

**SOLEDAD CANYON HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION (SCHA) GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
Held October 5, 2005, 7:00pm-8:30pm, at the Talavera Substation of Las Alturas Fire Station**

Meeting called by: SCHA Membership
Type of Meeting: General Meeting

Next Regular Meeting: Early January 2006
We'll hold a community clean-up and potluck!

I. Greetings and Introduction of New Neighbors

II. Financial Report: Stephanie Charitonenko, SCHA Secretary/Treasurer
Summary of discussion, outcomes, and next steps: Stephanie reported that as of the end of the third quarter 2005, SCHA funds amounted to \$1,594.14 based mainly on receipts of \$30 lifetime membership dues paid by members to date. The balance was virtually unchanged from last quarter except for the addition of \$4.04 in interest. No significant expenditures were planned for the next quarter; however, there may be considerable income to the fund next quarter if the SCHA membership accepts the draft Association By Laws and the receipt of \$25 annual dues begins from members. This part of the proposed By Laws is being proposed to allow the Association to purchase additional tables and chairs for the fire station and to allow its members to plan community activities that may require SCHA funds.

III. Proposed "A" Mountain Park (aka: Tortugas Mountain Preserve): Gregg Henry, "A" Mountain Park Committee Chairperson
Summary of discussion, outcomes and next steps: Gregg informed the membership that NASA is withdrawing control of about four sections of land on and around "A" Mountain that will revert to BLM control. The "A" Mountain Park Committee, appointed by Doña Ana County, had announced and listened to interested parties during the last year to gauge what community members would like to see done with the land once it reverts to BLM control. Based on the input, the Committee is recommending that the county take control of a minimum of 1,280 acres and perhaps up to 1,500 acres, in conjunction with about 500 – 600 acres of NMSU land, to make a regional park. This land and this timing represent a unique opportunity within the greater Las Cruces / Doña Ana County metropolitan area to set aside a large primary significant cultural, historical, and geologic feature, and the related parcels of land, at little or no cost. It will be a wonderful open-space element of the future greater City of Las Cruces. Both the BLM and

NMSU agree in principle to the plan and all parties are now waiting to see if the county also agrees. The proposed park would be reserved for activities such as hiking and biking that would have low environmental impact. Other parties are also submitting proposals for different uses of the land. Greg will report back to the SCHA as to what the County Commission decides with respect to holding public hearings to review the proposals in late October or early November 2005. To view the "A" Mountain Park Committee Proposal or to obtain any other additional information, contact Gregg at fullcircle@zianet.com.

IV. Groundworks USA Trust for Doña Ana County: Steve Fischmann, Member, Open Space and Trail Network, and Steering Committee, Citizens Task Force for Open Space Preservation (CTF)
Summary of discussion, outcomes and next steps: Steve briefed the membership on his previous work with CA local governments and the National Park Service (NPS) to ensure that quality of life is maintained as cities develop and populations grow. As a new resident of Talavera, he is continuing that work in this community and with the City of Las Cruces. As a member of the Open Space committee, he is helping to put together a proposal to tap into more than \$6 billion of NPS funds for park creation, reclaiming land, and sustaining improvements. To get involved in this effort or for more information, see the CTF web site: <http://www.zianet.com/openspace/> or contact the CTF by email: openspaces@zianet.com.

V. Update on the Talavera Flood Area Survey: Al Vickers, SCHA President
• Objective(s): The Doña Ana County Flood Commission has conducted a flood study of our area and submitted their draft findings to FEMA for review in order to make Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) as accurate as possible. The flood study will impact many residents in our area, by either taking their property out of a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area or placing it in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area.

- Current Status: The draft findings are also available for public review and comment at the Flood Commission office in Las Cruces. Based on the draft findings, the SCHA compiled a set of 16 questions and submitted these to the Flood Commission. The answers to the questions have been posted on the SCHA website, <http://www.zianet.com/scha/>.

- Next Steps: FEMA and the county will now verify the findings and prepare a preliminary map by sometime early next year. At that time, any property owner who has scientific data (to be completed by any licensed engineer) that challenges the study finding can submit such data as a challenge to the designation on the map. This challenge period will last for ninety days from the time the preliminary map will be released (TBD). Once all challenges are reviewed and either accepted or rejected, the final map will be drawn and certified.

Once certified, the results will be sent to the banks and mortgage companies that hold mortgage loans. Those companies will notify the home owners that flood insurance is needed to protect their property and the assets of the loan.

VI. Review of Proposed By Laws and Vote on Changes and Acceptance: Al Vickers, SCHA President

Summary of discussion, outcomes and next steps: Al explained that the SCHA formed a By Laws Committee in order to study and review the issues involved in formalizing our association more. The growth in the community and the constant need to protect our property rights, inform the residents, and respond to changes in the area planned by developers and county government has sparked the interest in this endeavor.

The committee met several times during July-August and drafted the set of By Laws that was disseminated for review by the membership via the SCHA email distribution list and posting at the SCHA website, <http://www.zianet.com/scha/>.

Since a substantial number of members did not yet review the draft By Laws and wanted time to do so, we agreed to postpone discussion and vote on the draft By Laws until the next general meeting to be scheduled in early 2006. Until then, comments and questions concerning the draft By Laws are encouraged. Please send them to Al at email: ekvickers@msn.com or give him a call at tel.: 521-1220.

VII. Update on County Plans and Programs

- **Bike Lane:** Construction of a bike lane has been funded by Doña Ana County and is expected to be completed early next year. The bike lane will run the entire length of Soledad Canyon Road. To the best of our knowledge, the bike lane is not planned to be extended on Dripping Springs Road at this time.

- **Dripping Springs Road Repairs:** Doña Ana County has developed a plan with two phases. Phase one involves a temporary repair using fill material from the adjacent dam, and special retaining materials. The county has also requested special state funding for a permanent conduit fix that will cost in the neighborhood of \$1.2 million. There is a special fund for this type of maintenance and there is a good chance it will be approved. Letters to County Commissioner Paul Curry will be helpful as well as letters to our state Senator Lou Rawson and our state representative Joseph Cervantes. Don't let them ignore our critical situation. If you want assistance in writing your letter Al Vickers will be glad to help. Again, he can be contacted at email: ekvickers@msn.com or at tel.: 521-1220.

VIII. Other Matters

- **Formation of SCHA Park Committee:** Paul Curry Development has donated two acres of land adjacent to the fire station to SCHA in order for a public park to be established. A committee has been formed to plan and design the park in order to make it functional by the end of 2006. Volunteers on this committee are needed! Your ideas and time spent on this committee can help make a lasting contribution to the community. Please contact Karen Perez tel.: 522-3221 to get involved in this important effort.

- **I-10 Corridor Study:** The I-10 Corridor Study is a high-profile and long-awaited project for the NM Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the residents of southeastern NM. The study will take a look at improving I-10 from I-25 to the TX State Line. It will evaluate the local and regional impacts of such corridor improvements as they relate to NM and TX, and will include the frontage roads adjacent to the interstate and the I-10 interchanges along the corridor to include I-25, NM-404, Vado, and Mesquite.

The I-10 Corridor Study is part of Governor Richardson's Investment Partnership (GRIP)

program, a \$1.6 billion statewide transportation expansion and infrastructure improvement project, and will be led by NMDOT District 1, located in Deming. The study is expected to take approximately a year to complete and at the end, an appropriate and well-defined transportation improvement alternative will be presented. For more information, please visit the website, <http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid-14648>. This site contains project information, updates, and meeting schedules.

• **Your Comments and Inputs Are Always Appreciated: Stephanie Charitonenko, SCHA Secretary/Treasurer.** Since this is only the second issue of the SCHA Minutes/Newsletter, your comments and inputs are appreciated to help make future issues useful to you and inclusive of all the latest community information. If you have suggestions on how to improve newsletter format or content, or you would like to suggest community news items to be included in the next issue (new issues expected every three months, in line with our SCHA meeting schedule), please send them to me at Charitonenko@direcway.com. Any corrections are also appreciated. Thank you for your support.