LOS ANGELES MISSION COLLEGE

Los Angeles Mission College
2009 Facilities Master Plan
Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
Public Scoping Meeting

Los Angeles Mission College
Main Campus Center
13356 Eldridge Avenue
Sylmar, California 91342
Saturday, April 25, 2009

ORIGINAL

REPORTED BY:
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CSR NO. 11419

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SYLMAR, CALIFORNIA: SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2009

10:05 A.M.

KAREN HOEFEL,

MS. HOEFEL: Good morning. It's a little loud.
Hopefully Terry will come and turn this down a bit.
We're going to get started. I realize there's only a few
neighbors here, but the meeting was scheduled to begin at
10 this morning, so we want to stay on schedule. We're
also, as you probably know, having a second meeting
Tuesday night. So those who were unable to attend the
meeting today will have another chance to attend the same
meeting Tuesday at 7 o'clock.

My name is Karen Hoefel, and I am the Vice
President for Administrative Services here at Mission
College. Just a little background on me, I've been here
for five years. So I've been through this process a
couple of times. So I know that there are those of you
here who also have some experience with the college's
planning efforts and EIR processes. So we're essentially
going to follow the same process and framework as we did
in the last EIR that was approved and certified by our
board I think in 2007. So it hasn't really been that
long.

I wanted to just welcome you all here, and I
wanted to also share with you, we recently completed a series of neighbor outreach meetings where President Valles addressed the group and shared with all of them, you, her vision for this college.

I know you all know that this college is the only higher education facility in the northeast valley. It is your community college. We are excited to be able to provide a wide range of programs and services to our students with the recent bond, Measure J. And Proposition A/AA bond programs are just about completed and spent out. And Measure J has given us the opportunity as construction costs rose and some of the previously planned master plan buildings couldn't be built under that funding source, Measure J gave us additional funds to complete that and then finish the build-out of Mission College.

So what I wanted to -- I want to give you a bit of a framework about this particular process. The last master plan EIR that was approved projected that Mission College would grow to 15,000 students by the year 2015. This current EIR process has not changed that. That number is still where we believe we will be by 2015.

Just a matter of background for those of you who have been involved in the college and this process several years ago, the college was struggling with
enrollment and was struggling financially. The good news for the college and the district and the community and the students is that the college is no longer struggling financially, and we also are expecting to have 10,000 student here in the fall. We almost reached 10,000 students this spring, but we were just short, around 9,800.

So we are proceeding along with our plans for growth given the current economy and availability of funds from the state to find students to attend community colleges. That number will either grow faster or slower than what our current projections are, but we do see a lot of demand. And as we open these new buildings, we certainly are experiencing more and more students coming to Mission College.

So having said that, this is what we're going to cover for you today is sort of an incremental change in the currently approved master plan. The buildings that are currently under construction, the buildings that have contracts awarded for them to go into construction are on the previous master plan. So we're not here today to change that or add to that, to have a discussion necessarily about those because those have already been approved.

We're going to be talking to you today about a
couple of proposals that will essentially build out Mission College. And as you know, we're relying on it so we're limited. So once we're built out, our only option is to either find property remote from the campus... We hesitate to do that, though, because we think our students deserve to attend classes on a single campus and not have to drive miles for various things.

The athletic fields that the college is proposing are fundamentally different than the project that you might have been a part of several years ago. That project, the college was working on behalf of the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation to relocate the ball fields from behind the park to the wash. That is not what this is about; that is not this project. That project didn't go through and it will never go through.

This project is about providing sort of the rest of the program elements of the Health, Fitness and Athletics Complex that is just about finished. And so these fields in the wash will provide facilities for our students. They will provide facilities for the local community. They will provide facilities for student athletes at Sylmar High School and San Fernando High School not to have to drive to Pierce College or to Pasadena or to Moorpark or to College of the Canyons where they have their own fields. It will provide those
students the opportunity to attend this college and have the same opportunities that they would have at any other college. So those fields would be utilized solely for Mission College students, not the same as what would have occurred had the county put their fields in that area.

So with that, I want to welcome you. We want to talk a little bit about what the meeting objectives are. Many of you were invited to our community meetings. Hopefully those of you who attended were able to meet with the president, talk with her about her vision.

Today's meeting is really about the environmental impact process. And the objectives of an EIR scoping meeting are, really, we're going to provide you with a summary of the process itself, what your role in this process is, how you can make comments on any concerns that you might have relative to the development that the college is proposing.

