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Santa Monica Daily Press

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THE VAMOS LOS DODGERS ISSUE

Hunt for study comes up short

BY MELODY HANATANI

Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL A nearly three-week-long search into the fate of a 1990s study that would've brought in millions of dollars in traffic mitigation fees has ended with little information and some speculation on what actually happened.

The City Manager and City Attorney's offices reported last week that they weren't able to find the outcome of a nexus study — which would set the fee rate — the City Council ordered in early 1992.

The hunt came after a council meeting last month when several proponents of Measure T — an initiative that would limit commercial growth in the city — brought the missing

study to light, which if it had been concluded, would've set the amount of money that City Hall could've collected from developers under an ordinance that was adopted in 1991.

The revelation took place as city officials blast Measure T, arguing it would result in lost revenue for City Hall and do nothing to tackle traffic issues as it claims it would.

The council asked City Manager Lamont Ewell and City Attorney Marsha Moutrie to review city records with regards to the ordinance, pulling information from the planning department, City Clerk and City Attorney's offices.

"The list includes the draft nexus study for millions of dollars in development fees, which suggests residents could have benefited from developer-paid signal synchronization and

local shuttle buses for many years now," Kevin McKeown, who was among the councilmembers in favor of the investigation, said.

Included in the report is a chronology, starting with the creation of the ordinance on Nov. 21, 1991 and ending on Dec. 24, 1996 with a memo from the consultant who conducted the study, explaining that recent legal developments would make it difficult to impose a fee. About 20 documents are referenced in the report.

The one thing that city officials weren't able to locate was the final study itself or why it was never submitted to the council for review. A draft study was discovered.

"We don't know why the trail ends there," Moutrie said. "There were significant things happening in the city that may explain in part

why the trail ends there."

Documents indicate that city staff and the firm of Meyer, Mohaddes and Associates (MMA), which was commissioned to do the nexus study, worked together for roughly 30 months. While the report cites a number of memos between mid-1992 and early 1994, the volume of available documents rapidly declines following January 1994, which is when the Northridge Earthquake occurred.

Moutrie said that the retention period on most city documents is less than 12 years.

The report mentions that the lack of available information could be attributed to the earthquake, reflecting a shift in priorities for the planning department.

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TOUGH CUSTOMER

Joe Montemorra, 34, lifts 242.5 pounds at Muscle Beach in Venice during the Special Olympics Southern California Powerlifting meet on Saturday.

Fabian Lewkowicz news@smdp.com

Santa Monica first to make food 'cool'

BY ELIZABETH KENIGSBURG

Special to the Daily Press

CITY HALL Taking steps toward sustainability, the City Council pledged to reduce Santa Monica's "FoodPrint" by promoting organic and locally grown food.

Santa Monica is the first city to sign the Cool Foods pledge sponsored by the Center for Food Safety (CFS), a national nonprofit public interest and environmental advocacy organization.

"The Cool Foods Campaign has developed a way for individuals or communities to measure how well they're doing at making sustainable food choices," Councilmember Kevin McKeown said. "Like the familiar ecological footprint, this is an ecological 'FoodPrint.'"

McKeown urged the council to sign the Cool Foods pledge last month, which encourages its followers to choose organic and locally-grown food, avoid processed and packaged foods, and reduce their meat and dairy intake. These actions, he says will be better for the environment.

"Santa Monicans already know that we

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COLDWELL BANKER

Green encouraged collaboration

FROM GREEN PAGE 3

region's waterways, protecting the health of humans who swim and surf in the Santa Monica Bay, and sustaining the overall health of the region's marine life.

Green's zealous determination and innate intelligence, coupled with a warm personality, enabled her to build consensus among diverse stakeholders, those who knew her said. Her genuine manner defused confrontation and won her admiration and respect from all interested parties on sensitive environmental issues. Behind the scenes always supporting her was her husband, Jack Green, who died in 2005.

Born in 1929 in Detroit, Green came to California to enroll at UCLA as a music major and played the cello in the school orchestra. She would later start a family and enjoy life raising three children.

She became swept up in the activism of the early 1970s, beginning her career as a water quality advocate in 1972 by working on the campaign to pass Proposition 20, the ballot initiative that established the California Coastal Commission. She then became president of the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters, which marked her introduction to the issues surrounding sewage treatment and its disposal.

"I got involved in environmental issues generally because I was looking for a place that needed work," Green said in a 2005 interview marking Heal the Bay's 20th anniversary. "It was a response to my depression, really, about the Vietnam War, civil rights issues — all that was going on in this country at the time. I said: 'I've got to get out of bed and do something!'"

Realizing there wasn't an organization to monitor the disposal of sewage and alarmed about the harmful impacts on the Santa Monica Bay, Green began holding meetings of concerned citizens in her Westwood living room. The foundation of Heal the Bay took shape there. Lacking formal scientific training, she nonetheless plunged into the complex world of public infrastructure.

"Reading the [federal] Environmental

Protection Agency's analysis of sewage treatment and its disposal was my science education," she recalled years later.

Green's approach — encouraging collaboration among groups that often had contrasting perspectives on how to tackle a problem — was not only a hallmark of her personal style but was extremely pragmatic.

"Heal the Bay is such a positive organization and Dorothy set the tone for all of us," said Madelyn Glickfeld, a member of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board and former Heal the Bay board member. "I was in a lot of meetings with Dorothy, and it wasn't about stopping things, but always about starting things."

She also served as a Los Angeles Department of Water and Power commissioner for three and a half years, and chaired the most important water policy conference in the state, the California Water Policy (POWER) Conference, for the past 17 years.

"Dorothy had a very clear vision of what water quality should look like in the State of California," said Carolee Krieger, president of the California Water Impact Network. "CWIN will continue her work to implement solutions for water quality and water supply issues across the state."

The U.S. government honored Green's three decades of leadership in 2006, bestowing her with the President's Volunteer Service Award. In the fall of 2007, the University of California Press published her book "Managing Water: Avoiding Crisis in California."

Green is survived by three sons, Joshua, Avrom and Herschel, and three granddaughters, Jessica, Katherine and Tara.

A public memorial service will be held Thursday at 2 p.m. at Mount Sinai Hollywood Hills in Los Angeles.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations be made to the California Water Impact Network, the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council or Heal the Bay.

news@smdp.com

Northridge earthquake could explain study status

FROM STUDY PAGE 1

Moutrie added that there was a change in the upper management of the planning department during that time.

Measure T proponents claimed that City Hall lost out on approximately \$45 million on developer fees, basing its figure on an estimate that more than 9 million square feet of development has taken place in the city since the ordinance would've been activated. The group calculated that City Hall might have charged about \$5 a square foot, modeling after a similar development impact fee in San Francisco.

"City Hall does not create new taxes or fees and then simply forget to collect them," Diana Gordon, the co-chair of Santa Monica Coalition for a Livable City, said. "Someone in city government decided to let developers off the hook for many millions of dollars."

Moutrie said the council does legally have the option of instituting a traffic fee if it chooses, but would have to conclude the nexus study in order to establish the rate. A nexus study looks at the relationship between the assessment of a fee and its impact. The

council did authorize city staff last month to develop a nexus study for an unrelated transportation mitigation impact fee.

She added that the council will most likely not have the authority to retroactively assess the fee on developments that have taken place since the ordinance was enacted.

"Once the developer gets permits pursuant to a certain provision and once they pull permits and start work, they have a vested right to proceed under the law that is in effect at that time," Moutrie said.

One of the documents unearthed is a memo between Gary Hamrick of Meyer, Mohaddes and Associates and former Transportation Planner Paul Casey regarding the 20-year Capital Improvement Program that was included in the nexus study. The program lists a series of traffic improvement projects totaling approximately \$143 million.

"Taxpayers are now paying for traffic improvements that developers were supposed to pay for and all residents are stuck in traffic congestion that we should not have had if City Hall was doing their job," Gordon said.

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