

Topanga Canyon Boulevard Roadside Committee

Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 10:00 – Noon
Supervisor Kuehl's Calabasas Office
26600 Agoura Rd. Suite 100, Large Conference Room



DRAFT MEETING MINUTES:

Approved Approved With Changes

Attendees:

Ed Aguilar
Ben Allanoff
Beth Burnam
Carrie Carrier
Rosi Dagit
Ron Durbin

Lauren Gallant
James Grasso
Timothy Lippman
Fiona Nagle
Tim Pershing
Roger Pugliese

Joseph Rosendo
Ed Siribodhi
Lauren Wonder
Bill Carrier

I. Introductions and Review of Minutes

Introductions were made. The minutes from the January 13, 2016 meeting were approved.

II. Communications Subcommittee Update

Carrie provided the following update:

Reaching out to homeowners in multiple ways. Next outreach will be an email campaign (MailChimp and/or regular email) timed to brush clearance season (May & June). Weed-whacking is one of our main BMPs, so we want to ensure that homeowners clearing their frontage lots are reminded about how their work in encroachment zone could qualify as volunteer effort for TCBRC. (also, need to remind them about obtaining the necessary "Letter of Consent" or "Encroachment Permit." (Beth, Carrie & Stacy working on this).

Carrie also referenced and quickly reviewed the Outreach Assessment that Stacy, she and Beth worked on for the Outreach Assessment criteria. In addition to tracking volume and type of outreach efforts, we will need to consider how to gauge effectiveness of each outreach effort. (Carrie asked Fiona for review and consider sharing a base template file for others working on their Assessments to use as starting point. (*After Meeting Note*: the Outreach Excel file is somewhat specialized. A better potential template might be the "Worker Safety" or "Cost Criteria" files that Stacy and Carrie worked on).

Carrie and Beth reviewed upcoming outreach efforts, including the Emergency Preparedness Fair at the School on May 7th, Topanga Days Parade and Fair on Memorial Day weekend. Tim P suggested handing out materials along route (IF we can get a car/float in the parade). If not, at the very least, we'll have materials at the Chamber of Commerce booth on the fairgrounds (Community Club) throughout the weekend, which Bill C and Carrie will be manning for several hours over the weekend.

III. Overview of Assessment Process - Caltrans and Fiona Nagle

A. Objective - Fiona reviewed the purpose for the Assessment for tracking, review, learning and informing the next Workplan (for 2018). Then, talk segued over to Fire Assessment issues (and the recent replacement of a Fire professional. The new Fire Inspector/Coordinator, Evan Conklin, is newly assigned to the Topanga territory. Evan is not yet familiar with the Community-Caltrans-Fire collaboration on TCBRC initiative). He and Fiona have met and did some preliminary inspecting (shortly before the April 13th TCBRC meeting)

B. Timeline - Fiona referenced her Timeframe and Assessment document (distributed at meeting). Data due by October 2016. Concerns expressed by Rosi that this may not be feasible for certain criteria, like Cost Criteria.

C. Assessment Criteria - Fiona discussed each criteria and what we were seeking to measure (see below for key issues related to the 8 criteria)

D. Additional Guidance and Q&A - these are summarized in Section IV: "Assessment Group Reports."

IV. **Assessment Group Reports**

1. Fire Safety - This Criteria took up the vast majority of the discussion time.

- Long discussion about SCE poles, which poles are treated, and how we can convince Edison not to treat them (blue flags for those with older equipment that were treated this past year. color changes annually). The FD does not dictate which poles need to be treated, but they do assess fire safety of them. SCE contracts out the pole treatments to third party. (see the "Toxicity" criteria below for more info on the action item related to eliminating the use of herbicides on these ~20 poles). We talked about possibly using a weed mat here. Permeable pavement/porous concrete was mentioned as a possible solution. Not sure if Caltrans is still considering this material or if SCE would approve. The advantage is that it could/would fit the contours of the space and might work like "bare earth" while providing a suppressive cover over the ground to curtail weed growth.
- Evan offered to Caltrans & others demo ladder fuel reduction (where the trees are cut up above the ground to the lesser of 10 ft or 1/3 up the ht of the tree). Beth said both horizontal and vertical.

Tim Pershing: State Parks contact, Craig Sap. There is an area in the North Area that serves as a good example of how to properly prune a tree for fire safety. Around Mile Marker (MM) 10.5 & 11. *Ben recommended sharing this info with the Messenger.

Fiona recommended filming it.

- **Mulch** (1/2 has worked well and half has stuff growing up through it). Area across from View Ridge. The one that performed better was 6 inches deep. The area that didn't do quite as well was 2 inches. It was unclear why some areas had 6 " of mulch while others only had 2". Possibly slope related, ground unevenness related, or machine related. But even the 2" showed some suppressive effect.
Fiona: this is pretty good, considering it's been there for a while. It may be good to remove and replace it periodically with new mulch.

Ron D. This is confirmation of what we already know. 6 inches is effective. 2 inches or less doesn't prevent weeds -- Mulch supply: caveat

We're also using special mulch for TCBRC (hardwood mulch). Must be careful with source of mulch. Want to use mulch that has been composted or aged to kill seedlings (prevent germination).

In sum, mulch is effective. Need to assess the costs of using mulch (and amortize it over the number of years it is effective (2 to 3, in general).

- 2. Environmental Toxicity** - Caltrans is not using any herbicides along TCB. SCE, however, is still using herbicides on certain poles with older equipment (~20 poles, per Ron Durbin). Roger and Ben did a two-hour inspection of poles to see what their status was. Fiona did as well. Even when poles are manually cleared by homeowner (or other volunteer), SCE will likely still apply herbicide for year-long prevention of new growth. (that said, some of the chemically treated poles still showed growth...plant resistance developing...?)

*Timothy L. said that he had an idea to encourage cooperation on the part of SCE. Timothy will reach out to SCE contact again. He, Roger and Ben to discuss and collaborate.

3. **Erosion Control** - Ben and Rosi have the form sent to them by Fiona. They can use this as starting point (or endpoint!) for their own Erosion Criteria Assessment/tracking form.
4. **Worker Safety** - Stacy (TTC) has this criteria. She and Carrie worked on worksheet for this in Excel. Their worksheet was based on guidelines in the original Workplan Appendix for this Criteria (sent to Fiona).
5. **Total Cost** - Rosi brought up concerns around the group's being able to meet the data collection deadline this year of October 2016. Carrie put together a spreadsheet to track costs for community volunteers. Fiona asked Joseph R. To join the Cost Criteria Assessment group-he agreed. Lauren W. said that costs from Caltrans would be available.
6. **Timeframe** - The issue of whether we could collect all necessary data by October 2016 (which is the data collection deadline) was discussed for a while. Some concerns about whether we'll be able to collect the data for ALL criteria (like costs, erosion) by the October 2016 deadline. There was also discussion around whether the extensive drought will create data that is not representative of long-term averages (Rosi). Comments were made that the current drought likely is representative of the "new normal," with climate change and drier weather patterns predicted for this area going forward. Heavy rainfall years will no doubt still happen (likely increasing costs), but those are likely to be less frequent than extended droughts. Hence the data averages that we collect probably do skew fairly close to the future long-term average.
7. **Outreach** - Stacy, Beth and Carrie sent file to Fiona outlining what has been done, quantifying it and indicating what is planned. Carrie setting up Community demo garden at either Library, school and/or private frontage property or near "the bridge" for this October.
8. **Satisfaction** - Fiona and Tim P working on this.

V. Action Items for Assessment Groups

- Lauren G, Timothy Lippman and Tim Pershing to make reprints of the commendation awards for the library display case sometime over the next month or so. (to be dropped off at the Library desk). Oleg will collect and hold until he receives them. Then they will be put in the display case.
- Fiona reviewing Assessment Excel worksheets emailed by Carrie for Outreach, Worker Safety and Costs. The latter two *may* serve as a useful template for those assessing other criteria. Fiona to review, revise (or suggest edits) and potentially send out to group for their use in developing their own assessment tracking forms/files.
- Stacy, Carrie and Beth to send out weed-whacking email campaign (Carrie drafting for review by Stacy, Beth et al).
- Timothy L. to reach out to SCE contact about stopping herbicide use on the 20 poles with older equipment.
- Fiona to send pics of her fire assessment ride with Evan.
- Everyone to work on creating an Assessment file for their criteria based on the input Fiona provided and the worksheet she distributed with additional guidance and a specific timeframe (a best effort should be made to have data in the Assessment files by October 2016 where possible).
- Additional outreach efforts by Outreach Criteria committee and TCBRC members to community as outlined at meeting (also in the Outreach file Carrie sent to Fiona).

V. Announcements and Other Business

- Fiona Nagle has moved to private sector but is staying on the Committee on a volunteer. basis long enough to help us transition. The new Caltrans professional helping oversee and guide the Caltrans part of this protocol is Ed Aguilar, an Environmental specialist in the Maintenance Division.

- Next Meeting Date, July 13,2016

VI. **Adjournment**