



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

May 27, 2014

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee 7/22/14

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 27, 2014, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Barbara Savage called the roll. Eleven of the 18 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Alan Bernstein, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Joseph Hoffman, John Kaliski, Caroline Moser, Barbara Savage, Julie Stromberg and James Wolf. Patricia Carroll, Ann Eggleston, Patty Lombard and Greg Wittmann arrived later. Committee Members absent: **Gerda McDonough**, Jeff McManus and Dorian Shapiro. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is ten, so the Committee could take such votes. Also attending: 20 Stakeholders and guests.

3. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its April 22, 2014 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no objection.

4. Review of Recent Notifications for Possibility of Further Study/Action (GWNC Mail and Early Notifications Report).

The “05/27/14 April - May Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City was distributed and reviewed. Mr. Gresham noted that the 919 S. Westchester project is “subject to review.”

Committee Members Patti Carroll and Greg Wittmann arrived at this time, making 13 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

The project is in back of the house. The Committee “will explore” and Agendize this and the 357 S. Western project.

5. Old Business

A. Larchmont Bungalow CUB & Variance Application (Ann D’Amato)

Copies were distributed of a “Zone change, zone variance, conditional use” application for the 107 N. Larchmont Ave. project. Ann D’Amato, representing Albert Mizrahi,

described Application history. She said that “originally it was a Zone Variance” request; “later the Planning Dept. decided it should be a Zoning Change.” She said they “asked for a full bar”; they are not yet serving beer or wine. She promised that “as soon as we know” of a Hearing date she will contact the GWNC. She is “handling the community outreach component” and described her awareness of community concerns. Ms. Gilman noted that “none of the other restaurants” on Larchmont “have a full line of alcohol.” Committee Members expressed concern that copies of the latest Application, a Zone Variance, were not provided at this Meeting; Ms. D’Amato promised to provide them and the hours of operation and bring the architect to the next Meeting. Mr. Wolf asked where parking would be located, noting “originally this wasn’t a restaurant.” He agreed to Agendize this for the June 24th Meeting.

- B. Conversion of historic gas station to Starbucks at 859 N. Highland (Elizabeth Valerio)
Copies were distributed of a “Schematic Package.” Mr. Wolf described the project as located at the southwest corner of Highland and Willoughby. Ms. Valerio said they did a “traffic impact study . . . submitted to the DOT . . . the impact was quite minimal.” They want 5:00 a.m. – midnight seven days a week hours. They “should have by the end of July a Hearing date.”

Committee Members Patty Lombard arrived at this time, making 14 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Ms. Valerio said “there will be absolutely no interior seating . . . we’ll have landscaping . . . low-rise walls . . . to provide a buffer” between outdoor seating and traffic. She said “customers can walk up to the windows . . . we have to maintain a lot of the existing structure.” She added “you’ll see two . . . wall signs.” They will “refabricate” the existing pole and sign. She believed the gasoline tanks have been removed and will “double check” the environmental study results. There was discussion of environmental cleanup done and needing to be done. Mr. Wolf and Mr. Kaliski requested view-from-the-street elevation diagrams for the Committee to review.

Committee Members Ann Eggleston arrived at this time, making 15 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Ms. Valerio said “we’re not going to be adding anything to it; it’s a matter of maintaining what’s there.” Mr. Kaliski requested additional landscaping to help prevent undesired parking; Ms. Valerio noted that “the original gas station had little or no landscaping.” Mr. Gresham and Mr. Wolf were concerned that traffic may back up onto Willoughby. Mr. Herman was concerned whether there was adequate alley width; Ms. Valerio replied that the DOT “didn’t have any problem with that.” She believed there probably would be a Hearing in late July or early August.

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Mr. Hoffman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the conversion of the historic Gilmore gas station to a drive-through Starbucks at 859 S. Highland, on the condition that the applicant provide a rendering showing the street and sidewalk being made available to the GWNC before its June 11, 2014 Board Meeting.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no objection.

- C. Building line repeal at Kangnam Restaurant at 4103 W. Olympic (Bill Robinson)

Copies were distributed of an “Application to Repeal Existing Building Line 4113 W. Olympic Blvd.” Effort was made but Mr. Robinson was not reached in time for this Meeting. There was discussion of what the Committee can or should do.

MOTION #1 (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Ms. Moser): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the repeal of the existing building lines on Bronson Ave. (on both sides of the street) at the intersection with Olympic Blvd.

CALL FOR THE QUESTION (by Mr. Gresham); there were no objections.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote; Mr. Genewick opposed.

MOTION #2 (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose any parking within the 30-foot setback areas of Kangnam Restaurant at 4103 W. Olympic Blvd. as defined by the building lines.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wolf noted that “it’s an existing non-conforming use.” Stakeholder Robbie O’Donnell described more details of the site.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with no objection.

MOTION #3 (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the application of Kangnam Restaurant at 4103 W. Olympic Blvd. for a Conditional Use Permit for additional parking on the adjacent Lots 11 and 13, Block 7 and Lot 22, Block 8 in the Boulevard Heights Tract.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with two opposed (Kaliski, Gresham).

