



Established 1971 To preserve and enhance the unique village character of Laguna Beach

# November 2022 newsletter

## Hybrid City Council

Tribute to Toni/Lease of Church  
Lot/Removal from Historic  
Register  
Tuesday, November 15, after  
5 p.m.  
Council Chambers

## Via Zoom

December Board Meeting  
Saturday, December 3, 9 a.m.

## In Person

Holiday Party  
Monday, December 19, 6 p.m.  
Presbyterian Church Hall

## Save December 19 for the Holiday Party, Election, and Bylaws Vote

We're skipping the November general meeting and looking forward to the annual holiday party on December 19, when in addition to our usual potluck feast we will have the election of board members for next year and also vote on a set of bylaws updated to reflect changes in state law. A strikeover version of the modified bylaws has been posted on our website ([villagelaguna.org](http://villagelaguna.org)) for members to consider before the meeting. Members who don't have e-mail may call 949-472-7503 to request a copy by regular mail.

With the time freed-up by our not meeting this month, members are urged to attend in person or call in to the November 15 City Council meeting, at which Toni Iseman will be recognized for her 24 years of service to the City. Join us to contribute to the list of her accomplishments—the more impressive for her having been in the minority, politically, for most of those years—and to the stories of the many ways she assisted

individual residents in resolving their City-related issues. She has never stopped listening to residents, offering ideas, and inspiring action (in recent years, in a notably hostile environment)—always keeping Laguna's values (as embodied in the General Plan) front and center—and we will miss her faithful presence on the dais.

Also on the Council's agenda for that evening is the signing of a lease for the Presbyterian Church parking lot as the site for a parking structure that the City will build and pay for but never own. Village Laguna will be objecting once again to the closed-door discussions from which the decision emerged, the absence of any public process or environmental analysis of this drastic step, the project's inconsistency with the recently updated Downtown Specific Plan, and the destruction of a structure long considered historic to make it happen.

Finally, the Council will consider removing a house on Hawthorne Road from the historic register to accommodate a remodel that will destroy its historic value.



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## **News Briefs**

1. For those who were unable to attend our October general meeting, the hour-long video shown at the Cultural Arts Center is now available for viewing on YouTube. To watch it ([villagelaguna.org](http://villagelaguna.org)), scroll down on the home page to “Village Laguna—40th Anniversary of Passage of the Height Limit Initiative,” click on “40th Anniversary.”

2. After what seemed like a commitment by the City Council to have the city arborist examine all the trees along the flood control channel one-by-one in an attempt to save as many as possible, all seven of them immediately disappeared when construction began. We may still have a chance for the promised input on the number and kinds of trees used to replace them when the landscaping goes to design review—stay tuned!

3. The handling of the design review of historic structures under the new “voluntary preservation” ordinance has begun to lead to regrettable losses of structures that until now had been confidently considered historic (being listed on our

historic inventory, which was adopted by Council resolution and continues to be a list of the best local examples of historic architecture, despite its deletion from the City’s records). The staff reports for the design review of remodels now make no mention of their history, and if the proposed changes qualify, by being judged “minor,” for administrative review rather than a full hearing by the board, they may be approved by a staff member over the counter. A proposal to strip the K-rated house at 1902 Ocean Way of all its historic features (original windows and doors, stucco and half-timbering, porch roof, etc.) was approved in this way last month, and an appeal on CEQA grounds by the Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition is expected.

4. The signatures that Mo Honarkar’s company collected for a referendum to invalidate the City Council’s Ordinance 1675 (an alternative to Measure Q) have been certified as sufficient, which means that the Council must now decide whether to put the ordinance to a vote of the people or repeal it.