



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

January 24, 2012

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee, 02/28/12

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2012, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Secretary Elizabeth Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Approval of the Minutes

Ms. Fuller called the roll. Land Use Committee Members in attendance at the roll call were: Patricia Carroll, Elizabeth Fuller, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Caroline Moser. Fred Pickel arrived later. Committee Members absent: John Kaliski, Patty Lombard, Ben Rosenberg and James Wolf. Also attending: 22 Stakeholders and guests.

Seven of the 12 Committee Members were present at the roll call. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is seven, so the Committee could take such votes.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Ms. Moser): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its November 22, 2011 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a unanimous voice vote.

3. Review of Recent Notifications for Possibility of Further Study/Action (GWNC Mail and Early Notification Reports).

Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the “1/24/12 Nov-Dec-Jan Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” and reviewed recent land use applications received by the City. There was discussion regarding the 664 S. Rimpau Blvd. project status, which is a Park Mile Specific Plan matter. Ms. Fuller reviewed the 308 N. Sycamore Ave. project history; the “manager’s unit” was never used as such and the wording “will be taken out.” Ms. Gilman will research and advise regarding the 5059 W. Melrose Ave. project, which also is not an HPOZ matter.

[Committee Member Fred Pickel arrived at this time.]

4. New Business

Ms. Carroll reported that a reported youth hostel at 265 S. Gramercy Pl. will be researched. She also mentioned that Paris Realty's "Tom's Coffee Shop," "on Western between Council and 1st in the old See's Candy" location, will probably ask for a Conditional Use Permit to be open until 2:00 a.m. These items may appear on a future LUC agenda.

5. Old Business

A. Conversion of service station to 7-Eleven at 3481 W. Olympic Blvd./Wilton Place.

Ken Kang of MK Design presented and distributed project information including diagrams and illustrations. Mr. Kang stated that "we will not go for the alcohol license; we will not sell any alcohol" It would be "an upscale 7-11 without alcohol; it's going to be a dry store . . . We're requesting a 24-hour conditional use." The current by-right hours of operation for the service station are 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. The owners are looking to expand the 24-hour permission to the rest of the site. A similar 7-11 store design is being constructed at 1800 E. Olympic Blvd.

Mr. Kang cited crime prevention statistics. "It's going to have wood veneers . . . [and will be] energy efficient . . . conserving . . . 22,000 square feet . . . [We will be] controlling the traffic areas . . . The gathering areas will be monitored . . . We'll have time-access safes with only \$30-\$50 each in them . . . Signs will be posted stating the maximum amounts kept in cash registers." He favorably compared it "with the liquor mart down the street" and indicated that the nearby Buddhist and Lutheran churches are in favor of the project while the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association and Wilshire Park Association both oppose it. There will be 26 surveillance cameras and a "fish bowl" design, to maximize visibility into the store at all times. A separate person, not the cash register clerk, will monitor the cameras. Mr. Kang added that "we want it very brightly lit." "Fresh foods and health foods" will be sold and there will be landscaping.

David Ruiz, who with his wife is "the franchisee of record," said they will have family and friends running the store. His family has owned the site since 2003 and it has always had a gas station. Mr. Ruiz said that "we already essentially have a 24-hour convenience store on the lot; all we're asking is to expand it . . . The lack of alcohol on this site" will address security concerns. He stated they are "making it much more user friendly . . . We want to be the family place." Stakeholder Judy Reidel was concerned that the store may have large and sandwich board "eyesore" signs. Mr. Kang replied that "that isn't the intention of the owners; we want the fishbowl effect" of being able to see and be seen through the windows. Sherri Woods, Olympic Park Neighborhood Council Board Member, asked and Mr. Kang confirmed that there will be an ATM machine near the counter. She also asked about in-person security; Mr. Ruiz replied that they "will consider all options." Mr. Genewick suggested that the owners could subscribe to a private security service; Mr. Ruiz responded that "we're open to any suggestions."

Stakeholder Arlin Low, a Country Club Heights resident, stated that the owners "have not approached us." She and Stakeholders Lana Soroko and Ernest Bufford were concerned that the project owners will eventually ask for an alcohol license and that there is another 7-11 only seven-tenths of a mile away from this project. Stakeholder Dr. Douglas Alston of Country Club Heights, who lives only 200 feet from the project, believed that current

stores already serve the neighborhood. Holly Eubanks, Country Club Park Neighborhood Association Board Member, encouraged Mr. Ruiz to meet with the group and brought copies of e-mail responses indicating 80% Neighborhood opposition to the project. She described “ongoing and constant problems” with loitering, lewd behavior and trash, and that the Police do not respond “because it’s not a high priority.”

Robbie O’Donnell of the Wilshire Park Neighborhood Association (WPNA) described that Mr. Kang had presented signatures of support from West Covina at a WPNA meeting along with making comments they believed to be inappropriate, resulting in WPNA members feeling insulted. Mr. Gresham expressed concern that Mr. Ruiz has not met with project neighbors. Stakeholder Stephanie Moorhouse was concerned with light pollution. Ms. Moser “would like to see” various security and design improvements to “the site as a whole.” GWNC Board Member Frances McFall was concerned that young people will loiter at the project.

Mr. Kang said there is not yet a Hearing date; “the Hearing might occur about seven months from now.” They plan to next visit the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council. Ms. Fuller asked if they would be open to including several voluntary conditions in their application and Mr. Ruiz would be “willing to look into anything suggested regarding ‘stipulations’” on the CUP.

MOTION (by Mr. Pickel, seconded by Mr. Genewick): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee defers action until at least its March 27, 2012 Meeting regarding the Conditional Use Permit application for the conversion of the service station into a 7-11 store at 3481 W. Olympic Blvd. at Wilton Place.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

6. Committee Member Comments and Reports

A. GWNC policy on liquor license applications (Herman/Carroll)

Mr. Herman and Ms. Carroll will coordinate a meeting to start developing the policy.

B. Traffic and Transportation Committee (Pickel)

Mr. Pickel may need to resign from the LUC and the Board due to a new job. The next Transportation Committee Meeting is scheduled at the Wilshire United Methodist Church on February 1st.

7. Public Comments

There were no more public comments at this time.

8. Announcements and Adjournment

Ms. Fuller announced the next LUC Meeting of Tuesday, February 28, 6:30 p.m. She reviewed the L. A. City Council Redistricting Committee Meeting appearance by GWNC representatives. The next Redistricting Committee Meeting will be February 1, 6:30 p.m. at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre.

On the horizon (possible future agenda items):

- Update on conversion of apartments to board and care facility - 901 S. Wilton
- Update on proposed AT&T Cell Site Modifications 137 N. Larchmont Blvd
- Update on cell phone poles proposed for 1st/Wilton & 9th/Mansfield
- Nara Bank proposal for parking lot at 238 S. Manhattan Pl.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. Pickel): to **ADJOURN** the Meeting.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer