



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

November 23, 2010

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee 01/25/11

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Land Use Committee was held Tuesday, November 23, 2010 at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:44 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Approval of the Minutes

Secretary Elizabeth Fuller called the roll. Land Use Committee Members in attendance at the roll call were: Patricia Carroll, Mike Genewick, Elizabeth Fuller, Dick Herman, Patty Lombard, Caroline Moser and James Wolf. John Kaliski arrived later.

Seven of the 14 Committee Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting, 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 eight, so at this time the Committee could only have discussions without making any Motions or taking any binding votes. Also attending were seven Stakeholders and Guests. Committee Members absent: Cindy Chvatal, Karen Gilman, Rudy Gintel, John Gresham, Fred Pickel, and Ben Rosenberg.

Approval of the Minutes was postponed until after a quorum was reached during Item #4. C.

MOTION (by Mr. Wolf): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its October 26, 2010 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a voice vote.

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

Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the “11/21/10 October & November Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” and reviewed recent land use applications received by the City. The only item flagged for further investigation was 838 N. Mansfield Ave., a condo conversion. (The 429 N. Western Ave. listing “looks like . . . [a] CUP renewal.”)

4. Old Business

A. Eastern Presbyterian Church Renovations - 4270 W. 6th St. (Kiyoshi Graves).

Ms. Fuller reported that the Church and Mr. Graves met with the Windsor Square HPOZ and the Park Mile Design Review Board (DRB) and there’s no new information. [This Agenda Item was returned to after Item #5. C.] She said the Church is “intending to continue with its plans.” Stakeholder Cooke Sunoo expressed concern about the project, which Mr. Wolf reviewed. He said the DRB meeting attendees were not favorable to the project. Ms. Moser said the Church “went through everything in a lot of detail.” Mr. Kaliski observed that “it’s a residential property and they want to build institutional uses on it.”

B. Café Gratitude CUP application - 639 N. Larchmont -- (Chris Bonbright).

Chris Bonbright and Mark Lehman re-presented the restaurant project, including photos and diagrams. Construction has begun; it will open February 1st. They'd like CUP application support and are "going before the LVNA" December 8th. The hours of operation will be 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. Mr. Bonbright said they "have complied with all of the City's requirements." Mr. Lehman stated they've "got 35 on-site parking spaces . . . We'll enliven this section of the . . . absolutely quiet street." Mr. Bonbright said the restaurant will have "far more parking than 90% of . . . similar restaurants . . . All the [outdoor] seating is on private property . . . [and] approved by the City."

[Committee Member John Kaliski arrived at this time, completing a quorum of eight Members. Now the Committee could take binding votes on Agendized Items.]

Mr. Bonbright continued that "noted landscape designers . . . designed the building." Mr. Lehman indicated that "there won't be a bar"; they'll "serve organic beer and wines." Mr. Bonbright said "there's parking allocated to our use in the garage . . . No [specific parking allocations] were requested [by the City] . . . [They're] really targeting . . . 5,200 daytime Paramount employees" that're "within walking distance." Mr. Lehman indicated they "have around 667 square feet of retail space" including for food service, book and other sales. Mr. Bonbright added "the interior is 2,645 square feet" including food preparation and other areas within the exterior walls. There'll be valet parking "if there's demand . . . [They're] a long way from single-family homes . . . The street is lined with meters." The retail lot "is 100% leased."

There was discussion regarding the property's parking history, requirements and available space. Mr. Lehman noted that they "can have 78 seats . . . total; 52 inside and 26 outside." They have a January 5th Hearing date. There was discussion regarding Committee versus Board action.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Kaliski): The Land Use Committee recommends that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board support the beer and wine CUP application of Café Gratitude at 639 N. Larchmont.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

C. Update on cell phone poles at 1st/Wilton & 9th/Mansfield (Ryan Shields).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. A. was started] Ms. Fuller reported that "T Mobile will come back to us" when there's more information available.

D. City Ordinance Regarding Community Care Facilities – Discussion and possible recommendation for Board action (Wolf, Kaliski, Gilman, et. al.).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. A was returned to.] Mr. Wolf reported that "the City agreed to postpone" action on this issue until February 10, 2011. There was discussion regarding the proposed Ordinance meaning and implications. Mr. Kaliski explained that for "six and under" beds per residence the City is trying to define and clarify things that most groups seem to support; for more than six beds, "institutional groups" are saying the proposed Ordinance is unfair.

E. Code Simplification Core Findings Ordinance – Discussion and possible recommendation for Board action (Wolf, Kaliski).

Mr. Wolf declared that this Item is like Item #4.D. There was discussion regarding City Planning Department operations and the proposed Ordinance.

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Land Use Committee recommends that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board write a letter requesting that the City

Planning Department make the draft Code Simplification Core Findings Ordinance available as a whole, not only the proposed changes and that all Ordinances be available in advance.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Fuller announced that the City Planning Department is holding “Code Studies Unit Public Workshops” which are similar to those the GWNC voted to request at its November 10, 2010 General Meeting. Mr. Kaliski noted that most Zoning Code revisions refer to small parts of the Code.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

F. Citywide Design Review Guidelines – Discussion and possible recommendation for Board action (Wolf, Kaliski).

Ms. Fuller reported that there’s no Hearing date scheduled yet. Mr. Kaliski reviewed the issue. He doesn’t agree with groups concerned that developers will claim compliance with the Guidelines should lead to City approvals of their projects.

G. Proposed policy statement on GWNC involvement in issues also being covered by HPOZ and/or Park Mile Specific Plan Design Review Boards.

Ms. Fuller distributed a “Proposed Policy on GWNC Involvement in Cases Being Addressed by HPOZ and/or Park Mile Design Review Boards – November 23, 2010” written by Stakeholder John Welborne. There was extensive discussion regarding the Committee’s jurisdiction, role and procedures. It was decided not to make a Motion or take any action on this.

5. New Business

A. Variance to legalize use of office space over garage at residence for priests at 4714 W. 9th St. (Bill Christopher/Jorge Barake).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after the Item #2 approval of the Minutes.] Ms. Fuller noted that the project address is 4714 W. 8th (Eighth) St., not 9th (Ninth). Mr. Christopher distributed photos and diagrams, and described the Missionaries of Guadalupe property and some of its “30 years” history. The Archdiocese “established a retreat house” on the property. “The front . . . is a two-story residential building . . . The original Certificate of Occupancy” defined it as being “for five priests” and staff. A 1976 Order to Comply was issued for the accessory building because it was built without a Permit. They’re “asking for a [Variance for a] home occupancy in an accessory [garage] space building . . . [for] two people” to work there. The garage will be used as office space only, not living space. However, office space in a garage is classified as a “home occupancy” use. It would be modified to have one large office flanked by three small offices. They’ve had one party there each year. “One neighbor behind” the building is opposed to the Variance due to noise concerns.

Mr. Wolf was concerned that “the final design may not look anything like the original plan.” Mr. Christopher clarified that “the carport is gone . . . removed in July or August.” There was discussion regarding what exactly the Applicant is requesting and whether it’s allowed. No substantial outreach has been done. Mr. Wolf recommended tabling this Item until proper outreach by the Applicant is done. Mr. Christopher said that they’re “at the beginning of the process. Mr. Kaliski described desired Applicant actions toward possible Committee and Board approval.

B. Full line liquor permit at karaoke club -- 4001 W. 6th St.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #4. G.] Ms. Fuller and Ms. Moser clarified that this is the M2 Bar at the northwest corner of 6th and Manhattan, one block east of St. Andrews. It seems to be a renewal of an existing permit.

C. Possible zoning violations at meditation center at 221 S. Manhattan Pl.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. A.] Stakeholder Rory Cunningham described activities at the meditation center, whose website is www.maum.org. The center offered to pay to use the school parking lot across the street. However, “they hold classes” and are “illegally parking on the front lawn . . . It’s a single-family home . . . They’re not allowed to run this type of organization . . . The City issued an Order to Comply . . . There’s a lot of people going all the time.” Ms. Carroll noted that Doug Mensman [Assistant Planning Deputy for L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (213-485-3337; 323-957-6415; Doug.Mensman@LACity.org) has been involved. Mr. Wolf declared that “the current use appears to be non-conforming . . . We’d support the City’s efforts to seek compliance at this lot.” There was discussion regarding whether the Committee should act since the City has already taken action. Mr. Wolf believed that “it’s a recognized violation.”

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Land Use Committee recommends that the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board prepare a simple letter for signature by the GWNC that supports compliance with existing zoning at 221 S. Manhattan Pl. and supports the City of Los Angeles’ enforcement efforts toward such compliance.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

6. Committee Member Comments & Reports

Wireless Telecommunications Subcommittee – Update on, discussion of and possible approval of Board policy on wireless telecommunications installations (Carroll, Gilman, Lombard, Kaliski, Genser, Fridman).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. B.] Mr. Kaliski believed that such a policy can be a simple “series of filters”; the proposed “policy is . . . fine.” There was extensive discussion regarding cell phone tower installations and what the policy could be. Mr. Kaliski will write and distribute to the Committee a revised draft policy.

7. Public Comments

Mr. Genewick announced that the Scottish Rite Temple is for sale for \$13.5 million and it may come to the Committee. Ms. Fuller later added that the Great Los Angeles Walk was participated in by around 100 people and the GWNC rest stop distributed bottles of water.

8. Announcements & Adjournment

MOTION (by Ms. Fuller, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Land Use Committee’s next Meeting will be on the fourth Tuesday in January, January 25, 2011.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Fuller explained that the 6:30 p.m. Committee Meeting start time allows it to finish before the host needs to close the facility. Also, the next General Board Meeting will be December 8, 2010.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

Mr. Wolf declared and the Committee agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer