

# Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council



## Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting

May 13, 2009

Approved by the Board  
July 9, 2009

### MINUTES

#### Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Board of Directors of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2009, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 South Lucerne Blvd. President Charles Dougherty called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

#### Roll Call

The Secretary, Elizabeth Fuller, called the roll. Board of Directors members in attendance at the roll call were: Jared Abrams, Patti Carroll, Moon Chung, Charles Dougherty, Elizabeth Fuller, Jane Gilman, Rudy Gintel, John Gresham, Alison Hannon, Margaret Hudson, Alex Jones-Moreno, Martha Schuur, and James Wolf. Director Jane Usher and Alternate Director Patty Lombard joined the meeting later. Directors Yigal Arens, Charles Bergson, Clinton Oie, Russell Sherman and Owen Smith were absent and not represented by an alternate.

The Secretary stated that a quorum was present.

#### Featured Presentation

Director Margy Hudson introduced LAPD Captain Matt Blake and Senior Lead Officer Joe Pelayo from the Olympic Station and Captain Eric Davis and acting Senior Lead Officer Reuben Gonzales (temporarily filling in for Dave Cordova) from the Wilshire Station.

Captain Davis reported that the number of crimes are down in our area, though he also acknowledged that it never feels that way when you’re a victim of a crime. He also invited people to subscribe to the area’s daily e-policing report at <http://www.lapdepolicing.org>

Officer Pelayo said the main problems in our area are burglaries – from both residences and vehicles. He advised people to lock their doors and windows (both homes

and cars), never to leave valuables in their vehicles, to use alarms and sensor lights, and to call 911 to report any suspicious people or activity.

*[Director Jane Usher joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m.]*

Captain Davis reiterated the prevention advice, which he said sounds simple but is still valuable – most suspects say, after they’re arrested, that they look for open locks and valuables left in cars. Many of them are drug users, supporting their habits, and want easy targets for quick fixes.

Captain Blake, from the new Olympic Division, asked if stakeholders have noticed any changes in service delivery since the station opened earlier this year. He said they judge their success on response times – the goal is seven minutes and their current rate is five minutes. He also introduced the station’s Night Watch Detective and told the story of a case in which the detectives put together bits of descriptions from different cases and arrested suspects responsible for multiple crimes. He said Officer Pelayo is the person to contact about graffiti and other “quality of life” issues. They also use Police Explorers to canvas the neighborhood for problems, and the Explorers will leave notes if they see items left in cars that could be potential targets for break-ins.

Captain Blake, too, reported reduced crime in the area, and said the Olympic Division currently ranks second in the city for crime reduction. He has also received compliments from stakeholders on the politeness of the officers, and is particularly proud of the Division’s youth programs, which help keep kids from becoming “part of the problem.” He said they have 80 8 to 13-year-olds who come to the station twice a week to participate in the program, as well as a “jeopardy” program to help more hard-core kids turn their lives around.

In addition, Captain Blake said the area’s Vice Unit is very aggressive, and has made more than 70 prostitution arrests since January. He said, though, that this is a circuit that moves around, and is hard to keep up with. But the police also do undercover stings, many of them in the very early hours of the morning. And they’re looking for other creative techniques, such as notices sent to the homes of people who are caught hanging out in areas known for prostitution activity.

Officer Pelayo said he learns a lot about what’s going on in the community through e-mail, and e-mail is also often the best way to get information out. He invited people to call him about any kind of problems they might be having, and said the number one complaint he gets is about illegal vendors on the street (they do sweeps of these twice a month). He also urged people to sign up for the e-policing service.

Director John Gresham noted that his neighborhood currently has no Senior Lead Officer, and asked who they can talk to when there’s a problem. Captain Blake offered to e-mail a map of each SLO’s territory to Mr. Gresham, and Director Jane Usher suggested we also post it on our GWNC website when we get it.

Director Patti Carroll asked what people should do if they have kids in their neighborhood who should be referred to the station's youth programs. Captain Blake said they can call the station, and teachers can also make referrals. A community relations person from the station will talk to the kids who are recommended.

Stakeholder Gary Duff, via an e-mail read by GWNC President Charles Dougherty, asked what can be done about low-flying helicopters in our area. Captain Davis said helicopters are an invaluable resource for the police, but he does understand that they're noisy. He said people bothered by the noise can notify the station, which can find out which helicopter caused the problem and make sure the pilots are adhering to FAA rules. He also said flying low is not a general practice unless there's a specific tactical operation...and that nine out of 10 times they can tell you why a helicopter is in a particular area and how the issue will be resolved.

*[Alternate Director Patty Lombard joined the meeting at 7:53 p.m.]*

Another question submitted by a stakeholder via e-mail addressed the issue of alarm bells going off at John Burroughs Middle School at all hours of the day and night. Nikki Ezhari, Field Deputy for City Council Member Tom La Bonge, said the school has given her office a number to call for help when this happens. Captain Davis said this is not necessarily a police issue, but can become one if noise is the problem. He said this is the kind of thing that can be brought to the Senior Lead Officer as a quality of life issue.

*[Director Jared Abrams left the meeting at 7:57 p.m.]*

Another stakeholder asked about a recent incident in which students from John Burroughs were held up at the corner of Wilshire and Citrus. Captain Davis said they do have significant leads in the case -- the suspects are gang members from south LA.

Director John Gresham asked if there are any current gang disputes in our area, and Captain Davis said there are not any at the moment, but we do occasionally have problems with gang members passing through and, for example, robbing someone on their way to a party in Hollywood.

Another stakeholder, who lives at 6<sup>th</sup> and Norton, said that area has had an "explosion" of miscellaneous crimes in the past year, including three armed robberies. She also said response times there have been poor, and one call about a robbery in progress didn't bring police for 17 minutes. She said the perception of neighbors is that even if they do call, there will be no response.

Captain Blake said the average response time for that area is 4.8 minutes, and that he doesn't know why it took so long in the one case. He said they are making vehicle break-ins a priority right now, and officers should be responding well to those calls in particular. He offered to look into the incident.

The night watch detective said he also often responds to such calls, but because

detectives are in plain clothes, residents may not immediately recognize them at a crime scene.

The stakeholder said a Neighborhood Watch doesn't work if people think the police won't respond, and Captain Blake said they just arrested someone who broke 37 car windows in the area, so he urged people to keep reporting crimes and promised the suspects will be caught.

Director Jane Usher asked if there are instructions or an established protocol to follow for reporting unregulated medical marijuana distributors.

Captain Davis said the city's proposed medical marijuana ordinance would give communities the ability to establish guidelines for the operation of dispensaries, but the City is still working on the ordinance and until it's there is a moratorium in place. He said no new clinics can open until the permanent guidelines are established, but they can get exceptions by applying for a hardship exemption through the Department of Building and Safety. He agreed, however, that shops operating under this loophole are springing up too fast, and said that if a specific complaint comes in, they will launch an investigation. The police do, however, have to acknowledge the confidentiality of patients, and are working closely with community groups and City Council District offices, Neighborhood Councils, neighborhood watch groups and others. He said his job is to enforce the laws, and he will do that.

Director Elizabeth Fuller asked if dispensaries really are targets for crimes to the extent that people tend to fear. Captain Davis said that within the last month, his area has gained 14 new clinics and there are now 33 within the Division's area. He said there have been three burglaries, two robberies and one homicide...but there have been arrests in all of the cases, and community members were instrumental in leading to the arrests in the murder at the dispensary at 812 S. La Brea.

#### Reading of the Minutes

The Secretary presented the Minutes of the previous meeting, which had been distributed to Directors by e-mail and posted on the Council's *greaterwilshire.org* web site. Additional copies were distributed at the meeting.

Director Elizabeth Fuller noted that "March" was misspelled on the first page. President Charles Dougherty found an incorrect date in the header on the inside pages. Director Margy Hudson said "Osteria" was misspelled on page 8. Director Jared Abrams said "Mr. Arens" at the beginning of the fifth paragraph on page 14 should be changed to "Mr. Abrams."

Director Jane Usher moved that the minutes be approved as amended. Director Jane Gilman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Elizabeth Fuller reported that we are paying four new vendor invoices today, and our current account balance, as reported on the DONE website, is \$145,390.57.

President's Report

President Charles Dougherty announced that the City Council Budget and Finance Committee has proposed a 78% cut in Neighborhood Council budgets for the coming year – from \$50,000 to \$11,200.

Director Jane Usher presented a motion relating to the proposed cut:

**SUBJECT:**

*On May 18, 2009, the City Council will hold a Special Meeting to give additional consideration to the pending budget for the upcoming fiscal year.*

*To date, the Mayor has proposed to reduce the funding of each Neighborhood Council from \$50,000 down to \$45,000, commensurate with the 10% budget reductions citywide. As of May 11, 2009, the Budget & Finance Committee of the City Council had proposed to sharply alter the Mayor's recommendation by decreasing the funding of each Neighborhood Council by 78%. Instead of the annual \$50,000 operating stipend, each NC would receive \$11,200.*

*Adding to this disproportionate decline, the GWNC has been advised that the Budget & Finance Committee proposes to transfer \$4.5 million from DONE to the City Clerk for the questionable purpose of running increasingly bureaucratic NC elections – it is also believed that this sum will be used to subsidize the running of general City elections.*

*Neighborhood Council representatives have turned out in full opposition to the 78% budget slashing and to City Clerk election funding.*

**MOTION:**

*The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council fully supports the efforts of Neighborhood Councils to provide meaningful local solutions, both in Greater Wilshire and throughout Los Angeles. The GWNC does not believe that the voice, work, and outreach of NC's can be forcefully exercised with a 78% budget cut. The GWNC supports the Mayor's budget proposal to reduce NC funding from \$50,000 to \$45,000 next year. The GWNC opposes City Clerk elections, with a proposed expenditure of \$4.5 million from the NC budget. City Clerk elections*

*add permanent and unnecessary bureaucracy, burden, and expense to the Neighborhood Council movement.*

*The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will actively lobby the City Council and Mayor to preserve its funding at a level of no less than \$45,000 per year and to abandon or postpone City Clerk elections. The GWNC encourages its stakeholders to write and/or call their City Council members, the Mayor, and other City Council members to demand the same. The GWNC will work in cooperation with all other Neighborhood Councils in support of this Motion.*

Ms. Usher said the City Council will vote on Neighborhood Council budgets on Monday, and that if we pass this motion it will communicate our sentiments to the Council Members. The motion was seconded by Director Rudy Gintel. It passed unanimously.

Mr. Dougherty reported that after searching for several years, we've finally had a "breakthrough" in finding office space for the GWNC. The office is in the Harbor Building at Wilshire and Crenshaw. It's an interior space, with no windows, but it's about 380 square feet (the right size for our needs), meets disability accessibility requirements, and costs about \$1.80 per square foot (or \$650-700 per month), which is within our budget. Director John Gresham said we might not be able to afford it if our budget gets cut, but acting Treasurer Elizabeth Fuller said the money is set aside in our current budget, and we could spend it before the end of the fiscal year. DONE representative Betty Wong Oyama said the space will have to be cleared through DONE before a lease can be finalized. Ms. Fuller recommended we spend the money now, even though we may soon have a serious budget crisis, because an office would provide central, accessible storage for our files and other possessions...and because we cannot hire an assistant to help with our clerical work (which she now does 80% of) until we have an office for an assistant to work in. Mr. Dougherty said he is hoping that no matter what funding allotment the City Council approves, they don't vote to "sweep" old funds from neighborhood accounts, so we should still be able to afford the space.

Mr. Dougherty reminded all Board Members and their Alternates that they must take the City's online Ethics Training course (and people who took it more than two years ago need to take it again and renew their certification). He read the names of those who have completed the training - Arens, Dougherty, Fuller, Gresham, Hudson, Oie, Schuur, Smith, Usher, Genewick and Jakubowski - and said that next time, he will read the names of those who *haven't* taken the required course, which can be found online at <http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done>

Mr. Dougherty introduced DONE representative Betty Wong Oyama, who announced that the due dates for 2009-2010 NC budgets will be changed, pending the outcome of the City Council's budget discussion on Monday.

Ms. Oyama also announced that the GWNC bylaws, recently amended to comply with new City election procedures, have been approved. She thanked Director Jane Usher in advance for submitting our required bylaws checklist by the June 1 deadline.

Finally, Ms. Oyama echoed Mr. Dougherty's reminder about ethics training...said hiring office help is a good idea (and that if we have someone in mind for the position, we should have them register with Apple One, the temp agency that's recommended for NC hiring)...and passed out information on lobbying dos and don'ts.

Mr. Dougherty introduced Nikki Ezhari, Field Deputy for City Council Member Tom La Bonge. Ms. Ezhari announced several recent accomplishments from her office:

- Some Preferential Parking District regulations in Brookside have been changed.
- New landscaping at John Burroughs is looking nice
- The Frances Blend School garden project has been helped by the Windsor Square Association and other local groups
- The Windsor Square lighting project is progressing with help from John Welborne
- Another lighting project is proceeding on Wilton Ave.
- The LAPD Wilshire Division open house will take place on August 14
- The CD4 office is looking into security cameras for the LAPD Olympic station
- Other active issues include billboards, medical marijuana dispensaries, and NC budget cuts. She said Mr. La Bonge does not support the proposed budget cuts or "grandfathered" billboards that would otherwise be illegal
- Finally, the new First St. water trunk line project has begun, and one lane of that street will be closed for a while.

Director Jane Usher asked that Ms. Ezhari carry back our appreciation of Tom La Bonge on these and many other issues.

Finally, President Dougherty introduced Fabiola Vilchez, the Central Area Director for Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's office, who introduced herself, said she'd be happy to help us in any way possible, and would be happy to attend any meetings we'd like to invite her to. She provided her phone number – (213) 978-0812 – and e-mail address ([fabiola.vilchez@lacity.org](mailto:fabiola.vilchez@lacity.org))

#### Guest Presentation

Rhonda Morris, from the LA Dispute Resolution Program, which is located in the city Attorney's office (though not part of that staff), introduced the program as a fair, quick, free service, with the goal of striking a happy medium between parties and avoiding litigation. She said there are 1,800 mediators in three offices, all of whom are volunteers and come from all walks of life. She said disputes that can be mediated include barking dogs, trees growing over fences, employer/employee conflicts, disputes between employees and the post office...and many others. She said the mediators don't give legal advice, and they are obligated to be impartial or they will be removed from the case. Also, all proceedings are confidential.

Director John Gresham asked how people can contact the program, and Ms. Morris said she would leave behind brochures and business cards for anyone who is interested. She said that when people contact the office, they will receive a call back within 48 hours. The mediator will hear the first party's side of the problem, then will contact the other party involved to set up a meeting. Often, she said, disputants don't like to talk to each other, and prefer to talk through the mediator. Resolutions can take anywhere from one day to several months, depending on the issue.

#### Ad Hoc Land Use Committee

Mozza to Go – Representative Brett Engstrom said the owners of the Mozza restaurants are planning to convert a 2,500 square foot building that used to house the Mac computer store on Melrose to a Mozza take-out service, with some on-site seating and sales of beer and wine.

Director Jane Gilman asked about parking, and Mr. Engstrom said it would be consolidated with the other two Mozza restaurants. (In addition to parking spaces behind the building, there are also lots on Willoughby and at Bancroft Middle School which are used by the restaurants' valet service).

Mr. Wolf said the Ad Hoc Land Use Committee asked that Mr. Engstrom provide a written statement outlining the parking plan. Mr. Engstrom said he e-mailed it yesterday...but Mr. Wolf and board secretary Elizabeth Fuller said they never received the document. Mr. Wolf asked when the hearing on the application will take place, and Mr. Engstrom said it will be on June 11. Director Jane Usher said that in every land use case that comes to the GWNC board after being heard by the Land Use Committee, we ask what the applicant is asking for and what the Land Use Committee asked the applicant to provide. Mr. Engstrom said the restaurant is requesting a CUP for beer and wine sales. Director Rudy Gintel asked if they're requesting permission for off-site sales. Mr. Engstrom said an on-site license is their main concern, but they would like to be able to sell beer and wine to go with take out meals as well. Mr. Wolf asked about packaging, and Mr. Engstrom said they would only sell liquor in the original manufacturer's packaging.

Mr. Gintel said he never heard about off-site liquor sales at the Land Use Committee meeting, and Ms. Usher said that would turn the establishment into a liquor store. She moved that we oppose any beer and wine sales to go, citing the restaurant's location in a neighborhood of single family residences.

Mr. Engstrom said they are applying for a Type 41 license, which is for on-site consumption, and everything else would be ancillary. Ms. Usher re-stated her motion for the GWNC to oppose any "to go" liquor sales, and Alternate Director Patty Lombard seconded the motion.

Director Patti Carroll asked Mr. Engstrom if the restaurant sees itself as being a liquor store, and Mr. Engstrom said the other two Mozza restaurants are very popular and

hard to get into, so this one would just be a fast, to-go alternative. But Ms. Usher said it doesn't matter who the owner or operator is -- if we grant this permit, and the owners change, the rights could be transferred, and we could have a liquor store there. Mr. Engstrom introduced David Ross, the Mozza general manager, who said beer and wine sales would be just a tiny part of the overall business -- there would only be a small kiosk for selling sauces and a few wines, from noon to 11 p.m., so it would be a minimal presence. Ms. Usher said the license doesn't specify what part of the business liquor can be, and Mr. Wolf agreed that these permissions go with the property, so we always ask applicants what their intentions are because we want that kind of information on file. He said he was disappointed that the applicant doesn't have the written document with him tonight, and that we originally saw the project as a traffic and parking issue, but were not aware of the liquor request. He asked that we amend Ms. Usher's motion, to oppose the CUP on the basis that the application was not forthright at our prior meeting. He also noted that we don't have another meeting before the public hearing on this matter and we don't have the applicant's written statement of requests in hand.

Ms. Lombard asked Mr. Engstrom if he brought a copy of the document that was e-mailed. He said he did not, but the restaurant has worked hard on its parking plan and to resolve parking issues with neighbors. Ms. Usher said they'll need to have a written and enforceable parking agreement, which specifies the hours of operation, and that she is disappointed with the lack of documentation in this case.

Ms. Lombard said she would like to further amend the motion to say we oppose the request because of the lack of documentation on parking solutions, and because of our previously stated opposition to take-out beer and wine sales.

Mr. Engstrom said the restaurant is 2,000 square feet, and the city requires two parking spaces per 1,000 square feet, which they have. Ms. Lombard said the Land Use committee felt that number was inadequate, and Mr. Engstrom said that's why they decided to consolidate parking with the other two restaurants. Director Martha Schuur asked if that means customers will have to pay an \$8 valet fee to pick up a pizza at the new restaurant, but Mr. Ross said the eight parking spaces behind the restaurant would be used for short-term parking for take-out customers, and people eating in and parking for longer periods would have their cars taken to the other available lots. He said there is also an attendant on the premises, who can move cars around to create extra space. He said the restaurant is taking parking very seriously, because it's often customers' first and last impression of the business.

Ms. Usher asked if these conditions will be written into the CUP, or just a stated way of doing business, and Mr. Ross said that it's currently their way of doing business, and they could fax the missing document tomorrow.

Director Jane Gilman seconded the amended motion. Director Margy Hudson abstained from voting on the amended motion; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.

Dover Apartments – Director Patti Carroll introduced the project, an existing apartment building on Beverly, where the owners would like to convert an old ground floor parking area, now used for storage, into several small creative studio spaces. She said the building currently provides no on-site parking, which is grandfathered in because of the building's age. She noted that the current owners have cleaned up the property and attracted a new group of renters. She said the neighborhood associations have also visited the property since this project was first brought to us a few months ago, and thought the proposed use was "great." The owners would need a variance for eight parking spaces, but she and the neighbors would support that request.

Owners' representative Brendan McDermott said the building's first floor was originally intended to be for parking, in the 1920s, but that's it's much too small to use for that now, and it's currently just storage space that he'd like to convert to creative studios. But he would need FAR and parking variances to do that.

Director Jane Usher asked what specific requests he's making and Mr. McDermott said he just wants to convert storage to commercial space. Ms. Usher said that would require a zoning change, so we'd need to know what zoning designation he was looking for. If the property is already C-2 he wouldn't need a variance to do the work. Mr. McDermott said the current zoning is C-2, and that he hasn't filed any specific applications yet -- he is only floating ideas at this point.

Ms. Usher said she'd volunteer to meet with our Land Use Committee to provide a template for future discussions, including queries on the existing conditions and what specific changes are being requested. She said she'd like to make a motion that we generally approve Mr. McDermott's idea, but that we want him to bring back more specifics of the plan.

Director John Gresham said he'd like to know how much parking they have now, and how much will be needed. Mr. McDermott said they'd need 8 spaces but have none. Ms. Carroll explained that none of the apartments currently have parking, nor have they ever had it. Mr. McDermott said the owners have actually reduced the number of apartments in the building, and Mr. Gintel said that reduction has already benefited the community.

Ms. Usher repeated her motion that we approve the general idea, but would like the representatives to come back with a more specific description of current conditions and what changes are being requested. But Mr. Wolf said we don't actually need a motion yet, because no formal application has been made, and there's no hearing scheduled. We can simply request that the owners come back again in the future, with more specific information about the privileges they're requesting.

Cell Phone Tower Update – Director Patti Carroll said there was a great effort by the Ridgewood/Wilton and St. Andrews Square Neighborhood Associations to protest the requested installation of a new cell phone tower an apartment building at 108 S. Gramercy. But although neighbors are fairly confident the outcome will be positive,

there is no formal decision yet. One thing that did stand out in the testimony presented at the recent public hearing, she said, was the cell phone company's false claims about their needs for towers in the area not being met.

BRE Wilshire-La Brea Development – Director Elizabeth Fuller described several issues neighbors are focusing on as this project approaches its first public hearing, along with ideas for dealing with some of them that came out of the most recent Ad Hoc Land Use Committee meeting.

First, while BRE has requested changing the entire block to C-4 (currently the La Brea side is C-2 and the Sycamore side is [Q]C-2, with the [Q] limiting it to R-2 density or surface-level parking), the neighbors are worried about the loss of an officially zoned buffer area between the commercial district on La Brea and the low-density residential neighborhood on Sycamore. Ms. Fuller reported that Land Use Committee chair Jim Wolf, at the most recent LUC meeting, suggested an alternate change: moving the lot line that currently runs down the middle of the block a bit further east, creating deeper lots that could be zoned C-4 along the La Brea Ave. side of the block, and shallower lots along Sycamore that could be rezoned from [Q]C-2 back to R2.

Second, BRE has requested a blanket CUP for the space, which would include liquor permits for three restaurants and one retail store. Neighbors are still divided on this issue, but some are concerned about the blanket permit and would prefer to negotiate permits individually with each potential tenant.

Third, the neighbors are concerned that the Final EIR does not deal adequately with potential traffic issues, and would like to see BRE commit to creating a fund for further study and mitigation measures.

And finally, while the developers have planned a small pocket park within the development, the neighbors don't think this is adequate green space for the number of new residents the development will bring to the neighborhood. They'd like to see BRE do more to mitigate the area's need for park space...perhaps by helping to develop a park at another site (such as some land that may be opening up in the next year or two on the Wilshire Crest School campus).

Ms. Fuller said her neighborhood has not yet taken a formal vote on these issues, but will be doing so before the May 27 Zoning Administration hearing, and she will be recommending the measures above. She moved that the GWNC support the neighbors' position when formalized.

Director Jane Usher said the zoning idea is excellent, but she rather than a traffic fund (which could be appropriated for other uses by the city), they should provide a written list of specific traffic commitments, including ingress and egress plans.

Director Rudy Gintel said he doesn't believe LAUSD would support the park idea, but Ms. Fuller said she has heard from both Rec and Parks and a CD4 contact that

LAUSD has been developing some shared space parks, and would be open to doing more. Mr. Gintel said he still doesn't believe it, but it would be great if they would.

Stakeholder Jack Humphreville said he has asked BRE to disclose the financial benefits of the entitlements they're requesting from the City, and they haven't done so. He said the entitlement requests should not be approved until they've provided that information.

Alternate Director Patty Lombard said she would second Ms. Fuller's motion for support of the neighborhood vote, but would like to add that BRE should stipulate its commitments for traffic mitigation, and the request that BRE provide financial disclosure. Ms. Usher seconded the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

Larchmont Grill -- Owners' representative Robert Fedor said the restaurant is seeking a full liquor license and to extend its hours by one hour each evening. He said there will be no physical changes in the restaurant, and no new seats. He passed out documents outlining the specifics of the request, along with photos of the establishment and a petition with signatures in favor of the changes.

Director Jane Gilman asked if he had talked to the Larchmont Heights Neighborhood Association about the plan, and he said that he was not aware of that group before this meeting, but would be more than willing to do so.

Ms. Usher asked if there would be any off-site liquor sales, and he said no.

Vice President James Wolf said he saw the petition at our recent Ad Hoc Land Use Committee meeting, and most of the people who signed it are not area residents. The restaurant owner, who was also present, said the petition has been updated, and does now include a number of neighbors.

Ms. Usher said the proposal seems fine, and it's nice that they brought the paperwork, but they should go to the local neighborhood association as well. Mr. Dougherty asked that Director John Gresham provide the name of a contact for that group.

Director Rudy Gintel said the Land Use Committee also reacted favorably to the request, but joined in asking the representatives to get an OK from the neighborhood association as well.

Mr. Wolf said that since no hearing date has been set, the representatives do have time to do this and to come back to us for a formal motion of support. Mr. Fedor asked if they should come to the Land Use Committee or the full Board for that motion, and Mr. Wolf recommended they come to the LUC first.

Bulldog Café – Matthew Healy, general manager of the Bulldog Café, said he was here primarily to get the City to deal with the hardship application his business has filed,

which would allow it to operate legally under the current Interim Control Ordinance for medical marijuana dispensaries. He said the vast majority of his customers live in the surrounding neighborhood, and are in urgent need of his services. He provided his phone number – (310) 403-8753 – and asked people to call him for clarification of any of the issues involved.

Director Martha Schuur asked if Mr. Healy could provide a list of the medical needs his product treats, and he said that his patients suffer from AIDS, nausea, chronic pain, cancer and other ailments. But he said his business doesn't make the guidelines for treatment; doctors make the recommendations. Ms. Schuur asked if MDs are writing the prescriptions and Mr. Healy said yes.

Director Jane Gilman asked what the hours of the business are, and Mr. Healy said it will be changing to 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Director Jane Usher said that when she was president of the City Planning Commission, that group sat through thousands of hours of testimony on this subject and one thing that was very clear was the compassionate need of patients for medical marijuana. But the commissioners also heard a lot about the wild proliferation of dispensaries in the city. The 2007 Interim Control Ordinance said businesses can't dispense marijuana unless they were registered with the city within a 90-day period, and they had to get a business license. But only people willing to register and confirm their location and business practices need apply. Many facilities did. 300 others didn't complete the process in time, but applied for hardship exemptions to continue operating. She said it was understood that such exemptions were for extreme circumstances only...but the City has not acted on any of the exemption applications, and the businesses should not be operating while an application is pending. She said this has created a crisis, which the City is handling badly. She said she has read the Bulldog Café's hardship application and does not see a hardship there...and the fact that the business is operating while the application is pending is shameful -- there are hundreds of legal businesses and this is not one of them.

Ms. Schuur asked what the hardship is in this case, and Mr. Healy said the business was licensed and operating legally at its original location in North Hollywood, but the landlord received a threatening letter from the DEA and evicted it. He said the hardship exemption is intended for situations like this, and it is shameful that other businesses are abusing the hardship process.

Ms. Gilman asked if there's a list of dispensaries in operation now, and Ms. Usher said it's organized by address, and is designed to prevent over-concentration of dispensaries in any one area.

Alternate Director Patty Lombard asked if it's true that there are now six dispensaries on our section of Melrose Ave., and Mr. Healy said there are more, with new ones popping up all the time.

Ms. Lombard asked why the Bulldog Café is open until 11 p.m., and Mr. Healy said it's to help patients who have trouble sleeping and need the drug to get to sleep.

Dege Coutee, president of a national marijuana advocacy group who has been part of the City's working group on this issue, said she was here to support the Bulldog Café, one of the original 187 dispensaries properly licensed to do business. She said the business filed a hardship exemption because they were forced to move by the DEA's threats to their prior landlord. She said many other such businesses are in the same situation – and are thus operating legally. They are not among the abusers.

Ms. Usher proposed two motions. The first:

**SUBJECT:**

*Nearly three hundred marijuana dispensaries have opened and are operating within the City while their requests pend for hardship exemptions from the citywide Interim Control Ordinance that regulates such businesses. Hundreds more such facilities that have neither registered nor applied for a hardship exemption are believed to be operating within the city. At least one unregistered marijuana facility has opened and is operating within the boundaries of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council, and is located within steps of both an elementary school and a public library.*

**MOTION:**

*The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council is concerned about the opening and proliferation of unregulated marijuana dispensaries in our community.*

*We believe that people with illnesses who are helped by medical marijuana should have access to medical marijuana. For the sake of public safety, though, access to medical marijuana should be provided in a lawful, well-regulated manner.*

*We support the moratorium on dispensaries that the City enacted while it drafts final regulations for dispensaries. We do not support so-called hardship exemptions under the moratorium except in instances of extraordinary public need and excuse. We do not support the operation of any such facilities during the pendency of their hardship exemption applications. We do not support the grandfathering of any such facilities.*

***NOW THEREFORE***, the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council requests and requires that City Council members LaBonge (CD4), Weiss (CD5), and Wesson (CD10):

*1. Obtain the immediate closure of any marijuana dispensary that did not complete its registration in accordance with the terms of the ICO and that is*

*operating either with no registration, with an incomplete registration, or with a pending hardship exemption.*

*2. Promptly act on all hardship exemptions from the ICO pending before the City Council and DENY all such applications that are not supported by extraordinary cause, excuse, and public need.*

*3. Promptly adopt permanent regulations that secure the safety of the public and that prevent over-concentration or operation near schools, youth centers, public libraries, and religious facilities.*

...and a second motion that the GWNC not support the Bulldog Café's request, because it does not belong in its current location near the Fremont Library.

Ms. Gilman seconded both motions.

Ms. Schuur asked what the dispensary's name was before it became the Bulldog Café. Mr. Healy said the legal name is still Cahuenga Caregivers, but its current DBA is Bulldog Café. He said the business is more than 1,000 feet from a nearby preschool, the library is currently closed for remodeling, and you do have to be at least 18 years old to enter the premises.

On the first motion, Director Rudy Gintel abstained; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.

The second motion carried unanimously.

Ogamdo Café – Director Elizabeth Fuller said this restaurant, at 842 S. La Brea, applied three years ago for a CUP that would allow extended business hours, a full liquor license and use of an outdoor dining patio behind the restaurant. At the time, all requests were denied after protests from the neighbors, whose back yards are separated from the property only by a small wall, and whose bedrooms mostly face the restaurant property. Recently, though, the restaurant submitted a new CUP application, asking for all the same privileges, and the neighbors are still adamantly opposed. She said no hearing date has been set yet, but the neighbors would like the GWNC's support in opposing the application.

Director Rudy Gintel moved that the GWNC support the neighbors' opposition to the application. Director John Gresham seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

#### DWP Oversight Committee

DWP MOU Representative Jack Humphreville reported that 55% of the voters opposed Measure B in the recent election, which was surprising because the measure's protestors were significantly outspent.

He also reported on the new storm water parcel tax, and shortage year water rates, saying Tier 1 allocations have been lowered by 15%. The new rates apply to single family residences only. Tier 2 rates are up by 75%. The purpose is to conserve water – the more you use, the more your rates will increase.

Mr. Humphreville said that in the current budget crisis, DWP is looked at as a cash cow, and will be getting hit in three ways: transfer costs, payments to inspect fire hydrants, and becoming a dumping ground for city employees who don't necessarily have the right skills for the work.

Finally, he said the MOU Oversight Committee is also looking for a ratepayers' advocate.

Director John Gresham asked Mr. Humphreville to explain the Tier 1 and Tier 2 rate structure. Mr. Humphreville said Tier 1 is the basic rate, and Tier 2 is the penalty rate, which will be charged to people who use more water.

Director Patti Carroll said it's her understanding that the rates will apply to apartment buildings as well as SFRs, and the Apartment Owners' Association is lobbying for a rent control adjustment to compensate for the increases. Mr. Humphreville said renters don't have any incentive to save water, since they don't pay water bills.

Stakeholder Myrna Gintel asked when the basic rates will be determined, and Mr. Humphreville said it will be based on lot size and temperature zone. There will be five categories for lot size and three different temperature zones. In apartments and commercial buildings, rates will be based on past use, but that won't be true for single family residences.

Director Rudy Gintel noted that people won't be able to reduce their charges by adding submeters, which only reduce sewer charges.

#### Director of Animal Welfare

DAW Lee Goldberg was not present, so there was no report.

#### Ad Hoc Outreach Committee

Director Margy Hudson, reviewing information provided at our last meeting, reported that our website designer neglected to include the cost of Content Management System programming in her initial bid for our website re-design project (which was previously approved by the Board). She said the designer has submitted a revised bid, which the Outreach Committee re-compared with all previous bids received for the project and determined was still the best bid for the work. We had hoped to have the Board approve the additional \$1,500 expenditure at our March meeting, but because we lacked a quorum at that point in the meeting, we were unable to do so. She moved that

we approve the new \$7,400 estimate for the website redesign, and Director Jane Usher seconded the motion.

Director Rudy Gintel asked if this would be a one-time cost or something that would be paid every year, and Director Elizabeth Fuller said it would be a one-time cost.

The motion passed unanimously.

In another outreach matter, Ms. Hudson passed around photos of street light banners that other Neighborhood Councils have posted around the city to increase public awareness. She said Alternate Director Mary Rajswing is looking into vendors, costs, etc. for a possible GWNC banner project, and we will provide more details at a future meeting.

#### Burns Park Improvement Project

Director Margy Hudson said she has received a letter from Rec and Parks, thanking the GWNC for its contributions to this project. Significant changes now in place include a new playground, irrigation system, pathway and newly painted fence. She said new benches – paid for by the GWNC – are coming, as is more landscaping work. She said we did get a note from the Windsor Square Association, asking the GWNC to pay half the cost of the fence painting, but we passed a motion to provide just \$20,000 to the project, which has all been spent.

President Charles Dougherty said our minutes do not show a promise to pay for fence painting, so we should draft a letter to that effect.

Alternate Director Mike Genewick said the WSA paid the full cost of the fence painting because the vendor needed to be paid quickly, but its understanding was that the NC would pay for a part of the cost and the WSA board requested 50%.

Director Martha Schuur said she remembers the board discussing the possibility of providing physical help to paint the fence, but not funding.

Ms. Hudson said the original bid for painting was \$97,000, but they got a waiver from the city to use an outside contractor, who did the job for about a tenth of the cost.

Mr. Dougherty said the problem is that we don't have the money. Mr. Genewick said he will report this to his board and will come back for further discussion, if necessary.

#### MTA Wilshire Corridor Subway Update

Alternate Director Mike Genewick said the MTA conducted six EIR scoping meetings on the Wilshire Corridor subway project, after an earlier study recommended further study of two route alternatives: one along Wilshire to the city of Santa Monica,

and one along Wilshire, with an extension along Santa Monica Boulevard. The DEIR should be ready by mid-2010, followed by a 13-month EIR/EIS phase. He said the earliest construction could begin would be 2013, and the project could be finished in six years if all the funding is in place. He said the total cost is projected to be \$6.1 billion for the Wilshire alternative, or \$9 billion for the Wilshire/Santa Monica alternative. That averages out to about \$500 million per mile. Measure R will provide about \$4.1 billion for the subway extension.

Director Jane Usher asked if he had any information about a Crenshaw Ave. station. Mr. Genewick said the MTA isn't currently evaluating a Crenshaw connection north of Exposition. A future study may look at it, but the specific point of connection has not been determined. Ms. Usher said there are always "agitators" - mostly from the development community and the Community Redevelopment Agency - who say they want a station at Crenshaw.

Alternate Director Patty Lombard asked if we are unanimously opposing a Crenshaw station, and Ms. Usher said we passed a motion keeping the option open, but as time passes she doesn't see any good will coming on the issue. Mr. Genewick says there is now more talk about a connection at Western or La Brea than Crenshaw, and President Dougherty said San Vicente is another option. Ms. Usher said she does know that the Korean community wants to develop the full length of Wilshire, all the way to Highland Ave.

#### Board Member Comments/New Business

Revising Financial Disclosure Form 54 – Director Jane Usher reported that the City council wants Neighborhood Council members to fill out a very complicated disclosure form, but most Neighborhood Councils would prefer a simpler, more logical form. Director Rudy Gintel asked if this is going to be an obstacle, and Ms. Usher said yes, and all Neighborhood Councils are up in arms about it.

Memorial Library Improvements – A stakeholder from the Brookside neighborhood said Director Owen Smith (who was out of town) asked him to speak about this project. Memorial Library is a memorial to World War I veterans. A group of neighborhood residents want to sponsor an improvement project including a garden, landscaping and security/motion sensors. A similar effort was started a few years ago, but work never got done. Mr. Smith would like to speak at a future meeting to ask for funding for the project – perhaps \$10,000. Neighborhood volunteers will do most of the work. He offered to pass out copies of the project proposal, but President Dougherty said it would be better to wait until Mr. Smith himself can make the presentation. Director Patty Lombard said the Hancock Park Garden Club would be interested in helping, too...and stakeholder Myrna Gintel said the Hancock Park Historical Society is also looking for a project to fund. Mr. Dougherty suggested that all parties exchange contact information.

Fire Station 29 Funding Request – Alternate Director Mary Rajswing said the Friends of 29 organization has been funding many fire station improvements, but there's a new need for several portable GPS units for use in the fire trucks. She said the Wilshire Center/Koreatown Neighborhood Council donated GPS units to another station, so she thought she'd bring Station 29's need to the GWNC. She said she won't be able to attend the July meeting, but would like to come back in September with a request that we provide five units for a total of \$1,700.

President Charles Dougherty said we do still have some discretionary funds in our budget and this sounds like something we should do. He asked for a more precise cost estimate. Ms. Rajswing said the units the station is requesting would come to \$1,670 with warranties and tax.

Director Margy Hudson recommended we approve the expenditure of \$1,700 for five Garmin GPS units with extended warranties (as requested by the fire station). Director Alex Jones-Moreno seconded the motion.

Vice President James Wolf suggested we make the same donation to Station 51, which also serves part of the GWNC area. Director Rudy Gintel asked if that would increase our funding request to \$3,400. Mr. Wolf said it would. President Dougherty expressed some reticence at the increase, and acting Treasurer Elizabeth Fuller cautioned against funding something that hasn't specifically been requested by the recipient (a practice DONE does not allow). Director Martha Schuur noted that other stations also serve the GWNC area, and Director John Gresham agreed, saying each of them should come to us with a specific request if other items are needed. Mr. Wolf withdrew his request, but suggested it might be worth exploring the need for GPS units at other fire stations. Ms. Rajswing volunteered to do this. The motion to fund the Station 29 GPS units passed unanimously.

May 30 HPOZ Conference – Director Margy Hudson distributed a flyer for the May 30 Citywide HPOZ Conference, at which she will be speaking. The conference will present topics of interest to those who live within current HPOZs and to people interested in exploring HPOZ status for their neighborhoods.

#### Public Comments

Frances Blend School Garden Update – Stakeholder Myrna Gintel distributed tribute booklets from the recent Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society Garden Tour, pointing out the GWNC's ad on page 18 and noting that the NC was also acknowledged at the event. Ms. Gintel said funds donated by the GWNC are being used for tiles for a sensory fountain and mural in the garden, and thanked the Council members for their support.

*[Director Jane Usher left the meeting at 11:15 p.m.]*

Announcements and Adjournment

President Dougherty announced that our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 8. The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Fuller  
Secretary