



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee
May 24, 2011
MINUTES
Approved by the Committee, June 28, 2011

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, May 24, 2011, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Secretary Elizabeth Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:46 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: Cindy Chvatal, Elizabeth Fuller, John Gresham, Dick Herman, John Kaliski. Patricia Carroll and Patty Lombard arrived later.

Five of the 13 Committee Members were present at the roll call, which is not a quorum. 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 at this time the Committee could only have discussions without making any Motions or taking any binding votes. Also attending were 39 Stakeholders and Guests. Committee Members absent: Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, Caroline Moser, Fred Pickel, Ben Rosenberg and James Wolf.

A. Approval of Minutes [This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. B., after a quorum was present]

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its April 26, 2011 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

B. Further discussion of Minutes style

Ms. Fuller relayed that Stakeholder John Welborne, the GWNC’s pro bono legal counsel, and GWNC Board Member Jane Usher, a deputy City Attorney, “very emphatically came down on the side of very detailed Minutes and the more detailed the better.” After further discussion, committee members agreed to continue having the Minutes written as they are.

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

Ms. Fuller distributed the “April-May Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area,” noting that “most . . . are residential modifications.” Mr. Kaliski requested and Ms. Fuller agreed to Agendize the “Wilshire/Rimpau Condo Project – 4661 Wilshire” for the June 28th Committee Meeting.

Committee Member Patricia Carroll arrived at this time.

There was discussion regarding “discretionary” land use projects.

4. Old Business

A. 901 S. Wilton Board & Care Facility (Marco Rojas & residents).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. A.] Ms. Fuller distributed a letter regarding the “proposed variance at 901 S. Wilton Place & 3810 W. 9th Street” from the Wilshire Park Association to the Committee. Facility owner Maria Barrios described that “all the clients are receiving SSI or Social Security” and described services provided to them. “We don’t accept sex offenders . . . criminally insane . . . or arsonists . . . we keep it very clean . . . you don’t see people hanging out . . . [it is] a State-licensed facility.” She described various agencies’ regular inspections and that it is not a developmentally disabled facility. Stakeholder Christian Altamirana confirmed that the facility has eight parking spaces including two for staff.

Committee Member Patty Lombard arrived at this time, making a quorum of eight Members. Now the Committee could take binding votes on Agendized Items.

Stakeholder Gary Ichihara, Wilshire Park Association Land Use Chair, clarified that their concern “isn’t the nature of the project; it’s the scale . . . she’s asking to triple the scale of the project while cutting down the parking.” He and others were also concerned that the project could set a precedent for approval of other large projects in the neighborhood. Lorna Hennington, Wilshire Park Association President, noted that “by right, ten [parking] spaces” will be allowed. Ms. Barrios stated that she would be “willing to write conditions into the Variance” request. There was discussion regarding how that could be done. Ms. Barrios is already serving ten clients and wants to serve 24. There was extensive discussion regarding what services are and could be provided, how many residents are and would be served and living at the facility, and whether the facility is licensed or not. Mr. Herman and Ken Kang (an architect not affiliated with this project) contended that no commercial kitchen is or would be required. Ms. Barrios stated they are “required to have one ADA-compliant bathroom and the clients are “all ambulatory” and “taken out” for recreational and medical activities.

Ms. Fuller explained that the Committee needs to see the conditions and revised plans in writing before taking an official position on the project. Mr. Kaliski said he would like to see “an alternative proposal . . . with fewer bedrooms” and encouraged Ms. Barrios to write “what [they] think the conditions should be.” Ms. Barrios indicated that there is no Hearing date yet; she will contact Ms. Fuller with more information.

B. 7-11 Conversion at Olympic/Wilton (Ken Kang & residents).

Ms. Fuller distributed letters regarding the proposal “to build a 7-Eleven at Wilton and Olympic” from the Wilshire Park Association to the Committee and regarding the “Seven-Eleven convenience store at the proposed site located at 3481 W. Olympic Blvd.” from the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association to the “GWNC Board of Directors.”

Ms. Hennington said the Wilshire Park Association “did our own petition . . . the neighborhood is not in favor of the proposed 7-11” and described that nearby 7-11s already exist. Stakeholder Judy Reidel announced the June Grand Opening of the Park at 9th and Wilton; she said that “a 7-11 across the street from that” is unwanted. She described problems at nearby 7-11s. Stakeholder Douglas Alston was concerned that the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council, which borders the location, was not consulted; he described that prostitution and other problems are already nearby. Committee Members welcomed neighboring Neighborhood Councils’ input. Dr. Alston “did a private canvass of the area . . . there are . . . 23 places” nearby “that distribute alcohol.” Mr. Kang stated that his “client (Grace Han) said if the community doesn’t want alcohol she won’t sell alcohol.” He indicated that if they don’t sell alcohol the only condition being requested is 24-hour operation.

Frances McFall, GWNC Board Member, announced that “the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association has made the decision not to support a 7-11 at that site . . . we will oppose this mart with or without an application to sell alcohol.” Mr. Kang said the 7-11 would have “26 cameras” of high-definition and compared them to bank cameras. Ms. Fuller relayed that the Committee received petitions from the Wilshire Heights and Country Club Heights Neighborhood Associations opposing the project. There were passionate comments that neighbors don’t want any kind of 24-hour facility at that location whether it is a 7-11 or selling alcohol or not. Committee members urged Mr. Kang to relay the residents’ concerns to his client and to use this “opportunity” to come up with new ideas the community can support. The two groups agreed to continue their talks and to come back to the GWNC as plans develop.

- C. Eastern Presbyterian Church Update & Recommendation Vote - 4270 W. 6th St.
[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #2. B.] Ms. Fuller distributed a letter “to express opposition to the Master Land Use Permit Application . . . proposed by the Eastern Presbyterian Church” from Mr. Kaliski to the City Zoning Administrator.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Land Use Committee recommends that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board oppose the CUP application of the Eastern Presbyterian Church at 4270 W. 6th St.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kaliski described his concerns with the project. There was discussion regarding Park Mile Specific Plan effectiveness.

MOTION to CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Ms. Fuller); there were no objections.

MAIN MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

- D. Update on Yeshivath Torath Emeth Academy issues (Lloyd Solly).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #3.] Mr. Solly mentioned that his group of neighbors was “unsuccessful in [their] appeal to stop the development”; a vote was taken “without reading the evidence . . . the City Council without discussion approved it,” including Councilman Paul Koretz. Mr. Solly believes the project is a “re-development of a residential-zoned lot . . . it is being used as a daycare facility . . . they approved a three-story residential school next to residential houses.” His group made “a decision . . . not to appeal it to the Superior Court.” He said “employees park on the streets” and described noise, traffic, parking and private property access problems. His group made a request “to put the facility in the Nuisance Abatement Program” and they are researching “other avenues with the Department of Building and Safety . . . The LAPD is very concerned about the congestion.” His group will “be meeting with the Fire Department.” There was discussion regarding how the Committee could or should proceed. Ms. Fuller offered to send new letters to appropriate city contacts, reiterating the positions voted on by the GWNC about a year ago (this included support for the neighbors’ nuisance abatement process as well as opposition to the applicants’ CUP application). Mr. Solly said he will send contact information for the letters.

E. Update on 812 and 822 N. Sycamore appeals (Fuller).

Ms. Fuller explained the projects, which were both supported by the GWNC over the last year or so, and noted that “both requests were denied by the City and both owners are appealing.”

F. Cell Phone Issues: Letter to City Council urging support for telecommunications regulations regarding equipment in public right of way (Gilman).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. C.] Ms. Fuller distributed a “[GWNC] Land Use Committee Draft Letter to City Attorney to encourage completion of the C.A.’s cell tower report.” Ms. Carroll noted that Committee Member Karen Gilman has worked on this. They requested that the Committee recommend to the Board to approve the letter and to write to the L.A. Public Works Department. Ms. Lombard recommended and it was agreed to “make the first sentence a stand-alone paragraph.”

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Ms. Chvatal): The Land Use Committee recommends that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board approve and send the “[GWNC] Land Use Committee Draft Letter to City Attorney to encourage completion of the C.A.’s cell tower report” and to ask the City Council to Agendize the issue.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

5. New Business

A. 401 S. Las Palmas tree removal (Chvatal).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. E.] Ms. Chvatal described that neighbors stopped a 100-year-old tree from being cut down. “The City had told the owner that to fix the sidewalk they had to cut down the tree.” While residents stood around the tree protecting it the owners “were notified by [the L.A. City] Urban Forestry” Department to not cut the tree down. The tree “is still standing . . . it’s not safe . . . the City Attorney . . .

is protecting the tree” and “there are alternative ways to fix a sidewalk without . . . cutting down a tree.”

B. Application for extension of hours at Yavneh Academy (Chvatal).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. B.] Ms. Fuller distributed a “Master Land Use Permit Application” to “modify conditions relating to future plan approvals and existing hours of operation.” The Academy’s Lev Stark said they are “asking for two slight modifications . . . an extension” of operating hours “for internal use . . . when the sun sets later” for specific holidays “inside the building only” and that the CUP [Conditional Use Permit] inspections be every five years instead of every two years. They already have CUPs and he cited their “track record” of compliance and a \$6,000 expenses cost for each biennial compliance review. There was extensive discussion regarding how often would be good for the City to review compliance, the applicant’s CUP review process and its cost. Ms. Chvatal noted that at the Hancock Park Homeowners Association Board Meeting “there did not appear to be any controversy over the hours . . . the Board voted not to support the condition for extended reviews.” There was extensive discussion regarding what the applicant could or should do to address compliance concerns. Committee members recommended that the school and neighborhood association continue their talks and come up with a compromise plan both groups can agree to before returning to the GWNC for a vote.

C. Discussion of possible GWNC policy on liquor license applications.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. C.] Because of the late hour, Ms. Fuller recommended and it was agreed to TABLE this Item.

6. Committee Member Comments & Reports

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. F.] There were no Committee Member comments or reports at this time.

7. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

8. Announcements & Adjournment

Ms. Fuller reminded that she will resign as Committee and Board Secretary by July 1st; volunteer(s) are needed. There was discussion regarding how to get the extensive Secretary’s work done, and the difficulty of finding and the need to rent an office within the GWNC area.

The next Committee meeting will be Tuesday, June 28, 6:30 p.m. On the horizon (possible June agenda items):

- Update on 901 S. Wilton conversion to board & care facility
- Update on cell phone poles at 1st/Wilton & 9th/Mansfield
- Update on Los Angeles Tennis Club Parking Variance
- Wilshire/Rimpau Condo Project – 4661 Wilshire

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer