



NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL #1

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
CITY HALL COMMUNITY ROOM
2929 TAPO CANYON ROAD

AGENDA

NC #1 Chair	Jill Abele
NC #1 Vice Chair	Dalila Minter
NC #1 Secretary	Cameron Thompson
CS Coordinator	Emily Habib
City Council Liaison	Council Member DeeDee Cavanaugh

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance

2. Agenda Review

3. Approval of Minutes

4. Correspondence

5. Public Statements/Comments

This is the time allotted for public statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Executive Board not on the agenda. Statements and comments are limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker.

6. Informational Presentation

HOME- Housing Opportunities Made Easier

7. New Business

a. Amendment to the Simi Valley Municipal Code to allow cargo containers as residential storage structures

b. Nomination of a representative to the Community Projects Grant (CPG) Review Committee

c. Nomination of a representative and alternate to the Program for Public Information (PPI) Committee



8. Community Services Coordinator's Report

9. Executive Board Comments

This is the time allotted for Executive Board member statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Neighborhood Councils, to give an Ad Hoc Committee Report or to make any announcements related to community events and other items of interest.

10. Adjournment: Thursday, April 6, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

/s/
Yvette Moore
Administrative Officer

If any interested individual has a disability that may require accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Services Coordinator at (805) 583-6756. Upon advance notification, reasonable arrangements will be made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Welcome

Chair Tom Williams called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He also confirmed that a quorum was present.

Elsa Dreckman	P	Vacant	
Debbie Gainey	P	Tom Williams	P
Mark Luker	P	Valerie Evans	P
David Mosso	P	Theresa Lewis	P
Cameron Thompson	P	Vacant	
Jill Abele	P	Vacant	
Dalila Minter	P	P=Present; E=Excused; A=Absent	

2. Agenda Review

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by David Mosso and seconded by Jill Abele to approve the January 5, 2023 minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Correspondence: None

5. Public Statements/Comments: None

6. Informational Presentations

a. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Program for Public Information (PPI) Committee

Brent Siemer, Deputy Public Works Director, made the presentation. He discussed the NFIP, which provides federally backed flood insurance for homeowners, renters and businesses. He also discussed Special Flood Hazard Areas (SHFA), which are identified by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as having special flood hazards. Anyone who lives in these areas is required to buy flood insurance.

In 1999, the City joined the Community Rating System. The ratings run from 9 (the worst) to 1. Through this system, an entity can raise its community rating. Each step up decreases the amount affected residents have to pay the Federal government for flood insurance. Simi Valley is currently at level 5. One requirement of this level is to maintain a Program for Public Information (PPI) Committee. This committee is made up of one representative from each Neighborhood Council plus three City officials.

b. The Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center

Fred Helsel, General Manager, gave the presentation. The original building was built as a church in 1924. It was also previously used as a temple, a school and a funeral home before being opened in 1995 by the City as the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center. As a regional hub for the arts, they strive to provide affordable, community based entertainment for all ages. The over 300 annual events include musicals, concerts, craft fairs, art exhibits, business meetings, and weddings. This could not be accomplished without a large volunteer base that ranges from stage performers to ticket takers.

7. New Business

Election of Officers

By consensus of the Executive Board, Jill Abele was elected Chair, Dalila Minter was elected Vice Chair, and Cameron Thompson was elected Secretary.

8. Community Services Coordinator's Report

Emily Habib noted that new Executive Board members will tentatively be appointed at the February 27, 2023 City Council meeting. Outgoing Executive Board members will also receive Certificates of Appreciation at this meeting. She informed the Executive Board that they would be reviewing a proposed amendment to the Simi Valley Municipal Code at the next meeting.

9. Executive Board Comments

Jill Abele informed the Executive Board that the Boys & Girls Club of Moorpark and Simi Valley would hold their Annual Auction and Dinner Gala on April 9, 2023.

Cameron Thompson and Debbie Gainey participated in the recent Ventura County Homeless Count.

10. Adjournment: Thursday, March 9, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

By consensus of the Executive Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.



CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

Neighborhood Council Development Project Overview

Project No Z-S-2023-0002
Neighborhood Council Nos 1, 2, 3 and 4
Neighborhood Council Date March 9, 14, 16 and 21, 2023
Tentative Planning Commission Meeting Date March 29, 2023
Tentative City Council Meeting Date TBD
Case Planner Zarui Chaparyan, Assistant Planner

Request:

To recommend to the City Council City-Initiated Municipal Code Text Amendment (Z-S-2023-0002), to revise portions of Title 9 of the Simi Valley Municipal Code to allow the use of cargo containers as residential accessory storage structures; and a determination that the amendments are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act.

Location:

City Wide

I. Project Description

Staff will present a Development Code update (Z-S-2023-0002) to allow cargo containers as permanent residential accessory storage structures, to the Planning Commission on March 29, 2023.

On August 22, 2022, the City Council directed Staff to prepare a code amendment to allow cargo containers as permanent residential accessory storage structures in response to requests from the community.

