

THE FCA BULLETIN

THE VOICE OF THE FOOTHILL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATION

www.foothillcommunities.org

SEPTEMBER 2004

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Neighbors,

Your Community and FCA need you. FCA's mission is to defend our Community from incompatible development, traffic, and increased airport noise that would adversely impact our semi-rural ambiance. This work is all done by volunteers. Can you spend a few minutes of your time each month at a FCA meeting helping on parks, trails, zoning, traffic, or other issues that are so important to our Community? Please give me a call.

There has been a request by Fairmont School to increase the number of students to 360. We believe that approval of this application will undermine the North Tustin Specific Plan - which was adopted to preserve our residential Community. Please read the article in this Bulletin! As land values continue to rise, efforts to put more density on the land will continue, in spite of planning and agreements to the contrary. This trend can only be stopped by a continuing Community effort.

We also have some good news to report. FCA and Supervisor Bill Campbell consider the Esplanade Trail an important Community asset. Supervisor Campbell has been working to secure the continuation of the trail. He hopes to make an announcement in the near future. Please complete the Esplanade Trail survey in this Bulletin. Additionally, the neighbors of the vacant property at the corner of 17th and Newport have shown their determination to protect their homes against the unwanted noise, dust, and intrusion of a 2-year construction staging area. Because of their efforts, the staging area was moved to a more suitable location.

You are all encouraged to visit the FCA Website at www.foothillcommunities.org. This site is maintained by FCA Director Rick Nelson. Many thanks, Rick!

We have received many comments about changing the name of our area from Santa Ana to a new name. Several members have been working on this idea and have developed an approach. Please respond to the survey.

Sincerely,

Bruce Junor, President
FOOTHILL COMMUNITIES ASSOCIATION
544-5958 or bjunor@cox.net

FAIRMONT SCHOOL EXPANSION

Fairmont Private School/Edgewood Campus, at La Colina and Newport, has applied for an increase in student enrollment. This is Fairmont's second attempt within a year for an increase. The first effort, resulted

in a unanimous rejection by the North Tustin Advisory Committee (NTAC) and was not forwarded to the Planning Commission. That application revealed its enrollment of 360 exceeded the 280 students allowed by

the existing conditional use permit (CUP). In April the County issued a Notice of Violation giving Fairmont 60 days to bring its enrollment down to 280 or face closure. To forestall closure, Fairmont submitted this second application, which stays the 60 day period until the application is processed.

Until 1988 Edgewood Private School, predecessor to Fairmont, operated with a CUP limiting enrollment to 140 students. That year, a CUP was issued allowing expansion to 280 students. Almost immediately, neighbors realized the error. This expansion resulted in the overload of this small site at the busy junction of two of North Tustin's important streets. A subsequent attempt to expand into a preschool on Vanderlip Avenue was denied by the Planning Commission. Following that defeat, the property was sold to Fairmont. Without obtaining County authorization, Fairmont increased its enrollment over the years and included a preschool. In an effort to legitimize that expansion, Fairmont applied for an increase to 442 students in 2003, which was defeated as noted above.

NTAC heard the second application in June 2004. In FCA's view, NTAC's performance at this hearing demonstrated several inadequacies. NTAC members did not have on hand and did not review the existing CUP. Without this information they had no understanding of the history of the Fairmont facility and its problems, including the unresolved parking problem. Nor did they know that Fairmont was illegally operating a preschool.

FCA opposes expansion at Fairmont's Edgewood Campus. In stating this opposition, we remain focused on factual issues related to North Tustin's Specific Plan with its emphasis on the residential character of our neighborhood. Those factual issues relate to traffic, parking, student intensity.

1. This is a commuter school and any increase in student enrollment will result in an increase in traffic and traffic hazards. This increase in traffic will occur during peak hours.
2. The onsite parking is not adequate. One requirement of the 1988 expansion was to record a parking arrangement with the adjacent church. This condition was never met. Parking in the bike lane on Newport Avenue was a result of the 1988 expansion.
3. The student intensity at this site is far greater than that of both private and public schools in our surrounding area.
4. This school abuts residential property. Allowing greater intensity of school use adversely impacts surrounding residential properties. Over 70 neighbors expressed in writing their opposition to the application for expansion.

