

Westside Neighborhood Council Board of Directors
Minutes of the Meeting of January 12, 2006
Westside Pavilion, Community Room A

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p. m. in Community Room A at the Westside Pavilion by Steve Spector.

Voting Board Members present

Renato Romano, 3; Steve Spector, 4; Mary Kusnic, 5; Gretchen Lewotsky, 6; Barbara Broide, 7; Terri Tippit, 8; Alan Levine, 9; Richard S. Harmetz, 10; Francois Nion, 11; Stacy L. Antler, 12; Robert Guerin, 13; Ron Stone, 14; Sarah Fitzsimmons, 15; Mellissa Kenady; David Ty Vahedi 17

Non-Voting Board Member Present

Senior Lead Officer Munif Ali, LAPD (Officer Ali gave a report at the start of the meeting and left to resume his police activities.)

Non-Voting Board Member Absent: Paul Backstrom – City Council District 5; Representative from LAFD

Other officials present

Deanna Stevenson of DONE

Minutes: MSP to accept as submitted the minutes of the previous meeting by a vote of fourteen in favor, zero opposed, and one abstention.

Public Comment

Kris Kelly and **Adele Langdon** urged the Council to appoint a Director of Animal Welfare who would represent the WNC in support of making Los Angeles City animal shelters kill free zones. (Members of the WNC made clear their feeling that the Council was not likely to appoint a D. A. W.)

Danielle Elliot shared her concerns of the increase private encroachment on public land by sidewalk dining on public streets outside restaurant premises. Restaurants are not required to provide additional parking spaces for the sidewalk patrons. She cited a restaurant with outside seating for 66 patrons without any additional parking. Pedestrians are forced off the sidewalk and into the street in order to move past the tables and chairs. She suggested the city provide public notice for hearings involve revocable permits for outdoor seating.

Mark Elliot presented an update on the USC Neighborhood Participation Project and informed the Board that members receive another questionnaire, which will be used to assist the USC staff to assess Neighborhood Council progress and issues.

Terri Tippit briefed the board the area surrounding the proposed Exodus Recovery Homeless Center at Brotman Hospital has expressed concern that the Center will become a dumping shelter for the homeless. The center has been paid \$10,000 by the City of Santa Monica to open a sobering center. Cliff Cheng, who is active on the Palms Neighborhood Council, has asked local organizations to support efforts to stop the sobering center's use as a drop location for the homeless from Santa Monica and elsewhere. It will be an agenda item next month.

Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report:

Melissa Kenady reported that the treasury disbursed \$1,014.69 in the past month. She is waiting for invoices from Sketch Farm, LAFD and from the Westwood Charter School's Halloween Hoot. Riddick Youth Center required a \$100 key deposit.

Land Use Committee:

Gretchen Lewotsky reported that the mixed-use project at the southeast corner of Overland and National marks the first time the Land Use Committee has been given for review a project that is not within the WNC boundaries. She said that the committee asked Festival, the developer, a number of questions, whose answers Festival promised to supply. Festival did not follow up and supply either the requested documents or answers to the committee's questions. Nevertheless, it seeks the WNC endorsement of its project. It will be discussed as agenda item 6a. Gretchen also said that the committee will originate an interested party data base (a mailing list) in order to send to those who request it information about pending meetings about land use proposals that are to go before both the committee and or the board. The list will be turned over to developers and others who wish to make presentations. Those making the presentations will be required to send out the notices to interested parties as well as to owners of properties who would normally be sent notifications by the city if the city were holding hearings about the properties.

She gave an update of the Landmark Theater Project.

Public Safety and Traffic:

Barbara Broide reported on the dates of upcoming CERT disaster emergency preparedness classes. Contact Barbara for details.

She reported on the dates and times for street closings resulting from work on the Santa Monica Boulevard reconfiguration project.

Barbara also provided information about upcoming street closures related to the Santa Monica Boulevard Reconfiguration Project.

Barbara reported that trailer signs advertising condo development are being parked on Olympic, Pico, and Westwood over the weekends taking up parking spaces including metered space, and creating safety hazards for drivers. Residents have assumed these are illegal off-site advertising signs that should be cited by the city. Paul Backstrom reported that additional issues are involved. Paul and Barbara agreed to investigate those issues for the WNC and will report their findings to the council at the February meeting.

Barbara also said that upcoming City meeting will discuss proposed changes to the City's rules for automobile uses adjacent to residential areas and asked for a volunteer to cover the meetings and bring to the Board information about what transpired at those meetings.

During Viacom hearings on the contract, one contract change was made. If a location for the advertising signs is not accepted, the community would have the right to suggest three locations within 500 feet of the rejected location. Should Viacom reject all of the three alternate locations, the Department of Public Works would make the final decision on location. Barbara also noted that Viacom has requested fifty street furniture items to be placed on the Santa Monica Reconfiguration Project from the 405 through Century City.

Memo of Understanding: Barbara reported on the possibility of a Memo of Understanding being written by a group of neighborhood Councils and the

Department of Transportation. The current draft of the MOU indicates that the MOU would establish a pilot project that would create neighborhood traffic plans for each of the NCs involved. Barbara expressed concern that the MOUs could create negative impacts on areas not linked to the MOUs.

She listed the streets in our area that would be resurfaced.

The deadline for comments on the JMB EIR Century City project is January 13. The WNC will consider the issue later in the agenda.

The WLA CPAB Traffic Committee goal-setting meeting is scheduled for Tuesday. Robert Ringler, DOT representative Pauline Chan and Barbara will be on the City's public information channel 35 to discuss traffic issues on 2/2 at 1:30.

Outreach:

Terri Tippit reported Councilman Weiss obtained permission from the city council to display 15 WNC banners from light poles in our area.

The kiosk outside of Starbucks will display our poster, 3 other posters will rotate other kiosk in our area. When Melissa and Jean receive permission from the merchants we will begin our pilot program of cleaning the sidewalk and maintaining trash can pick up on northside of Pico Veteran to Westwood.

All members of the WNC have been requested to send Terri contact e-mail addresses for the WNC database. Each board member will send information to their constituents. WNC members should also send Terri e-mail addresses of others who should be added to the database.

Officers Committee

Steve Spector said that the Housing Rights Center would like to send a representative to a WNC meeting in order to explain fair housing laws. Board members indicated that they felt that the Center would have a greater impact in reaching tenant if it made its presentation at a different venue.

MSP 15 to 0 to elect the slate of officers as nominated by the Nominating Committee, which was re-election of existing officers.

DONE Report:

Deanna Stevenson reported that the results of our budget survey would be discussed at a future meeting.

Agenda

f) (taken out of order) Parking Issues on Selby Ave.

Theresa Baca, who lives on Selby near Notre Dame Academy for Girls and Elementary School, is frustrated that the school does not provide adequate parking for staff and students so they use Selby as a parking lot. She and her neighbors had been unable to resolve the problems directly with the school. She, therefore, requested that the WNC appoint somebody to act as a liaison between residents and the school in order to help bring about solutions to the parking problems. Blaise Antin will work with CD5, Traffic and Safety Committee, School and neighbors to resolve the problem.

a) Festival Project Overland at National.

Aaron Swerdling and Mitchell Sawasy presented the proposed 40,00 square foot mixed use (6,500 sq. ft. retail), 3-level, 29-loft condominium project with eighty-six subterranean parking spaces. The project will seek three variances from the city. Questions were raised by board members about landscaping and height.

A guest suggested that because the units are lofts, the building might create more traffic than ordinary residential units would create.

Sawasy responded that architecture, not landscaping, is the issue with this type of project.

Gretchen reminded the board of Festival's failure to supply a haul route despite the LUC's asking that such a route be given to the WNC. Sawasy responded by offering to work with the WNC on the haul route.

Gretchen said that although she supports business, she is concerned that the developer did not respond to the five questions the committee presented when Festival went before the LUC.

MSP by a vote of 13 in favor, one recusal, and one abstention to authorize Gretchen to draft letter for WNC to send the Planning Commission indicating that because the Developer did not follow up with information on haul route and other items, the WNC could not take a position on this project.

b) Update on Masonic Lodge:

Terri Tippit, Barbara Broide, Bob Cimiluca, Nancy Cautillo (Pastina Restaurant) representatives from the Lodge and LAPD met. The Lodge agreed to provide 24-hr contact numbers, on-site security, schedule of events, and pursue obtaining a loading zone in front of the building with specific times for vendors to unload. The police will patrol more frequently on Friday and Saturday nights. The group will meet quarterly, next meeting in March.

c) Freeway Landscaping:

Terri reported that if the WNC applies for a permit to plant trees along the 10 freeway the fee would be waived.

MSP that the WNC would be the applicant for a tree planting project with Caltrans along the 10 freeway between Military and Westwood Blvd. 1 to 0.

e) Concerns about JMB-EIR:

Barbara Broide circulated a letter to the board in advance of the meeting that provided input to the City in response to the HMB DEIR for the Constellation Place Condo Project. The letter focused on the issues related to traffic study methodology, which concerned many community groups reviewing the document. The letter was reviewed and edited during discussion.

Shannon Burns spoke in support of the attached letter objecting to conclusions in the EIR for the JMB project in Century City. She said that she supports the letter in its entirety.

Nancy Samovar spoke in behalf of Lucy Bava, a Cheviot Hills resident, in support of the letter in opposition to the project as it now stands. Samovar said that people are reluctant to travel to the Westside because they can't deal with the traffic. Samovar believes that because of traffic issues, business people should support the intent of the letter.

Bob Cimiluca, a member of the board of the Westwood South of Santa Monica Boulevard Homeowners Association, spoke in opposition to what he called the *flawed* EIR and asked the WNC to oppose the EIR.

MSP 11 to 0 the WNC Board members work to craft a letter detailing concern over traffic study results contained in the Draft EIR, requesting that better and more realistic information about traffic impacts be generated so community could assess project, including determination of appropriate mitigations.

MSP to adjourn at 9:38.