

MENTONE MATTERS

Vol. 1, No. 1

BY AND FOR MENTONITES, ABOUT MENTONE, CALIFORNIA

March, 2018

WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

Imagery © 2018 Google, Map data © 2018 Google United States



LAFCO Lot 3207 One Week Before November 10, 2017

By Guest Contributor Steve Rogers, consulting engineer,

Orange trees were taken out on the property bordered by the Zanja Creek and Sylvan on the south and Wabash on the west, across from the Crafton Elementary School), in what was, until recently, an unincorporated area of Crafton/Mentone. The property was sold by Larry Jacinto to the Catholic Church in 1993 and then rented back to Jacinto, who used a large portion of the grove property for storage, fueling and maintenance yard for his farming equipment (Jacinto is Redlands' orange grove farming contractor, in addition to his own activities,). There were two structures which were also demolished, in anticipation of the imminent development of the 11.97-acre property into 34 single family residential lots and before receiving San Bernardino County Local Area Formation Commission ("LAFCo) approval in application No. 3207.

Photo Courtesy Darian Stetka



LAFCO Lot 3207 One Week Later, November 10, 2017

Development approvals - referred to as "entitlements" - are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. The City of Redlands demands to have property development annexed into the City for water and sewer services; thus, the City would need to require a complete review and analysis of the land use challenges associated with the site in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

SOIL CONTAMINATION? Historically, metal underground fuel storage tank(s) [UST(s)] rust and leak fuel into the soil and groundwater; on this site it may have migrated southerly and under the Zanja.

However, the Environmental Considerations section of the LAFCO 3207 staff report indicates that the City of Redlands prepared an environmental assessment (Initial Study, only) (See "HAPPENING" on p. 3)

IN THIS ISSUE:

Editorial Page	2
"Peninsula"	4
"Water Rates?"	4
"Trails"	5
Elections	7
Notes	7
Village news	7
Organizations meeting locally	8

Welcome to a - hopefully - monthly e-newspaper until replaced by the MENTONE MATTERS web page; although some of it may seem to be “old news” Mentonites may not be aware of events regarding our community; this medium aspires to remedy that as well as to coordinate the efforts of the groups and individuals who want to preserve Mentone. Perhaps you have noticed that sections of Mentone are being developed; these are being annexed to Redlands – which means *they are now in Redlands’ city limits* - on a regular basis. In 1997 Redlands enacted Measure U, giving itself the power to *demand* annexation in exchange for water and sewer service because Mentone was already in its state-legislated “sphere of influence” in the 1970s. Rather than lose the ability to sell properties because of lack of water and sewer service, developers, *including some based in Mentone*, are annexing to Redlands.

Additionally, at a recent meeting of Cops and Clergy, it was reported that Redlands’ Mayor mentioned in passing the City’s intention to take over Mentone. However, other unincorporated areas are not so treated by the cities in whose sphere of influence they have been placed.

In addition to the forced annexations stated elsewhere herein, the owners of 14 lots between Crafton and the water tank on Agate intend to sell; quite likely the new owner will agree to annexation, as well as the owner of the lot on Crafton and the Boulevard. Thus, Mentone will be effectively surrounded by Redlands. Other developments since 1997 have been forcibly “pre-annexed.”

How did it come to this critical stage? We believe it’s because Mentone, which was the destination of choice in the 1880s (having been started in 1874), was never incorporated - as Redlands was. Perhaps because of its rural character and Mentonites’ independent spirit, that was safe - until 1997. Sometime in the past various individuals, we believe, tried to stop the rampant gobbling up of our territory but felt powerless or did not know what to do about it. Currently, that is the feeling of many Mentonites.

You may be thinking “No! Not in my backyard!” and/or “What can I do to help?” We say get involved: attend community meetings such as MACA and COMET and/or donate to the necessary legal expenses to make Redlands leave us alone; *there may be time limitations to keep in mind*. For more details, please e-mail us.

As philosopher Edmund Burke is credited as saying, “The way for evil to prosper is for good people to do nothing.”

Please also tell your friends and neighbors in Mentone about this e-newspaper; we will be happy to receive their e-mail addresses to send it to them and/or you can forward it. If you do not wish to receive Mentone Matters in the future, or we have duplicate e-mail addresses for you and you wish to designate just one of them, please e-mail us.

Actually, we hope to have the web page up and

running shortly. We also “covet” your news items. E-mail them to us.

Having said all that, if the “Harmony”

MENTONE MATTERS
 P.O. Box 304,
 Mentone, CA 92359
 E-mail: mentonematters@aol.com
 Web page: mentonematters.com
 (under construction at present)

DESIGN WEST ENGINEERING
 MECHANICAL : ELECTRICAL : PLUMBING : ENERGY

```

  graph TD
    Root[DESIGN WEST ENGINEERING] --- MECHANICAL[MECHANICAL]
    Root --- PLUMBING[PLUMBING]
    Root --- ELECTRICAL[ELECTRICAL]
    MECHANICAL --- FIRE[FIRE PROTECTION]
    MECHANICAL --- LOW[LOW VOLTAGE]
    ELECTRICAL --- COMMISSIONING[COMMISSIONING]
  
```

OUR SERVICE IS SECOND TO NONE

909.890.3700
 WWW.DESIGNWESTENG.COM

275 WEST HOSPITALITY LANE : SUITE 100
 SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA 92408

project goes through in East Highland, CalTrans will widen the Boulevard and most of our business district will likely “go away.” Thus, the Greenspot folks also need our support. E-mail us for details.

HAPPENING? (Cont'd from p. 1)

and a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the development project entitlements; that is, *the staff report omitted the soil contamination.*

To clean up the contamination, the tanks and dirt must be dug up and the dirt left exposed to the air, usually adjacent to the site, for a period of time. The installation, operation and removal of such facilities are under the purview and permitting authority of the San Bernardino County Fire Marshal Hazardous Materials Division, who serves as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) in San Bernardino County. The Commission's Environmental Consultant, Tom Dodson and Associates, determined that if the Commission approved 3207, it and the City's environmental assessment are adequate documentation for the Commission's use as a lead agency under CEQA.

The project received its final approvals at the November 7, 2017 Commission meeting.

IT'S NOW IN REDLANDS' CITY LIMITS: After the pre-zoning and environmental assessment process by the City of Redlands and submission to LAFCo the property was annexed into Redlands, pursuant to its Measure U, enacted in 1997 and outlined in Chapter 13.60.030 of the City's Municipal Code - demands annexation of all contiguous [adjacent] and non-contiguous property development proposals for which the developer needs water and sewer service from Redlands, which owns all of Mentone's former water companies.

FIRE PROTECTION? Further, in order for the Commission to consider approval of the project's annexation to Redlands, the City was required to prepare a Plan of Service, in order to support the request for the area to be removed from unincorporated County territory and into Redlands' City limits. The reorganization proposal includes the detachment from San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (SBCFPD) [Ed.'s note: it's located on the corner of Crafton and the Boulevard] and its Valley Service Zone. The City of Redlands Fire Department then covers the new development. The proposal also include detachment from the County Service Area (CSA) 70 and CSA 70 Zone P-7, an inactive entity that was created by the County in 1991 to provide park and recreation services for the unincorporated Mentone-Crafton community.

WHY? Other determinations made with LAFCo 3207, as are required to be provided by Commission policy and Government Code Section 56668 for any change of organization/ reorganization proposal, include: 1) the San Bernardino County Assessor has determined that the total assessed value of land and improvements within the reorganized area on the secured assessment roll is \$1,232,377 (land= \$997,848; improvements=\$234,529); 2) the reorganization area is within the sphere of influence area assigned to the City of Redlands, within the Mentone community; 3) this proposal will assist the City's ability to achieve its fair share of the regional housing needs since the organization area is being developed with 34 single-family residences; and 4) that the County of San Bernardino and the City of Redlands have successfully negotiated a transfer of property tax revenues that will be implemented upon completion of the reorganization, which fulfills the requirements of the Revenue and Tax Code.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE FARMLAND? Another land use issue identified in the LAFCo staff report, and one of the main tenets of LAFCo law, is the preservation of open space and prime agricultural lands. While this site previously had an existing use representing a fragmented citrus grove operation, the development planned under LAFCo 3207 will convert prime farmland to non-agricultural use.

