



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting

October 9, 2013

MINUTES

Approved by the Board, 11-13-13

**1. Call to Order** (Owen Smith)

A duly noticed Meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, October 9, 2013, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd., Los Angeles. President Owen Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p. m.

**2. Roll Call** (Jeffrey Carpenter)

Secretary Jeffrey Carpenter called the roll. All 21 Board Seats were filled. No Board Seats were vacant (some Alternate Seats were vacant). Twelve of the 21 Board Members or their Alternates were present at the beginning of the Meeting, which is not a quorum: Jeffrey Carpenter, Ann Eggleston, , Frances McFall, Jeff McManus, Robby O’Donnell (Alternate for John Gresham), Clinton Oie, Jason Peers, Joane Pickett, Owen Smith, Jane Usher, Greg Wittmann and James Wolf. Charles D’Atri (Alternate for Fred Mariscal), Michael Genewick, Jack Humphreville, Patricia Lombard, Barbara Savage (Alternate for William Funderburk) and Briana Valdez arrived later. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: Betty Fox, Patricia Carroll and Daniel Whitley. The GWNC quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 13, so at this time the Board could only have discussions without making any Motions or taking any binding votes. Also attending: 15 Stakeholders and guests.

**3. Approval of the Minutes** (Jeffrey Carpenter)

*[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5.]* Mr. Smith requested and it was agreed to TABLE this Item until the next (November 13<sup>th</sup>) General Board Meeting.

**4. President’s Report** (Owen Smith)

Mr. Smith reported on attending recent BONC (L.A. Board of Neighborhood Commissioners) and LANCC (L.A. Neighborhood Councils Coalition) Meetings.

A. Board Vacancies

Mr. Smith noted the vacancies. Alternates are needed for: Area 2 (Citrus Square), Area 9 (Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews), Area 12 (We-Wil), Other Non-Profit and Religion.

B. Ethics & Funding Training

*[The following paragraph is from the Agenda.]* All Board Members and Alternates must complete Ethics Training in order to vote on funding Motions before the Board. The course is available online at <http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done>. In addition to Ethics Training, all Board Members and Alternates were also now REQUIRED to take a new Funding Training course (about the new system of NC checking accounts that will be launched this fall). The course is at <http://www.slideshare.net/EmpowerLA/nc-checking-account-training-62413>.

The last page of the presentation contains a link <http://www.empowerla.org/Boardregistration> to a completion form you can submit to register your attendance. Board members and alternates MUST complete both trainings to be eligible to vote on funding-related matters.

[The Agenda showed tables of which Board Members and which Alternates have completed which trainings.] Mr. Smith noted the above.

- C. Approval of two GWNC City Budget [Representatives] (Jack Humphreville and Fred Mariscal)  
Mr. Humphreville and Mr. Mariscal were approved.

## **5. Local Government Updates**

### **A. CD4 Update (Ben Seinfeld)**

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #2.*] L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (323-957-6415; Councilmember.LaBonge@LACity.org; <http://CD4.LACity.org>) introduced Ben Seinfeld, Field Deputy (213-485-3337; cell 213-804-2388; Ben.Seinfeld@LACity.org) and Kristy Noochlaor, Special Assistant (Kristy.Noochlaor@LACity.org).

*Board Member Mike Genewick arrived at this time, making a quorum of 13 Board Members present. Now the Board could take binding votes on Agendized Items.*

The Councilman answered questions. He sent a letter to pro football owners requesting them to put a team in Los Angeles. He reminded to be prepared for an earthquake. Mr. Seinfeld is working to keep illegal marijuana dispensaries from opening.

*Alternate Board Member Barbara Savage (for William Funderburk) arrived at this time.*

Mr. Seinfeld introduced Don Hunt, president of the newly formed “South Hollywood” Neighborhood Association and reported that the Wilshire Blvd. Rapid Transit Bus project will start in December; expect lane closures.

*Board Members Jack Humphreville and Patricia Lombard arrived at this time.*

A Field Deputy for Congressman Javier Becerra reported that some government services are available despite the shutdown.

### **B. CD5 Update (John Darnell)**

Mr. Smith relayed for John Darnell, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Five Councilman Paul Koretz (310-289-0353; John.Darnell@LACity.org), that AIDS Walk L.A. will be October 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, LaBrea Blvd. between Beverly Blvd. and 3<sup>rd</sup> St. will be resurfaced.

## **6. Community Concerns / Public Comments**

### **A. KYCC/Wilshire Park School Green Space Project (Ryan Allen)**

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #2.*] Mr. Allen introduced KYCC, the work it does, and its service area...and offered to recruit help for graffiti removal and described community projects work. He also introduced an upcoming green space project KYCC will be involved in at Wilshire Park School, which is currently applying for a Prop. 84 grant for the project and will soon will be submitting a Neighborhood Purposes Grant application to the GWNC.

*Alternate Board Member Charles D'Atri (for Fred Mariscal) arrived at this time.*

Stakeholder Tito Corona (213.891.2965), representing Western Transit Partners, a company bidding on the Purple Line Extension project, announced an October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting to introduce itself to the community.

**7. Treasurer's Report and Budget Items** (Patti Carroll)

**A. Monthly Budget Reports/Expenditures Approvals**

Stakeholder and former Treasurer Elizabeth Fuller requested for Ms. Carroll and it was agreed to TABLE this Item until the next (November 13<sup>th</sup>) General Board Meeting.

**B. YTD Budget**

Stakeholder and former Treasurer Elizabeth Fuller requested for Ms. Carroll and it was agreed to TABLE this Item until the next (November 13<sup>th</sup>) General Board Meeting.

**C. Funding motion for Larchmont Fair Booth**

Ms. Fuller reminded that the Larchmont Fair will be October 27<sup>th</sup>. There was no Outreach Committee Meeting this month.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Ms. McFall, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will spend \$300 for a booth at the October 27 Larchmont Fair.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a roll call vote of the 13 eligible voters present with 11 in favor ("Yes" or "Aye") (Eggleston, Genewick, Humphreville, McFall, O'Donnell, Oie, Peers, Savage, Usher, Valdez and Wittmann) and one abstention (Carpenter). Mr. Smith, as chair of the meeting, did not vote.

*Board Members Briana Valdez arrived at this time.[My notes indicate she arrived before this, and did take part in the roll call vote, as noted above.]*

**D. Funding request: L.A. Drama Club (Julia Blaire)**

Ms. Blaire could not attend; no request was made.

**E. Funding request: Enrichment Center Summer Program (Diann Farmer)**

Ms. Farmer described the program; they're asking for \$5,000 in funding. Mr. Smith requested and it was agreed to TABLE this Item until we do more outreach for grant applications and have a better idea of what groups will be submitting applications this year

**8. DWP Oversight** (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the IBEW contract is getting a lot of attention. General Manager Ron Nichols will be re-appointed by Mayor Garcetti. Two of the new DWP Commissioners are Neighborhood Council Board Members, including the GWNC's Bill Funderburk. Expect a large power rate increase, partly due to a historically low snow pack.

**9. City Budget Issues** (Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that City employee contracts will be negotiated. A report described LA's roads "as the worst in the country."

**10. Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

**11. New Business**

Mr. Humphreville encouraged the GWNC helping to sponsor a City Council District Four Candidates Forum. Mr. Humphreville, Ms. Lombard and Ms. Savage volunteered to form a committee to organize the forum.

**12. Transportation Committee** (Gerda McDonough)

A. Metro Response on Wilshire Stakeholder Outreach  
Ms. McDonough announced an October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

B. Report on BPIT Meeting—Tuesday, 10/1  
Ms. McDonough listed streets that will receive “bicycle treatments” according to the City’s Bicycle Plan Implementation Team.

C. Other  
There was no other information presented.

**13. Outreach Committee** (Fred Mariscal)

A. Opportunity for NC Emergency Plan project  
Copies were distributed of a letter from James Featherstone, General Manager, L.A. Emergency Management Dept., to all Neighborhood Councils regarding selecting “a Neighborhood Council (NC) to create a customized Neighborhood Emergency Plan . . .”  
[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #16. H.*] Ms. Fuller, for Mr. Mariscal, explained the project.

B. Upcoming Citizen Recognition Awards  
Ms. Fuller indicated that there will be more news next month.

C. Report on Larchmont Zoning Walk/Discussion with LUC – Saturday, 9/21  
Ms. Lombard reported that “about 30 people” participated. Several groups noted “uses . . . general condition of sidewalks . . . sense of space . . . [and] trees.” Afterward, “a large focus group” shared ideas and solutions. She said “we’re about . . . to engage the property owners in the conversation.”

D. Update on NC Use of Transit Shelter Media Space  
Ms. Fuller requested and the Board agreed to TABLE this Item.

**14. Board Member Reports and Comments**

A. Board member opt-out option for paper copies at Board meetings (Wittmann)  
Mr. Wittmann is “soliciting comments about” Board Members opting out of receiving paper document copies at meetings to save money.

Ms. McFall requested more lighting at the Wilshire Ebell parking lot entrance. There was discussion of whether to re-order some Agenda Items.

**15. Public Comments**

There were no public comments at this time.

**16. Land Use Committee** (LUC) (James Wolf)

*[Each Item's first paragraph is directly from the Agenda.]*

**A. Application for a CUB to serve beer and wine at True Burger Restaurant, 850 S. La Brea.**

**Issue:** The applicant is seeking a CUB to sell beer and wine at the restaurant at the above address. Sycamore Square representative Ann Eggleston reported that the applicants have not met with the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, and the Board of that group has not taken a position on the application, lacking enough information. Stakeholder Elizabeth Fuller, who owns one of the three nearest homes to the restaurant, opposed the application on the grounds that the restaurant is nearly always empty. (She fears it will be out of business soon and the liquor permit would almost immediately pass on to whatever unknown tenant moves in afterward.) She also noted that Umami Burger (the previous tenant in that spot), Mo' Better Burgers (across the street) and Top Round (a block south), have all been successful without liquor permits. Committee discussion centered on the best way to obtain input from Sycamore Square before the October 2 hearing date.  
Recommended motion: [see the below Motion].

*[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #14.]*

Copies were distributed of responses from True Burger to the GWNC Liquor License Policy questionnaire. Mr. Wolf described the project and the Land Use Committee's suggested motion.

**LUC SUGGESTED MOTION:** The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will: 1) urge the applicants to meet with the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association; 2) request that the public comment period on the Zoning Administrator's case be held open for an extra 45 days to allow input from the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association and the GWNC (via a vote at its November 13 meeting) and 3) if the applicants do not meet with the SSNA as requested, that the GWNC Board oppose the application.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Eggleston noted that the applicants did meet with the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, as promised, and the Association voted 5-2 to support the application.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Savage, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the application, with the conditions requested by the neighborhood association: that there be no outdoor TV/video system; that the owners install "be respectful" signs; and that a plan approval would be required if the restaurant changes ownership.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Fuller, who owns the property across 9<sup>th</sup> Street from the restaurant, said she opposes the application because: 1) the CUP to sell liquor would run with the land for current and subsequent possible property owners; and 2) the owner wants to install an outdoor patio TV which could draw noisy crowds. Ms. Eggleston said the issue of the television just came up for the first time at the applicants' ZA hearing, that the Neighborhood Association requested that a TV would not be allowed and that only single servings of alcohol would be allowed.

**MOTION FAILED** by a hand vote with five in favor; eight opposed.

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Ms. Eggleston): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council opposes the application for a CUB to serve beer and wine at True Burger Restaurant, 850 S. La Brea.

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with eight in favor; four opposed.

**B. City’s procedural change to processing of Small Lot Subdivision requests (to allow granting of construction permits before final maps are filed).**

**Issue:** Under the current Small Lot Subdivision ordinance, developers who have received all necessary approvals cannot begin construction on their projects until a final Tract Map has been recorded with the city, which can take up to a year to complete after the map has been filed, or until they go through a variance application process to have the map requirement waived. The city is proposing a change in the law that would allow construction of small lot subdivision projects to begin once a tract map is approved and filed, but before the map actually records. Committee members discussed whether or not it is a good idea to allow construction before every applicable city department gives its stamp of approval, and whether or not enough other safeguards are built into the process that projects would not go forward without all necessary permissions.

Copies were distributed of GWNC Land Use Committee Secretary Greg Wittmann’s “Summary of Small Lot Subdivision Process Change, CPC-2013-2450-CA.” Mr. Wolf explained the issue.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Wolf, seconded by Mr. McManus): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council endorses the City’s plan to allow construction of small lot subdivision projects before final tract maps are recorded.

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 12 in favor; one abstained.

**C. Small-Lot Subdivision at 816-828 N. June St.**

**Issue:** The applicant seeks approval of a 12-unit small lot subdivision with a height variance to allow construction of a roof deck. About a dozen stakeholders spoke in opposition to the project, saying it is too big and too modern for their mostly single-family neighborhood, built in the 1920s. The project representatives expressed surprise at the depth of the opposition, and agreed to request a postponement of their city hearing until they could meet and discuss the project further with the neighbors.

Mr. Wolf explained the project.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Wolf, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council opposes the small lot subdivision at 816-828 N. June St. project as presented, but encourages the developers to return to the GWNC LUC to present 1) a new proposal based on their discussions with the community and 2) a letter confirming that they have requested a delay of their scheduled City hearing.

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 16 in favor; Ms. Pickett abstained.

#### **D. Small-Lot Subdivision at 851 N. Cherokee**

**Issue:** In their third appearance before the LUC, the applicants discussed initial meetings with the project neighbors (which had been requested by the LUC in the applicants' last appearance), in which the three-unit project (requesting a height variance for a roof deck and parapet, reduced setbacks and permission for "early start" construction before the tract map is recorded) received mixed reactions. Several stakeholders said further discussions are necessary, especially regarding the proposed height of the roof deck, but expressed optimism that compromises could be reached. Committee members discussed the roof deck height, and the applicants agreed that they might be able to limit the height to just 18" over what is normally allowed, which the neighbors said would make the project much more acceptable.

Copies were distributed of related documents. Mr. Wolf described the project and issues.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Wolf, seconded by Mr. D'Atri): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council support the small lot subdivision at 851 N. Cherokee project, with a height variance of only 18" above what is normally allowed.

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 16 in favor.

#### **E. Medical Marijuana Dispensary at 215-217 N. Larchmont**

**Issue:** A medical marijuana dispensary has leased space in an upstairs unit at the above address. Community members and local business leaders are concerned about its potential impact on the neighborhood, especially in light of the area's frequent use in various capacities by neighborhood youth. Committee members reported that the Hancock Park Homeowners Association and the Larchmont Boulevard Association have secured the services of a pro bono attorney, who is looking into whether or not the use is legal. There was discussion of whether or not the LUC should take a vote on the matter: some committee members said a vote would be inappropriate if the use is found to be legal, while others suggested that the Board could make a statement supporting legal uses and opposing illegal uses. No vote was taken. (Note: an update on this project will be provided at tonight's Board meeting. Action may be requested based on that update.)

**MOTION** (by Mr. Wolf, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (GWNC) will write a letter in support of the Larchmont Boulevard Association (LBA) and of the Hancock Park Homeowners Association, established 1948, (HPHOAP) in commending Councilman Tom LaBonge (City Council District 4) for his efforts in opposition of the Medical Marijuana Dispensary located at 215 North Larchmont, which violates Proposition D, and efforts to urge the City to take all appropriate action against the proposed dispensary.

**AMENDED MOTION** (by Mr. Genewick, accepted by Mr. Wolf and Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (GWNC) will write a letter in support of the Larchmont Boulevard Association (LBA), the Hancock Park Homeowners Association (established 1948; HPHOAP), the Windsor Square Association and the Larchmont Village Neighborhood Association in commending Councilman Tom LaBonge (City Council District 4) for his efforts in opposition of the Medical Marijuana Dispensary located at 215 North Larchmont, which violates Proposition D, and efforts to urge the City to take all appropriate action against the proposed dispensary.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Pickett reported that the LBA and the HPHOAP hired legal representation. There are six “youth centers” within 600 feet of the dispensary, violating Proposition D. Letters were sent to building owner Frank Fox “demanding” that the dispensary cease operations.

**MOTION PASSED** by a hand vote with 14 in favor; Ms. Savage abstained.

Mr. Wolf noted that the following items were presented for information only; no Board action was requested or required at this time.

**F. Renewal of CUB for beer and wine sales at 3Twenty Wine Lounge, 320 S. La Brea**

Issue: Representative Bill Bergstrom reported that the application is a standard renewal of the existing permits, with no additional changes. Committee members had some questions about the apparent current use of 12 tables outside the restaurant, which do not appear to be included in the original permits. Mr. Bergstrom said he would check on the details with the business owner and return to the Land Use Committee at a future meeting.

**G. Applications for repeal of the building line and the continued use of two adjacent lots as parking lots at Kangnam Restaurant – 4103 W. Olympic)**

Issue: The applicant is seeking to legalize use of an official setback area that has been used for parking since 1989. Committee members had questions about the building permits and site plan for the location, neighborhood opinions on the requests, and what restrictions there might be, if any, under the local HPOZ. The Committee asked the applicants to meet with the Wilshire Park Association and the HPOZ Board, and return to the LUC after those meetings.

**H. Possible joint meeting with Hollywood Studio District NC to discuss temporary landscaping in place of widening Melrose Ave. at the LC (formerly Camerford Lofts) project.**

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #12. C.*] Issue: Because the project, although outside GWNC boundaries, affects the northern border of the GWNC area, stakeholders and some Land Use Committee members had suggested a joint meeting of the two NCs might be useful to discuss the street widening issue. At the GWNC Land Use Committee meeting, however, committee members agreed that because the project is outside the GWNC area, a joint meeting would not be appropriate, and that GWNC members and stakeholders who would like to have a say in the issue should be urged to attend a HSDNC meeting on the subject.

There was discussion of possible having a joint meeting with another Neighborhood Council. Mr. D’Atri reported that the Larchmont Village Neighborhood Association was unanimously opposed to widening Melrose Ave.

*Board Member Jane Usher had to leave at this time.*

Other potential agenda items for future LUC meetings:

- Application for parcel map to divide a lot into two lots at 800 N. Sycamore
- Presentation on plans for mixed-use development at 5100 Wilshire Blvd. (Oasis Church site)
- Presentation on 30-unit residential development at Wilshire and Crenshaw
- Condo development at 853-859 S. Lucerne

[There was no Item #17.]

**18. Announcements and Adjournment**

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 13, 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Smith declared and the Board agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Levin  
Minutes Writer