

Westside Neighborhood Council
Thursday, October 8, 2015, 7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

1. WELCOMING REMARKS:

a. Call to Order

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

a. Board Roll Call

In Attendance:

**Kate Kennedy (Seat 1)
Lisa Morocco (Seat 2)
Vito Bello (Seat 3)
Chris Elliott (Seat4 alt) Steve Spector (Seat 4) @ 8:30pm
Brendon Kotler (Seat 5alt)
Elnie Vannetim (Seat 6 alt)
Barbara Broide (Seat 7)
Terri Tippit (Seat 8)
Sean McMillan (Seat 9)
Stacy Antler (Seat 10)
Mary Kusnic (Seat 11)
Colleen Mason Heller (Seat 12)
Francesca Beale-Rosano (Seat 13)
Shannon Burns (Seat 14)
Eric Shabsis (Seat 15)
Wende (Seat 16alt)
Thomas Born (Seat 17alt)**

b. Review and Adoption September 10, 2015 Minutes

Motion to approve the September 10, 2015 Minutes.

Motion by Lisa

Second by Stacey

Approve (Seats 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16)

Abstain (Seats 1, 5, 6, 7, 14, 17)

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Board's jurisdiction (Up to two minutes per speaker)

Adrienne Nelson representing Westwood Charter School personally acknowledged and thanked the WNC for the support of the library. Stacy commented on the kindergarten space and Lisa acknowledged that the 75 books all have 'Thank you WNC inscribed .' She also noted that is it good to support Children's Book World.

4. PRESENTATIONS (discussion and/or possible action):

a. Sean McMillan, brief update and Q&A on the VA's West LA Master Plan

Sean said he attended the meeting on October 7 2015 at the Wadsworth VA with approximately 150 stakeholders and VA Administrators and Federal, State, County and City Government officials. He highlighted the Presentation which was made that outlined the concept for redevelopment of areas of the VA property to provide assistance and housing for the Veterans in accordance with the property Deed of 1888.

Sean presented highlights of the proposed Homeless Veterans Center as follows:

The VA WLA Campus will become a magnet where Veterans can receive state of the art healthcare, housing, employment assistance and other supportive services to promote community engagement and well being

It would create a 'self –contained' community of permanent housing with integrated health and wellness services available in a safe and supportive environment, exclusively for Veterans, on the WLA campus.

The Urban Master Plan Drivers:

1. Provide Coordinated Care Integrating Housing, Healthcare, Treatment and Support Services that puts the Veteran First
2. Ensure a Safe Environment for all Veterans
3. Revitalize the WLA VA Campus to Provide Services that Support and Honor Veterans
4. Include the Veteran Voice in the Masterplan Process to Create a Community for Veterans by Veterans
5. Recognize Needs for Specialty Services
6. Maximize Re-Use of Existing Assets, Historic Buildings and Green Space for Veterans
7. Provide Opportunities for Learning, Employment and Recreation for Veterans
8. Incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Concepts

He said further discussions include an immediate need for temporary housing and incorporating Metro – purple line into the facility.

Certain capital would be obtained from public-private partnerships.

Sean noted there are concerns including issues from UCLA, oil interests and Brentwood.

The website for information and comments to be submitted on or before December 1 2015 is www.helpouselavets.com.

b. Lisa Morocco and Shannon Burns Training on Funding Procedures required for any board member who makes a funding motion.

Moved to next month's meeting.

c. Eric Shabsis, update on City Planning Commission meeting on Sign Ordinance.

Eric presented a detailed update and overview on Sign Ordinance provisional regulations and the upcoming CITY Planning Commission meeting scheduled for October 22 2015

Barbara passed out and they along with board members discussed the following action alert notice and information.

“Action Alert: CITYWIDE SIGN ORDINANCE

Educate your stakeholders, share this information and take a position!

1) *Contact City Planning Commission who will hear revisions proposed by PLUM at its Oct. 22nd meeting. Submit letters in support of a strong Sign Ordinance to CPC. Send to cpc@lacity.org. Copy your Councilmember, PLUM (c/o Patrice.lattiore@lacity.org), Mayor (mayor@lacity.org) and full Council.*

2) *Plan to attend CPC Oct. 22nd meeting to testify in favor of the following points*

3) *Plan to attend upcoming PLUM and Council meetings on the Sign Ordinance to speak on behalf of communities for a strong ordinance before PLUM and the full Council*

4) *Review your past position(s) taken on the Ordinance and revise as needed.*

Refer to: CPC-2015-3059-CA Proposed Ordinance Revising the Citywide Sign Regulations /Related Council Files , 11-1705, 08-2020, 11-0724, 12-1611

We support the Sign Ordinance without changes introduced by PLUM. We request that CPC and the Council:

- a) Disapprove any AMNESTY for billboards that lack permits or have been altered in violation of their permits.*
- b) Disapprove the “grandfathering” of 14 sign districts that have been added to the ordinance since it was reviewed by CPC in 2009. Grandfathering weakens the City’s off-site sign ban and creates a confusing and unmanageable patchwork for enforcement.*
- c) Disapprove any new process, including a Conditional Use Permit process to authorize construction or operation of digital off-site signs outside of sign districts. No digital signs outside of sign districts.*
- d) Increase the takedown ratio of existing billboards in exchange for any new off-site signs in sign districts. Takedown should be no less than 4 square feet removed for every 1 square foot of TRADITIONAL billboards erected AND no less than 8 square foot removed of traditional billboards for every 1 square foot of new digital billboards. Community benefits to be offered IN ADDITION to required takedowns, not instead of sign removal.*
- e) Request that the City Attorney review all signs without permits and those altered in violation of their permits for enforcement action and compliance.*

The Citywide Sign Ordinance now pending before the City Planning Commission, and the Council’s PLUM Committee MUST be improved and strengthened before it goes to the full City Council. Substantive changes made to the ordinance since public hearings were held in 2009 have significantly weakened the ordinance as the outdoor advertising industry continues to lobby to further weaken the City’s ability to reign in signage in Los Angeles.

Once billboards are erected it is very difficult to get them removed. Once billboards are erected, communities cannot stop or attempt to regulate offensive, or unhealthful messages from being posted. Billboards are protected by First Amendment Free Speech rights. Messages for junk food, alcoholic beverages, violent images from films or television programs, etc. are all protected.

****Recommended to support the following provisions:*

-The restriction of sign districts to regional commercial and regional center zoned areas.

- The restricting of new digital billboards and off-site signage to sign districts.
 - The requirement that billboards in the surrounding community be taken down before new digital billboards or off-site signs be put up in sign districts.
 - The prohibition on off-site signage in parks and city recreation facilities
 - The new schedule of penalties that will provide a real deterrent to violation of sign ordinance regulations.
 - Communities being able to have a voice in determining how any Sign Districts in their area are operated/regulated.”
-

Colleen made the following motion.

The WNC moves to support the Sign Ordinance without changes introduced by PLUM December 2014. We request that CPC and the Council:

- a) Disapprove any AMNESTY for billboards that lack permits or have been altered in violation of their permits.
- b) Disapprove the “grandfathering” of 14 sign districts that have been added to the ordinance since it was reviewed by CPC in 2009. Grandfathering weakens the City’s off-site sign ban and creates a confusing and unmanageable patchwork for enforcement.
- c) Disapprove any new process, including a Conditional Use Permit process to authorize construction or operation of digital off-site signs outside of sign districts. No digital signs outside of sign districts.
- d) Increase the takedown ratio of existing billboards in exchange for any new off-site signs in sign districts. Takedown should be no less than 4 square feet removed for every 1 square foot of TRADITIONAL billboards erected AND no less than 8 square foot removed of traditional billboards for every 1 square foot of new digital billboards. Community benefits to be offered IN ADDITION to required takedowns, not instead of sign removal.

e) Request that the City Attorney review all signs without permits and those altered in violation of their permits for enforcement action and compliance.

Second by Lisa

Motion Passed

12 – 0 – 4 Abstain (Seats 4, 6, 11, 15)
Seat 16 was out of the room and did not vote.

5. COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENT REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. LAPD Senior Leads-- Eric Swihart and Mario Gonzales

Officer Gonzales acknowledged and thanked the WNC for its' support.

He also commented on the internet fraud scams including the 'inheritance example' and asked everyone to be vigilant.

Officer Swihart commented on the area home break-ins and noted the frequency of entry which is gained from the side or back of the house. He also discussed the purse snatchings which are occurring in area restaurants. Adrienne expressed concern about the RV's which are parked near the school.

b. LA City Council District Representative—Philip Bennett

Philip announced that the Department of Transportation has released a work order for restricted parking notices for oversized vehicles which will be placed on Pontius and Cotner Streets between Pico and Santa Monica Blvd, in an effort to control and prevent these vehicles from parking. A stakeholder stated and inquired on the weight limit restriction on the vehicles which is approximately 6000 pounds, similar to a Ford Excursion.

Philip announced that DWP is hosting a 'Free Customer Service Day on Saturday, October 10, 2015.

He also spoke about the complex issues involved and the increasing homeless population in Los Angeles and stated the City of Los Angeles has declared a State of Emergency With the Homeless Crisis. He noted the City is allocated \$100,000,000.00 to address the situation. Sean noted the homeless population is shifting due to City initiatives and cited examples of Santa Monica homeless moving to Venice and LA moving to West LA.

c. LA City & other Government Departments/Agencies

d. Community and Stakeholder Organizations--LA Chamber

West LA Chamber representative noted its' 70th anniversary and updated on its' event with the Canadian Counsel General, noting that Los Angeles has the largest Canadian 'ex patriat' population.

6. BOARD REPORTS (including discussion and possible action items):

a. Treasurer, Shannon Burns, Treasurer Report

- Monthly Treasurer's report on WNC's Funding Program account, including review and approval of Purchase Card's monthly statement-MER.

Shannon presented the WNC Treasurer's Report and noted the September 2015 expenses as follows:

\$220.00 WNC Post Office Box Rental

\$41,59 WNC Phone

\$3.00 Bank charge

Total \$264.59

Shannon made the following motion:

That the WNC approve the MER as noted, \$220.00 WNC Post Office Box Rental, \$41.59 WNC Phone and \$3.00 Bank charge which total \$264.59.

Second by Mary

Motion Passed 16 - 0 – 0 (Seat 16 was out of the room and did not vote.

b. Chair, Terri Tippit

- Discussion on funding projects outside WNC boundaries.

Terri reviewed the WNC policy with respect to funding projects outside of the WNC boundaries.

Terri stated that our policy has been to fund projects within the WNC boundaries. Many will remember Bob Guerin on several occasions asking why we didn't support Castle Heights that his HOA fed into, or Annette Mercer Palms Middle School, She said she was contacted by our stakeholders who attended Clover and Webster Middle.

We agreed at that time that if we did one school we'd have to outreach to all. We found those in question were in another NC area. It has been suggested we revisit that policy.

Terri said, "We are under the city umbrella, we get our funds from the city, we must be transparent."

She said there are a number of schools and a case can be made for libraries, parks and fire stations that also service our stakeholders, especially fire stations. Once the rail is up and running the response time will be increased—trucks can run through a red light but not through a train—we will see more of FS43 answering calls to our stakeholders south of Expo. She said she has asked DONE several times the last few weeks if we are allowed to fund outside our boundaries and we do not have a response yet and will follow up.

c. Lisa Morocco, Selection Election Outreach

- funding for up to \$500 for materials and food for table at Heyler Harvest to promote the WNC and Selection Election November 2016.

Lisa announced the annual Heyler Harvest taking place on Sunday October 14 2015 at 1pm to 4pm. She noted the WNC will have an outreach table there for outreach and to promote awareness for the next Selection Election in November 2016.

Lisa made the following motion.

That the WNC approve up to \$500.00 for items for the WNC outreach table at the annual Heyler Harvest taking place on Sunday October 14 2015 at 1pm to 4pm.

Second by Shannon

Motion Passed

14 – 0 - 0

(Seats 1, 9 did not vote)

d. Eric Shabsis, funding for up to \$2000 for Overland School classroom chairs. School District is not replacing broken chairs.

Eric recused himself and left the room for this presentation.

Hannah Lee, Teacher, representing Overland Elementary School, thanked the WNC for all its' done to assist the school. She explained the school is using very old, decades old wooden chairs and stated they are in need of 29 new chairs which cost approximately \$2,000.00. Colleen asked if the chairs were approved by LAUSD and Hannah confirmed they are.

Terri confirmed the WNC representatives who have taken the required Funding and Ethics training to confirm those eligible to vote.

Lisa made a motion, :That the WNC fund up to \$2,000.00 for Overland Elementary School for the purchase of 29 new chairs thru a neighborhood purposes grant.

Second by Stacy

Unanimous 13 – 0 – 0

(Voted to approve Seats 1a, 2, 4a, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16a, 17a)

(Not voting Seats 3, 5, 6 and 15 recused)

e. Lisa Morocco, discussion of donating funds towards Emerson Middle School Garden- total project is \$1,760.00.

Ref. item b.

f. Lisa Morocco, Take Me Home Days

- update on 3 weekend event, Volunteers needed for 3 Saturdays-- October 10, 17 & 24, 1-4pm to wear WNC t-shirt and help adoption day at Westside Pavilion.

Lisa asked for volunteers to help with Take Me Home Days for Pet Adoptions and to create awareness. The WNC is hosting on the following Saturdays, October 10th, 17th and 24th from 1pm to 4pm at the Westside Pavilion Mall.

She acknowledged and thanked Steve, Ryan and Vito and the Westside Pavilion for their continuing generous support of this effort.

g. Lisa Morocco, Website update

- in process of updating website pls. submit photos, ideas, corrections.

Lisa asked everyone to submit their thoughts, ideas and suggestions for the new website which is currently in process.

The WNC Website is being updated. Terri said she asked new alternates to submit a small bio and asked everyone to go to the website and review their bio as some may need to be updated. Jeff and Bennett still need to submit a bio.

She also noted the Pick Pico meeting will be held on Friday, October 23 at 6pm at Heyler.

Ring Security Device

Lisa discussed the Ring Security device which was presented at a prior meeting to the WNC. She noted that FOWLA has purchased 500 of these at a discount and has extended an invitation to the WNC to offer to their stakeholders at a discounted price.

Eric made the following motion.

That the WNC take this item up as an emergency motion due to it's time sensitivity with FOWLA.

Colleen seconded

Motion Passed 10 – 4 – 3 (Seats 7, 11, 15)

Lisa made the following motion.

That the WNC fund a Non-purpose Grant of up to \$1,000.00 toward the FOWLA discounted purchase price for the Ring device, to be allocated at \$10.00 per device, to enable the WNC stakeholders to purchase a Ring security device at a discount through the FOWLA,

except where the stakeholder's HOA is already providing the \$10.00 discount to avoid a duplicate reimbursement.

Second by Colleen

Vote For: 8 (Seats 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17)

No: 3 (Seats 3, 7, 15)

Abstain: 3 (Seats 4, 11, 14

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Motion to Adjourn at 9:30pm

Motion by Shannon

Second by Mary