Due to this loss, a mitigation measure has been imposed where the project developer will be required to fund acquisition of farmland or farmland conservation easements at a ratio of .50/1 or half an acre for each acre of prime farm land converted to residential land use with development of the tract. Based on 5.5 agricultural acres of the 11.97-acre project site being prime farmland, a total of 2.75 acres of prime agricultural land

shall be acquired and permanently protected and made available to an existing farmland trust or comparable organization, prior to issuance of a grading permit for the tract development. The condition of approval goes on to add that the project developer shall submit verification to the City of Redlands Development Services Department that the acquisition of farmland has been completed; a receipt from the farmland conservation agency will serve as adequate verification that this condition has been satisfied. However, said mitigation may not be required to be in the same County, thus leading to acquisition of similar farmland in Kern County (i.e., near Bakersfield), unless that is explicitly included.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? The November 7, 2017 LAFCO 3207 staff report states that, in February 2016, Patrick Meyer, representative for both the previous property owner The Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community, Inc., and the current owner, Sam-Redlands, LLC, submitted a petition initiating the change of organization and the application materials requesting annexation to the City of Redlands.

Meyer is also part of the Redlands Steering Committee.

NOT THE FIRST SUCH ANNEXATION: Over several Mentonites' objections at the May 2017 LAFCo meeting, Jacinto's orange grove on the corner of Wabash and Citrus was annexed to Redlands, with Patrick Meyer being Jacinto's representative and submitting the paperwork. Meyer is also part of the Redlands Steering Committee.

Redlands' continual chipping away at the so called "rural-urban interface" was the primary topic of discussion with the City of Redlands General Plan Update which was recently approved by the Redlands City Council in December 2017.

WHAT'S NEXT? The County is currently pursuing its own General Plan Update, called the Countywide Vision, which will be the governing document for the unincorporated area; Mentonites may have an opportunity to protect their agricultural roots by insisting that the County put stronger regulations in place to establish a "green limit line" along Wabash, potentially preventing Redlands from converting any more of the land east of Wabash Ave within their sphere of influence into tract development. (See, also, the Editorial, p. 2.)

THE "PENINSULA" STAYS IN MENTONE!

Proposed to be included in LAFCO 3207 annexation [see page 1] was the adjacent, unincorporated peninsula area directly to the south along the East side of Wabash Avenue and north of Citrus Avenue; however, due to the peninsula area property owners' written objections, it was eliminated from consideration.

According to the November 7, 2017 staff report, as a result, disapproval of the proposal by the Commission would create a peninsula of unincorporated territory between the City's existing boundary and LAFCO 3207. Residents of the area received questionnaires from the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo) a few months before, requesting their wishes as to being annexed to Redlands instead of creating a "peninsula" of Mentone territory nearly surrounded by Redlands.

The residents were requested to send their written agreement with the proposal or lack thereof by mail to LAFCo. One of the affected residents, Steve Hellerman, Crafton Hills College Political Science professor, along with a few other concerned community members, attended the LAFCo meeting at which the proposal was under consideration and stated that the residents did not want to be included in Redlands' city limits.

LAFCo decided to abandon the proposal to include the peninsula in the annexation action for the adjacent development and instead chose to grant the resident's requests to remain in unincorporated Mentone territory.

ARE WATER RATES GOING UP?

By Joyce Rapp

NextDoor.com reported that water rates to Mentone would be going up and provided a protest form, with customers needing to object by February 15. No notices of a raise in water rates were sent to customers with the water bills, so far as this writer knows. This writer emailed the protest form to the City, which was forwarded to City Clerk Jeanne Donaldson and Municipal Utilities Engineering Director Toor.

SERINA M. LOPEZ
Paralegal
SLopez7267@aol.com

PARALEGAL SERVICES
(951) 805-4735

1255 W. Colton Avenue
Redlands, CA 92374

Because the Water Department's head had stated in a 2009 San Bernardino Sun article that Mentone customers were charged more than Redlands customers; however, the Water Department recently told this writer that the rates were the same. Thus, this writer also e-mailed a formal letter, requesting the actual water rates charged to Mentone and Redlands customers. No response has been received as of this publication date.

TRAILS GET CLOSER TO REALITY?

Four CalPoly Pomona students recently presented two different designs for Mentone's extension of the "Orange Blossom Trail," particularly the portion which goes along Opal Avenue, across the Boulevard, through the proposed community park (on the vacant land adjacent to the Hovey Tile factory, corner of the Boulevard and Opal), to Redlands. It starts at the Santa Ana River, goes through Redlands and San Bernardino, through Riverside and Orange Counties, and ends at the ocean. It is designed for bicyclists and horses or walkers eventually to travel the entire distance.

One design provides for basketball, tennis and other courts; however, the proposed basketball and other courts may violate the County's lease agreement, said Steve Rogers, P.E., and, therefore, may not be buildable. The other plan is for a conventional, family-style park, incorporating a landscape design by Mentone resident Phil Kilgour, a retired City planner landscape designer.

Photo Courtesy Jason Martin



Black & White Area Emphasizes Project Focus

Photo Courtesy Jason Martin



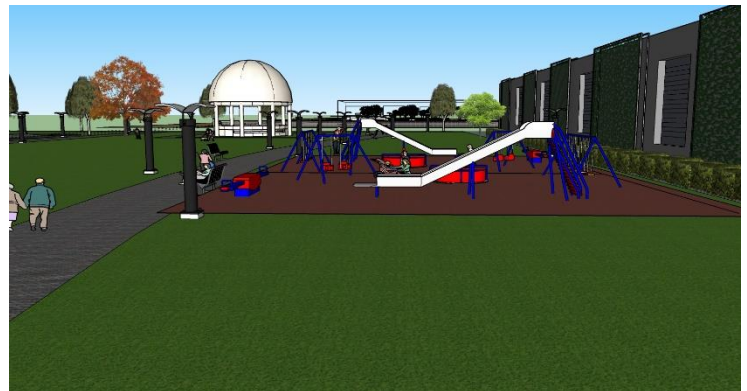
Trail extending from park connecting to the Santa Ana River Trail with wayfinding elements

Photo Courtesy Jason Martin



CalPoly students presenting at MACA meeting February 13, 2018

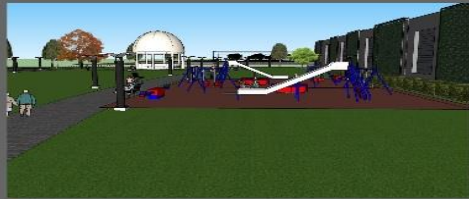
Photo Courtesy Jason Martin



Proposed park on the south side of Mentone Blvd. looking north toward the Senior Center

Photo Courtesy Jason Martin

Model 1:



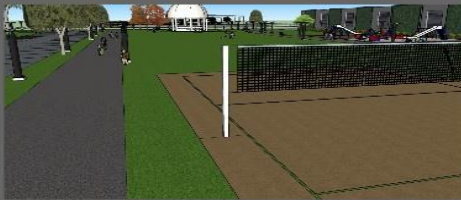
Playground



Lawn and Stage/ Gazebo for concerts in the park.



Basketball and Tennis Courts



Volleyball



Vertical Garden and Hedges



Plan View

Several views of the different athletic courts

The trail would go by the Senior Center/County Library, located between Opal and Jasper, on the north side of the Boulevard. The Center was built where a railroad originally brought tourists to Mentone and then to Redlands, beginning in the late 1800s but was decommissioned in the past. The path goes adjacent to the MWD's water district's pipe into Mentone. The park along the trail is titled a "linear park." The students' work is a "wish list," only, for Mentone; the students are not responsible for actually constructing the trail or parks. They are being paid by a San Manuel grant. The students also stated that the Redlands Water Department has plans for the trails in the Mentone area.

Photo Courtesy Jason Martin

Model 2: Mock-ups.



