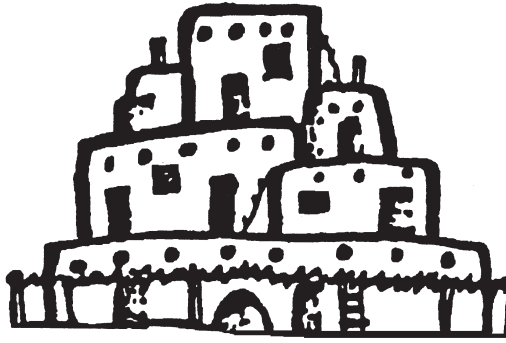


San Marcos Association Newsletter



January
February
March
2006

Annual S.M.A. and Planning Meetings

This year, the S.M.A. annual membership meeting will be on the fourth Thursday of February. That will be **February 23rd** at the Turquoise Trail School. The meeting will start at 5:30 PM with the business meeting in a classroom. At about 6:00, in the gym, the San Marcos District Planning Committee meeting will begin the public presentation of its draft final plan.

The business meeting consists of a very brief treasurer's report and election of board members and officers. There will be a presentation of the activities of the association for the past year and plans for the upcoming year. As dues are annual by the calendar year, and few pay before this meeting, there will be the opportunity to pay dues starting at 5:15 and continuing throughout the meeting. We do need your support.

The San Marcos Planning District public presentation meeting will be the last before the plan is finalized and presented to the Board of County Commissioners. This is the last major opportunity for the planners to gather public feedback.

There will be a brief discussion of the commuter train route through our district. Development on all sides of the district will be briefly reviewed and how we fit into the greater pattern will be outlined.

Most of the meeting will be concerned with a presentation of the plan itself and responding to questions and comments from the public. Commercial (actually, mixed use) zoning, residential density zoning, and institutional zoning will be presented.

There are to be different residential density zoning districts than just the old hydrologic zones. The hydrological zoning approach was appropriate for a large county rural area lacking community plans. Most large developments solved the need for more specific zoning by the use of covenants imposed on all deeds.

The new density zones will be reliable and predictable. No longer will a hydrological report allow a surprise higher density subdivision to be approved right next door in an area of 40 acre minimum lot size. These zones have been developed with the input of people from each of the neighborhoods in the District. The predictability and stability brought by this change will benefit all neighborhoods.

Affordable housing is to be addressed by a creative approach. Guesthouses are a fact of life in much of the district. Some are legal and some are not. The plan would allow guesthouses and make it legal to rent them. There would be limits on size and water use. Both home owners and potential renters will benefit. Of course, no one has to build a guesthouse or to rent it. The plan just makes it legal to do so.

The above are just a few of the items from the plan. We hope thinking about these will be enough to make you come to the meeting to hear more. Bring your questions and comments. Long comments are best presented in writing (as well as being spoken). Also, stop by the SMA meeting. Pay your annual dues. Support your Association that supports your District. We do need your personal and financial support!

Ortiz Mountain Clinic

The San Marcos Area has a great medical facility which continues to be under appreciated and under utilized. A recent review of cases caused a cut-back that is not good for our community.

The following is a note from LuAnn Wosick CFNP/Medical Director.

Ortiz Mountain Health has been experiencing shrinking pains. Due to budget constraints, our RN position was switched to a medical assistant position, Dr. Mark Reininga's position was deleted and our administrator's position was cut by 40%.

It was very sad to say goodbye to both of our Marks -- we really appreciate all of their contributions to our community. The cutbacks were a result primarily of not enough encounters (patients coming in for visits) and not enough revenue collected.

Over the last 4 years the cost of delivering health care has risen dramatically and the numbers of OMHC encounters has stayed static. Why is this in a community that continues to steadily grow? Our CEO feels that it is because there is not a big enough population here to support a clinic. I've been refuting this for the last 10 years but my arguments have worn thin.

Do people know about us? Do they know that we accept almost all insurances (not just Presbyterian), Medicare, Medicaid and private pay patients? Do they know that we deliver high quality health care that equals or exceeds any care found in Santa Fe? Do they know that if we don't use it we'll lose it?

How can you help? Tell everyone about us and encourage folks to get health care. So many conditions can be successfully treated if caught early. Health screenings and early treatment saves lives and money. We can treat any condition that any

cont.(clinic) pg. 2

Solar Power

This is more a review than an endorsement of one of our advertisers. Your editor built his house in 1996 and found there was neither high enough quality flat panel equipment nor designers/installers available to make the immediate use of active solar heat desirable.

Many things have changed. The price of propane has increased by two and a half times. Solar equipment has continued to improve as have the experience and abilities of local professionals. We had wanted a traditional rather than a passive solar home. We had designed the house using components that would be appropriate for a domestic hot water and house heating with an active solar system to be adding later. Last Spring, we decided to act.

After talking to people in Albuquerque and two companies locally, we chose to work with Cedar Mountain Solar. They designed and installed a system which at first seems complex, but is easy to use and which allows for homeowner tweaking (for those who would like to). Installation went easily, and the system worked well from the start.

One consideration of active solar systems is what to do with the heat generated in the collectors in the summer. It is easy if there is a pool or very large hot tub or another place to put the heat generated that is greater than that needed to provide domestic hot water. If there is no such place, there are other design alternatives that can solve the problem.

The system was to provide up to 70% of the hot water and home heating. So far, the actual performance is more like 85%. We have had reliable hot water and a warmer house than we chose to afford when we were paying for fossil fuel to provide the heat. In short, our expectations have been surpassed.

As with hybrid cars or wind power, long term economy is not the only consideration. Doing the right thing for the economy and for the following generations is an equal reward.

I guess that the review is so positive that this is an endorsement; but by the editor, not the SMA board.

Please Help Now.

We are nearly broke! Your association took the lead in representing a number of families who were threatened by devaluation and over building in their neighborhood.

The legal case and outcome were reported in previous Newsletters (we won). The cost of that legal contest with the County ate up our usual reserve as well as the money donated for the purpose of bringing the case to court. We must have that reserve to use when our next need comes along.

We have represented this community in forcing the proper closing of mines, with community utility and trespass problems, with proper code enforcement and many other things. Most recent activity has been involved with the critical District Planning that we initiated.

We do badly need your help. We have not increased the annual dues in years and would like to delay doing so as long as possible, so your generosity is our hope.

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clinic (cont from pg.1)

clinic or Family Practice office in Santa Fe can and we are right down the road with often same day service.


Other ways to help are by joining our advisory council that meets quarterly or our new patient network group that is being organized by Doug Wesley to promote OMHC.

We need ideas but mostly we need people who are able to put the ideas into action, a "booster club" so to speak who will make flyers, meet with other community groups, organize and participate in community outreach projects, etc. Presbyterian Medical Services is committed to keeping us open but if the numbers of people using us don't increase, this will be difficult to do. I continue to say that there are enough people in my community to support a full-time clinic. What do you think?

Your Association thinks we cannot afford to lose the clinic. They have special services that LuAnn did not mention. A recent local blog included information that: Niccole Toral, who has a Masters in Counseling and is a Licensed Professional Counselor works at the clinic, and that her services are available FOR FREE! (And only for free.) The blog also has said: that there is a state of NM program, for women who have no insurance, through which you get a free exam, pap smear, and mammogram each year and that the clinic does participate in that program.

We highly recommend that you investigate the medical services that are available and that you use the clinic.

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HIGHWAY 14 CONSTRUCTION

Everyone in the greater San Marcos area has been affected by the seven mile reconstruction and rehabilitation, now underway, of NM Hwy. 14, the Turquoise Trail, from just north of Cerrillos through the intersection of CR44/45 at Lone Butte. More than just our main road, NM14 is a major rural collector of the state highway system, a commuter route to Santa Fe and a scenic and popular road for tourists and cyclists.

The Citizens Advisory Committee for Hwy. 14 has been working cooperatively with representatives of NMDOT District 5, design consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff, Sites Southwest, and Mountain States Constructors Inc. The goal is to utilize Context Sensitive Design principles throughout this project to provide a resurfaced and safer roadway and a new bridge at San Marcos Arroyo while minimizing environmental degradation and preserving the rural feel and aesthetics of this National Scenic Byway. The construction plan calls for rehabilitation of most of the road along the existing alignment, with milling up of the surface and very rapid repaving. However, two miles of road at the San Marcos Arroyo needs rebuilding and full reconstruction. With the temporary bridge detour working effectively, completion of the bridge and rehabilitation of the arroyo will come at the very end of the project.

Celebrating 20 Years of Service
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Primarily due to the good (for highway construction purposes at least) weather, the pace of the project has been swift. However, credit for this is also due to flexibility in design review and the staging decisions and consistent rapid work of MSCI. As well as major work at the bridge and Coyote Springs and improving the alignment at old CR 42 (the Galisteo Rd.), the public has witnessed the heavy shoulder prep work, culvert replacement, environmental protection, drainage improvements, and the new construction of the very many turnouts along this route, etc.

Now the public should be aware that, as the weather holds, the pace of construction activity will speed up. Crews will start working Saturdays but will minimize traffic impact. As late afternoon light increases, work hours will extend. Paving may well start sooner, the newly aligned CR 42 entrance in a few weeks, then the roadway itself from the south end of the project. Work will start soon on the milling up and reworking of the CR44/45 intersection where traffic calming design and improved sight lines are planned. At the entry to Cerrillos, the turning radius from the north will be improved as part of this phase and paved accordingly.

Complete information week by week can be found at <http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=11845>.

In addition to observing the posted speed limits, since enforcement by the Santa Fe Sheriff's Dept. is strict, we must expect continuing lane closures and pilot cars. Lane closures are typically one mile long, but some are longer. We must expect 15 to 20 minute delays and sometimes 2 stops, though every effort will be made to make these as short as possible. It will depend on the nature of the work underway. Planning our commuting and trips to town will be a necessity.

All of this represents a trade-off: inconvenience for the public, but a rapid pace of project work on the one hand and the completion of the project – save for planting and composting – months earlier than November as originally planned. So citizen patience and advance planning are called for in the near term, but the early completion should be good news for commuters, business owners, and residents all along the Turquoise Trail.

Linda Murnik

Note: Plan sets for this project are available for public viewing during business hours at the Ortiz Mt. Health Clinic, Johnson's of Madrid Gallery, the San Marcos Feed Store, the Hideaway, and through the SMA at 438-4390.

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Membership is open to any resident / property owner in the San Marcos area. Most of the funds of the Association come from your annual dues. 2006 dues are \$15 per person or \$25 for a household. We need your dues and your involvement. Please send your check to: **San Marcos Association, P.O. Box 722, Cerrillos, NM 87010-0722**
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