We're going to review the 2007 master plan, as I said. It is approved and now under construction, just to refresh your memory on where we're at with that. But we're primarily here to describe the new development areas that the college is proposing to build, and the Environmental Impact Report will address only those new development areas.

We are here to solicit your input on possible
environmental impacts on the new development areas, on
the methods, your ideas possibly as to how we might
minimize those impacts, and any alternatives as required
by the CEQA process to the projects that we're currently
proposing.

So those are our objectives this morning. The
format at this meeting is going to be that our EIR
consultants are going to go through a little more detail
about the process and where we're at in it and what the
next steps are. Our master planning consultants will
review the master plan, the new development areas. At
the end of all that presentation, then we will allow
you -- we have various stations set up -- to go and
record, write your comments. We have a court reporter
here if you're interested in giving your comments
straight to this station. You'll get all those details.

So I want to just welcome our consultants. Our
EIR consultant from URS is Dev Vrat. He is very
experienced, an expert on the EIR process. He's done a
lot of this throughout the state. Mia Martinez from
Leo A. Daly, our master planning consultant, will give
you an overview of the proposed master plan. And then
Annette Cortez from URS, who is our public outreach
manager, will actually give you specific instructions on
how you can have all of your concerns and comments
recorded.

So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Dev to start.

DEV VRAT,

MR. VRAT: Thank you very much, Karen. Can you hear me okay? So what I'm going to do is give you an overview of the entire CEQA process because this meeting today is like the very early step in the process which we're about to undertake. We're just starting, okay, and we're trying to involve the public from the very beginning.

So the way the CEQA process works is when any project, any proponent like the college or a private developer or anybody comes up with a concept of a project which may have a physical effect on the environment, that triggers this law. It's called the California Environmental Quality Act.

And it's kind of like a complex process, as Karen indicated, but it requires us to identify the possible impacts of the project, to come up with mitigation measures, and to do our best to mitigate the project, okay. It's not about approving the project or denying the project.

The CEQA process is only about analyzing the project and determining what the environmental effects
are, and then later on those environmental effects will be presented to the decision makers. So let's run through that really briefly.

The first thing we did was we prepared a Public Notice of Preparation, and we prepared an initial study of what we believe the environmental issues are related to the master plan changes. And I think you've all, hopefully, received the public notice in the mail. We put it at the library. We published ads in English and Spanish in local newspapers. So we did our very best job to try to notify the public that we're just starting this process.

And as Karen indicated, we've actually had some local neighbor meetings. We've just been talking about the master plan, not even about the environmental process. So the college is doing everything it can to work with the community from the very onset. That's the first thing I want to emphasize is we're just starting.

The next step, and this is where we are right now, we are in the EIR scoping meetings. There's a 30-day period from the time you receive that notice where you have an opportunity to read the initial study which is available on the website, and it's also available in the libraries, including this college library.

So we'll be presenting the master plan today so
you have a good overview. And if you have questions, you can read the initial study. The master plan itself is right now it's a conceptual master plan. The entire conceptual master plan is on the website. So the master plan is not a done deal. We'll be developing the master plan considering the public's concerns as we move forward. They'll be going along hand in hand.

So we have 30 days for you to provide us comments, and we'll provide a little more detail about how to do that. But it doesn't have to be only in these meetings. You can send us letters or emails or anything as long as we -- we want to get them within 30 days. The reason for that is we want to be able to analyze your comments.

So what we will do is we'll take all your comments, and then we will prepare what's called a Draft Environmental Impact Report. The reason it's called a draft is because once we do the draft report, we're going to put it out again, okay. And the public will have another -- this time you'll have 45 days. You'll have 45 days to read that report, and you'll be able to look at each part of that report, and you'll be able to let us know in writing have we addressed your concerns, okay.

And all those letters, we collect every single letter, every comment, we collect those comments, and we
give those to our staff. We have all kinds of specialists. You'll see the specialists spread out across this room. Those specialists will be charged with responding to your comments. And by law we are required to respond to your comments in writing, okay.

So then we're going to produce what's called the final EIR. The final EIR will have all of your comments printed in the document, and every single comment you make there will be a response from us. When I say "us," I mean the entire team. We all work together to respond to your comments. So that's what constitutes the final EIR.

That final EIR will be presented to the Los Angeles Community College District in a public hearing. And so the district is required to make formal findings that they have read that EIR and they're aware of the environmental impacts of the master plan. We know there's going to be environmental impacts, but it's up to the Community College District to approve this plan.