Second possible park design for property South of Mentone Blvd

COMET AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HOLD ELECTIONS

COMET (Citizens of Mentone Empowered Together) and the Mentone Chamber of Commerce held elections at their January meeting. The same officers were elected to both organizations for three-year terms: David Wilder was elected president, replacing Pastor George Everett, who held the office for many years. Another nominee for Chamber President was rejected because they live out of Mentone. Gabe DeLaRosa was re-elected Vice-President. Arlene Blas was reelected treasurer. The Secretary's position, vacated by David Wilder, was not filled and is still vacant.

Meet the officers: Wilder is a San Bernardino County Commissioner who lives in Mentone. Delarosa, who is also MACA's president, also lives in Mentone. Blas, retired from CIO information technology, lives elsewhere but lived in Mentone when she was first elected as treasurer.

All Mentonites are welcome to join COMET; all business owners who live or do business in Mentone are welcome to join the Chamber. See below for meeting day and time.

NOTES FROM MACA MEETING*:

Another "Welcome to Mentone" sign is now ready and will be going up at or near the East end of Mentone, on Highway 38, dedication to be announced.

The Redlands Humane Society is looking for pet foster parents; contact the Humane Society at 792-6199 or see Jan Orbaker at Redlands Market Night, Thursdays.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff reminds Mentonites that they should lock their cars and make sure their garage doors are closed, to avoid theft.

Another "Every 15 Minutes" will be held at REV in April, exact date to be announced. This is a CHP program to educate teens of the dangers of drinking and driving, as well as other dangerous behaviors.

Marc Steinnorth's representative, Jordan Gurnett, reported that there are two new bills, one regarding property taxes, the effect of which is differentiated by property owners being over or under 55 years of age. The other one is directed at eliminating robocalls and spam e-mails.

Karen Watkins said the County does not have the resources to do the Community trail or parks for Mentone (see related article elsewhere) but will help us find grants and grant writers. "Start small and grow," she said, raising funds by purchasing "blocks."

**A request for complete minutes was declined; more details are available at MACA's monthly meeting.*

VILLAGE NEWS:

GREENSPOT

Court records show that a motion on the *Greenspot Residents v. City of Highland, et al.* petition for writ of mandate is set to be heard on April 6, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. in Dept. S23 of the San Bernardino Super Court at 223 W. Third St., San Bernardino.

The referendum obtained by Greenspot residents is set for Highland voters at the general election in November.

CRAFTON

Free Tax Preparation: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program at Crafton Hills College Central Complex (CNTL) Room 119

Saturdays through April 7th except March 17

Free Parking in Lot E

MENTONE BEACH

Moose Lodge: March 16: St. Patrick's Day Corn Beef and Cabbage & The Tomcats 6 p.m. to 12 a.m.

March 17: Wrestling 2 p.m.

ORGANIZATIONS MEETING LOCALLY:

(On Sundays unless otherwise noted)

Rocky Point Fellowship

2116 Mentone Blvd.,

Mentone, 92359

Avodah Fellowship (Friday nights)

Rocky Point Fellowship (in the fellowship hall)

2116 Mentone Blvd.,

Mentone, CA 92359

Congregational Church UCC

1205 Beryl Ave,

Mentone, CA · (909) 794-2893

Sandals Church East Valley

1325 Amethyst Ave., Mentone, CA

Faith Chapel

1259 Agate Ave.,

Mentone, CA 909-863-8145 *ORGANIZATIONS (Cont'd):*

Faith Chapel

1259 Agate Ave.,

Mentone, CA 909-863-8145

Seventh-Day Adventist Church of Mentone (English and Spanish) (Saturdays 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.)

1230 Olivine Ave.,

Mentone, CA 909-794-1610

Mentone Indonesian-American Seventh-Day Adventist Church

1331 Turquoise Ave.,

Mentone, CA 909-99-3521

COMET and Chamber of Commerce: Rocky Point Fellowship,
 2116 Mentone Boulevard, at 7 p.m. on the last Tuesday of the month.

AA/NA Rocky Point Fellowship, Tuesdays

MACA: Mill Creek Cattle Co., in Diamond Jim's Saloon,

1874 Mentone Blvd., second Tuesday of the month,

Mentone, CA 909/389-0706

Interested in advertising with us? E-mail us for rates and information.