

Desert Dwellers

Volume 17, Issue 52

August 2014

Development Happenings

For a number of years now, the neighborhood has not had to confront development issues. Perhaps we've been lulled into a false sense of immunity, because now, seemingly all at once, there are several events taking place that will affect Oracle Foothills.

Catalina Foothills Lodge (CO7-14-03)

This is the major potential development on our borders. A California corporation is the owner of 50 acres directly to the west of Oracle Foothills. Built in the late 1940's by the Genematas family, the founders of Oracle Foothills Estates, the Lodge was once a premier destination resort. For many years the buildings have been allowed to deteriorate and now consist of rundown rental units. The owner is proposing to completely redevelop the property with small housing units, a boutique hotel, high-end shops and restaurants, and possibly a senior-living center.

The first step in the process is to request an amendment to the Pima County Comprehensive Plan, which is the county's broad-level urban density document. At this point, the developer's plans do not have to be specific as to number of units planned, building heights, traffic impact, etc. The Pima County Planning and Zoning Commission will consider the request at their meeting on August 27th. This is a public hearing at which you will have the opportunity to voice your opinion. If approved by P&Z, the plan will go to the Board of Supervisors, to be heard October 21 at their regular meeting.

The BOS may approve, disapprove or ask for more information from the developer. If approved, the next step is to request a change in the zoning. At this point, the developer must provide very specific information about their plan and its impact on the land, the surrounding neighbors, the traffic, etc. The plan will then again go through the public hearing process.

As you can imagine, this is a very lengthy process. The developer's representative in Tucson does not anticipate any construction activity for at least 3 years, even assuming everything goes smoothly. Now, however is when OFNA and the individual neighbors must get involved if we hope to influence the direction of the development.

Please let your OFNA Board know how you feel about the potential Lodge development. You will find contact information for all board members on the back page of this publication. Also, on Page 3 of this newsletter are the meeting locations, and addresses of public officials to whom you may wish to write.

If you were unable to attend the informational meeting on August 4th and would like to see the proposal for the Lodge property, contact Carole DeAngeli, 690-1107; caroledeangeli@earthlink.net. I will keep you informed, via e-mail about the relevant meeting dates.

Chantilly Tea Room (CO7-14-05)

The owners of the Chantilly Tea Room on the corner of Genematas and Oracle are in the process of closing the business and selling the property. The original approval for the business specified in the Comprehensive Plan that it could only be a tea room. The owner feels that the business will be difficult, if not impossible, to sell with that restriction, and has asked to amend the Comp Plan to allow for various other businesses in his zoning, CB-1.

In negotiations with Bruce Read, the owner's father and business manager, the OFNA Board agreed to a list of businesses that would be allowable to the neighborhood, as well as a set of re-

(Continued on page 2)

Developments, continued

(Continued from page 1)

restrictions on hours, lighting, traffic and alcohol.

The types of businesses the board agreed to are:

- Apparel Store
- Art Gallery or Store
- Florist Shop
- Gift, Curio or Novelty Shop
- Interior Decorator
- Jewelry Store
- Office: Business, Professional or Semi-Professional
- Yoga/Pilates Studio

The board has also requested that the following restrictions be placed on any business at that location:

- Any other uses require, at a minimum, a public hearing before the Board of Supervisors for a modification rezoning condition.
- We would not support any change in use that would be more intensive than what is presently in place, in terms of traffic, noise, odor, parking and overall impact on the neighborhood.
- We request that the conditions currently restricting the Tea Room remain in place for any future business/use, i.e.,
- No regular late night (after 10:00 p.m.) or early morning (midnight to 6:00 a.m.) hours of operation. This does not include use of the site when the business is closed or an occasional special event.
- No liquor license.
- No amplifiers or public address system will be allowed; no excessive noise or sound beyond the site.
- Lighting shall not be directed toward the residential lots.
- Dumpsters will be fully screened and located in the parking area.

- We request that on-street parking **not** be allowed. Genematas Drive is narrow with minimal shoulders and does not lend itself to having cars parked on both sides of the road. On-street parking has been an issue in the past at the Tea Room.

OFNA has worked closely with the Pima County Planners who are also working with Mr. Read on the Comp Plan amendment. The first public hearing for this project will be on August 27th at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. If approved, the plan will go to the Board of Supervisors, tentatively on September 16th.

West Yvon Drive Closure

Currently, Pima County owns the right-of-way for the unmaintained portion of Yvon Drive running west from Genematas to Oracle. At the request of the property owners along the Oracle Foothills portion of this street (the easterly section), Pima County has agreed to abandon the right-of-way and quitclaim the property to each adjacent property owner.

The County is offering to waive the normal fee for this procedure, and has asked the Catalina Foothills Lodge if they, too, would like to join the project and have the ROW abandoned all the way through their property to Oracle Rd. Recognizing a good deal for themselves, especially in light of their planned redevelopment, the Lodge owners agreed.

The legal descriptions for all involved properties are now being prepared and will be sent to Pima County Real Property for approval. Once the paperwork has been completed, the project will go before the Board of Supervisors for approval, probably in late August or early September.

Upon completion of the abandonment process, the road will be closed to through traffic. The method of closure will be determined at a later date.

The prickly pear fruits are ripening, mesquite beans are abundant and maybe you're wondering how to use these amazing native foods. The best resource for information is **Desert Harvesters**, a local organization offering recipes, techniques, workshops and demonstrations. Their website is

www.desertharvesters.org

Public Input

There will be a number of public hearings regarding the development issues outlined here. Any and all neighbors are encouraged to attend and voice their opinions.

Planning and Zoning Commission

Meets at 9:00am on the last Wednesday of every month
Board of Supervisors Hearing Room,
Pima County Administration Building,
130 W. Congress St. 1st Floor

Board of Supervisors

Meets at 9:00am, Tuesdays
Board of Supervisors Hearing Room,
Pima County Administration Building,
130 W. Congress St. 1st Floor

To speak at these meetings, you must first fill out a speaker's card, located near the entrance. You are allowed 3 minutes to speak.

You may write (or call) either directly to Supervisor Miller,

Supervisor Ally Miller

District 1

130 W. Congress St., 11th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-724-2738
district1@pima.gov

Or you may want your letter to go the entire Board of Supervisors. For the entire board, send it to:

Board of Supervisors

Robin Brigode, Clerk of the Board
Administration Division
130 W. Congress, 5th Floor
Tucson, AZ 85701

If you have questions about the Lodge redevelopment plan itself, want more clarification or specifics, contact the consultant for the property owners/developers:

Jim Portner

Projects International
850-0917
jportner@projectsintl.com

Please contact Carole DeAngeli if you need more information on any of these projects. I will notify all those on the neighborhood e-mail list of the meeting dates.

caroledeangeli@earthlink.net, 690-1107

Upcoming Neighborhood Events

ANNUAL MEETING

We only hold one meeting a year for all residents. This is your chance to learn more about your neighborhood, what has been happening this past year and what the upcoming year will bring.

WHEN: Saturday, September 20, 2014
WHERE: Dove of Peace Church, 665 W. Roller Coaster Rd. All Saints Hall (Lower Level)
TIME: Coffee @ 8; Meeting @ 9:00am

Please join us. You may even win a raffle prize!

NEIGHBORHOOD PICNIC

Fun and Good Food for All!

WHEN: Sunday, October 26, 2014
WHERE: In the wash, next to 220 E. Yvon Dr.
TIME: Noon until Dark
BRING: A potluck dish to share.

Everything else will be provided by OFNA, including delicious barbecued meats.

Bring the whole family! All Oracle Foothills residents are invited!



Comings and Goings

Welcome to Our New Neighbors

- Bea & Salvador Diaz, 545 E. Agave Dr.
- Darylle Mak & Bruce Eckhardt, 435 E. Yvon Dr.
- Michael & Patricia Crain, 433 E. Yvon Dr.
- Don & Gaby Croft, 469 E. Canyon View Pl.
- Rudy & Amie Robles, 5830 N. Genematas Dr.
- Chris & Lisa Gundy, 110 E. Yvon Dr.
- Jay & Krista Catlow, 5325 N. Genematas Dr.
- Roslyn Mauer, Carlene & Bill Sim, 5713 N. Genematas Dr.
- Samuel Hoffman, 5860 N. Genematas Dr.
- Lisa & Scott Meder, 75 W. Yvon Dr.

- Jodie & Tom Piccioli, 5451 N. Genematas Dr.
- Patti Brown & Dean Clayton, 5525 N. Genematas Dr.
- Anna Groff & Brian Miller, 5445 N. Georgia Dr.
- Jay & Jan Cole, 5540 N. Genematas Dr.
- Joyce Kelly & Steve Rollman, 5557 N. Genematas Dr.
- Mike & Tammy Trost, 5431 N. Agave Dr.

Some of you aren't that "new" but it's been awhile since this newsletter was published.

Goodbye and Good Wishes to Longtime Neighbors who have Moved

- Lee & Becca Abel
- Chris & Hannah Dillon
- Paul & Amy Gomez
- Henry & Olivia Hudson
- Duane & Kristi Lough
- Bob & Jackie Smith
- Clint & Sandra Nelson
- Derek & Carolyn Redmore
- John & Lori Barbee

OFNA is ONLINE

Be sure to visit our website, www.ofna.org, and explore all the information available there. You will find links to the Recommendations List, the latest meeting minutes, and up-to-date crime reports. We have pages for the Book Club (Readers Revised) and for Real Estate.

And, look for Oracle Foothills Neighborhood Association on FACEBOOK.



OFNA Dues

A membership invoice will be in the mail soon. The fiscal year runs from September 1 to August 31. Dues are \$45 per household, per year, and are always voluntary.

Many thanks to those of you who loyally support the association with your dues.

Questions regarding dues or membership?
Contact:

Jay DeAngeli
ejdeangeli@comcast.net
520-690-1107

A Tale of the Bees

"There are thousands of them," she said, "they've taken over my back yard!" It was bees this neighbor on Maria was talking about, the loud buzzing sound alerting her to their presence. But not your ordinary 'swarm' of honeybees in search of a new nest site, which would move on in a day or two. No, these bees were hovering near the ground, going in and out of holes in the ground; many, many holes close to one another, covering an area perhaps 20'x60'. With her grandchildren expected to visit soon, she was very nervous and not too happy about these unexpected house guests.

Most of us are familiar with the honeybee and its habits, a highly social insect known for its importance as a pollinator for so many plants, including our food crops. But, here in Arizona, we are also privileged to have many species of native bees (honey bees are not native to North America) whose habits are very different. In fact, Tucson is thought to have more kinds of bees than anywhere else in the world, with the possible exception of some deserts in Israel.¹ Almost all of our native bees are solitary, going about their business without the assistance or cooperation of other bees.

One of our native bees is *Diadasia rinconis*, the cactus bee, responsible for pollinating our iconic saguaro, prickly pear and cholla cacti. When these plants are flowering, the female bees get busy digging burrows for their brood cells, and gathering the abundance of pollen for the food that will sustain their young during their transformation from grub to adult bee.

Cactus bees are non-aggressive, and unlikely to sting.

With the help of Dr. Stephen Buchman, well-known local bee expert with the University, Beth learned that the bees, even though solitary, often nest in huge aggregations, building their brood burrows in close proximity to one another. Each burrow may contain separate cells for up to a dozen eggs, each provisioned with pollen mixed with a bit of nectar to create a paste, then sealed off. This process could take up to a month, Beth learned with dismay, but then the females would leave, never to return. Good news, right? Not so fast. In a couple of weeks, the eggs will have hatched, the grubs feasted on the bee bread and grown into adult bees who will then emerge from the burrows - in numbers several times greater than the original group of females. According to Dr. Buchman, this is the fastest journey from egg to adult of any bee known. Once emerged, the bees will mate, the males will die and the females will go off to start the cycle over again. The nesting ground will be barren and quiet once more.

Though perhaps initially alarming, the bees provided a fascinating lesson in desert ecology, one that few of us are privileged to witness. Thank you, Beth, for sharing this experience, and for patiently allowing the bees to go about their important tasks!

1. Steven J. Phillips and Patricia Wentworth Comus, eds., *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*, (ASDM Press, Tucson, 2000)341-344

Streets Update

There is still a significant amount of gravel and sand that washes into our streets with any heavy rainfall, often creating deep ruts alongside the road. We thank PCDOT for responding the OFNA's request to sweep our streets of big gravel deposits. But, we are still waiting for them to finish filling the roadsides with material that won't wash out with the first rainstorm.



It's Election Time Again

2014 is an even year between presidential elections, which means mid-term elections are upon us. This year we will vote for Congress as well as state senators and representatives, other statewide offices and judges.

Voting is not only a privilege but an obligation of the citizenry in a democracy. Democracy cannot work without us, the voters. Please make sure you are registered, and please vote!

Here are the dates you need to know:

Primary

Registration Cut-Off—July 28, 2014

Early Voting Starts—July 31, 2014

Election Day—August 26, 2014

General

Registration Cut-Off—October 6, 2014

Early Voting Starts—October 9, 2014

Election Day—November 4, 2014

For any information about voting or registering to vote, contact the Pima County Recorder's Office, **724-4830**, or for registration information:

<http://www.recorder.pima.gov/regvote.aspx>

Remember that you must complete a voter registration form to:

- Register to Vote
- Change your name
- Change your address
- Change your political party

There are several ways you can vote.

- Go to an early voting site
- Request an early ballot and vote by mail
- Go to your polling place on election day

Primary and mid-term general elections historically have very low voter turnout, embarrassingly low. Let's turn that around and become an active and educated voting populace! If you don't vote, you're letting someone else determine your fate.



Need Paper Copies?

Minutes of the Annual Meeting and Board Meetings are posted on the OFNA website. Also posted there are the latest **Recommendations List**, a **MAP** of Oracle Foothills, **membership form**, and more. All are printable.

For those of you who do not have access to the internet, I am happy to provide any of these documents to you in hardcopy form.

Just call **Carole DeAngeli, 690-1107**

OFNA Financial Report - Fiscal Year 2014

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Balance Forward (9/1/13) | \$13,316 |
| Income | 3,162 |
| Expenses | 4,156 |
| Current Balance (7/30/14) | \$12,322 |

Detailed financial reports are available at the Annual Meeting. Members may receive a copy at any time by requesting it from the Treasurer, ejdeangeli@comcast.net, 690-1107.

Real Estate News

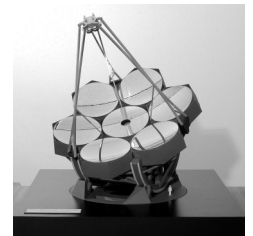
Here are the current listings and recent sales.

| ADDRESS | STATUS | PRICE |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 215 E. Yvon Dr. | Active | \$299,000 |
| 317 E. Canyon View Dr. | Active | \$309,000 |
| 155 E. Yvon Dr. | Active | \$329,000 |
| 5660 N. Maria Dr. | Pending | \$344,900 |
| 501 E. Canyon View Dr. | Active | \$387,000 |
| 200 E. Yvon Dr. | Active | \$395,000 |
| 5702 N. Lady Ln. | Active | \$399,000 |
| 5515 N. Via Arroyo Amistoso | Active | \$350,000 |
| 535 E. Agave | Active Contingent | \$425,000 |
| 5646 N. Genematas Dr. | Active | \$425,000 |
| 211 E. Yvon Dr. | Active | \$499,000 |
| 460 E. Yvon Dr. | Active | \$589,000 |
| 110 E. Yvon Dr. | Closed | \$315,000 |
| 5525 N. Maria Dr. | Closed | \$376,000 |
| 5320 N. Maria Dr. | Closed | \$450,000 |
| 5325 N. Genematas Dr. | Closed | \$392,900 |
| 545 E. Agave Dr. | Closed | \$525,000 |
| 435 E. Yvon Dr. | Closed | \$365,000 |
| 303 E. Canyon View Dr. | Closed | \$220,000 |
| 433 E. Yvon Dr. | Closed | \$280,000 |
| 546 E. Agave Dr. | Closed | \$275,000 |
| 5830 N. Genematas Dr. | Closed | \$420,000 |
| 469 E. Canyon View Pl. | Closed | \$261,000 |
| 5704 N. Williams Dr. | Closed | \$600,000 |
| 5860 N. Genematas Dr. | Closed | \$550,000 |

For up-to-date real estate news of the neighborhood, check the OFNA website's Real Estate page: www.ofna.org/realestate

Giant Magellan Telescope A Local Connection

There are exciting changes taking place in the world of astronomy, and Tucson plays a key role. The Steward Observatory's Mirror Lab on the campus of the University of Arizona is busy making the huge mirrors that will make up the Giant Magellan Telescope. Each mirror is 27' across and weighs 40,000 pounds. Seven mirrors will eventually make up the telescope that will be installed high in the Atacama Desert in Chile, one of the highest and driest location on earth. According to the website, the GMT will collect more light than any telescope ever built and the resolution will be the best ever achieved. Commissioning of the telescope is scheduled to begin in 2020.



Even closer to home, one of our neighbors, Matt Johns of Yvon Drive, is Chief Engineer and Telescope Group Lead for the project and has been working on the GMT for a decade. Matt is based in Pasadena, but he and his wife Virginia have owned a home in Oracle Foothills for many years.

Tours of the Mirror Lab are available to the public and I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to see the incredible work that is being done right under the football stadium.

To learn more about the GMT, take a look at their website, www.gmto.org. Information about the Mirror Lab, including tours, can be found at <http://mirrorlab.as.arizona.edu/>

ORACLE FOOTHILLS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Standing Committees and Task Assignments

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Carole DeAngeli, Area Leader

Website Administrator

Carole DeAngeli