



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

June 24, 2014

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee 7/22/14

1. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, June 24, 2014, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:51 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Barbara Savage called the roll. Ten of the 18 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Ann Eggleston, Karen Gilman, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Joseph Hoffman, Barbara Savage, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg, Greg Wittmann and James Wolf. Alan Bernstein and Patty Lombard arrived later. Committee Members absent: Patricia Carroll, Mike Genewick, John Kaliski, Gerda McDonough, Jeff McManus and Caroline Moser. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is ten, so the Committee could take such votes. Also attending: 22 Stakeholders and guests.

3. Approval of the Minutes

It was agreed to TABLE approval of the May 27th Minutes until the July 22nd Meeting.

4. Review of Recent Notifications for Possibility of Further Study/Action (GWNC Mail and Early Notifications Report).

The “06/24/14 May - June Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City was distributed and reviewed.

5. Old Business

A. Conversion of historic gas station to Starbucks at 859 N. Highland (Elizabeth Valerio).

Ms. Valerio indicated this was presented to the GWNC Board at its June 11th Meeting [Item #16. A.] and that it was approved with conditions, including closing the curb cuts on Willoughby and Highland. Mr. Gresham noted that the rendering presented still shows a curb cut. The Hearing will be in mid-August. Ms. Valerio described that they are working “to match the original” and will also maintain the old car wash structure. The lease is “the standard Starbucks lease, around ten years.”

B. Development of 5-unit Single Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton (Matthew Hayden).

The presenter was not present; this was TABLED to the July 22nd Meeting.

- C. Conversion of existing recreational space to second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy (Christopher Sorenson).

The presenter was not present; this was TABLED to the July 22nd Meeting.

6. New Business

- A. Development of parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 Norton (Mark Moreno).

The presenter was not present; this was TABLED to the July 22nd Meeting.

- B. Change of use to non-profit museum at former Scottish Rite Temple, 4357 Wilshire Blvd. Mr. Wolf indicated that the Applicant requested more time before presenting.

- C. Development of 4-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 421 N. Van Ness (Sam Trude). Representative Sam Trude distributed a “Preliminary Parcel Map . . . Adjustment” Application and photos and diagrams and described the project. He said it is “zoned R3-1 . . . the surrounding neighborhood is predominantly multi-family . . . the units would be . . . approximately 2,000 to 2,200 square feet . . . we issued notices to over 200 residents” nearby. He said “there was a single-family residence on the site.” Stakeholder Susan Levine believed the project “does not fit in with the neighborhood architecture.”

Committee Member Alan Bernstein arrived at this time, making 11 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Stakeholder Michael Gilman was concerned with “traffic and safety” and noise. Architect Kurt Gibbs said the project would be “three stories” and “we’re going to try to keep” the construction cost “between \$200 and \$250 per square foot.” Ms. Savage believed that the project can be built in a “sustainable” way while maintaining the character of the neighborhood.

Committee Member Patti Lombard arrived at this time, making 12 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Mr. Wolf noted the Applicant is “requesting relief” to decrease the side yard from six feet to five feet. Mr. Trude indicated that the Application was “submitted last week” and no Hearing is scheduled; they would like to get a Hearing within three to four months. Mr. Wolf explained that the Committee wants to ensure that it and the Board have opportunity to advise the City before the Hearing. Charles D’Atri, President, Larchmont Village Neighborhood Association (LVNA), recommended and Ms. Lombard supported Tabling this Item because, he said, the developer recently has made attempts “to reach out to the neighborhood.” Ms. Lombard and Mr. Wittmann encouraged design revisions to fit in more with the neighborhood. Mr. Trude and Mr. Gibbs agreed to return after more communication with the LVNA on a second Tuesday.

7. Committee Member Comments and Reports

- A. Discussion of approval process for condo development at 853-859 S. Lucerne (Joe Hoffman).

Copies were distributed of a “Certificate of Compatibility” and a project rendering was displayed. Mr. Wolf and Mr. Hoffman presented about the project at 853-859 S. Lucerne. Mr. Hoffman said the house was demolished in 2005; the lot has been empty since. In early 2013 the owner “applied for a Tract Map adjustment up to 15 units” for one of the two buildings as a by right project. He said it would be “four stories . . . mostly subterranean parking . . . Mediterranean-style . . . the community was very concerned about the size.” The HPOZ voted three in favor and three opposed with one recusal (which was requested by the city). He noted “there were some adjustments made to the project” since the HPOZ vote. They are “only asking for 14” units for the 859 Lucerne property. He described that “the main building will hold 68 parking spaces” including eight guest spaces. The buildings would have 18 and 14 units. Roz Strotz of the Windsor Village Neighborhood Association (WVNA) Board wants the GWNC to support a WVNA appeal of the Central Area Planning Commission; she said “Windsor Village is appealing the determination letter . . . the project violates the Preservation Plan” which she believed the City did not consider. She said the project is “massive” compared to the duplex to the south and that “the HPOZ Plan takes precedence over by right projects.” Stakeholder Stephen Saporon was concerned that the project could set a precedent and believed that the WVNA was not represented through the HPOZ Board.

Committee Member Alan Bernstein left at this time, making 11 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Stakeholder John McPherson said that at an HPOZ Meeting the “overwhelming” number of Stakeholders opposed the project. There was discussion of what the Committee can or should do.

Committee Member Dorian Shapiro left at this time, making 10 Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

Mr. Hoffman reported that City Council District Four opposed the project at the latest Hearing. Ms. Lombard and Mr. Wolf suggested that we use language from the original appeal document (which Ms. Strotz agreed to supply) to craft a resolution of support that can be voted on at the July 9th GWNC Board meeting. Mr. Wolf encouraged Stakeholders to attend that meeting. Stakeholder Elizabeth Fuller noted that Ms. Strotz should send the appeal documents to LandUse@GreaterWilshire.org.

B. Transportation Committee Report (Julie Stromberg).

Ms. Stromberg reported that the Committee met May 12th; Gerda McDonough stepped down as Chair. Stakeholder Michelle Owen was voted as Chair and Ms. Stromberg as Secretary and LUC Liaison. The City’s General Plan Transportation Mobility Element has a “Wilshire Plan . . . we filed extensive comments on the Notice of Preparation . . . Metro wants to increase the sales tax.” She described the City assessment of streets. June 15th she submitted 15 repair requests to Street Services; some already have been repaired.

8. Public Comments

Stakeholder Jack Humphreville reported that probably there will not be a proposed sales tax increase on the November City ballot.

Committee Member Ann Eggleston left at this time, making nine Members present (the Committee quorum is ten).

There was discussion that the City's ReCodeLA project consideration process is difficult to follow, possible impacts on the City and how information has been presented at these Committee Meetings. Stakeholder Diane Dicksteen reported that, for the Metro construction lot at Crenshaw and Wilshire, they are building fences. There was discussion of quality of life and business access issues and what Stakeholders can do.

9. Announcements and Adjournment

A. Next meeting: Tuesday, July 22nd, 6:30 p.m. Possible future agenda items:

- Larchmont Bungalow CUB & Variance Application
- Density Bonus at 807 N. Hudson
- Application for CUB renewal and extended business hours at Jajungguh Café at 4653 W. Beverly
- Construction of 30-unit residential building at 4180 W. Wilshire

MOTION to ADJOURN (by Mr. Hoffman).

MOTION PASSED without any objection.

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin, Minutes Writer
Edited by Land Use Committee.