So they can require mitigation measures of the environmental effects, et cetera. But if they choose to do so at the end of the day, they can approve the master plan even in spite of the environmental effects. And the reason for that is because there's community benefits.

As Karen indicated, this is a community college,
it serves the community. And they make a judgment: is it better to have the master plan for the community in spite of those environmental effects. And if they make that finding, they're welcome to approve the master plan.

Yes, I'm sorry, one thing I want to make it very clear that we're not taking questions and comments right now. Any questions or comments you have when we conclude our presentation, we're going to have all these stations and you're welcome to provide questions at that time.

So I want to just point out this website address here. It's basically the college website. If you go to the home page of the college, in the lower left-hand corner you will see a little box. It says "Master Plan and EIR." Just click on that box, it will take you right into the area of the website where everything we're talking about tonight is available to you right now.

So Karen briefly mentioned the purpose of this exact meeting. I want to go over that a little bit. Your job is to really help us prepare the best possible EIR. You can actually help us by letting us know what your concerns are, and then we'll do our best job to analyze them. So let us know what you think the environmental issues are associated with this plan.

It's very important, if you want the plan to be as good as possible, to give us ideas of how we can
reduce the environmental impacts. If you come up with ideas that are practical ideas to reduce environmental impacts, the college will implement them. We're not going to do wild and crazy ideas. But if you can help us improve the project, that's a useful role. And the other one is to just plan alternatives which reduce environmental impacts.

We think this is a good plan, we think this is a good location. If you're aware of other locations that would work for the college, we want to know about those. We're not wedded to this site, we just think it's the best site. If you can find another site for us where we can get our job done, we'll look at it. And we need to look at it in the EIR.

So it's very important if you think you know someplace where the college can put the fields or the college can put the temporary facilities or anything, if you've got an idea for another location, let us know. But it's got to be another site that would have less environmental impacts. It's not just about, well, we don't want it in our backyard, so go put it over there.

It's got to be a site that has less environmental impacts than this project, and it also has to meet the needs of the college. If the college says we want to have these athletic fields, then you have to give
us a site that allows the college to develop athletic
fields that are conveniently located to the college.

With that, I'm going to turn it over to Mia who
is with Leo A. Daly Architects. By the way, I wanted to
mention that the team of the college gateway, Leo A. Daly
and URS, this is the same team that was on the last
master plan. So we think we're pretty familiar with the
conscerns of the community, and you're lucky because we
have the same team working together really well. So, Mia...

MIA MARTINEZ,

MS. MARTINEZ: Thank you, Dev. Good morning,
everyone. I'd like to start off with the 2007 Master
Plan. It was approved two years ago by the L.A.
Community College District. And since then, we have the
parking structure and the CDC that has been completed.
And as you all know, the Health, Fitness and Athletics
Complex is nearly complete. It will be finished in the
fall of this year.

So the college is well on its way to completing
its campus as described in the approved 2000 Master Plan.
And as you can imagine or have probably even experienced
before, with plans come interferences at times. And so
there was a couple of things that have interfered with
this master plan, the first one being the proposed building that was to occur at the corner of Eldridge and Hubbard. Due to site constraints, it can't be located there anymore. Instead it will be combined with the building down at the end -- I'm sorry, with the building that will be over at the east campus facility. And that would be there. So that one large building will house our math and science lab. It will be called the Center for Science and Technology.

The other main difference is this area in here. You might remember Eldridge was supposed to continue to McClay. And due to geological constraints and also cost impacts, this is no longer feasible as well.

So aside from these two main differences, the approved master plan is still very much in effect. And that pretty much brings us to our proposed master plan today where we'd like to talk about additional developments in new areas and also to approve another area which will complement and support the entire build-out of the college as a whole.

And so with that, this would be the Athletic Fields Complex which would be to the north of our east campus here. And then we also have swing space that's proposed to go across the street from Hubbard, across from the main campus. And then the third area of
improvement, actually, the first two are development areas, and this third one is an improvement area of Eldridge streetscape.

So to help us get oriented here, we have the college, the main college here, this is the proposed location for the swing space, the Eldridge streetscape developments, and then finally our Athletic Fields Complex just south of the Sylmar Independent Baseball League Fields and north of our east campus here. As you can see, the college is very much landlocked. So they're left with few options to expand.

Our first area of development is the Athletic Fields Complex as I mentioned earlier. And there are several reasons why I think the college is interested in developing this. The first one being that with the completion of the Health, Fitness and Athletics Building being completed this fall will come an expansion of health programs and fitness programs.

