

# Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council



## Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting

May 9, 2007

Approved by the Board,  
as amended, on 7/11/07

### MINUTES

A duly noticed meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council ("GWNC") was held on Wednesday, May 9, 2007, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 South Lucerne Avenue. This was the first meeting of the Board since the March 14 elections. Charles Dougherty, President of the Council, called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

BongHwan Kim, Assistant General Manger of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), spoke briefly about the role of the council in participatory government and administered the oath of office to the newly elected Board members. Director Jane Usher said that despite having been an outspoken critic of DONE in the past, today is a new day, and the new DONE leaders really "get it." DONE representative Melvin Cañas congratulated the new Board members and their Alternates. President Dougherty thanked the DONE representatives for being so responsive to our Council, and he distributed a roster of Board members' personal contact information for the members to check and correct.

The Secretary, Jane Gilman, called the roll. Board of Directors members in attendance were: Yigal Arens, Patti Carroll, Moon Chung, Sam Cunningham, Charles Dougherty, Elizabeth Fuller, Jane Gilman, John Gresham, Alison Hannon, Margaret Hudson, Alex Jones-Moreno, Shar Penfold, Mary Rajswing, Thomas Roe, Martha Schuur, Russell Sherman, Jolene Snett, Jane Usher, Robert Wishart and James Wolf. Board member Roy Forbes and his Alternate, Janet Wieringa, were absent.

The Secretary stated that 20 of the 21 Directors were represented in person or by an Alternate at the beginning of the meeting and that a quorum was present.

President Dougherty asked the Secretary to present the Minutes of the previous meeting, and the Secretary stated that the Minutes of the Council's General Meeting of March 14, 2007, which also was the 2007 Annual Meeting of Stakeholders, had been distributed to Directors by e-mail and had been posted on the Council's *greaterwilshire.org* web site. Additional copies were distributed at the meeting. Director Margaret Hudson made a motion that the Minutes be approved as written, and Director

Yigal Arens seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the reading of the Minutes was waived and the Minutes were approved as written.

#### Election of Officers

Director Jane Usher nominated Charles Dougherty to a second term as President of the Council, and Director John Gresham seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried. Mr. Gresham nominated Director James Wolf to the position of Vice President, and President Dougherty seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried. Director Jane Gilman nominated Director Elizabeth Fuller to the position of Secretary, and Director Margaret Hudson seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried. Ms. Hudson nominated Director Russell Sherman to the position of Treasurer, and Director Jolene Snett seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion carried. The officers took their seats.

#### Public Comments

Alternate Charles Bergson, who submitted a challenge to the March 14 election results, stated that he had meant no ill will and that he was here to “clear the air” about that challenge (which was rejected by the Final Decision Maker). He said he thinks the acronyms GWNC and GWNU are too similar, and hopes the GWNU will change its name to something more distinct and less confusing to stakeholders and voters. He also brought up the ongoing Larchmont Village discussion, and asked that the Council, in its second term, work to preserve “neighborhood ambience” in all Greater Wilshire neighborhoods.

Stakeholder John Welborne congratulated all the people who ran in the March elections, plus those who were elected as Board members and serve as officers of GWNC. He also asked for help in distributing the commemorative paperweights to last term’s Directors and Alternates who were not in attendance at the March meeting. He also congratulated Charles Bergson, noting that Mr. Bergson was elected as an Alternate and that Mr. Welborne knows that Mr. Bergson really does care about community issues.

Jim O’Sullivan, Chairman of the Mid-City West Neighborhood Council, congratulated the new Board members, and he wished them the best of luck. Board Member John Gresham thanked Mr. O’Sullivan and noted that both of our Councils have one very important issue in common: the future of Wilshire Boulevard.

Alternate Margaret Sowma noted that the street lights on Wilshire Boulevard, between Wilton and Norton, have been off for a number of months and that calls to the DWP have produced no action. She asked if the GWNC could help, and Director Jane Usher noted that a former board member of the Windsor Square Association is involved in liaison with the DWP, so she will ask him to make a call on GWNC’s behalf.

Stakeholder Robby O’Donnell, President of the Wilshire Park Association, asked what happened at the former Perino’s site on Wilshire Boulevard and why the Park Mile

Design Review Board has allowed the “back end of a building” to face the Boulevard at this location.

Stakeholder Cynthia Markus said she saw the GWNC meeting notice in the *Larchmont Chronicle* and attended tonight to express that she’s concerned about losing the “character” of Larchmont Village to “greedy developers,” which is also happening in Old Town Pasadena. As a resident of Citrus Avenue, she said she’s also concerned about mansionization, in which huge homes dwarf the rest of the neighborhood. And she wants to know how we can get our sidewalks fixed. (She’s been told by the staff member at the City’s “311” telephone number that there’s an 87-year wait to have the City make the repairs . . . or homeowners can pay 50% of the cost and have it done in a year.) Director Patti Carroll said she heard at a meeting of the Larchmont Boulevard Neighborhood Association from the City Attorney that property owners are responsible for all repairs out to the middle of their streets. However, if you report a problem to the Bureau of Street Services and get a reference number for the complaint, the liability falls back on the city. Jane Usher noted that the City Planning Commission, at its meeting on May 10, would be discussing a new ordinance attempting to restrict “mansionization.” (At this point, John Gresham asked if we’d moved on to the Board Member Comments section of the Agenda, and President Dougherty said he was experimenting with allowing Board Member responses to Public Comments.)

Mr. Raymond Yu, a visitor in the audience, announced a Memorial Day rally at the LA Memorial Coliseum, including a march from Figueroa to Hoover, a Revlon Walk Against Cancer, Fire Station open houses, and an upcoming Canoga Park parade.

Stakeholder Mee Y. Chang spoke about ongoing problems with La Boca Restaurant, at Melrose and Wilton, including kitchen noise, slamming gates, and patrons in the driveway. She also said that since the restaurant was granted a Conditional Use Permit for a full line of alcoholic beverages and longer hours at night, she has to sleep in her living room and keep all her windows closed. President Dougherty asked for Ms. Chang’s contact information, and referred the matter to the Land Use & Zoning Committee, suggesting that it be placed on the agenda for the GWNC’s July, 2007 meeting. Director John Gresham noted that Ms. Chang has been complaining about this issue for a long time, and said it would be a good one for the Council to consider.

(At this point, 7:53 p.m., Director Jane Usher left the meeting, and her Alternate, Cindy Chvatal, took her seat.)

#### Board Member Comments / New Business

Director Elizabeth Fuller announced that Sonic Automotive, the parent company of Beverly Hills BMW, has proposed building a new two-story automotive service center on the current site of the Bob’s Big Boy restaurant on Wilshire Boulevard. Ms. Fuller said the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association has taken a position against the zoning changes that would be required to build this facility and asked for: 1) the support of other neighborhood associations for this position and 2) that the item be put on the

GWNC's July agenda for a full discussion and vote. Director John Gresham made a formal motion that the GWNC put this item on the July agenda for consideration and action, which was seconded by Director Jane Gilman. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Director Robert Wishart announced that a grass roots group of neighbors is seeking to improve Robert Burns Park at Beverly Boulevard and Van Ness Avenue, and he asked that the Council also put this matter on the agenda for discussion in July. Director Margaret Hudson noted that the neighbors are seeking funds for the improvements and that she has asked them for a budget and suggested they meet with both the Council District Four staff and the Department of Recreation and Parks. (At this point, stakeholder John Welborne noted that anyone can ask for an item to be placed on a future Agenda at any time, with no Board vote required.) Carolyn Ramsay, field director for City Councilmember Tom LaBonge, noted that she is already scheduled to meet the following day with the neighborhood group about the Robert Burns Park improvements.

(At 7:59 p.m. Director Jane Usher returned to the room and again took her seat.)

Director Mary Rajswing announced the city's annual Fire Service Recognition Day, to be on the Saturday before Mother's Day, which will feature open houses at local fire stations from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ms. Rajswing also noted that Mee Y. Chang has also talked to her about the problems with La Boca Restaurant, which shows how well the GWNC is working.

Director John Gresham asked when the Park Mile Design Review Board will meet again, saying that the Perino's Apartments issue is "spilt milk," but noting that the way to prevent similar things from happening, such as with a vacant lot on Bronson and Wilshire near Perino's, will be community involvement at the next meeting. Director James Wolf said the Design Review Board meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month, so the next one will most likely be on Thursday, June 7. Mr. Gresham asked how members of the public can get on a mailing list to be notified about the meetings, and Mr. Wolf said he would inquire of the Design Review Board's staff member from the City Planning Department. Stakeholder John Welborne suggested the PMDRB put GWNC Secretary Elizabeth Fuller on the e-mail notification list and that Ms. Fuller could forward meeting notices to the GWNC Directors, and Mr. Wolf agreed.

Director Margaret Hudson announced a Los Angeles Neighborhoods Initiative (LANI) forum on "Helping Neighborhoods Thrive," which will be held May 17 at the USC Davidson Conference Center. Handouts were available with further details.

Director Russell Sherman mentioned two traffic issues – the Wilshire Boulevard Busway and the possible conversion of Pico and Olympic Boulevards into one-way streets – saying the Council will need to follow these closely, since they affect all of us.

Review of *Ad Hoc* Committees and Acknowledgement of Committee Chairs

President Dougherty listed the following GWNC committees and their leaders, asking for new Director and Alternate (and Stakeholder, for *ad hoc* committees) volunteers where needed:

Organization Committee – GWNC Officers

Website – Elizabeth Fuller

*Ad Hoc* Special Projects Committee – Margaret Hudson

Million Trees Subcommittee – Mary Rajswing

(New volunteers included Robert Wishart, Jane Gilman, Alex Jones-Moreno and Alison Hannon.)

*Ad Hoc* Land Use & Zoning – James Wolf

(New volunteers included Mike Genewick, Yigal Arens, John Gresham, Patti Carroll, Cindy Chvatal, Jolene Snett and Elizabeth Fuller)

*Ad Hoc* Committee on Larchmont Village – Jane Usher, James Wolf and Steve Lewis, as Co-Chair with Jane Usher

*Ad Hoc* LAPD Boundaries Liaison – John Gresham

Representative to DWP MOU Oversight Committee – Jack Humphreville

*Ad Hoc* Outreach Committee – Vacant

(President Dougherty noted that “we live by outreach.” Director John Gresham commented that “outreach is never done,” saying that we must always be looking for new ways of doing community outreach. President Dougherty asked for new volunteers for this committee, and when there were none, he said that he would reach out for volunteers for this committee . . . and that everyone on all the other committees should consider themselves “*de facto*” members of the Outreach Committee.)

*Ad Hoc* Traffic Committee – Since the former head of this committee is no longer a member of the Board of Directors of the GWNC, Director Russell Sherman (who is also the head of the Wilshire Area Community Police Advisory Board) volunteered to fill the spot. There were no other volunteers.

Director Robert Wishart moved that the committees continue with chairs as detailed by the President, and Director John Gresham seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

Discussion of Board Vacancies for Filling at July 2007 GWNC Meeting

President Dougherty proposed, as per the GWNC Bylaws, that the Board appoint Stakeholders to fill vacancies on the Board. Currently one Director seat is vacant (Roy Forbes has resigned), and seven Alternate places are open (for Directors Arens, Chung, Cunningham, Fuller, Gresham, Schuur and Wishart). Filling these vacancies will be an action item on the Board’s July agenda, and President Dougherty invited people to submit names of others willing to serve in these positions.

President Dougherty asked if any volunteers were present and, if so, to introduce themselves. Joan Jakubowski, from Sycamore Square, and Charles Rosenberg from WeWil introduced themselves. (Another volunteer, Jared Abrams from Larchmont Village, was present earlier, but already had left the meeting by this time.) Director Jane Usher suggested that the current Alternates who were present introduce themselves, and Director John Gresham asked that they also mention from which areas they were elected. Stakeholder John Welborne reminded everyone that although geographic designations are used during GWNC elections, all Directors and Alternates, once elected, represent the entire Greater Wilshire area.

President Dougherty said he would introduce the Alternates at the July meeting. Then, in response to a question from Director Gresham, Mr. Dougherty agreed it would be helpful if Directors, Alternates, and Stakeholders would e-mail to him names of potential candidates to fill the vacancies in order for the vacancies to be filled in July.

#### Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Larchmont Village

President Dougherty then asked for a report on Larchmont Boulevard from *Ad Hoc* Committee Chairs Jane Usher and James Wolf. Director Usher reported that, subsequent to the Larchmont issue erupting at the Council's March meeting, the *Ad Hoc* Committee has met twice, with more than a dozen members participating, six of whom are present this evening. At an April 11th meeting, held at the CD 4 District Office in Hollywood, Councilmember LaBonge did an excellent job of moderating the discussion among more than 100 people who attended to talk about Larchmont Village, La Luna Ristorante, the Q Conditions for Larchmont Boulevard, and other related issues. Last week, another meeting was held to focus specifically on the Q Conditions.

At this point, Ms. Usher passed out a handout listing the current Q Conditions, which shows that "lower Larchmont" (Beverly to 1<sup>st</sup> Street) has more restrictive conditions than "upper Larchmont." For example, there are three different tests for determining the number of food establishments that can be located in the lower Larchmont area. Also, there are guidelines for what distinguishes a restaurant from other kinds of food-serving establishments . . . and rules prohibiting drive-throughs. Restaurant storefront width can't exceed 40 feet and there can be no more than one restaurant per 270 feet (in the total 2700 linear feet of storefront area, meaning there can be no more than 10 restaurants in all). Also, the widths of all restaurants added together may not exceed 200 feet.

Ms. Usher presented another chart showing current storefront statistics, which she called a big advance from the most recent time this issue came up, in the late 1990s. Currently, she said, there are 12 restaurants on lower Larchmont (2 over the maximum), with a combined footage of 327 feet (which is 127 feet more than the maximum allowed). Also, there are establishments such as Sam's Bagels and Pinkberry, which are not currently classified as restaurants . . . and two others, Noah's Bagels, and the delicatessen on Beverly, which the City doesn't consider restaurants. Asking "how do we get back into compliance if we're not currently abiding by the Q Conditions?," Ms. Usher said

“the City prefers to wait for current restaurants to go out of business, and then not replace them with new restaurants.” “But,” she added, “this isn’t very likely.”

Director Usher also distributed a “Recommendation Report of the GWNC *Ad Hoc* Committee on Larchmont,” which contains a summary on the first page, with additional depth and nuance on the following pages. Ms. Usher said that, back in March, there were many questions about the purpose of the Committee’s assignment, but that the new mission statement (on the first page of the report), addresses those questions.

Pursuant to the report, Ms. Usher offered the following Motion proposed by the Committee:

*MOTION: We ask the Board of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) to take two actions at this time. One: we ask the Board to adopt this report, including its Mission Statement, its list of characteristics that typify the best of Larchmont, and its guiding principles as an initial road map for the future of the Village. Two: we ask the Board to authorize, in concept, the expenditure of up to \$25,000 for the hiring of land use professionals who will work with us to build community consensus and to define a discrete and focused set of land use conditions for Larchmont Village. All actual expenditures will require the further specific approval of this Board.*

Ms Usher said the Committee believes that the hiring of an outside land use professional will enable us to identify the best land use solutions, balance the interests of all constituents, and diffuse individualized passions and pet peeves. She added that about half a dozen of the “top professionals” in the city (many of whom live in the Greater Wilshire area) have already offered their services.

Director James Wolf said he applauds Ms. Usher for her hard work and leadership, and he called the report a good starting point for looking at issues larger than specific cases. Stakeholder John Welborne said it was good to see the Neighborhood Council operating in a proactive and less combative manner on this issue, and he said that if the Council and its Stakeholders can come up with a plan that solves some of the festering Larchmont problems, that will be great. Stakeholder Vincent Chieffo noted that one critical feature of the proposal is that it represents an effort in which the whole community is getting involved. President Dougherty thanked Ms. Usher and Mr. Wolf and the Committee and called for public comment. There was none.

Next, President Dougherty opened the discussion for Board comment, Director Jane Gilman complained that none of the Larchmont retail or property owners, or even their employees, was involved in the drafting of the proposal, and she said she is very concerned that the Committee didn’t talk to or involve any of those people . . . especially since many of the Committee’s proposals seem very restrictive for businesses. Ms. Usher noted that the owner of Flicka, plus a Coldwell Banker realtor, plus another Larchmont-based realtor were on the committee, and that, early on, they went to the Larchmont

Boulevard Association, but didn't get any response. In fact, said Ms. Usher, the approval of the Committee's report "requires" GWNC to invite owners and tenants into the process, and the Committee does have a list and will contact them. She also said that any owners or tenants could have volunteered for the committee when it was formed at the last GWNC meeting in March . . . but even if the owners or tenants don't step forward on their own, the committee leaders are requiring themselves to write to and invite participation from the owners and tenants. Also, Ms. Usher said, the ideas listed in the report are expressed as "thoughts" not "mandates," and the report contains language such as "such standards *may* include . . . ."

Committee member John Welborne said the purpose of the report is to do exactly what Ms. Gilman is requesting. He noted that the community had a big meeting two months ago, which a number of Larchmont property owners attended. All attendees at that meeting were asked to volunteer, and there was lots of public notice of the subsequent meetings that have been held. He, too, stated that all that the report before the Board recommends is to study the issues and potential solutions; and that the report doesn't give answers and is *not* a plan. Finally, Mr. Welborne reiterated that the property and business owners have been invited, and he said that this is a very public process.

Ms. Gilman said that when something is labeled as a GWNC agenda item or committee agenda item, many people feel it's just for the Council and not the public. Mr. Welborne noted that the GWNC has a higher percentage of Stakeholder turnout at its meetings than the City Council does, and he said the committee report is simply trying to "get people into the room." Director Margaret Hudson asked which members of the Larchmont Boulevard Association attended the March GWNC meeting at which the committee was formed, and Mr. Welborne said the committee or someone has the sign-in sheet. Ms. Usher named Michele Lipkin (from Coldwell Banker Realty), Kristin Sato (from Flicka), and Randy Asada (from Phileas Fogg) as among the participants in subsequent meetings. Ms. Usher said she also spoke to four business owners, all of whom said they were afraid to participate because they were concerned about retaliation by their landlords. Ms. Gilman asked if the landlords were invited, and Ms. Usher said the committee has not yet personally invited the individual landlords. She said that the committee will be writing personally to each owner, and that, by July, all will have been invited, in person, to participate.

Mr. Welborne noted that lawyers and brokers for some landlords and tenants were present at the March meeting, as was at least one landlord, and that none of them has chosen to participate in the committee. Mr. Welborne also pointed out that the *ad hoc* committee so far has just been a committee to organize a committee. And today, the GWNC Board is just being asked to adopt the mission statement and a list of issues to look at, and to put someone on staff to manage the formation of a plan.

Ms. Usher said that, in 1999-2000, a group also tried to revisit the Q Conditions, and the group worked six to nine months on the project, but then, at the eleventh hour, the "rug was pulled out" by the property owners who said they hadn't heard about what was going on and that the group had no authority to act without them. This was despite the



full participation of one property owner who had represented himself as the leader of an association of the Larchmont property owners. To prevent this from happening again, Ms. Usher said she is now committed to inviting “everyone in a personal, direct way on day one” and to then hold them accountable for participating. She also noted that the committee now has 1,200 signatures from community members seeking action on this matter, so the GWNC has a large stake in the issue and an obligation to answer Stakeholders’ expressed concerns with an effort.

Director Jolene Snett said the time is right to preserve Larchmont, and it behooves the Neighborhood Council to do this. She said she agrees with the mission statement, but is unsure about hiring a planner – she doesn’t feel, based on the information in the document, that we know what would be done with the money once it’s allocated, and that it’s a kind of a “slippery slope” . . . owners and tenants need to promote and support the business owners and the historic integrity . . . but how? And she’s not sure that “throwing money” at the problem helps. She also asked if someone would do the work *pro bono*, so we could spend our money later, on the plans that get created. Finally, she noted that DONE has definite rules about the kinds of things neighborhood councils can fund and not fund, and she’d like to know what DONE would need to see in this proposal before it could be approved.

President Dougherty said the use of funds for this kind of issue is vetted by DONE and is appropriate, but it does need a specific Board action to approve the expenditure.

Ms. Usher quoted from the report that a “planner will receive a specific scope of work,” and she said the committee is only asking now that the concept be approved and that the committee will come back later to ask for approval of the expenditure itself. Director Yigal Arens noted that the Board meets only every two months, and he asked if that works with the committee’s timeline. Ms. Usher said it does. Mr. Arens also noted that it’s important to look at other neighborhoods within Greater Wilshire (other than just the neighborhood surrounding Larchmont Boulevard) that are facing the same problems and that this is a lot of money (and a large part of the GWNC’s budget) to spend on just one neighborhood.

Ms. Usher noted that it will take until July to extend invitations to all the property and business owners, vet the planners, ask about *pro bono* contributions, etc., and that the expectation is to prepare the Council for the committee to come back in July with a budget request and details. The committee would then submit an interim report in September, with more complete results in November. President Dougherty summarized that the committee is just seeking approval to move forward with the idea of hiring our own planner instead of a City planner. Ms. Hudson asked if Larchmont has a Business Improvement District, and Ms. Gilman said there are both a BID and a merchants’ association . . . the latter being like a chamber of commerce.

Director John Gresham said he doesn’t know how much money is in the GWNC budget altogether and that he has trouble with approving a specific amount for this

purpose without seeing a treasurer's report. Mr. Welborne said the preceding meeting's Minutes show \$68,000 in the GWNC treasury, and the Council will get more next year. Also, he pointed out that the money will revert to the City in 2009 if it's not spent. President Dougherty wondered if the neighborhood and homeowners' associations might also be willing to contribute, and Alternate Cindy Chvatal noted that the Hancock Park Home Owners' Association had voted unanimously to support, and help fund, the planner idea. She also said that all GWNC expenditures will require GWNC further action, so it would be a good thing to move forward now. Finally, she said that costs would ultimately be shared with CD4 and the neighborhood associations . . . and that this issue will come up more and more, in other neighborhoods, so it will be good to have a plan in place to deal with it.

Alternate Mike Genewick noted that the Windsor Square Association also approved the project and the idea of funding it, and said, "We have done this before, we will do it again. It's not scary. If you want something done, you have to put up the money." Susan O'Connell, former GWNC Treasurer, said that what DONE wants, procedurally, is for the Council to designate a specific vendor, a project scope, deliverables, etc., and that's what the committee will do through this vetting process. They just have to fill out the paperwork correctly. President Dougherty also said this is the kind of thing DONE would approve and noted again that this vote would not be an approval of the expenditure, but an approval of the ballpark estimate based on initial research. Ms. Usher said the committee does have one actual planner who has said he will give *pro bono* time to the project, but that, in her experience, *pro bono* work is never as good as work received via a paid contract.

Ms. Gilman asked if the committee were to go "over the heads" of the property owners, does the GWNC have some sort of liability insurance? Ms. O'Connell said the City of Los Angeles is our insurance. Ms. Usher said there's no liability for having a thought about something, and President Dougherty noted that the GWNC is an advisory board and any recommendation it makes requires City action, so anyone wanting to sue would have to sue the City.

Mr. Gresham noted that if we put a dollar amount on the project, it carries more political weight, and Steve Lewis, incoming co-chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, said we have an opportunity here to legitimize the Neighborhood Council . . . and that if we allow bureaucratic inertia to stop the momentum, we'll discourage people from participating and supporting the Council's work. He also said he hopes we'll speed up the process, and not slow it down, and he spoke of the importance of engaging the entire community: "This is it. People who are absent vote by their absence. The owners had the opportunity to participate." He also said, "There's no conspiracy here to abridge the rights of owners or tenants" and that "it's about finding common ground."

Director Robert Wishart made a motion to: 1) Adopt the report and mission statement and 2) Authorize the concept of spending up to \$25,000 for the services of a professional planner. Mr. Gresham seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. There were 18 votes in support of the motion. Ms. Gilman voted no. Ms. Snett abstained.

The motion carried.

*Ad Hoc Land Use and Zoning Committee Report*

Director Jane Usher noted that, as a member of the City Planning Commission, she has chosen to excuse herself from GWNC discussions of specific property issues, so she left the meeting at 9:29 p.m., and her Alternate, Cindy Chvatal, took her seat.

*755 Seward Street*

Director James Wolf, Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Land Use and Zoning Committee, introduced the developers of a proposed project at 755 Seward Street, Messrs. Gary Toll, Rich Gunter, Greg Buha, and Scott Posten. The developers explained that the new building will be an office condominium and said their firm will be one of the tenants. They said that because the site is currently home to a metal plating company, there are some environmental issues, and they will be working with the state on an indemnification and cleanup program. They also said they have sent out surveys to the surrounding community.

The site is the SW corner of Seward and Waring, which is a commercial street. The building will be in keeping with the neighborhood character, and the goal is to bring more people back into the neighborhood. Currently, there are four commercial tenants on the site (a construction company, a photographer, a sculptor and one other). President Dougherty asked about the current zoning, and the developer said the property is zoned "CM1" for commercial and manufacturing use. He also said the building will be two stories over parking (three stories in all), and approximately 16,000 square feet. There will be five tenants per floor, and the office suites will be 1,000-1,500 square feet each. The target demographic is business entrepreneurs such as CPAs, post-production companies, architects, and lawyers. The building will be 45 feet high.

The adjacent properties are mostly single-story commercial establishments. There is R1 housing behind the building and R3 housing across Waring. The building currently on the property is a single-story yellow building. The parking entrance will be on Waring, and there will be 34 parking spaces (two spaces for every 1,000 square feet). There will be approximately 10 units in the building, or less. This is a by-right development, and the only thing they'd like to discuss with the Council is the parking orientation – which will feature tandem spaces, like condominium residences use.

Director John Gresham said he doesn't like the inconvenience of tandem parking, and President Dougherty asked if the developers will need a variance for this style of parking. They said no, but they seek not to have a full-time parking attendant, which will require a variance. Mr. Dougherty asked if both spaces in the tandem area would be owned by the same business, and the architect said yes.

Director Margaret Hudson asked about current street parking restrictions at the location and the provision for visitor parking. The architect said many of the tenants

won't have visitors, and visitors for those who do can park on the street, where there are no time limits. He also said some units will be larger than others, so those occupants would have more than two spaces. Mr. Gresham asked where the customers will park. The architect noted that his design will be retaining the current building's footprint, and there will be parking under half the building, plus surface parking outside the building footprint. Director Jolene Snett asked if the owners could reserve any parking spaces for visitors, and the architect said they could talk about that. Ms. Snett said it's unrealistic not to expect visitors, and that it would be a community service to add visitor parking.

Ms. Hudson asked about landscaping, and the architect said it hasn't been planned yet, but they can certainly look at it. Stakeholder John Welborne asked how many people present know what is "CM" zoning. Seeing few hands, he explained that it means "commercial manufacturing" and that it is the current designation for the property. Ms. Snett noted that the property is in her neighborhood and that she hopes the new development will be in keeping with the Wilshire Community Plan. Once again, the architect noted that the project requires no zoning changes and that this use is allowed for this property. President Dougherty asked if the only variance will be for the lack of a full-time parking attendant, and the architect said yes.

(At 9:50 p.m., Director Thomas Roe left the meeting.)

Director Mary Rajswing said it would be helpful if the developer had brought photos of the surrounding area, and the architect directed her attention to a panel of photos showing 10 neighboring buildings in the block. Mr. Gresham said it would be important to stay in touch with the neighbors, and the architect said they have talked to the neighbors, including residents in the R1 housing behind the property. President Dougherty noted that it's probably too early for the Council to vote on the project, and the architect asked if the Directors' concerns about parking were the number of spaces, their orientation, or the issue of visitor parking. Director Russell Sherman said including more than the minimum required number of parking spaces would be good, and if there are only the minimum number of spaces, visitor parking will be important. Once again, the architect said he had no interest in doing something that doesn't fit the neighborhood, and President Dougherty thanked him for coming early in the planning process and invited him to return when the plans are further along.

#### 932-936 Crenshaw Boulevard

Director James Wolf moved on to discussion of a project planned for 932-938 Crenshaw Boulevard, which he has been told by Andrew Woods (son of King Woods), is back "on" after reportedly being cancelled several months ago. Mr. Wolf said, though, that after leaving this message, Mr. Woods never called back with further information, saying only that modifications have been made to the original plans, and the project will take a new form. Director John Gresham thanked Mr. Wolf for the update and noted that having it on the agenda, even without all the new details, makes it easier to bring the matter up again in the future.

Announcements & Adjournment

President Dougherty asked if there were any further corrections to the public contact roster, and he suggested that, after the meeting, people stay to make any necessary changes . . . and to look at the architect's photos and renderings for the Seward Street project. Director Mary Rajswing asked when the new address list would be circulated, and Mr. Dougherty said "soon." He also proposed changing the date of the GWNC's September meeting to the 26<sup>th</sup>, because of the Jewish holidays, and he promised to put the change on the Agenda for the July meeting. He announced that the next meeting will be held on July 11. Director Robert Wishart made a motion to adjourn, and Director Jane Gilman seconded. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Fuller  
Secretary