

# The Grapevine

No. 4

News from East Eaton Wash Neighborhood Association

February 26, 2009

## Voting time again!

Please vote in our Association's annual election of officers at our Saturday March 14 meeting at Hastings Branch Library from 11:15 am to 12:45 pm. (Stop by to vote and check out the Mexican cooking demo in the library from 11 to noon.)

Officer positions are:

President - chair meetings; officially represent the association to external parties

Vice President - support and act in place of President or Secretary as needed

Secretary - publicize meetings; record and distribute meeting minutes; maintain contact list.

Treasurer – receive, keep safe, track, report on, and disburse Association funds. (So far the Association has never had any funds.)

Nominations for willing candidates may be made via e-mail [eewna@eewna.org](mailto:eewna@eewna.org) or phone 626 792-2927 by March 10. Please provide the name, address, and a contact phone number for the candidate.



## The “Neighborhood Association”

Anyone age 18 and above who lives within its boundaries is automatically a member of *East Eaton Wash Neighborhood Association*. The boundaries are from Foothill Blvd. north to the south side of Orange Grove Blvd, and from Eaton Wash east to Sierra Madre Villa Ave. There are no dues.

The Neighborhood Association mission is to help improve the quality of life in our neighborhood. It does this by:

- helping us get to know and communicate with each other,
- keeping us informed of local developments and issues affecting the neighborhood,
- helping us work together to safeguard and improve our neighborhood,
- providing an avenue for organized feedback and input to the city.

Meetings: Second Saturday of each month at 11:15 am at Hastings Branch Library.

E-mail: [eewna@eewna.org](mailto:eewna@eewna.org)

Web site: <http://www.eewna.org>

## Park Pedestrian Path

City staff is working on a plan to move the pedestrian path between our neighborhood and Viña Vieja Park from its current route starting at Avocado at Alameda to a route starting near the originally planned location on Avocado at Las Lunas. From the new gate, the path would immediately turn north to avoid crossing under the “too low” Edison high tension wires. It would continue north to a second gate where the white vinyl fence currently comes across to the eastern edge of the park. The path would then turn west, crossing under the wires, intersecting the existing eastern park pedestrian path.

The path would be 10 feet wide, bounded by new vinyl fencing. The gates would be open from 7 am to dusk (as the gates on the current path are

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supposed to be). The path would be made of decomposed granite, the same substance used on the current park paths under the Edison wires. Some landscaping is contemplated, but details have yet to be worked out.

A big concern for residents near the new entry is the prospect that park patrons from all over will decide to use our quiet streets for a second parking lot since this path will make them closer than parking on Orange Grove. The city has promised to work with nearby residents to figure out parking restrictions that will be effective with the least negative impact for them. (Perhaps we can learn something that could be used to improve the situation for the neighbors of PCC-CEC.)

The city is hoping to have plans in place and construct the new path this spring.

## **Ice Rinks Project**

The city's Ice Rink project is still in progress. The project would build an approximately 500 x 120 foot building up to 40 feet tall located between Eaton Wash and the Edison lines, south of the dog park and north of the water well/PCC parking lot. This area is city owned dedicated parkland. The building would house two NHL sized rinks for public recreational use, locker rooms, skate rental, pro shop, party room, and hot dog type food facility. There could be as many as 460 spectator seats, about half for each rink. There would be 143 parking spaces in a lot between the building and the dog park.

A major concern all along for our neighborhood has been the route by which vehicles will access the site. At this time last year, agreement had been reached with PCC that the operational project would be accessed through the PCC parking lot. But not construction access. That left the city proposing to route construction on a temporary road through the east side of Viña Vieja Park and on Orange Grove Blvd. Fortunately, after direct intervention by Vice Mayor Haderlein, we are told that PCC has agreed to allow access through their parking lot for construction as well as operations.

In the spring of last year, the City Council was presented the information that the lowest construction bid was about \$21 million, whereas only \$12 million was in the budget. The council directed the building be redesigned to reduce construction costs, and that expected revenue by restudied. The redesign to save as much as \$1.5 million changed the building from steel frame to concrete block walls. It made the building less energy efficient but increased the potential seating capacity back to near the original estimate.

In December 2008 it became public that the city had switched to negotiating with a different entity for the contract to operate the facility. Previously the operator of the current ice rink in the Civic Center was to get the contract in return for giving up their lease on the Civic Center site, which expires in November 2011. Now the City is negotiating with "Los Angeles Kings/Polar Ice Ventures". No reason has been given for the change. The Council approved some redesign of the facility interior they said would improve function and revenue.

Also in December the Council was presented with a potential financing plan that would have the city borrow money from other city funds to construct the project, with the expectation of paying those funds back after issuing municipal revenue bonds when financial markets improve. This would require the city to pay interest to the source funds out of the city's general fund, thus violating the original promise of only doing this project if it would not require taxpayer funding. A few Council members expressed concern; some indicated a desire to urgently forge ahead using funds from wherever they can.

The city is about to issue a request for new construction bids, hoping construction costs will be so much lower now that the budget gap will be eliminated or very small. (No mention that revenue expectations should also be revised.) Then in the spring, city staff will present the Council either with alternatives or a complete package to approve the design, construction bid, financing, access agreements, and management agreement.