And so there will be the indoor instructional facilities provided; however, they will be lacking outdoor instructional facilities. And so by having these athletic fields, they're certainly able to teach there.

Also, the college has a thriving athletic program; however, they lack competition fields. So naturally the fields that are proposed to go at the
athletic complex will be all NCAA-designed. Therefore, it will fulfill that need for competition fields.

If we focus on the properties that comprise the Athletic Fields Complex, we have the northern parcel which is owned by the college, about 6.4 acres, and the southern parcel which is currently owned by the Army Corps of Engineers. And the college is currently working with the Army Corps to lease that property for about 25 years. Once that time is up, then they can renew it as well for the purpose of using that parcel as athletic fields.

The area in between is a riparian area, and that should be preserved for natural drainage patterns that occurs through here and enters into the Pacoima Wash. And also, there's some wildlife, plant life, and so forth that should also be preserved.

For the northern parcel, we have development of men and woman's NCAA soccer fields. There's also the men's NCAA softball fields. Both would have the appropriate amount and type of seating. They would also have batting cages, bull pens. There's also concession stand with storage and restrooms. Parking would be accessed off this main access road here which is right off of McClay. And that parking would consist of about 50 cars; there's a fire access turnaround. And the
parking lot will also incorporate solar panel shade structures.

For the south development of the athletic fields we have the men's NCAA baseball field. There are batting cages, bull pens, again, for both the home and visiting teams. Again, more seating, a concession stand also with restrooms and storage. Parking for about 100 cars, again, with the solar canopies above. And then that can be accessed also off of the main access road.

This here is proposed by the college to stabilize the terrain here which is where the street and the access road is from washing away to the Pacoima Wash which we understood to be a problem in the past. And because it's so close to the floodplain, the 100-Year Floodplain Plan, it should definitely be improved and the college is intending to do so.

One other important thing to note, because the athletic fields are directly across from our Health, Fitness and Athletics Complex building, Harding which is right here off of McClay, and so I think it is intended that all the students will continue to use Harding to get to McClay to get to these fields and also to get to the freeway. So there is a concern that this will become more congested, and so naturally the college will propose to provide safe passage and have a designated crosswalk.
so that the teams and students and community can all travel safely to and from each area.

The second area of development is the property across the street from the college here. We have the library and the child development center. This property is currently serving as a commercial nursery. And so one of the reasons why the college is interested in that property is because as the college continues to meet its full potential build-out, the academic programs will also be increasing and, therefore, student enrollment will be hopefully increasing to meet all the needs of those academic programs.

And so with each building that is completed, the campus continues to lose additional space or open space to temporarily place the departments that are waiting for their future permanent location to be built, so it would serve as swing space. And there are several bungalows on the campus right now that could relocate there. And once they do locate to this nursery area, then that open space would now be available for the next facility which is the student services building to start construction.

Once the master plan and the college is fully built out, though, I'm sure you're all wondering what would happen to that location since it would serve its purpose. And one of the things that the college is
interested in doing is housing their extension programs there.

So with the swing space, naturally, in order for this to take place, the college would have to acquire this property. It's a single acre, and so that will allow for about 50 parking paces here. And as I mentioned before, the bungalows that are currently on campus, some of those could relocate here. And then, therefore, the student services building would be able to start construction.

And the third improvement area for the college would be along Eldridge between Harding and Hubbard here. And there's many reasons why the college is interested in proposing to improve this area. And as you can tell from the picture to the side and as I'm sure most of you have traveled along Eldridge, there are lots of cracks in the sidewalks. The trees, the roots are cracking the sidewalk so the sidewalk paving is lifting and it's very unsafe for the pedestrians.

There's poor lighting. The fences are rather low, and I guess they could be higher to make a bit more safer travel pattern. Also, I think as conditions become worse and it becomes desolate because nobody wants to travel that, so once this east campus is fully built out, it will need to serve as the main commuting pathway for
all of its users. So it needs to be improved, and that's certainly what the college is intending to do.

And some of those improvements include rest areas here which would be inserted in between some of the diagonal parking. And the paving patterns, there would be new paving patterns. There would also be designated crosswalks which would make it safer for its users. And the rest areas, there could also be seating and so forth.

Also, we understand traffic to be a concern where there's a lot of fast speeds that occur along Eldridge. And so we'll be inserting a landscaped center median, that would certainly minimize or reduce the driving lane so that traffic would naturally slow down.

