

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee Meeting

June 1, 2010

Approved by the Committee
7/6/10

MINUTES

Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, June 1, 2010, at the Wilshire United Methodist Church, 4350 Wilshire Blvd., Land Use Committee Chair Person James Wolf called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Roll Call & Approval of Minutes

Committee member Elizabeth Fuller called the roll. Committee members in attendance at the roll call were: James Wolf, Cindy Chvatal, Rudy Gintel, Karen Gilman, and Michael Genewick. Yigal Arens and Patti Carroll joined the meeting later. Charles Dougherty, Patty Lombard and Bryan Christie were absent.

Ms. Fuller stated that a quorum was not present at roll call. The meeting proceeded with non-vote items only.

Approval of the minutes was tabled until later in the meeting.

New Business

Cell Phone Pole at 9th & Mansfield – Ryan Shields, from Synergy Development Services/T-Mobile presented the company’s plans for a “stealth right of way pole” at the NE corner of 9th & Mansfield. He said the antennas would be contained in a top radome, with other equipment in a below-ground vault.

[Committee member Yigal Arens joined the meeting at 7:17 p.m., completing a quorum for the meeting.]

Mr. Shields said the pole would be 32-50 feet high, and that the company needs to

locate an antenna every quarter mile, because the more you use the site/signal, the shorter the footprint becomes. He said all nearby commercial sites are already built out, so they're now coming into residential neighborhoods. He said a small meter pedestal would also be installed above ground, near the pole. The pole will be painted brown to match other poles.

Ms. Fuller, who lives in the neighborhood, asked why the pole couldn't be located on busier Olympic Blvd., just a block away, or on commercial Wilshire Blvd., just two blocks away, where a new BMW showroom is now being built. Mr. Shields said he didn't know about the new construction and would need to research it.

Committee member John Gresham asked if this pole would be used only by T-Mobile. Mr. Shields said yes, and for e-911 traffic (e.g. Metro PCS or AT&T could use the equipment for 911 calls if they couldn't get a signal on their own network). He said T-Mobile realizes antenna installations are unsightly, and they're trying to change the aesthetic in public rights of way. At the same time, however, DWP has certain regulations that can complicate things, such as not being able to locate antennas above power lines.

Mr. Gresham asked if this installation would be just a pole. Mr. Shields said yes, that everything would be contained inside the pole – there would be no antennas on top. Mr. Arens asked why no other companies are squeezing antennas into such small installations, and Mr. Shields said T-Mobile is making an effort to do this not; they've even done some installations inside flagpoles. Mr. Arens asked whether we should ask other companies to do smaller installations, but Mr. Shields said there may be some design restraints.

Mr. Gresham asked how the pole is anchored and whether it could be a danger in any way to existing structures. Mr. Shields said traditional poles are "direct buried," but this will be a steel or composite pole with a poured foundation. Mr. Wolf asked if it would have a concrete footing with anchor bolts, and Mr. Shields said it would – there will be no tripping hazards or ADA issues.

Mr. Wolf said it looks like an elegant solution, without the usual above-ground cabinet nearby. He asked for further description, though, of the nearby meter pole. Mr. Shields said the meter housing will measure 14" x 14" x 36 (or 40)". Mr. Wolf asked if it would be ventilated. Mr. Shields said the underground vault would have a vent (flush with the ground), but not the meter housing.

Mr. Gintel asked how many amps the equipment will use. Mr. Shields said it will pull 200, but actual consumption will be more like 100 amps.

Mr. Gresham asked if the only other thing on the pole would be utility wires. Mr. Shields said yes.

[Committee member Patti Carroll joined the meeting at 7:34 p.m.]

Ann Eggleston, president of the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, representing the area where the pole will be located, said she would much prefer that T-Mobile look at location options in commercial areas, such as the BMW dealership already mentioned, or the new BRE development that is planned for the SW corner of Wilshire & La Brea. She said there do seem to be commercial options available that will reach into residential area. Also, the proposed site is close to Wilshire Crest Elementary school, and we don't know health effects of this kind of equipment.

Myrna Dwyer, a board member of the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, said she lives a block north of the proposed site, and has the same concerns and questions as Ms. Eggleston. She said she'd prefer the pole be located on Olympic Blvd., or in another commercial area. She said she, too, is concerned about long-term health effects.