FCA believes approval of Fairmont's application would reward a zoning violator. It would make a mockery of the application-approval-enforcement procedure.

At press time the Fairmont Expansion request remains in the County Process. The County has not completed its environmental review which began in June - an unusual length of time. Residents can express opposition to this expansion by contacting Supervisor Campbell at 714-834-3330 or e-mail bill.campbell@ocgov.com.

EL TORO AND JOHN WAYNE AIRPORTS

Conversion of the former El Toro MCAS into the Great Park is proceeding slowly. Concept options for development are being presented at a series of community forums. Meanwhile, the Navy announced its plans to sell off the base lands all at once as originally planned. To keep abreast of the status of El Toro/Great Park, see www.eltoroairport.org.

Officials at John Wayne reported a record 823,000 passengers passed through the airport in June. With the major increase in air traffic, it is imperative that North Tustin residents report intrusive aircraft noise. **Please call the Noise Abatement office at 949-252-5185 and leave a message**

For information on flight activities at John Wayne Airport, see www.ocair.com.

ESPLANADE PARK EXTENSION

The planned expansion of the Esplanade Trail between Vanderlip and Warren was placed in jeopardy because of the Railroad's decision to sell the land to adjacent property owners. Supervisor Campbell has committed to sort out and rectify this situation and make the trail public again.

The County needs the Community's input. Please take the time to answer the survey questions on the enclosed insert - either e-mail to bjunor@cox.net or fold and mail the insert. Your answers will be tabulated and the results forwarded to Bill Campbell. The results will be reported in the next FCA Bulletin.

PROPOSED AREA NAME CHANGE

How many times have you had to explain to people making deliveries to your home that you don't live in Santa Ana even though the address says so? Do you simply refer to this area as "North Tustin," "Tustin Hills," "Cowan Heights," or "Lemon Heights" when explaining this same issue to your family and friends? If so, you're

not alone, and many residents have expressed frustration with the lack of identity for our unique area.

FCA has fielded numerous inquiries about this issue, and a committee is currently exploring options for an official name change. The intention is to remain unincorporated yet change our postal name -- which would also change the corresponding ZIP code of 92705. There are many benefits to this proposal including:

- C Provides a unique identity for our area
- C Eliminates confusion.
- C Provides a greater sense of community.

FCA has had preliminary discussions with Supervisor Campbell regarding the process associated with a name change. We are now requesting input from the Community on this subject. Please take the time to answer the survey questions on the enclosed insert. Either e-mail to namechange2004@yahoo.com or fold and mail the insert. FCA will collect the input from the Community and then share this information with our elected officials as well as the United States Postal Service. Your answers will be reported in the next FCA Bulletin.

JOIN FCA!

WHY? FCA has been the only organization that has worked diligently for over 40 years to preserve the unique quality of our Community. The result of our efforts is an area sought after by individuals seeking an environment with large spacious residential lots and no commercial intrusion. This wonderful ambiance has been made possible by the constant vigilance of FCA, which has been the moving force in maintaining our high property values. FCA's effectiveness can only continue through a large and active membership. **NUMBERS COUNT.** Our elected officials look at the number of members we represent and respond favorably when they see a large voting block being **VERY** active. In order to continue our past successes, we need your support. Your \$15 annual membership is the best investment you can make in the value of your home and in your Community. With your support and assistance, we can continue to make a huge difference.

Complete the form on the back of the newsletter and mail it in today. By joining today you will not only become a 2005 member, but will also have the benefit of membership for the remainder of this year.

Contact: Dessa Schroeder, 838-6017.

www.foothillcommunities.org

The FCA website is up and running! You will find postings of FCA and other events, current concerns, contacts for community issues, and web links to useful

resources. Send comments, contributions, or suggestions to the webmaster. Feel free to suggest what you would like to see on the web site! Contact: Webmaster & Director Richard Nelson at rnelson@richardnelson.com or 714-730-7810.

2004 FCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FCA Board Meetings

Held on the 1st Thursday of the month - 7:15 pm,
PFF Bank (Prospect & 17th).
To confirm date and location, call:
Elva Woodland, 633-2726
All members welcome!!