Community members have expressed interest in permanently placing cargo containers as storage units at their residences, as an affordable and efficient alternative to stick-built construction. Some of the potential advantages and disadvantages of the use of cargo containers on residential properties are detailed below:

Advantages of Cargo Containers:

1. Ease of purchase and installation with a growing number of prefabricated container suppliers available.

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2. Potentially more cost effective than stick-built structures as they require little or no assembly and less labor to install.
3. Upcycling containers to be used as storage instead of being turned into waste, may reduce the need for construction materials like wood, brick, and cement.

Disadvantages of Cargo Containers:

1. Safety concerns as structural changes that may be required by the Building Code to make them “permanent” may damage the structure’s integrity.
2. Cargo containers may have potentially toxic chemicals and remediation can be time-consuming and costly.
3. Cargo containers do not meet the requirements of the City’s residential design guidelines that accessory structures be architecturally compatible with the main residence.
4. Screening may be an issue as the height of cargo containers (eight to ten feet) exceeds that of perimeter walls that are allowed in most residential zones (six feet unless adjacent to an industrial or commercial zone, when the wall can be eight feet high).

After researching 18 jurisdictions on their rules and regulations for cargo containers, Staff recommends the following amendments to the SVMC:

1. **Land Use:** Ventura City, Ventura County, Los Angeles County, Lancaster, and Santa Paula allow cargo containers as storage units on larger rural or agricultural parcels. The City Council on August 22, 2022 recommended allowing cargo containers as storage on parcels at least 11,000 square feet in size.
 - Staff recommends allowing cargo containers as storage units on residentially zoned properties at least 10,000 square feet in size and on properties with an Animal, Limited Animal or Horse Overlay parcel, as these properties tend to be more ‘rural’ in nature.
2. **Architectural Compatibility:** Santa Clarita, Santa Paula and Thousand Oaks allow cargo containers if they are architecturally compatible and “match” the architecture of the primary residence (i.e. updates to the façade and roof pitch). Current City of Simi Valley policy requires that accessory structures have the same façade and roof pitch of the primary residence.
 - Given the potentially high costs of converting a cargo container to match a primary residence, Staff recommends that cargo containers be painted with one solid color found on the primary residence to maintain some level of architectural compatibility.
3. **Location and Setbacks:** Santa Clarita has setbacks ranging from zero to five feet depending on the zoning and Thousand Oaks has setbacks of five feet for cargo containers in the rear yard.
 - To ensure adequate screening from public view with six-foot high property walls, Staff recommends required setbacks for cargo containers of five feet

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from side yard property lines, and 10 feet from street side and rear yard property lines. Traditional storage sheds can be 18 feet in height and have three foot setbacks from the side and rear yard property lines.

4. **Height Limitations:** Santa Clarita, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura City apply height standards cargo containers ranging between 14 feet (Thousand Oaks) and 20 feet (Santa Clarita) in height. The City of Lancaster does not allow stacking of cargo containers. Standard cargo containers are between eight and ten feet tall.
 - Staff recommends limiting cargo containers to a height of ten feet and not allowing stacking due to screening concerns.
5. **Number of Containers:** Los Angeles County and the City of Santa Clarita allow for one cargo container per residential lot.
 - Staff recommends allowing one cargo container on parcels of at least 10,000 square feet in area.
6. **Entitlement Processing:** Ventura County and Ventura City require a Minor Zoning Clearance for the installation of cargo containers.
 - Staff recommends a Minor Zoning Clearance to entitle cargo containers as storage units on residentially zoned parcels. For cargo containers over 120 square feet in area, a Building Permit will also be required.

II. Project Compatibility

The goals of amending the code and allowing permanent use of cargo containers for accessory residential uses are to promote and provide standards for use of cargo containers for accessory storage.

- 1) The Cargo Container text amendments are consistent with the following General Plan Land Use policies:
 - a. Land Use Element Policy LU-5.1: “Locate and design development to assure compatibility among land uses, addressing such elements as building orientation and setbacks, buffering, visibility and privacy, automobile and truck access, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation safety, impacts of noise and lighting, landscape quality, and aesthetics.” The enhanced setbacks of 10-feet, height and stacking limitations facilitate screening, as well as requiring the color of the container to match a color on the main residence, would ensure that the use of containers as residential accessory storage structures would be compatible with surround land uses.
 - b. Land Use Element Policy LU-8.4: “Promote land development practices that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and disposal of waste materials incorporating such techniques as...Recycling and/or salvaging for reuse of construction and demolition

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debris.” Cargo containers may be upcycled and repurposed for use as residential accessory storage structures instead of ending up in landfills.

III. Environmental Review

The proposed amendments are exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; California Public Resources Code Section 2100, et seq.) and CEQA regulations (Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 15000, et seq.) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), which states that: “A project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.”

The proposed amendments to the Development Code provide minor modifications that include updating development standards to allow cargo containers as a residential accessory structures. Establishment of these standards will not create a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.