use dropped, and I stopped thinking about it. I was sure I had no reason to worry: while Californians generally consume half of their water outside, I don’t have a lawn, don’t wash my car in the driveway, and don’t have a pool. I was so confident my water use was low that I still wasn’t paying attention to it three years into California’s extreme drought, and nearly a year into my water reporting fellowship with the *Bay Area Monitor*.

I’m paying attention now. After a fourth dry winter in a row, the hills edging the valley where I live are already brown, buckeye trees already have yellow leaves even though they’re still blooming, and local farmers have already baled their first crop of hay. Worse, the Sierra Nevada snow pack that provides two-thirds of California’s water is down to almost nothing.

Last year, the state asked people in cities to use 20 percent less water. But we didn’t listen. So for the first time ever, California has mandated urban water restrictions. The state says cities must collectively use 25 percent less water in 2015 than they did in 2013, and each city has a customized target ranging from 8 to 36 percent less. The target depends solely on how much water the city used last year, which varied enormously from 41 gallons per person per day in South San Francisco to 614 gallons per person per day in the Palm Desert region of Southern California. It doesn’t matter how much water a city has or how much they have already conserved, and some object to this approach.

I needed to know how much water I actually use...so I called the Fairfield water department. The woman who picked up offered to send my water history.

I could hardly stand the wait. This time the bar graph showed that I use 89 gallons a day, below the average of 96 gallons a day it’ll take for Fairfield to reach its state mandated conservation target this year. All the same, I’m stepping up my own water conservation. Much as I enjoy baths, I don’t need one every day. Some may see California in drought as a story of water haves and have nots. But as one of the haves — at least for now — I say we’re all in this together.

*Excerpted and reprinted with permission
from the Bay Area Monitor, June 2015
To read the whole article on water supply
go to www.BayAreaMonitor.org.*

*Robin Meadows (www.robinmeadows.tumblr.com)
is the reporting fellow for the 2014-15 Water
Education Initiative. This article represents
the last in a six-part series that she wrote for
the reporting fellowship.*

LEAGUE NEWS

National – The League sent a letter to the U.S. Senate with other reform groups expressing support for the Lobbying and Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2015. This legislation, [...] would limit the ability of lobbyists to use bundled contributions to buy influence with members of Congress.

Today, [June 25, 2015] on the eve of the second anniversary of the Shelby County v. Holder U.S. Supreme Court decision that gutted key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), bicameral legislation was introduced to renew a nearly two-year effort to restore the historic law and its vital voter protections. The Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 was introduced this morning by Senators Leahy, Durbin and Coons and Representatives Lewis, Sewell, Sanchez, and Chu. On this new bill, LWVUS President MacNamara stated: “We are very pleased that new legislation has been introduced in both houses of Congress [...] but there is so much more work to be done with the 2016 elections quickly approaching.”

LWVC CONVENTION ACTION REPORT

At the LWVC Convention 2015, the following were adopted:

Program Items

- All current program positions were retained
- No new study or update study was adopted
- The Agricultural Land Preservation position #2 was updated to change “an available water supply” to “a sustainable water supply.”

Issues for Education and Advocacy

- Money in Politics
- Climate, Sustainable Water, and Protecting the Environment
- Election Reform and Voting Rights
- Minimum//Living Wage

These issues provide opportunities for your League to advocate at the local and regional level as well as participate in LWVC advocacy in Sacramento, educate your community, and empower community leadership to make everyone’s voices heard and make the best decisions for everyone.

LWVC 2015-2017 Budget

The budget increases PMP by \$2.50 each year. The budget reflects our ongoing commitment to being a flexible, sustainable, and ambitious organization.

Bylaws: Changes

Delegates passed all of the 8 proposed bylaws amendments. Overall, these reflect our desire to comply with nonprofit best practices, often striking policies from the bylaws so that they can be more appropriately, and flexibly, dealt with in Policies and Procedures. Additional notable changes are: allow Copresidents, adopt a Two-Year Budget, make LWVC Council Optional

Join the League of Women Voters

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to LWVCS to LWV Cupertino-Sunnyvale, P.O. Box 2923, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

___ \$60 Individual member

Name(s): _____

___ \$90 Two members in a household

Address: _____

___ \$30 Student

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

___ Contribution \$ _____

Phone(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Membership checks are made out to “LWVCS” and are not tax-deductible. Donations to “LWVCS” are also non-deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to “LWVC Education Fund.”

CALENDAR

July

Mon 13 7:30 PM **Board Meeting**
Hollimon's
11155 La Paloma Drive, Cupertino 95014

Sat 25 9-12 **Sunnyvale Civic Center Project Workshop**
Sunnyvale Community Center
550 E Remington Drive, Sunnyvale

WHO REPRESENTS YOU

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The LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

FIRST CLASS

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