



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting
December 14, 2011
MINUTES
Approved by the Board, 1/11/12

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2011, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd., Los Angeles. President Owen Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 p. m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Fuller called the roll. Board Members in attendance at the roll call were: Betty Fox (Alternate for Charles Dougherty), Elizabeth Fuller, Mike Genewick (Alternate for Alex Jones-Moreno), John Gresham, Jack Humphreville, Frances McFall, Clinton Oie (Alternate for David Lunzer), Jason Peers, Joane Pickett (Alternate for Jane Gilman), Owen Smith and Margaret Sowma (Alternate for Jane Usher). Larissa Alarcon, Patricia Carroll, David Lunzer, Mary Rajswing and Jane Usher arrived later. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: Yigal Arens, Charles D’Atri, Barbara Kumetz, Fred Pickel, Benjamin Rosenberg and James Wolf. One Board seat (Area 12 We-Wil) is vacant. Also attending: 35 Stakeholders and guests.

Eleven of the 20 Board Members or their Alternates were present at the roll call, which is not a quorum. 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.

3. Approval of the Minutes

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5.]

MOTION (by Ms. Rajswing, seconded by Ms. Fox): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its November 9, 2011 General Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote.

4. President’s Report (Owen Smith)

A. Board Vacancies

Mr. Smith noted the vacancies – please recruit:

Area 2 (Citrus Square) – Alternate

Area 9 (Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews) – Alternate

Area 12 (We-Wil) – Director and Alternate

Renter – Alternate

B. Bylaws Conformation to DONE’s new uniform Table of Contents (John Welborne)

Mr. Welborne was not present and there was no report.

C. Ethics Training

Board Members and Alternates who have not yet completed the training: Alarcon, Carroll, D'Atri, Kumetz, Pickel, Rosenberg, Dwyer, Fox, Kaliski, Katz, Lombard, Rubin. You MUST complete the course at <http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done>. Mr. Peers completed the Training. No other Ethics Training completions were noted at this time. Ms. Fuller encouraged Board Members to complete the Ethics Training.

Board Member Mary Rajswing arrived at this time, making 12 Board Members present, one short of the GWNC quorum of thirteen.

5. Guest Speaker

Carolyn Ramsey, Program Director, Trust for Public Land (<http://www.tpl.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/california/los-angeles-county/park-acquisition-design.html>), presented with slides and described Los Angeles-area work and projects including natural lands purchases, park fitness zones and green alleys. The Trust is working to acquire many parcels in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Board Members Patricia Carroll and Jane Usher arrived at this time, making a quorum of 13 Board Members present as Ms. Usher replaced her Alternate Ms. Sowma. Now the Board could take binding votes on Agendized Items.

Ms. Ramsey continued that the Trust is building parks, bike and walking paths and playgrounds. They are also “building 12 more” fitness zones “within the next year” and adding solar lighting and other amenities to increase use and safety of alleys and parks. Land is “deeded over right away to public agencies” or other entities “to manage the land.”

Board Member Larissa Alarcon arrived at this time.

Ms. Ramsey added that “about half the funding is from public sources and half is” private. [The following comments were made after Item #3.] L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (323-957-6415; Councilmember.LaBonge@LACity.org; <http://CD4.LACity.org>) thanked Ms. Ramsey for her community service and recognized the John Burroughs Middle School for its public/private partnership.

6. Community Concerns

A. 1. Storm Drain Flooding and Repairs. [Presenters Patrick Holland, LA County; Bruce Hamamoto, Department of Sanitation; Robert Vega, Department of Sanitation; and David Podemsky, Stakeholder]
Maria Chong-Castillo, Public Works Deputy for L.A. County District Three Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (818-901-3831; MCCastillo@bos.co.la.ca.us), introduced Patrick Holland, L.A. County Flood Control District Engineer. He gave a slide presentation, described flood control efforts and that Hancock Park is in a “sub-watershed” of the Ballona Creek watershed. When storm drain and street drain capacities are exceeded there is flooding. Input is requested to develop more solutions by Summer or Fall 2012. Ms. Chong-Castillo said bonds would be issued and the Stormwater Pollution Abatement Fund would pay for the solutions.

Board Member David Lunzer arrived at this time, replacing his Alternate Clinton Oie.

A 1970's project was opposed by local residents partly because the Wilshire Country Club would have needed a major renovation. Ms. Chong-Castillo said they "will reach out to the Country Club" to include them in solutions and that "we'd like to create a regional storm drain system." Robert Vega, L.A. Dept. of Sanitation, described storm drain work, including a potential flooding alert system being developed.

2. David Podemsky, Stakeholder

Stakeholder resident Christine Chun showed videos of severe building and street flooding up to six feet deep in her condo building on February 6, 2010 and November 20, 2011. She claimed that "the City and County have known about these problems for years." The City warning system failed both times; she and other residents are working with the City to correct it and requested help with solutions.

B. John Burroughs Middle School Staff and Students – Acknowledgement of funding for garden project.

Helena Yun, Assistant Principal, John Burroughs Middle School, thanked Ms. Rajswing for inviting them and for facilitating garden project GWNC funding. Seven Honor Students spoke regarding the School's excellence. Dr. Steven Martinez, Principal, showed slides regarding School landscaping improvements and expressions of appreciation for GWNC help.

C. LA High Alumni Association.

This Item was Tabled until the January 11, 2012 General Meeting.

7. Local Government Updates

A. CD4 Update (Ben Seinfeld)

Ben Seinfeld, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (213-485-3337; cell 213-804-2388; Ben.Seinfeld@LACity.org), distributed a "Council District 4 Quarterly Activity Report" and described recent wind storm palm frond and other items cleanup. The Western Ave. crime problem is being worked on by various government and non-profit agencies; there will be a community meeting in January. He is working to improve street lighting. A "bidding process has begun" for repaving Wilshire Blvd. from Western to San Vicente by 2015. [The following comments were made after Item #9. B.] Mr. Seinfeld read from the L.A. City Council Redistricting Commission website (www.Redistricting2011.LACity.org; (213) 922-7740; Redistricting.LACity@LACity.org) the biography of Commissioner Grover McKean.

B. CD5 Update (John Darnell)

Mr. Darnell could not attend and there was no report at this time.

C. CD10 Update (Sylvia Lacy)

Ms. Lacy could not attend and there was no report at this time.

D. 42nd Assembly District Update (Nicole Carcel)

Ms. Carcel could not attend and there was no report at this time.

E. 47th Assembly District Update (Charles Stewart)

Mr. Stewart could not attend and there was no report at this time.

F. 26th Senate District Update (Andrew Lachman)
Mr. Lachman could not attend and there was no report at this time.

8. Treasurer's Report and Budget Items

A. Monthly budget report/approval – Nov./Dec. (Elizabeth Fuller)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after the last comments in Item #7. A.] Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the “Monthly Spending Report – November 9, 2011 – December 13, 2011.” She thanked Ms. Carroll, who is finishing being trained, for volunteering to be the Treasurer. Ms. Fuller reviewed the Monthly Spending Report; Demand Warrants are waiting to be paid.

FUNDING MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Ms. Pickett): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves its “Monthly Spending Report – November 9, 2011 – December 13, 2011.”

FUNDING MOTION PASSED with none opposed.

B. YTD Spending Report (please note amounts available under COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS/OTHER and OUTREACH/SPONSORSHIPS).

Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the “[GWNC] Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 . . . Revised 12/14/11.” Adjustments were made for the “John Burroughs Middle School Landscaping” and “Wilshire Park School Beautification” projects.

FUNDING MOTION (by Ms. Usher, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves its “[GWNC] Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 . . . Revised 12/14/11.”

FUNDING MOTION PASSED with none opposed.

9. New Business

A. Formation of GWNC ad hoc committee on City Council Redistricting.

Ms. Usher described redistricting challenges and said “we need to make our voices known to” new City Council President Herb Wesson. The Board agreed to form an ad hoc [temporary] Redistricting Committee with, so far, Owen Smith, Chair; John Gresham, Member; and Jane Usher, Advisor.

B. City Clerk Survey on NC Election Alternatives. (see handouts)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after the first comments in Item #7. A.] Ms. Fuller distributed a “Neighborhood Council Election Alternatives Survey,” “Description of Different Election Methods” and “[NC] Elections Common Processes and Cost Variables.” She described and reviewed the Survey, listing election/selection and other options. Ms. Usher preferred not using the City Clerk again and favors an in-person Town Hall Meeting with written ballots and proof required of a Stakeholder living, working and/or owning property in the GWNC area.

MOTION #1 (by Ms. Fox, seconded by Ms. Pickett): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves postponing its election until 2014.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote.

MOTION #2(by Ms. Rajswing, seconded by Ms. Pickett): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves notifying the L.A. City Clerk’s Office that it approves postponing its election until 2014, that it further prefers future elections to be in-person Town Hall Meetings with mandatory written secret ballots and proof required of Stakeholders living, working and/or owning property in the GWNC area; and that it requires that its elections and selections honor the GWNC Bylaws.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote.

10. DWP Oversight (Jack Humphreville)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #17.] Mr. Humphreville reported that the DWP is asking for an interim rate increase.

11. City Budget Issues (Humphreville/Mariscal/Sowma)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the City credit rating has again been lowered, pensions are not being funded as needed and there is a \$72 million budget deficit so far this fiscal year. He, Ms. Sowma and Federico Mariscal, the GWNC Budget Advocates, have been meeting with the Mayor’s Office.

12. Traffic & Transportation Committee (Pickel)

Mr. Pickel was unable to attend and there was no report.

13. Outreach Committee (Rajswing)

A. Upcoming meeting speakers/events (organizers in parentheses):

January – LAFD CERT Program

February – Local clubs: Ebell of Los Angeles, Rotary, Windsor Square/Hancock Park Historical Society

March: Assessor/property tax issues

April: LAPD Neighborhood Watch/Block Captain Program

May: Library Friends Organizations (Fremont, Wilshire, Memorial)

June: Local religious organizations

Others?: Solar panel leasing and group purchase programs, League of Women Voters, etc.

Ms. Rajswing described outreach efforts. Ms. McFall would like more City speakers.

B. Proposal for GWNC stakeholder honoree program (Peers)

Board Member Jason Peers is refining his proposal for this program, so discussion was tabled until January.

14. Other Committee/Project Reports

There were no other reports at this time.

15. Board Member Comments

There were no other Board Member comments or new business.

16. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

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

[The first paragraph is directly from the Agenda.]

A. Proposed Ordinance to Allow Farmers' Markets in All Residential Zones.

Issue: The City has proposed a new ordinance intended to make it easier to establish new farmers' markets, which would allow new markets in all Residential zones. Committee members were concerned about possible "unintended consequences" of the ordinance as written, especially regarding the proposed notification radius (300 ft.) for new applications, the percentage of residents (60%) who would have to approve such a use in a given area, and the fact that public hearings could be waived at the discretion of the Zoning Administrator. Concerns were also raised regarding oversight of the quality and type of food products sold, parking, traffic and other issues. LUC Recommended Motion: That the GWNC write a letter to the City requesting revisions in the proposed Ordinance for Farmers Markets in Residential zones such that: 1) the 300-foot residential notice radius be increased to 1,000 feet; 2) the 60% residents' approval minimum within the residential notice radius be increased to 67% (2/3); and 3) that public hearings be required for all applicants wanting to locate a Farmers Market in a residential zone. (Note: the committee vote on this motion was 9-2, with members Gresham and Wolf opposing.)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #9. A.] Ms. Fuller described the issue and that the LUC considered it and made recommendations. Mr. Gresham was opposed to any Farmers Market in a residential zone. Ms. Usher observed that there is a "streamlined, good process already on the books . . . [and] every neighborhood that's weighed in" opposes the proposed Ordinance. Ms. Pickett believed that a residential zone Farmers Market would not survive.

MOTION (by Ms. Fox, seconded by Ms. Alarcon): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council opposes the proposed Ordinance to allow farmers' markets in all Los Angeles residential zones.

MOTION PASSED with none opposed.

There will be NO Land Use Committee Meeting in December. The next LUC Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 24, at 6:00 p.m. Potential Agenda Items for January LUC Meeting:

- Nara Bank parking lot (200 block of S. Manhattan Pl.)
- Update on conversion of apartments to board and care facility at 901 S. Wilton
- Update on proposed modifications to cell phone antenna at 137 N. Larchmont Blvd.

18. Public Comments

[This was the same as Item #16.]

19. Announcements and Adjournment

Next General Meeting: Wednesday, January 11, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Smith declared and the Board agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer