

Westside Neighborhood Council Meeting

On December 14, 2006, at the Westside Pavilion, Los Angeles

Present: Steve Spector (3/), Renato Romano (4), Mary Kusnic (5), Mado Most (6), Barbara Broide (7), Terri Tippit (8), Alan Levine (8), Dick Harnetz (10), Francois Nion (11), Stacy Antler (12), Bob Guerin (13), Ron Stone (14), Robin Hall (15), Melissa Kenady (16), David Ty Vehedi (17)

Absent: Renato Romano (4); (Note: Seats 1 and 2 are currently vacant.)

Non-voting Members Present: Jay Greenstein, CD 5; Deanna Stevenson, DONE

Non-Voting Members Absent: LAPD, LAFD

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 by President Steve Spector.

Minutes: The minutes were read and corrected. (See attachment.)

Public Forum

1. **Robin Hall** introduced herself and spoke of her activities on behalf of Westwood Charter School. She has been recommended by the school's principal to succeed Blaise Anton as the school representative on the WNC. She recently became Anton's alternate.
2. **Stephen Slater**, a consultant to Verizon, spoke about the property on Santa Monica Blvd. between Parnell and Prosser, which consists of a building containing telephone switching equipment and a parking lot on Prosser. Verizon is seeking a zoning change to reduce the amount of parking required on the site and to allow on Prosser to be sold for development or other uses.
3. **James Dickerson** spoke about a proposed site for what he described as an upscale lounge, for the sale alcoholic beverages at 2000 S. Cotner. The establishment would sell food, but over 50% of sales would consist of alcoholic beverages. The business to be called Shock Lounge would have a capacity of 250 patrons. The lounge would consist of 5,000 square feet, would not have a band, and would not allow dancing. Dickerson mentioned that what he described as the upscale nature of the business would attract local workers during the rush hour, people who would prefer to have a drink rather than hazard the traffic. It would be open from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.
4. **Susan Bursk**, President of the Century City Chamber of Commerce suggested that a site within Century City such as the Century Plaza Hotel be used in the next WNC election to make it easier for Century City workers and residents to vote. She said that many Century City people were not informed about the election because the Walkman organization, which distributes WNC election materials, does not service businesses. Currently, two business seats are allocated for Century City. Burst suggested that Century City business people be allowed to vote for both seats and not as they are now for only one seat

5. **Alan Levine**, a WNC board member, noted that a recent *L. A. Weekly* article served to emasculate **Councilman Weiss** and to attack Neighborhood Councils. He also referred to a Los Angeles *Times* article about Councilmember **Bill Rosendahl's** suggestions about improving traffic on the Westside. He concluded by saying that he hoped that the WNC would be a beacon of progressive egalitarianism and not degenerate into bickering and nimbyism.

Treasurer's Report

Melissa Kenady reported that the WNC currently has a balance of \$162,900. The complete Treasurer's Report is available on-line. Melissa also noted that Comptroller Laura Chick has made seventeen recommendations to DONE, seven of which Chick called urgent. She added that Chick has called for improved staffing and communication.

Funding Committee

Ron Stone submitted the new Funding Committee's report, which is available on-line. The report suggests funding guidelines and calls for certain limitations on donations to non-profits.

Land Use Committee

Gretchen Lewotsky in absentia submitted the LUC report, which is available on-line.

Transportation and Public Safety Committee

Barbara Broide reported that the committee would now meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:15 p.m. at the Westside Pavilion. In regard to the Trammell Crowe \$300,000 mitigation money, she said that the previously allocated \$50,000 for signal preemption for Station 92 is no longer needed since the Department of Transportation has scheduled the installation for the coming fiscal year. Therefore, the committee is recommending that the WNC vote at its January meeting that those funds be reallocated for the purchase of four battery powered jaws of life, one for each engine in the battalion that covers the WNC area. The committee continues to follow up with DOT to obtain information that is necessary to conclude Phase 1 of the traffic study. The committee would like to invite representatives of the Expos Phase II project to come to the WNC February meeting to discuss the process used for scoping and outreach to the community in order to maximize participation from the community. Barbara noted that the WNC has not received a response to its letter sent concerning the matter in which traffic studies have been done on recent Century City projects, including the JMB project. On the approval of the WNC chair, the committee will draft a new cover letter and send it with the old letter to the new Planning director. The FBI headquarters project EIS is expected shortly into the New Year. Members of the community are seeking a political solution to the problem and meanwhile are raising funds for a possible lawsuit regarding placement of a Southern California regional FBI headquarters at the site of the current Federal Building.

Mike Eveloff reported on recent negotiations regarding the JMB project in Century City. He explained that 1.3 million square feet of the project (thirty-two stories) are a result of

traffic said to be generated as a result of the 614 square foot drive through bank facility currently located at the site. He indicated that a coalition of homeowner associations has challenged the project and its environmental documents and attempted to have the project developers dedicate a large sum of money for community infrastructure improvements. During negotiations, the local CD 5 office became involved although coalition representatives felt it inappropriate for the CD offices to become involved in a proposed agreement between two private parties. **Lisa Trifiletti**, Planning Deputy for CD 5, responded about concerns over accountability, transparency, and oversight. Eveloff countered that under the coalition's proposal there would be set allocations for 75% of the funds to be spent as generated by interest income with flexibility for 25%. A compromise to have the fund administered by the California Community Foundation (rather than the City or the coalition) has been pursued. However, under the agreement negotiated with the CD 5 office and JMB, the Council office can adjust all of the allocations. The WNC is expected to have an advisory voice over the allocation of funds. Another major difference between the coalition brokered agreement and the final one pursued by CD 5 is that the coalition agreement would have resulted in \$5 million being posted in interest generating accounts pending project permit issuance, whereas now, only \$2.5 million will be posted with the second installment not coming due until the permit for the second building is in place.

Katherine Greenbaum, a WNC resident, asked for clarification as to the seeming discretionary nature future funding allocations under the CD 5 brokered plan.

Terri Tippit reported on the Outreach Committee and on election results. Those having comments and/or suggestions on the elections are invited to forward their comments to Terri. She stated that the new Board members are encouraged to attend an orientation meeting to be presented by DONE on January 17 at 6 p.m. at the Inman Center on Motor Avenue. All WNC Board members are required to complete the City's Ethics Training by December 31. The ethics training may be completed online.

Lisa Trifiletti of the CD 5 office said an attempt will be made in 2007 to update the West L. A. Community Plan because of the explosive growth on the Westside. The transportation element and RAZ zoning will be considered. She announced that she is working on arranging a tour of the community for both the new directors of the Planning and the Transportation Departments, Gail Goldberg and Gloria Jeffs.

Jan Gabrielson, chair of the Policy and Procedures Committee, has made a written recommendation that Standing Rule 17 be added to the WNC by-laws. **Standing Rule 17** says that WNC chairs are limited to members of the board and their alternates. A motion was made to do so. He further noted that there is a need to change/revise the WNC by-laws within a specified number of days of the WNC election. A by-laws committee will get underway to review and make recommendations.

Robin Hall requested that funding for Westwood and Overland be granted by the WNC on a regular rather than on a piecemeal basis.

Commendations for services rendered to the WNC were made to departing WNC board members **Blaise Anton, Bob Guerin, Alan Levine, Gretchen Lewotsky, and Francois Nion..**

Jay Greenstein reported on his efforts on behalf of the **Councilmember Weiss** to have the City work to improve the storm drainage system at street intersections. Barbara Broide and Katherine Greenbaum said that a number of drains were backing up due to debris. Dan said that the drains are cleaned up four times a year but that he was attempting to have impacted drains taken care of more quickly. Jay also reported on the City's actions to stop the inappropriate operation of a business at the corner of Westwood and Missouri. He also reported on the need for a crosswalk at Ashby and Westwood, a crossing at Exposition, and concerns by neighbors about the Meridian business on Westwood.

Mike Eveloff requested that the curbs on Century Park West be painted red in order to emphasize to drivers that they were not to park on that street.

DONE Report.

Deanna Stevenson requested copies of the 2007 WNC Annual reports to be used by DONE as examples of Best Practices.

Barbara Broide commented on the lawsuit settlement made between the city and billboard companies, a settlement that she found unacceptable. She also attended the VA meeting conducted by Director Dorman at the VA for NC reps. She reported that there will be future meetings with VA reps. She reported that an accounting of the outside land uses was made as well as an overview of funding and expenditures.

Tom Ponton, a member of the Neighborhood Review Commission said that a meeting would be held at 6:30 p.m. on January 11, 2007 by the commission at Mark Twain school in Venice to discuss Best Practices.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard S Harmetz, Recording Secretary
Westside Neighborhood Council