



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Board Meeting
December 8, 2010
MINUTES
Approved by the Board 01/12/11

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Wednesday, December 8, 2010, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 South Lucerne Blvd., Los Angeles. President Owen Smith called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Elizabeth Fuller called the roll. Board Members in attendance at the roll call were: Yigal Arens, Charles Dougherty, Elizabeth Fuller, Jane Gilman, Kiki Gindler, John Gresham, Jack Humphreville, Alex Jones-Moreno, Barbara Kumetz, Frances McFall, Clinton Oie, Mary Rajswing, Margaret Sowma (alt. Usher) and Owen Smith. Patricia Carroll, Charles D’Atri and Fred Pickel arrived later.

Fourteen of the 21 Board Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting. The GWNC quorum (the minimum number of Board Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 13, so the Board could take such votes. Also attending: 13 Stakeholders and guests. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: David Lunzer, Matthew Oldham and Benjamin Rosenberg.

3. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its November 10, 2010 General Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

4. President’s Report (Owen Smith)

A. Nominations/Seating of Additional Board Members & Alternates.

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council nominates Robby O’Donnell as the Area 13 (Wilshire Park) Alternate Board Member.

DISCUSSION: Ms. O’Donnell introduced herself and read the Oath of Office aloud.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

Mr. Smith welcomed Ms. O'Donnell to the Board.

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council nominates Caroline Labiner Moser as the Area 14 (Windsor Square) Alternate Board Member.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Moser introduced herself, described her community activities and read the Oath of Office aloud.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

Mr. Smith welcomed Ms. Moser to the Board.

Two candidates declared their interest in the opening for the Business Alternate seat: Ken Bernard and Joan Pickett. Both candidates introduced themselves and their history of community involvement.

MOTION (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Ms. Gilman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council nominates Joan Pickett as the Business Alternate Board Member.

There were no nominations for Mr. Bernard.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

Ms. Pickett read the Oath of Office aloud and Mr. Smith welcomed her to the Board. There were no other nominations.

Remaining vacancies – please recruit:
Area 2 (Citrus Square) – Alternate
Area 9 (Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews) – Director & Alternate
Area 12 (We-Wil) – Alternate
Education – Alternate
Renter – Alternate [see Item #11]

[Ms. Carroll and Mr. D'Atri arrived at approximately this time.]

B. Bylaws Conformation to DONE's new uniform Table of Contents (John Welborne).
Mr. Welborne was unable to attend and there was no report.

C. Thank you for holiday donations to HopeNet and Toys for Tots/Fire Station 29.
Mr. Smith thanked Board Members and Stakeholders for their donations.

5. Local Government Updates

A. CD4 Update (Nikki Ezhari)

Nikki Ezhari, Deputy District Director for L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (213-485-3337; 323-957-6415; Nikki.Ezhari@LACity.org), reported that the culvert under Rossmore is being fixed. She distributed flyers for and encouraged attending a free CERT class to be held on six consecutive Mondays starting January 10, 2011, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Council District Four Hollywood Field Office, 6501 Fountain Ave., L.A.

B. CD5 Update (John Darnell)

John Darnell, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Five Councilman Paul Koretz (310-289-0353; John.Darnell@LACity.org), could not attend and there was no report at this time.

C. 42nd Assembly District Update (Haeyoung Kim)

Haeyoung Kim, Field Representative for State 42nd District Assemblyman Mike Feuer (310-285-5490; 818-902-0521; Haeyoung.Kim@asm.ca.gov), distributed the Assemblyman's November Newsletter and reported that a legislative Special Session passed a State Budget. Assemblyman Feuer is putting together next year's legislative package; she encouraged submitting ideas. Ms. Kim will be moving out of the area and Nicole Carcel will replace her.

D. 26th Senate District Update (Andrew Lachman)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #7.] Andrew Lachman, aide to State 26th District Senator Curren Price, Jr. (213-745-6656; Andrew.Lachman@sen.ca.gov), reported that Senator Price will oversee business development as the State Committee Chair. He described the Senator's latest legislation. Arts funding has been increased. Everyone was invited to the Senator's holiday party December 9th 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the African-American Historical Museum.

6. **Guest Speaker** – Representative from Los Angeles Department of Sanitation.

Daniel Hackney, Environmental Supervisor, L.A. Dept. of Public Works (213-485-3684; Daniel.Hackney@LACity.org), described his background, gave a brief overview and described some DPW facilities and work. Los Angeles' recycling is "the best in the world for a city this size." They encourage solutions regarding the biggest challenge: "scavenging is rampant Citywide . . . [by] homeless, mom and pop . . . and commercial operations."

Mr. Pickel arrived at this time.

The recycling program loses money. The City is legally obligated to replace recycling trucks at least every seven years and to recover recyclable materials under State Assembly Bill 939, an unfunded mandate. An increased redemption value "would incentivize scavengers." Mr. Hackney requested NC members and stakeholders to provide input on the issue of scavengers, saying his department is just beginning to think about ways to tackle the problem.

7. **Treasurer's Report & Budget Items**

Monthly Budget report/approval (Matthew Oldham)

Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the “Monthly Spending Report – November 1 – December 7, 2010.”

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Pickel): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the “Monthly Spending Report – November 1 – December 7, 2010.”

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

8. DWP Oversight (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that storm water fees will probably have to be raised. The City Council did not approve a Term Sheet for a DWP Inspector General (Ratepayers Advocate); the IBEW protested it. The City Council put on the next election ballot an ordinance requiring the DWP to give the City its Transfer Fee three months before the City Budget is due. It’s still to be seen if the City will support broader power to remove the DWP General Manager. City Councilmembers Perry, Smith, Parks, Krekorian, Koretz, Cardenas and Rosendahl “have helped a lot.” The DWP will spend \$45 billion in the next 10 years. Desalination is “very expensive.”

9. City Budget Issues (Jack Humphreville & Margaret Sowma)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the City has an \$88 million deficit for July 1st through December 5th. The projected deficit for next fiscal year’s Budget is \$343 million; he believed “the real deficit is really about \$400 million” and that the city Council is “avoiding the issue” of needed infrastructure work; the budget situation “will get ugly next June.” The State has “basically junk credit.” Many City financial staff have left. A Stakeholder encouraged completing the upcoming Mayor’s Budget Survey.

10. Outreach Committee (Matthew Oldham)

A. Great Los Angeles Walk wrap-up (Liz Fuller)

Ms. Fuller described the successful November 20th Great Los Angeles Walk and GWNC participation; Internet blogs mentioned this, which is good for outreach. GWNC spent only \$86 of the \$200 budgeted for the project.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. D’Atri): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will donate food leftover from the November 20th Great Los Angeles Walk to HopeNet.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

Ms. Gilman suggested offering food at GWNC Board Meetings to encourage Stakeholder participation.

B. Increasing GWNC subscriber list/database (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville noted that there’re around 50,000 Stakeholders in 20,000 households in the GWNC area; they’re trying to “build up the database.” Ms. McFall encouraged outreach to schools and parents.

C. Upcoming meeting speakers/events:

January 12 – Local School Principals (Mary Rajswing)

Ms. Rajswing presented a draft letter that the Outreach Committee wrote to invite School Principals to speak at GWNC Board Meetings for up to five minutes and some students to also speak. We are starting with public schools in our area, but will also be doing outreach to private and religious schools.

February 9 – CD4 Candidate forum (Liz Fuller)

Ms. Fuller explained that all six City Council District Four Candidates will be invited to speak at a February 9th Candidate Forum; five have already accepted “and will be here.” Ms. McFall asked if we could hold a similar forum for CD10 candidates, since about 25% of the GWNC area falls within CD10. Ms. Fuller said there are “Eleven Candidates declared” to run for the City Council District Ten seat and we don’t have another meeting with time available before the election. As an alternative, however, we could schedule a special Town Hall Meeting. There was extensive discussion regarding how to give Stakeholders the opportunity to hear all City Council Candidates. Mr. Gresham suggested co-sponsoring a Town Hall Meeting with another Neighborhood Council(s). Ms. Fuller said she would try to find out if another NC in the CD 10 area is planning a candidate forum, in which GWNC might be able to participate.

March 9 – LAPD Vice? (Patti Carroll)

Ms. Carroll said she will try to re-schedule the speaker from LAPD Vice for our March meeting.

11. Ad Hoc Pedestrian Safety Committee (Sarah Tabor)

Ms. Fuller announced that Ms. Tabor will be moving out of the area; the Renter Alternate Board Member seat is now available, as well as the Pedestrian Safety data and project. She asked if there were any volunteers to take over the Pedestrian Safety project Ms. Tabor started, but there were none.

12. Board Member Comments/New Business

Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC) Support (Mary Rajswing).

Ms. Rajswing distributed a draft GWNC letter to John Viernes, Jr., Director, L.A. County Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, in “support for the Koreatown Youth and Community Center’s (KYCC) proposal being submitted” and introduced Irma Garcia of the KYCC Environmental Unit. They’re seeking a letter of support for their fundraising. Ms. McFall and Mr. Gresham expressed support for the KYCC.

MOTION (by Mr. D’Atri, seconded by Ms. McFall): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves of sending a letter in “support for the Koreatown Youth and Community Center’s (KYCC) proposal being submitted . . . [to] provide substance abuse prevention services . . . and to expand its efforts to achieve the program goals of decreasing underage drinking, drug use and the availability of alcohol within our communities.”

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

13. Land Use Committee (LUC) (James Wolf)

A. Café Gratitude wine and beer CUP Application – 639 N. Larchmont Blvd.

Issue: This new restaurant, selling organic vegetarian and vegan food, plans to open in February/March and has applied for a permit to sell wine and beer. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. The restaurant will be 1,978 square feet and have seating for 78 patrons, 26 of them on an outside patio. There are 35 parking spaces on the property. Hearing date is January 5. Owners are meeting with the LVNA this month. **LUC recommended MOTION:** That the GWNC support the CUP application.

Ms. Fuller described the project. Mr. D’Atri advised that the LVNA is considering supporting the project but “hasn’t taken an official position.”

