



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

May newsletter 2019

Charm House Tour Set for Sunday, May 19

Village Laguna's forty-seventh Charm House Tour focuses on North Laguna and reflects a hundred years of life in the city, ranging from a Settlement-style beach cottage hand-built by its owners (summer visitors from Riverside) in 1915 to a contemporary inspired by Wright, Neutra, and Schindler. There's a two-story Dutch Colonial Revival dating to 1921 in a colorful garden and a Midcentury Modern with an expansive view. Tickets are still available for \$50 (compare with \$60 the day of the tour) by mail (P.O. Box 1309, Laguna Beach, CA 92652), online (www.villagelaguna.org), or at one of the following local outlets: Fawn Memories (384 Forest Ave.), Cottage Furnishings (802 S. Coast Highway), Laguna Beach Books (1200 S. Coast Highway), and EGO Salon (Monarch Bay Plaza). Parking will be free at ACT V, along with bus transportation to the Festival of Arts Grounds, where tour busses will depart from noon till three.



Charm House Tour
Sunday, May 19, noon to 3 p.m.
Festival of Arts Grounds

June Board Meeting
Saturday, June 1, 9 a.m.
Home of Bonnie Hano

“Save Laguna Summit” Draws More Than Two Hundred



At a meeting attended by more than two hundred Laguna residents sponsored by Village Laguna, the Laguna Beach Democratic Club, the Laguna Canyon Conservancy, CANDO, the South Laguna Civic Association, the Laguna Beach Urban Tree Fund, and the Top of the World Neighborhood Association, representatives of these organizations and of Transition Laguna, the Laguna Greenbelt, the Laguna Preservation Coalition, the Laguna Beach Beautification Council, Laguna Concerns, and the neighbors opposing the Cleo Street redevelopment project shared their ideas about preserving our heritage and our environment and protecting Laguna from overdevelopment.

Johanna Felder of Village Laguna described the thinking behind the “Save Laguna Summit” by saying that time was when, faced with a big planning decision, “the City Council would appoint a task force with representatives of a broad range of community groups, and with the help of staff they would consider the issues together, figure out what they agreed about, and prepare a document that reflected their shared values. Those values became part of the City’s General Plan and Municipal Code, and the fact that Councils have respected them is largely responsible for the way Laguna looks and feels today.”

“Recently,” she continued, “these shared values have been under attack as ‘out-of- date’ and as ‘threatening private property rights.’ We’ve seen Councilmembers preparing to ‘streamline’ the design review process, to make it harder for the public to comment on the removal of City-owned trees, to amend the General Plan in order to dismantle our

historic-preservation program, and to allow a two-person subcommittee to negotiate the guidelines for forthcoming major developments behind closed doors. Arguing for respect for these values is likely to expose the speaker to scorn and name-calling from the dais and from other members of the audience. If this goes on, it’s likely to have a chilling effect on public participation. We need to speak up and insist that it stop. Just as important, we need to show the Council that the loudest voices don’t represent what most Lagunans want.”

Penny Milne (CANDO) said that her organization’s concerns included the proposed Canyon Acres apartments and a projected 20,000-square-foot LCAD student center and argued that any development in the canyon should “follow the rules instead of rewriting them.” Bob Borthwick (Greenbelt) reminded us of the priceless feeling of serenity we all have on entering Laguna Canyon and said that his organization was committed to opposing additional travel lanes for the Canyon Road and pursuing acquisition of further parcels contiguous to the Greenbelt.

Chris Prelitz (Transition Laguna) pointed out that buildings are responsible for more carbon emissions than cars and asked where the City stands with regard to its climate-change goals. Cathy Jurca described historic preservation as a natural check on overdevelopment and criticized Council’s readiness to abandon it in favor of a new ordinance that will violate state environmental law. Laura Horgren (Democratic Club) expressed the club’s determination to knock on every door to elect Councilmembers whose views about Laguna represent residents like those assembled.

Greg O’Laughlin (SLCA) called attention to the City’s emphasis on tourism and asked for more attention to residents’ needs. Gene Felder (LCC) stressed the need to consider the cumulative effects of development on residents’ quality of life. Ann Christoph (Laguna Concerns) recalled the successful community effort to stop the Athens Group’s overdevelopment of Aliso Canyon twelve years ago as an example of what can be done when groups work together.

Given the size of the crowd, it proved impossible to follow the presentations with three concurrent roundtable discussions of the issues as had been planned, and instead participants were encouraged to write their thoughts on good-sized Post-It notes that will be collated and summarized by the organizers in the weeks to come. Further meetings to discuss ways of capturing the energy in the room for collaborative action are planned

Electric Vehicle Rentals Ruled Out at Fairview Street and Coast Highway

At its April 16 meeting, the City Council heard an appeal of the approval of the rental of small electric cars at 980 N. Coast Highway and then voted unanimously to overturn that approval. Three Planning Commissioners, assured by staff that they could approve the use as “no more obnoxious” than other uses allowed in the zone, had discounted the Fairview Street neighbors’ concerns about traffic on their narrow, steep, sidewalk-less street. The neighbors argued that the use was expressly prohibited in the Commercial-Neighborhood zone and that the limitation of the cars to streets with a speed limit of 35 mph would force all the trips generated (estimated at 72 per day) into the neighborhood. Having been alerted by the neighborhood association, Village Laguna spoke in support of the appeal.

New Police Cars to Keep Graphics After Media-Hyped Hearing

The flag-inspired graphics on the City’s new police vehicles returned to the agenda April 16 for Council consideration of a post-approval change from muted to primary colors. Meanwhile there had been complaints about the motif, many of them based on aesthetics but some raising issues of Laguna’s image, and by the time of the hearing we had seen two of our Councilmembers talking about lack of respect for the flag on Fox News and thus inciting a nationwide e-mail storm of patriotic indignation. Flag supporters filled the Council Chambers, where the rhetoric was charged and often hostile toward anyone with a different view. Several of the very few comments opposing the motif pointed out, to no avail, that using red for the letters “ICE” in “POLICE” made them stand out and suggested that just changing the color of one of those letters might help. In the end, the Council voted 4–1 (with Toni Iseman dissenting, saying that she felt “tyranny in the room”)

to leave things as they were. Peter Blake took the opportunity to insist that Village Laguna was responsible for the opposition. For the record: Not so.

Revised Short-Term Lodging Ordinance Set for Second Reading June 4

A revision of the City’s 2016 short-term lodging ordinance that has the support of Coastal Commission staff was introduced at the April 23 Council meeting and passed to a second reading on a 3–2 vote (with Blake and Dicterow opposed). The product of 16 months of negotiation, it preserves the ordinance’s all-important prohibition of new STL units in residential zones (to which the Coastal Commission had objected) while allowing conversion to STLs of units that fail to meet density, parking, or other development standards and letting the existing permitted units in residential zones (a total of 73) remain in perpetuity. At the same time, it protects units reserved for affordable and senior housing from conversion and requires hosting platforms to collect and remit transient occupancy taxes and to book transactions only for permitted units. The Council will take final action on the ordinance on June 4, after which, assuming that they approve it, it will go back to the Coastal Commission for certification.

Senate Bill 50, Amended, Clears Another Committee

The housing legislation that would override local zoning, amended in the hope of broadening support for it, received the approval of another committee on April 23. The new version reportedly exempts coastal cities with fewer than 50,000 people, areas at high risk of fire, and state-designated historic districts. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, “opposition to the bill remains strong,” and “it may not succeed if other housing bills [increasing spending on low-income housing and protecting tenants] don’t garner support.” It must clear the Senate by May 31 and the legislature by mid-September

Renew your membership!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

I have enclosed my check for the following membership (I understand the amount is not tax-deductible):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student - \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer - \$250/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic - \$40/individual, \$60/family | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservationist (\$500 family) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter - \$150/family | <input type="checkbox"/> Villager Extraordinaire (\$1,000+)* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me my newsletter electronically instead of by mail. | <small>*includes two Charm House Tour tickets</small> |

Contact Treasurer Richard Picheny at 295-0545 or rpicheny@gmail.com to arrange for automatic monthly or quarterly payments.
Mail to Village Laguna, PO Box 1309, Laguna Beach, CA 92652



P.O. Box 1309
Laguna Beach, CA 92652

FIRST CLASS MAIL

My Favorite Local Business

by Armando Baez

Sheltered in an alley between the Selanne Steak Tavern and the Main Street Bar is the best bakery in Laguna Beach, Andrée's Patisserie (1456 S. Coast Highway). While the restaurant and the bar are very busy in the evening hours, the bakery rules the mornings (7:35 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 7:35 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday). Ron Reno has been baking here since 1981. He studied baking at Cerritos College and started baking for Laguna in 1979 at the Renaissance Bakery on Forest. When he heard that the Coast Highway location was available, he snapped it up right away.

Once you're inside the shop, the bakery case immediately draws your eye and starts your mouth watering. Ron's daily bake items are made from his own recipes and include all of the standards: muffins, bear claws, cinnamon twists, almond and chocolate croissants, lemon squares, and—my favorite—cream cheese Danish pastries (cherry or raspberry). What makes these so special is that he makes the cheese fresh daily. His sandwiches are also made fresh using his own baked bread and the finest meats and cheeses. He grinds coffee beans to make each cup of coffee and offers lattes, cappuccinos, and a great black cup to go. In addition to the comfortable counter inside, there are tables and chairs in the alley for those who choose to linger. I count on meeting locals there whenever I visit.

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