Joan Jakubowski, a former board member of the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, who lives a half block east of the proposed location, said she and her husband and mother (who were also at the meeting) have the same concerns as the other neighbors. She also asked, how long the pole will take to build, if the site will be landscaped in any way, and whether or not streets will have to be closed during construction. She said that with all the other current and planned construction in the neighborhood, there are already traffic issues, and another big project will create a "mess." Finally, she too expressed concerns about possible health effects – especially so close to the elementary school – and said there have to be other possible locations than right in the middle of a residential neighborhood.

Mr. Shields said he would contact the BMW dealer about that site as a potential alternative, and asked if the neighbors could supply contact information for the BRE site as well.

Mr. Gresham asked if it's cheaper to put antennas on a building than it is to build a pole, and Mr. Shields said it is.

Mr. Gintel asked if they do need antennas every half mile, and Mr. Shields said they do...and if the antennas are too high, they suffer pollution from other cell sites. He said a cell antenna site is only as good as a person's telephone phone – many new phones use less power, so they need more powerful antennas. Also, regarding health concerns, he said the antenna signals are about the same strength as those from a wi-fi router, which many people have in their homes.

Ms. Jakubowski asked if there's a similar pole installed anywhere that people could see, but Mr. Shields said that although they have about five of them in development, none have been installed yet. Regarding landscaping, he said they could do some around the meter pedestal, and he's open to ideas for that. Finally, regarding street closures, he said the construction process is much like digging a swimming pool – the excavation takes one day, they set the vault the next day, and then they backfill the hole. He said there may be flagmen and cones, and the street would be restricted to one lane during that time.

Ms. Fuller asked what the timeline is for this process. Mr. Shields said he will come back to us after doing some further due diligence on potential commercial sites, probably in August.

Ms. Dwyer asked if he would also look at Olympic and Mansfield as a potential site. Fred Pickel, another neighbor, asked that he also think about the south side of Wilshire Blvd., between Sycamore and Orange, where there's a small mall.

Mr. Wolf said that it does seem that the cell industry is addressing aesthetic issues in some ways. Mr. Shields said this pole is similar one proposed for 1st and Wilton, which was approved by the Bureau of Engineering and Cultural Affairs, but then appealed by neighbors. He said he walked that area with neighbors, to talk about alternatives. Also, he noted that another proposed site, atop a building at 535 Gramercy, was denied, but they're considering moving it to the NE corner of 3rd & Gramercy, and then putting another pole on Beverly – which will give them about 80% of the coverage they need in that area (less than they wanted, but they'll have to live with it). He said they won't be able to use the old wood pole at 3rd and Gramercy, but they can construct a new one with wood cladding.

Ms. Carroll also noted that all utilities in Hancock Park and Windsor Square are located underground, so they will need to install their equipment on Beverly instead of in a residential area. Mr. Shields said they will try to do it on Beverly, at Wilton or Gramercy.

Mr. Gresham noted that our neighborhood council has said from the beginning of these discussions that we'd like to see cell phone antennas gravitate to major thoroughfares and commercial buildings.

Mr. Wolf suggested that Mr. Shields come back to us with pictures and suggestions for alternative sites, and that there might be some value in doing a computer simulation, too. Mr. Shields said a real installation might be finished in the Valley in the next three months or so. Ms. Carroll noted that there's also a new installation in a church steeple at 3rd and Wilton.

Further New Business was postponed until after the Approval of the Minutes.

Approval of the Minutes

Committee Member Elizabeth Fuller presented the minutes from the last meeting. Committee Member Cindy Chvatal moved they be approved as written. Committee Member Mike Genewick seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

New Business (Cont'd)

Wilshire Center-Koreatown Redevelopment Project Area 5-Year – Michelle Banks Ordone and Yonah Hong, from the Community Redevelopment Agency, introduced the 5-year implementation plan (including boundaries) for the Wilshire Center-Koreatown area. Ms. Ordone said these plans are required for their project areas, and are critical to the Agency's work. This is the third such plan that's been done for the WCKT area. Ms. Ordone also noted that although the draft plan says "Adopted July 1," it has not been adopted yet, and the approval date has been extended for public comment.

Going through the plan, she said one of the most important categories is affordable housing. The Agency has a 25% set-aside of its tax increment for affordable housing. The plan talks about inclusionary housing and proportionality; it notes the percentage of affordable housing required, how much must be set aside for seniors and non-age-restricted occupants.

Ms. Ordone said the document is large, but also available on the Agency's website. It includes goals for business development, open space, public improvements and more. Some specific projects have already been identified and vetted.

Committee Member Mike Genewick asked how the CRA and its projects are financed. Ms. Ordone said that every municipality that has a CRA must enact it. In the year the plan is adopted and an area is identified as blighted (either physically or economically), it receives a percentage of the property tax. They also receive a portion of new taxes generated through the Agency's development efforts.

Committee Member Rudy Gintel asked if that means the state pays the CRA based on the difference between baseline taxes and the new tax rate...and Ms. Ordone said it does.

Ms. Ordone said the next meeting where the WCKT plan will be discussed is scheduled for July. The current plan was adopted in '95, and didn't generate tax increment funding until 2002. The new Plan also talks about what's planned for the future, and reviews several projects, including an historical preservation effort. (She distributed copies of a PowerPoint presentation on the plan, which includes renderings for specific projects.

Mr. Genewick asked about the eastern boundary of the project area, which Mr. Gresham said is the center line of Manhattan Place. He asked if the park at Wilton Place is outside the project area. Ms. Ordone said it is, and the CRA can only take on a project outside the area if it can demonstrate that the project will benefit the main project area.

Mr. Gresham said he is concerned about references in the plan about connecting the area to "Mid-City," which means Miracle Mile...which means going through the Park Mile. Ms. Ordone said that in this plan, "Mid City" refers to the Crenshaw area, south of the 10 Freeway.

Mr. Gresham asked if the CRA is involved in the development of luxury condos in the area and Ms. Ordone said those are being developed with private investments, but

do generate tax income. The CRA gives only technical assistance to those projects, and they don't count toward the agency's affordable housing goals.

Mr. Wolf asked if all current projects are noted in the report, and Ms. Ordone said all projects that are known at this time are in the report; only those they're not aware of yet are not included.

Mr. Gresham said he's concerned about the public part of the notification process. If there's something very dense going in near the GWNC area, we would like to be notified, even if the project isn't technically within our boundaries. Ms. Ordone said that it helps her to know that. Mr. Gresham said it's also important to talk about the areas in which our boundaries do overlap...and that there's been a lot of "misuse" of properties on Manhattan Place, for example. Ms. Ordone said she'd be happy to come back to another meeting to discuss these issues further.

Committee Member Patti Carroll said she's concerned about parking issues, and wonders how the CRA is dealing with these. Ms. Ordone said the CRA did a parking study with David Evans Associates, which is being finalized now and will contain both short and long-term recommendations. One thing they have learned is that people's perception that there's no available parking is often just a perception and people just don't know where the available parking is. She said the CRA would like to be able to identify and show people where spaces available. Also, there will be a transition to credit card pay stations during the 5-year plan period...and they want look at shared parking options for businesses.

Mr. Gresham noted that the area did lose shared parking for the subway at Wilshire/Western, where the facility is now private. Ms. Ordone said there's also a problem with structures that are open during the day but not at night. Another question is whether there should be a parking district.

Mr. Gresham asked what the CRA district's relationship is with the Olympic Business Improvement District. Ms. Ordone said the CRA assisted with a portion of the BID plan consultant's fee. They're also helping with a new streetscape with pedestrian lights, which happened at the same time the BID was being formed.

Committee Member Karen Gilman asked how – if the point of creating the BID is to bring in tax money – we can make sure that continues. Ms. Ordone said they 51% of business owner support in the neighborhood, but the CRA also realized it's not the right time to ask owners to assess themselves because of the economy. She said they'll go back to the businesses later, though, because the CRA can't build improvements until they know they can sustain them. So right now, they're just working on plans and designs.

Ms. Hong also noted that assessments are greater for businesses along Olympic Boulevard, so not all owners pay the same amount.

Mr. Wolf said it would be nice to see a map of all the planned projects, and asked

if some of our committee members meet with her at her office for more information. Ms. Ordone said yes...and Ms. Hong displayed a map showing the requested information.

Ms. Gilman asked if the plan requires any specific neighborhood council input. Mr. Gresham said he's worried that if we take time to study it, we'll have no time to act, since the next round of discussions are scheduled for July. Mr. Wolf noted that our NC didn't exist the last time a 5-year plan was developed, but we need to make sure we are included the next time the planning cycle comes around. He also encouraged anyone who's interested in the subject to attend the July 1 hearing.

LA County Open Windows in Restaurants Policy – Committee Member Karen Gilman distributed information on the LA County health code policy forbidding open doors and windows in restaurant dining areas adjacent to food preparation areas. She said the policy was brought to her attention recently, and she'd like to find out how it affects businesses in our area – apparently some restaurants in Hollywood have been cited for having open-air dining. Ms. Gilman said she's been in touch with Carol Kim, the Health Deputy for Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, but hasn't had a response yet. After some discussion, however, committee members said they hadn't heard of this regulation causing problems for any restaurants in our area, and the consensus was that we don't need to get involved in any way at this time.

4th Street Bike Boulevard Proposal – Dorothy Kieu Le, from the LA County Bicycle Coalition – a non-profit organization that works to create more bike routes in LA county, said the group has started a new campaign to create a “bicycle boulevard” along 4th Street, from Cochran to Hoover. The plan would create a pedestrian and bike-friendly street, shared by cars. the project would include repaving, analyzing dangerous intersections for improvements, and greening spaces to make the road safer and calm traffic. Ms. Le said there is no formal plan yet, just a concept, but they're presenting the idea to all the Neighborhood Councils in the area, and will make a presentation to City Council Member Tom La Bonge for funding. She said 4th St. is already included in the City's Bicycle Master Plan, which is scheduled for approval in July. And the LADOT is planning to paint “sharrows” along the street to mark space for bikes.

Ms. Le said the idea is getting lots of attention, and they want to build on it. The first bike boulevard in LA County will be created in Long Beach; this would be the first one in the city of Los Angeles, and they would like our support.

Mr. Gintel asked how long the bike boulevard section of the street would be, and Ms. Le said it would include about 2 ½ miles. Mr. Wolf asked if the plan would be subject to CEQA requirements, but Ms. Le said it wouldn't.

Mr. Wolf asked if the photo provided with Ms. Le's informational materials is from the area, but she said it's just an example from a similar boulevard in Berkeley.

Ms. Fuller asked how much the project would cost, and where the money would come from. Ms. Le said local returns from Measure R would pay for part of it, and Metro's Call for Projects might also have funding (it consolidates and distributed state

and federal funds for various kinds of transportation projects). Ms. Le said they will be asking Mr. La Bonge to consider those as viable sources for funding.

Mr. Wolf said he'd like to see actual plans for the project before taking a vote on it. Ms. Le said she would be happy to come back next month with a progress report and more detailed presentation.

Planning Code Simplification – Alan Bell, from the City Planning Department presented the City's plans for simplification of its zoning codes. He said the Planning Department has two jobs – to develop plans and standards, and to manage the discretionary approval process (for CUPs, site plans, etc.). Today, the Department spends about 90% of its time on discretionary applications. Only about 10% is spent on advance planning and the development of new plans and regulations. He said the Department budget has also been dramatically reduced – they've gone from a staff of 400 to only 240. So their mission is to work smarter and more effectively with existing resources. However, there have been so many ad hoc amendments to City codes since 1946 that there are now more than a million words in the Code, and every amendment adds a layer of complexity and to the amount of work the Department has to do. So they're hoping to streamline the codes, to fix technical problems with an improved process. He said they're not trying to change the policies that are set force in code...just streamline the review processes.

Mr. Bell said the Department is mindful of the need for due process and public involvement in discretionary approvals, and they hope to create a more transparent and understandable process for the staff, public and developers. He said the report they're developing won't address all issues, but it will go a long way toward helping people understand the processes involved. The report itself hasn't been written yet, but there will be a study session with the CPC on June 10. A mailing was sent to Neighborhood Councils today. Approvals are scheduled for July.

Committee Member Cindy Chvatal asked if there's been a public review process for the new codes yet...since voting is scheduled for next month. Mr. Bell said it's all just a department recommendation at this point. Ms. Chvatal asked how Neighborhood Councils will be able to have input in the process. Mr. Bell said there have been a few focused workshops, and there will be hearings before Planning Commission. Public testimony on the staff recommendations can be given then. Still, however, the plan is based on internal plans and meetings with the City Attorney's office, based on their own knowledge of what works and what doesn't.

At Ms. Chvatal's request for an example, Mr. Bell said there are currently 13 ways of saying a project conforms to the General Plan in various parts of the City codes. Their intention is that there be just one way of saying this, and that all department reports will be crystal clear on that and other issues. He said the current way of doing business is unsustainable with amount of work they have, and they will soon have to choose between being a department that only engages in case processing or one that has time to update community plans. He said they've already cut scheduled plan updates from 12 to 5 because of a lack of resources.

Ms. Chvatal said she's concerned that the Department will "gut" the process. Mr. Gresham said the part of the process they're looking at is the part where there's community involvement. He said if 10% of the Department's work is developing plans, then 10% of its staff should be dedicated to that and the other 90% to working with the community.

Committee Member Mike Genewick said he understands that LA has one of the most difficult planning processes to navigate, and they're just trying to simplify process. But Mr. Gresham said enforcement isn't being simplified. Simplifying the application process will just make it easier for bad developers to get projects through.

Mr. Wolf noted that in other cities that have simpler processes, developers who come in with non-conforming projects are just told "no." But here the Planning Department says, "Let's think about it," and creates a huge morass. The issue here is that everyone is looking for loopholes and public sentiment is that the Planning Department wants to reduced notification requirements and eliminate people from the feedback loop.

Lucille Saunders, from the La Brea/Willoughby Coalition, said she agrees that the codes need to be simplified, but the simplification process needs more citizen input before it goes before the CPC on June 10. She said people citywide are asking for this at various Neighborhood Councils, and she's concerned that the simplifications are being imposed on us as other policies have been...and by the time they get to the CPC there will be very little leverage for citizen input. Ms. Saunders said people should also have time to review drafts of the simplification recommendations before they go to the CPC. She distributed a report from a PlanCheck LA meeting, which included a summary of simplifications that seem to need review. She asked that we call for a delay in the process, because as things are currently scheduled, there won't be any discussion at future Plan Check meetings until after the CPC hearing. She said people do support the simplification effort, but they want to be part of the discussions and not have it imposed upon them.

Mr. Gresham said he's read that notification radii for some projects is being reduced to just next door neighbors, which will be a big problem. Mr. Bell said that was part of a 2002 Charter change, not this effort. Mr. Wolf said it looks like summer dates for these discussions were chosen so many people would be on vacation. We received no notice of the process in April or May, and now it's June. Mr. Bell said they will be asking the CPC only to discuss the matter in June, not vote on it. Mr. Wolf noted that the final language hasn't even been crafted yet, and asked when people would have a chance to review it. Mr. Bell said it will be crafted by July, and they haven't found that the CPC is just a rubber-stamp body; they do deliberate.

Mr. Wolf said this matter is important enough that there should be another bar on calendar chart for public analysis and another for CPC approval, starting in September or later.

Stakeholder Lloyd Solly asked if there's a defined process for creating city codes,

and Mr. Wolf said there is for some of them, but this is a huge overhaul and should be at least a year-long process.

Ms. Saunders asked if public input is required for the simplification process or if the Planning Department can just submit something to the CPC for approval. Mr. Wolf said that's what they're doing here. In contrast, he said, the CRA proposal we saw earlier is being presented as a draft for comment, but this is being presented as a staff report for action, not a draft for discussion. Ms. Saunders asked if there's a legal way to stop this, and Mr. Wolf said that whenever the city isn't doing what it's supposed to do, private citizens have to sue the city. Often they win, but they don't get reimbursed for the cost of taking action.

Committee Member Karen Gilman moved that we recommend the GWNC board adopt the motion suggested in Ms. Saunders' handout:

“The Land Use Committee recommends the proposed City Planning Commission June 10, 2010 study session on the Code Simplification Work Program with corresponding ordinances and the following schedule of July, August and September be delayed 90 days to perform Charger mandated outreach and exchange of feedback with all Neighborhood and Community Councils and communities.”

Mr. Wolf proposed we add the phrase “a minimum of 90 days” and “with all individual neighborhood and community councils” (to ensure they schedule more than one meeting). Ms. Gilman amended her motion as follows:

“The Land Use Committee recommends the proposed City Planning Commission June 10, 2010 study session on the Code Simplification Work Program with corresponding ordinances and the following schedule of July, August and September be delayed a minimum of 90 days to perform Charger mandated outreach and exchange of feedback with each Neighborhood and Community Council and community.”

Ms. Chvatal seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Mr. Bell said this is the first time he's encountered the idea of delaying the discussion process. Ms. Chvatal asked if only three organizations have discussed the matter so far, and Mr. Bell said they were all city-wide coalitions (like PlanCheckLA), not specific neighborhood groups. He said they're not wedded to any particular approach at this point, but are not trying to cut the public out of the process, just trying to become more efficient. Ms. Chvatal said we're “gun-shy” because of the way the recent increase in fees was handled, but Mr. Bell said a more efficient process will mean lower fees. There wouldn't be automatic approvals, just an expedited review process. They're trying to be neutral in the process that's being outlined. In contrast, he said, San Francisco just posts a notice saying the Planning Department intends to approve something unless there are objections before the end of a 30-day comment period. If objections are filed, then the project goes onto a different track. They can waive public hearings now for almost

any part of the process.

812 N. Sycamore 3rd Dwelling Unit – Applicant did not reply to invitation to attend meeting. Will re-extend invitation for next meeting.

6801 Melrose Wine Tasting CUP – Owner’s representative Brett Engstrom said the business at 6801 Melrose (at Mansfield) used to be a mini-mart, but became a wine shop about a year ago. The owner has submitted an application to allow wine tasting in the shop. The tasting area would take up less than 97 square feet of floor space, and no drinking would be allowed anywhere else on the premises. The tasting would be ancillary to the rest of the store’s retail sales.

Ms. Fuller noted that the GWNC has received three letters in support of the application (two from neighbors and one from GWNC member Jane Gilman) and none opposed.

Mr. Gresham asked if the tasting area would be walled off from the rest of store. Owner Jill Bernheimer distributed a floor plan showing the tasting area, and explained that there will be some physical demarcation of the space.

Mr. Arens asked how the tasting process will work – will the samples be sold, or simply available for handouts. Ms. Bernheimer said there will be a fee for tastes, just like at wineries. She said she’s not interested in giving away the products, and wants to make sure customers are actually interested in purchasing the wines.

Mr. Gresham asked how large the tastes will be, and Mr. Engstrom said samples are usually one ounce.

Mr. Wolf noted the mall’s limited parking and asked if the tasting would cause customers to remain at the store longer or would in any other way stress the current parking, but Ms. Bernheimer said she’s not trying to increase the volume of customers or the time they spend at the store, but just wants to make sure they come in with an intent to purchase. She just wants to add value to the service she’s already providing.

Committee Member Mike Genewick move that we recommend the GWNC board support the application. Ms. Chvatal seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Market CUP at 450 S. Western – Applicant requested postponement of this discussion until our July meeting.

932 S. Rimpau 2-Story Accessory Structure -- William Kim, representing the homeowner at this address, explained that a garage on the property was converted to an unpermitted 2-story structure before the current owners bought the property. He said they recently received an order to comply from the city and would like to legalize the structure. The building, which has a bathroom but no kitchen, is now being used as a rec room and guest quarters; no one is living there. The outer appearance is consistent with the main house.

In response to questions from the committee, Mr. Kim said the owners do not know when the conversion was done (since it pre-dated their ownership), and the setback from the property line is 5 feet.

Ms. Gilman said other homeowners are concerned that this case (and others like it) may set a precedent about how the Department of Building and Safety issues orders to comply and what they ask to be done. Here, for example, they're asking the owners to build a covered carport to make up for the lack of required covered parking.

Mr. Wolf noted that the plans the representatives are presenting call for the space to be converted to a rec room, and asked what it is now. Mr. Kim said it is now a rec room. Mr. Wolf said that's confusing, since it's not a "new" room, as the plans say. Also, the plans don't explain how the current construction/old building will meet current building codes. Mr. Kim said an inspector will visit, but Mr. Wolf said that without the walls open, the inspector won't be able to review the foundation, electrical work, framing and other interior details.

Mr. Wolf also asked about the carport, saying various plans and drawings don't match – the plans make it look as if the building hasn't yet been built, when it has. He said the plans should include notes about what already exists, and should not indicate that the whole thing will be new construction. He said he'd like to see drawings of what exists today...and an effort to explain how it meets today's codes. He said problems can arise when minor details are missed. Mr. Kim said the plans will be revised, and he will return when the new drawings are ready..

216 N. Irving 3rd Dwelling Unit – Discussion postponed until next month, at applicant's request.

St. Andrews Boarding House – Discussion tabled until future meeting, due to lack of time.

AT&T Cabinet at 1st & Gramercy – Discussion tabled until future meeting, due to lack of time.

Old Business

Yeshivath Torath Emeth Academy -- Lloyd Solly, a stakeholder from the neighborhood where this project is proposed, reported that the CPC approved the school's application for a new preschool building a few months ago, with one commissioner noting that "the sound of children is the sound of life itself." (The GWNC had opposed the application, supporting the neighbors' request that more time for discussion and mediation of certain issues be granted.) Mr. Solly said an appeal has now been filed by a group of 20 people, and they're waiting for a City Council hearing to be schedule.

Mr. Solly said the appeal is based on the lack of a foundational right to build a “school” where none existed (the existing building is permitted as a day care center), violations of permit terms at other adjacent school-owned buildings, and the lack of a required traffic study. He said four formal complaints have also been submitted regarding the school’s other buildings, but three of them have been closed already. The building at 555 La Brea has been striped for parking, but then LADBS notified the school of its pending visit, and when the inspector came, cars were parked in the spaces (which they never had been before). The next day, however, the cars were gone and the area was being used once more for playground space.

Mr. Solly said the neighbors are also starting to call the police each day to report nuisance noise from the school, trying to get action through the nuisance abatement program (but it’s a long, drawn-out process and requires excessive documentation). He said if that doesn’t work, there’s a chance they might pursue a writ at senior court.

Mr. Solly said he’d like the GWNC’s help to draw attention to the school’s continuing violations and the City’s failure to enforce its codes and conditions.

Mr. Gintel asked if the City has approved the new building, and Mr. Solly said it has, but because there’s an appeal on file, construction can’t start yet. He said the project will depend on what happens with the City Council, which has to hold a hearing within 75 days. Mr. Gintel asked if they’ve demolished the old building yet, but Mr. Solly says they can’t.

Mr. Wolf said the GWNC has already expressed its opposition to the CUP application, but Mr. Solly said the neighbors would appreciate further help in dealing with the applicant’s continuing violations. Mr. Wolf said the best approach is to keep doing what they’re doing, be persistent and document the situation with photos. He said it would also help to see the list of actual conditions for the properties, and then we might be able to help. Mr. Wolf also suggested that the neighbors ask the Building & Safety inspector to come back unannounced, but Mr. Solly said they tried that and were told that B&S is only responsible for making sure the school provides parking (which they’ve done by striping the area), not that they’re using it.

Ms. Fuller suggested that Mr. Solly return to us with the list of current conditions, and photos and other evidence the neighbors have collected documenting the violations.

Bricks & Scones – No news.

Van Ness Preschool – Applicant’s purchase of the property fell through. He will get back to us if/when he finds another location.

Larchmont Bungalow – No news.

1st/Wilton Cell Phone Pole – Discussion tabled until future meeting due to lack of time.

4001 W. 6th St. – Discussion tabled until future meeting due to lack of time.

Dubai/Cordon Bleu – Discussion tabled until future meeting due to lack of time.

Review of Recent Early Notifications

Postponed until next meeting, due to lack of time.

Committee Member Comments & Reports

Cell Tower Committee – Postponed due to lack of time.

City Planning Department Audit Review Committee – Postponed due to lack of time.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Announcements & Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Fuller
Committee Member