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will draft a letter supporting the wine and beer Conditional Use Permit Application of Café Gratitude, 639 N. Larchmont Blvd., contingent upon the support of the Larchmont Village Neighborhood Association.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Gilman cautioned that “from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. parking” will not be as plentiful as the project owners are saying.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote. Mr. D’Atri will advise the GWNC as to whether the LVNA supports the Application or not.

B. Code Simplification Core Findings Ordinance

Issue: The City has recently proposed an ordinance reflecting its core findings in its efforts to streamline city building and zoning codes. As with several other issues currently being considered by the City, there have been very short public review processes for this ordinance, which don’t allow adequate time for Stakeholder, and particularly Neighborhood Council, review and input. Also, the City has made available only the goals of the changes, and not the exact wording of the draft ordinance, which makes it difficult – especially for lay people – to understand the exact import or context of the proposed changes. The GWNC Land Use Committee has reviewed the proposal and has not identified any major points of objection . . . but it does recommend the following action regarding the City’s review process in general. **LUC recommended MOTION:** That the GWNC send a letter to the Planning Department recommending that it publish all draft ordinances in their entirety (not just a list of proposed changes) well in advance of scheduled votes, so the public and Stakeholders can better understand specific chapters and their overall import.

Ms. Fuller distributed copies of “Myths and Facts about the Planning Department’s Recent Initiatives” and relayed that “the Land Use Committee is going to keep studying the proposed Ordinance.” She described the Ordinance as noted above.

CONSENT MOTION (by Mr. D’Atri, seconded by Mr. Pickel): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council adopts the Motions in Item #’s 13. B and C.

[See below Item #13. C. for the Motion vote.]

C. Zoning Violations at 221 S. Manhattan Pl.

Issue: The residentially-zoned property has recently undergone a use change and is now operating – in violation of its zoning -- as a business (meditation center). Neighbors have complained about the increased foot traffic and parking issues, and the city has cited the property owners with an Order to Comply by November 29. **LUC Recommended**

Motion: That the GWNC send a letter to Building & Safety and the City Council Office stating that we support the existing zoning and the City's efforts to enforce compliance at 221 S. Manhattan Place.

Ms. Fuller described the project as noted above. Stakeholder Rory Cunningham described activities at the meditation center, including that they hold classes and have illegal parking on the front lawn. They're not allowed to run this type of organization; the City issued an Order to Comply and there are a lot of people going there.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

Mr. Smith encouraged reading the following informational items (which may be presented for action, after further LUC discussion, at a later date):

D. City Ordinance Regarding Community Care Facilities

Issue: The City, in an effort to comply with state requirements, has proposed a new ordinance governing community care facilities (including group homes and sober living homes). The City has continued its discussion of the ordinance until February 10, giving the public more time for review and deliberation. Community activist groups in general seem to be happy with the proposals in the ordinance, but organizations that run facilities with more than 6 beds seem to feel the new rules will be too restrictive. Land Use Committee Members have reviewed the ordinance and have not yet found any major points of objection. **LUC recommended action:** None at this time.

E. Policy Statement on GWNC Involvement in Issues Also Being Covered by HPOZ and/or Park Mile Specific Plan Design Review Board

Issue: After several months' discussion about the appropriate handling of issues also being considered by local HPOZ and Specific Plan Review Boards, the Land Use Committee considered a proposed policy statement on the topic. Finally, however, Committee Members agreed that current review procedures seem to be working well and there is no need to formalize things further. **LUC recommended action:** None at this time.

F. Variance to Legalize "Residential" (Office) Use of Accessory Building (Garage) at 4714 W. 8th St.

Issue: This residence has long been used to house a group of missionary priests, who also use space over the garage for offices. After the city cited an illegal carport on the property (which has now been removed), it also asked the owners to obtain a variance for the "residential" (office) use of the garage space...as well as a variance to allow one extra employee (codes allow one employee in this type of space; the priests currently have two lay employees). Since no hearing date has been set yet, Committee Members asked the applicants to return with updated plans for the space, reflecting its current configuration,

and asked them to also obtain input from the Brookside Neighborhood Association and immediate neighbors before the GWNC makes any recommendations. **LUC recommended action:** None at this time.

NOTE: There will be no LUC meeting in December.

Potential Agenda Items for January 25 LUC Meeting (in addition to those above):

- Update on cell phone poles proposed for 1st/Wilton & 9th/Mansfield.
- Update on Eastern Presbyterian Church Renovations (4720 W. 6th St.)
- Presentation and discussion of next draft of a possible new GWNC policy on wireless telecommunications installations
- Condo conversions at 838 N. Mansfield

Mr. Smith said that there are no other potential Agenda Items.

14. Public Comments

Ms. McFall thanked all Committee Members for their work and encouraged saying the Pledge of Allegiance at every Board Meeting. Ms. Gilman announced that the Wilshire Community Police Council is having a sports memorabilia sale January 27th. Mr. Jones-Moreno announced that the Oasis Center has academic tutoring available for all ages Saturdays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; volunteer teachers are needed.

15. Announcements and Adjournment

[The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, January 12, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.]

The Board agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer