

**LAND USE COMMITTEE  
OF THE CRESCENTA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**March 10, 2011 6:32 P.M.**

**La Crescenta Library Community Room, 2809 Foothill Blvd., La Crescenta, CA**

**OPENING BUSINESS**

1. Roll Call Absent Council members Todd and Dennis so Charlie Beatty and Odalis Suarez would vote. All other council members were present.
2. Public Comments – non agenda items there were none

**PUBLIC HEARING & ACTION ITEMS**

3. Oak Tree Permit No. 201000003

Applicant: Paul Barnes  
4531 Ramsdell Avenue

The applicant seeks to authorize the removal of two oak trees, (one retroactive) in order to construct a second unit. The existing site contains a 957 square-foot single-family dwelling and a detached garage. The applicant proposes demolishing the existing garage and building a two story, 2,728 square-foot second unit. The applicant also proposes to build a second driveway from Orin Avenue. This project would remove one oak tree on the north-west portion of the property for the construction of the proposed driveway. Another oak tree on the south-west portion of the property has been removed.

Hearing Officer Meeting: Tuesday, March 15, 2011, Time: 9:00 a.m.  
Room 150 Hall of Records  
320 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

**Speakers:**

- Mariam and Paul Barnes spoke first asking permission for removal of one tree on SW corner already removed and one on NW corner they also need removed to build their home. Mariam is 29 years old, recently married to Paul whose father and new wife live in existing house on Paul's property. She grew up here and went to our schools. They want to raise their family in our community. Existing house is a 2 bedroom 1 bath. They will live in an apt while they build their house. They did not know they had to remove the second oak tree when they hired someone to remove other trees, oak by mistake. They want to do what is right. Mariam tearfully asked in favor of tree removal.
- Paul asked tree guy to cut elm but also cut oak by mistake. He needs a retro permit for the oak tree already cut.
- Abby Nabegh spoke on behalf of his brother Reza Nabegh of 4537 Orin, La Crescenta, in opposition to tree removal.
- Toni and Holly Cannon of duplex at 4531 and 4533 Orin, La Crescenta, did not realize this meeting pertained only to the oak trees, hate to see Oak tree go for it shields their view of utility poles. The Barnes home is on Ramsdell and they hate to see the driveway and additional home on Orin for parking is a problem. Toni also grew up in La Crescenta and remembers open spaces with vineyards. Her issue is crowding on Orin cul-de-sac.
- Steve Goldsworthy said the project meets zoning requirements, R3 in that area.
- Cheryl Davis explained why the county wants us to hold hearings locally for too hard for residents to go downtown. The county wants us to provide input and recommendation to them.
- Terri Hirano from Marina Del Rey is a cousin of Paul's and in favor of tree removal.
- Karen Rosen of Los Angeles in favor of tree removal for people more important than trees.
- Lucy Gabra of La Canada is Mariam's mom in favor for wants her children to fulfill their dreams and have her future grandkids close.
- Rena Durrant of Los Angeles in favor for after Paul's mother died his Dad remarried but Paul wants to still take care of his Dad too. Rena is a deputy DA in Lancaster/Palmdale area.
- Art Cobery 2742 Harmony, La Crescenta, opposes. While he wishes the Barnes love and happiness Toni Cannon is his friend and agrees the residents of Orin will suffer.

- James Bacon of Burbank in favor and wants his friend to be able to build his house.
- Richard Carper 2304 Panorama, La Crescenta, in favor for his Dad is a general contractor.
- Daniel Carper, Richard's dad, 2304 Panorama, La Crescenta, also in favor for its so difficult to get permits as it is without worrying about trees. They will put 2 trees in so where is the problem? Council should help, not make it more difficult.
- Michael Rosen of Porter Ranch in favor. The kids are trying to do the right thing for their elders.
- Gene Ingram 5454 Freeman, La Crescenta, in favor. He is a retired LAPD Sgt and believes the oak tree law is meant to be enforced by spirit of the law, rather than the letter of the law.
- Mary Ann Larussa of Burbank knows they are good people wanting to build a home to raise their family. They are willing to put up more trees so no reason not to let them.
- Anna Sheklow 2907 Alabama, La Crescenta, in favor. She has a business in La Crescenta and loves trees but people add more financially to a community than trees. While she doesn't like really big houses, let these friends of hers move in.
- Laura Vinceri 3327 Prospect, La Crescenta, is a friend of Mariam's and in favor. We should be able to do what we like to our own property.
- April McCarty of Tujunga, friend of Mariam in favor for feels our economy needs more residents and we should keep them here. She understands parking issues but it will only take out one parking spot. They helped her build her business and will plant 2 new trees. Paul's Dad needs Paul close. It will not be a duplex but another home.
- Pamela Mass of Sun Valley in favor for doesn't want them to sell and move elsewhere.
- Rebecca Harrington of Los Angeles is the lawyer for Mariam and Paul. They paid \$9k in fees thus far and are willing to hire someone to monitor the trees growth.

Council man Robert Thomas read the emails sent to our council:

- Nick McDonald asked who would be in charge of the meeting.
- Jenn Youssef of San Gabriel knows Mariam and they are good people. Let the newlyweds move past the oak tree that is stopping them from adding a second home to this property.
- Linda Baim in favor for they are two fine people.
- Silva Kazarian is a friend in favor for they are a good couple. They are not developers wanting to overbuild. This tree will not allow them to build their new modest home. Uprooting the oak tree was not their first solution, it has become their last resort.
- Regine Ingram Los Angeles and Mariam's friend in favor of preserving rights of residents.
- Karen Rosen Los Angeles in favor for their friends. Paul is selflessly providing his father a residence on HIS OWN property and living elsewhere.
- Szashe Rowland friend of Mariam in favor of removing tree and stopping the stress to his friend.
- Leslie Lesh knows them and wants them to build. Councilman Steve Goldsworthy added Leslie is owner of Leo's Sports Bar and President of the CV Chamber.

Public Comments closed.

Questions from Council members:

Danette asked if they ever received any fine for cutting down the first tree as lawyer noted how much they had already paid. Answer no fine yet.

Steve Goldsworthy asked if garage could be moved to save the tree. Answer not enough turning radius into garage to move driveway anywhere else to get approved by county code.

Robbyn Battles asked about the garage in the rear, told garage will hold 4 cars off the street. They have 100 feet on Ramsdell and will have a double driveway on Orin. Even though oak is healthy now with driveway it will most likely die.

Odalís Suarez asked how long process has been ongoing. 1 year 4 months ago it started.

Odalís asked if oak tree was cut before plans were drawn. The one cut was smaller than the one in the back. They will plant a 24inch box tree with a radius of 2 to 3 inches. Paul explained he hired the tree guy to cut one tree and he cut the other by mistake and then split. Odalís would like to see mitigation of planting 3 trees but one could be elsewhere. Odalís was concerned the notice was published in the Burbank Leader instead of our local CV Weekly paper.

**Motion:**

Councilman Robert Thomas moved and Councilwoman Robbyn Battles seconded that our Land Use Committee recommend to county to allow this oak tree to be removed with replacements according to recommendation of forester. Forester recommended same type of tree, two 24 inch box size for this site.

Motion carried 7 in favor and 2 opposed (Odalis and Danette). Alternate Councilman Charly Shelton was not able to vote.

The Land Use Committee adjourned at 7:45 PM

A special meeting of the CVTC then convened. Robert Thomas moved the CVTC accept the recommendation of the Land Use Committee. Vote was in favor 8 with one no vote (Odalis) to accept the recommendation of the Land Use Committee. A letter will be written in time for the county meeting next week. **ADJOURNMENT 7:46 PM**