

Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

PCAC Celebrates 30th Anniversary!

January 26, 2021

Plans to invite Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council members and other frequent participants and their guests to a banquet to celebrate 30 years of community-industry dialogue were postponed but not cancelled due to COVID-19. A review of PCAC's origins, history, mission, and purposes were instead the means to show the efforts both community members and managers of Pasadena's refineries, chemical plants, and related industrial facilities have made for three decades to provide a forum for constructive dialogue. The presentation was made by Diane Sheridan, a third-party facilitator who has worked with the group since 5 local plants decided in 1990 that they wanted to form an advisory panel in keeping with the recommendation of the chemical industry's then new Responsible Care program. Slides are attached.

In 1990, the Steering Committee developed the mission and ground rules, picked the charter members, and chose the name for the group. The mission adopted 30 years ago remains the same: "To provide a forum that opens dialogue between community and industry, addresses issues of interest to both, and promotes awareness and understanding of those issues." Sheridan spoke about how the CAC focuses on industry-related issues, from monthly plant updates, annual reports (such as worker safety and plant emissions) to monthly meeting topics. The first meeting was held on January 23, 1991 at the PISD Administration Building on Cherrybrook. PCAC has continued its 9-times-a-year meeting schedule since COVID intervened by meeting on Zoom.

Recognizing the challenges that many organizations face, Sheridan acknowledged that PCAC needs to increase membership, increase plant and community attendance, and develop plans on how to sustain face to face communication in this age of social media.

Plant representatives were invited to share their views on the value of the community-industry dialogue. Among the comments were: great avenue to build relationships between the community and the people behind the "sign"; appreciate having open and honest communications with community members; opportunity to support the community in ways that our companies would not otherwise be aware of. PISD's Career and Technical High School representative, relayed appreciation on behalf of PISD, for all the support over the years.

Though not as festive as a banquet, the first meeting of PCAC's fourth decade saw members toasting good riddance to 2020 and their hopes that 2021 is an easier year for all.