These are some examples of what those can be. For the rest areas, we have planters, seating, there's paving on the sidewalk, seating with low fencing, trash cans, example of the bike lane, and then also we have the center median, again, with the crosswalk and so forth.

And so with that, I'll turn it over to Annette Cortez with the rest.

ANNETTE CORTEZ,

MS. CORTEZ: Thank you, good morning. So this concludes the presentation portion of today's meeting and begins the open house and the public comments.
As you all noticed, we set up several stations throughout the room. At each station we also have flip charts where we will record your comments. Also, there's three comment stations: there's two in the back for general comments, for information that should be considered during the Environmental Impact Report, and in the front we have a construction comment station for specific comments or questions in regards to the construction activities, and the last way that you can submit your comments are by verbally giving your comments to our court reporter.

At each comment station, we have forms. And you can either fill them out and drop them off in the boxes that we provided, or you can take them with you. And there's information on the bottom of the form, there's an address and a fax number where you can fax them or mail them.

So we urge you at this time to please visit our stations and discuss your issues or concerns with our experts that will be staffed in each station. Thank you for participating this morning.

I will have Dev talk to you about the useful public comments and the kind of comments that we are expecting that hopefully we'll get from you so that we can then incorporate them or consider them in the
Environmental Impact Report.

DEV VRAT,

MR. VRAT: This is just kind of like a repeat of what we mentioned earlier, that the comments, the most useful comments are very specific. They're about the environmental impacts of the project or the plan, ways to reduce those impacts, alternatives to the plan or the alternatives to the location. And the whole idea is to identify the impacts and try to come up with ways to reduce the impacts. Any other comments really are not useful at this stage of the process. This stage is about environmental impacts.

So with that, now you're welcome to approach our comment stations, et cetera.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. VRAT: Just come over here. This is the master plan station. If you have any questions about the master plan, this is the station for that question. This concludes our presentation. Thank you very much.

RON MAIZLAND,

MR. MAIZLAND: My comment is in regard to traffic that will be -- will be put onto Harding Street from the new parking structure located across from the health
center.

That our neighborhood already has very heavy traffic -- has heavy traffic and cannot handle that much new traffic for this new facility. It's a residential area that is already over-occupied by the golf course, little league, and other facilities in our area, and the impact on our neighborhood is immense and unacceptable.

And the best answer to that traffic would be to have it go out the back of the parking area onto McClay Street where it can exit a whole lot easier and without reconstruction or the traffic jam problems that's going to occur on Harding.

And also, we do not like the idea that the parking structure for the new health facility isn't large enough have to handle all of the traffic that will be coming into our area and will cause people to be parking in our neighborhood as the new college parking lot.

This is unacceptable to our neighbors in the area, and it's nothing that we're going to stand for. That's my comment. My name is Ron Maizland, and I live at 12909 Harding Street, Sylmar.

LORRAINE MANOOGIAN,

MS. MANOOGIAN: Lorraine Manoogian, 15516 West Monte Street. Let's see, use funds to not only buy out
property on the west side of Hubbard for the going market value, but put an additional sum to represent the sacrifice that the citizen is making when he's had to be -- willing to sell and give it to the school. So that -- I had it so nice with her.

The thing is the market is low. They should get that and another $100,000 just because they moved and gave us -- opened up the space and had to go through that decision of taking another home someplace else, probably as close as possible to the old one.

They don't have to get -- there should be -- I don't know how to word it. It's sort of like a gift or just an honest response from the school to -- added value, give added value to the home to justify their property being transferred to public use.

I'm looking at -- in this marketplace, they should go right back to the original balloon, size of the balloon and go ahead and give that kind of a price. It isn't eminent domain. We don't want to use that. We want the people to get the property, not just the government takes it over and we occupy it and they get pushed out. I don't like that, that's real bad.

I think we need to respect the long-time occupant, give them full and bonus value for the property. I'm sure there's a better way to say it.
(Whereupon, the public meeting was concluded at 12:00 P.M.)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA    }
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  }

I, Grace A. Verhoeven, a Certified Shorthand
Reporter within the County of Los Angeles, State of
California, do hereby certify:

That the said hearing was taken down by me in
 shorthand at the time and place therein stated and was
thereafter reduced to print by Computer-Aided
Transcription under my direction;

I further certify that I am not of counsel or
attorney for any of the parties hereto or in any way
interested in the event of this cause and that I am not
related to any of the parties thereto.

Witness my hand this 11th day of

May, 2009

GRACE A. VERHOEVEN
CSR NO. 11419

PARK AVENUE DEPOSITION SERVICE