6. New Business

A. CUB application for liquor permits and late-night hours at Waa-Waa Plaza/135-139 N. Western (David Lee, James Santamaria & Myung Soo Seok)

Copies were distributed of a “Conditional Use-MCUB” application. Mr. Santamaria said “it’s currently an outside strip mall . . . there are three requests . . . for liquor permits in two new buildings” for “three restaurants . . . it’s part of the Wilshire-Koreatown Neighborhood Council . . . the Hearing date was May 20th.” They distributed copies of “Proposed Volunteered Conditions/Revised Items.” He said “we’re withdrawing our request for beer and wine” at the space now occupied by Tom & Tom’s and would close at 2:00 a.m. He said “everything is ADA-compliant” and “was approved . . . in 2011;. . . there is an on-site valet service . . . it’s a covenant we have with the City.” Ms. Carroll relayed that neighbors wanted a 10:00 p.m. gate closing time at the rear of the property, which abuts residential neighbors in St. Andrews Square (in the GWNC area). Mr. Kaliski and Stakeholder Janice Wood were concerned about parking availability and noise. Stakeholder Henrietta Cosentino was concerned that seating capacity is “over 400” with only “28 parking spaces . . . the plaza is right up back to a residential street . . . there’re private homes . . . literally within a few yards . . . we support” the activity “until 11:00 p.m. but not until 2:00 a.m.”

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Kaliski): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the request of the 1,830 square-foot Thai restaurant for the CUB for beer and wine, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m. as stipulated in the Applicant’s voluntary conditions; and opposes all other aspects of the CUB request with the exception of the closure hours of the rooftop patio at 6,008 square-foot Tom and Tom’s, which shall close by 12:00 a.m.

B. Development of parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 Norton (Mark Moreno)
It was agreed to TABLE this Item.

C. Development of 5-unit Single Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton (Matthew Hayden)
Copies were distributed of a packet of diagrams. Christian Winger and the other owner presented. They said “the driveway will be on the north side of the lot” and “is going to be right off of Wilton . . . we have a 15-foot front setback.” Adjacent property setbacks are “probably 20-20 feet” and “we have a rear setback of five feet . . . in accordance with the Small Lot Subdivision” Ordinance. There would be “two spaces” per unit for one full-size and one compact vehicle with limits of 45 feet and nine units which could be sold or rented. Five of the units would have a 35-foot height limit. It would be three floors. There was discussion of the limited street parking available nearby. Mr. Kaliski noted that the City does not require guest parking for projects less than ten units. Committee Members expressed concern that the project appearance was not in conformity with the surrounding neighborhood and that there is not enough open/green space. Mr. Wolf will Agendize for this to be presented at the June 24th Committee Meeting. The Hearing date will be around September.

D. Property line encroachment and garage access issues at 112 S. Arden (Audrey Jadilli)
Ms. Jadilli explained an issue with her neighbor to the north who “has completely locked me out of the north side of my property” and threatened to call the police if she “steps foot on their property . . . totally and absolutely refuses to speak with me.” She claimed the neighbor will not participate in mediation and disrespected a police officer, and that the neighbor’s fence and gate are on her property. She said “Code Enforcement won’t come out because it’s a civil matter.” Ms. Moser offered to contact her as a Member of the Windsor Square Association.

E. Remodeling at former Ruskin Art Club at 800 S. Plymouth (designated HCM).
Copies were distributed of a draft letter and photo “Re: City of Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument Number 863, Ruskin Art Club, 800 Plymouth Blvd.” Mr. Kaliski described the issue, saying “it’s a historic cultural monument” and that the owner has made changes without authorization. Mr. Kaliski said the owner “has stated that he desires to demolish the garage,” contrary to City Office of Cultural Resources guidelines. Mr. Kaliski believed that, if this is allowed, it would establish a bad precedent. He questioned whether established city procedures for permitting work on historic structures are being properly followed, with the required public review. Specifically, “the breakfast room was removed even though they were told not to.” Ms. Savage described recent publically listed project work. There was very extensive discussion of the issue and what the developer has and should do.

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board forward

the attached letter “Re: City of Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument Number 863, Ruskin Art Club, 800 [S.] Plymouth Blvd.” to the City Historic Cultural Resources Commission.”

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no objection.

7. Committee Member Comments and Reports

A. Presentation on proposed sign ordinance, including penalties, etc. (John Kaliski) (note: GWNC has already voted to support the overall ordinance, but there is new information available regarding proposed penalties for violations and other details. City Council PLUM Committee hearing on the new material is June 24.)
Copies were distributed of a “Report on Outstanding Issues on Proposed Citywide Sign Ordinance.” Stakeholder Jonathan Tucker reported that the teardown of a 1920s home in Citrus Square “has galvanized the whole neighborhood”; he wants Committee help.

8. Transportation Committee Report (Julie Stromberg)

Ms. Stromberg indicated that there was no report.

9. Public Comments

There were no comments at this time.

10. Announcements and Adjournment

A. Next meeting: Tuesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m. Possible future agenda items):
- Density Bonus at 807 N. Hudson
- Condo development at 853-859 S. Lucerne
- Application for CUB renewal and extended business hours at Jajungguh Café at 4653 W. Beverly
- Change of use to non-profit museum at former Masonic Temple building, 4357 W. Wilshire Blvd.
- Construction of 30-unit residential building at 4180 W. Wilshire
- 4-unit Single Lot Subdivision project at 421 N. Van Ness
- Conversion of existing recreational space to second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy Pl.

MOTION (by Ms. Eggleston, seconded by Ms. Carroll): to **ADJOURN** the Meeting.

MOTION PASSED without any objection.

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 10:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer