



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

August 26, 2014

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee 09/23/14

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, August 26, 2014, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Secretary Barbara Savage called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Savage called the roll. Nine of the 17 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Patricia Carroll, Ann Eggleston, Karen Gilman, Dick Herman, John Kaliski, Barbara Savage, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg and Greg Wittmann. Joseph Hoffman arrived later. Committee Members absent: Alan Bernstein, Mike Genewick, John Gresham, Patty Lombard, Jeff McManus, Caroline Moser and James Wolf. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is nine, so the Committee could take such votes. Also attending: 24 Stakeholders and guests.

3. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION (by Ms. Eggleston, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its July 22, 2014 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with nine in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

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

Copies of the “08/26/14 July-August Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City were distributed and reviewed.

5. Old Business

A. Conversion of existing recreational space to second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy (Adam Miller, Christopher Sorenson)

Stakeholder Janice Wood (the nearest neighbor to the project) said she “no longer has an opposition to this project . . . because there’s now a one-story garage, not two.” Owner Carol Chew related that neighbors liked the front “architectural additional touches.”

MOTION (by Ms. Carroll, seconded by Mr. Kaliski): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the plans for conversion of existing recreational space to second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy as presented with a one-story garage and some architectural details added.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with nine in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

6. New Business

A. Development of 162-unit, 7-story apartment complex at 700 S. Manhattan Pl. (Jared Sopko)

Jared Sopko, architect, distributed renderings copies, displayed slides and indicated he also designed the project at 720 S. Western. Copies of a letter from Arlin Low, President of the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association, opposing the project also were distributed. This 48,000 square-foot lot is allowed 91 units. The developer is seeking a Variance to build 121 units and to transfer some of the R4-2 residential zoning to C2-1 commercial zoning. They are providing 305 parking spaces, “including some extra parking for the commercial.” There would be “entrances off of 7th Street and Western . . . residential parking off of Manhattan Place . . . no studios.” Mr. Wittmann wanted the project to have one or more “zip cars” available for residents and parking spaces “separately charged from the units.” Also, to develop “the entrance area” to be more of a “mingling” place. He believed that “this site is appropriate for a project of this scale.” Mr. Kaliski was concerned about a “major curb cut on Western,” that “the open space on the north side would be mainly in shadow” and would like “some open semi-public spaces.” There was also discussion of whether it would be more appropriate, instead of applying for a variance to allow the extra density, for the developers to apply instead for a Density Bonus, which would give them the added density they want without a variance (but which would require them to set aside a certain number of units for low-income tenants). Stakeholder Frances McFall believed that the project is too high and dense and noted the lack of local park space. GWNC Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller reminded of the need for the developer to meet with the community. Mr. Sopko said that they are “early in the process” and promised to return. No Motion was made.

B. Density bonus for 46-unit apartment project at 729-743 N. Hudson (Eric Lieberman)

Eric Lieberman, architect, displayed diagrams of the 27,000 square-foot five-story project that is and will be zoned R3-1. It would have 46 units including four Very Low Income Units. Parking is ground-level per code, 62 plus ten “surplus” and 51 bicycle parking spaces. They are requesting additional height to create a fifth floor. There are two curb cuts to facilitate traffic flow. There is no alley. Planters planned for the front of the building are intended as “stormwater planters.” He said “there are green elements” and that the project could be LEED-certified. The project was filed in late May or June. Mr. Kaliski encouraged breaking up the proposed building’s mass into two 100-foot buildings. Mr. Lieberman indicated that the City is still studying a Mitigated Negative Declaration. He offered to present to the South Hollywood Neighborhood Association and to return to a future meeting with updates. No Motion was made.

C. Development of 5 condominiums at 4806 W. Elmwood (Ronald Liu, Darrell Cheng)

Mr. Liu and Mr. Cheng said there are unoccupied single-family homes now on the 7,200 square-foot lot in an R3-1 zone. They are allowed to build nine units but only are proposing to build five: three three-story and two two-story with subterranean parking. The three-story homes each would be 2,200 square feet and have five bedrooms and four bathrooms; the two-story homes would have three and three. The only entitlement they requested is regarding the Tract Map. Landscaping is planned that did not appear on the diagrams. They are expected to sell for around \$700-800,000 each. Mr. Kaliski would like more open space and described potential architectural and aesthetic improvements. Some committee members noted the lack of floor space for common spaces (e.g. living, dining and family rooms in the floor plans). No Hearing date is set. There was discussion of and request for the developer to meet with neighbors and return with a “clearer landscaping plan.” No Motion was made.

D. Single Lot Subdivision project at 665 S. Rimpau (Guy Penini)

Mr. Penini distributed copies of elevations and site plans. Copies of the Master Land Use Permit Application also were distributed. The site is vacant and at the corner with Wilshire near Farmers Insurance. The project would be seven townhomes with no Variance request. There would be a 17-foot setback from Wilshire. Parking would be two spaces per unit plus four guest spaces. He said the project conforms with the Park Mile Specific Plan and that the design is consistent with much local architecture. He said they have met with the Park Mile Design Review Board around six times in the last six months and incorporated recommendations of theirs. Mr. Kaliski, who attended the Park Mile DRB meetings, said the project “is substantially better now.”

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the Master Land Use Permit Application for the Single Lot Subdivision project at 665 S. Rimpau.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with nine in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

E. CUB violations at True Burger restaurant, 852 S. La Brea (Elizabeth Fuller)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #6. F.] Copies of a “True Burger Liquor Advertising – August, 2014” handout with photos of exterior liquor advertising, the City Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approval letter and a site diagram were distributed. Ms. Fuller described the issue. The Letter of Determination states that there will “be no exterior advertising of alcohol.” This was reported to City Council District Four Field Deputy Ben Seinfeld who reported it to the LAPD Vice Unit. Ms. Fuller noted that the CUP approval letter says on page 12 that “there shall be no exterior advertising of any kind or type, including advertising directly to the exterior from within, promoting or indicating the availability of alcoholic beverages. Interior displays of alcoholic beverages or signs which are clearly visible to the exterior shall constitute a violation of this condition” and that “no signs are permitted on the outside of the building or directed from the inside to the outside which display or advertise the availability of alcoholic beverages.” She also noted, however, that the letter also says that these conditions apparently cannot be enforced, because they are not part of the ABC license. Mr. Kaliski

added that the City Sign Ordinance may apply. There was discussion of whether “voluntary conditions” are “enforceable,” what is allowed and what can be done. No Motion was made.

- F. Construction of 4-story, 22-unit apartment complex with density bonus at 5022-5026 Rosewood Ave. (Frank Afari)

Stakeholder Mike Gilman was “concerned with the scale of the project” near Van Ness in an R3-1 zone. The developer is requesting a 32 ½% density bonus of two Low Income units. Mr. Kaliski believed that more project options are available regarding the density bonus. Mr. Afari described the project, but did not bring a full set of plans, so agreed to return at the next Meeting with more information. No Motion was made.

Committee Member Dorian Shapiro had to leave at this time, making eight Members present, one short of the quorum of nine.

- G. Construction of 30-unit apartment building at 4180 W. Wilshire (Matt Dzurec)

Mr. Dzurec was not present and this Item was Tabled.

7. Committee Member Comments and Reports

- A. Transportation Committee Report (Stromberg)

Ms. Stromberg reported the Committee will meet August 28th at 6:30 p.m. here. Chi Ming Gong, Street Services General Superintendent, will speak and answer questions.

Committee Member Joseph Hoffman arrived at this time, again making a quorum of nine Members present.

8. Public Comments

Ms. Fuller reported that the Larchmont Bungalow (107 N. Larchmont Ave.) has a September 22nd Hearing date on its newly revised application and is requesting a beer and wine, not full line, license. This date came to the committee’s attention too late to be agendaized for this meeting, but the hearing date is before the next meeting. Ms. Fuller said that it can be agendaized for the next Board meeting. There was discussion of what the Committee and individuals can do. Mr. Kaliski wanted the GWNC to oppose the application; Ms. Gilman agreed that “this is not the way to challenge a “Q” condition.” There was extensive discussion of “Q” conditions issues, the Bungalow project and its history, and inconsistencies of City Planning Department decisions and applications of the City Planning Code.

Mr. Hoffman reported that, regarding the Morumbila condo project at 853-859 S. Lucerne, Stakeholders in opposition “lost the appeal three-to-one.”

9. Announcements and Adjournment

- A. Ms. Savage noted the next meeting: Tuesday, September 23, 6:30 p.m. Possible future agenda items:

- Density bonus at 801-813 N. Hudson (Michael Cohanzad)
- Development of parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 Norton (Jared Sopko)

- Development of 5-unit Single Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton (Matthew Hayden)
- Development of 4-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 421 N. Van Ness (Sam Trude)
- Change of use to non-profit museum at former Scottish Rite Temple, 4357 W. Wilshire Blvd. (Michael Gruber)

Ms. Savage **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objection at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin, Minutes Writer
Edited by Land Use Committee.