



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting
September 10, 2014
MINUTES
Approved by the Board, 10-8-14

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance (Owen Smith)

A duly noticed Meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, September 10, 2014, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd., Los Angeles. President Owen Smith called the meeting to order at 7:04 p. m. [*This Agenda Item was returned to after Item #7. A.*] The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Frances McFall.

2. Roll Call (Jeffry Carpenter)

Secretary Jeffry Carpenter called the roll. Thirteen of the 21 Board Members were present at the Roll Call: Jeffry Carpenter, Ann Eggleston, Michael Genewick, John Gresham, Joseph Hoffman, Jack Humphreville, Patricia Lombard, Fred Mariscal, Frances McFall, Clinton Oie, Owen Smith, Daniel Whitley and John Winther. Patricia Carroll, William Funderburk, Jason Peers, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg, Jane Usher and Greg Wittmann arrived later. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: Jim Wolf. The GWNC quorum (the minimum number of Board Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 13 (see <http://empowerla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Greater-Wilshire-NC-Bylaws.pdf>), so the Board could take such votes. All 21 Board Seats were filled (by election or appointment). No Board Seats were vacant (some Alternate Seats were vacant; see below). Also attending: 16 Stakeholders and guests.

3. Guest Speaker: Ron Galperin, City Controller, on Bureau of Street Services Audit

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after the beginning of Item #11.*] Mr. Galperin described Controller’s Office operations, including City employees’ payroll, services and audits. He is “looking for return on investment in everything we do.” He encouraged “to see <http://ControlPanel.LA>, a virtual checkbook and dashboard to see how our tax dollars and all the other revenue of the City is being spent.” The City has “more than 900” special revenue funds. Mr. Galperin explained the City’s decision to recently slurry seal many streets, resulting in major repairs continuing to be deferred for grade “D” and “F” streets that have major problems.

4. Approval of the Minutes (Jeffry Carpenter)

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #1 was returned to.*]

MOTION (by Mr. Carpenter, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its August 13, 2014 General Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with all 15 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

5. President's Report (Owen Smith)

Copies were distributed of invitation fliers for and Mr. Smith announced a reception to meet new Neighborhood Prosecutor Mehrnoosh Zahiri (213-978-2220; Mehrnoosh.Zahiri@LACity.org). Copies were distributed of invitation fliers for and Mr. Smith announced a "5 Steps to Neighborhood Preparedness" (<http://5Steps.LA>, not www.5Steps.LA) workshop.

Board Members William Funderburk, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg, the second group of Board Members to arrive later, arrived at this time, making 20 Board Members present (the GWNC quorum is 13).

A. Board Vacancies

Mr. Smith noted the vacancies. Alternates are needed for: Area 2 (Citrus Square), Area 3 (Country Club Heights), Area 12 (Western-Wilton), Education, Religion and Non-Profit. He indicated that there were no nominations at this time.

B. Seating of Board Members and Alternates Elected or Volunteered But Not Previously Installed – if any

i. Jane Luo – Alternate for Area 9 (Oakwood/Maplewood/St. Andrews)

Ms. Luo was not present so was not sworn in

C. Ethics & Funding Training

[The following is from the Agenda.] All Board Members and alternates must complete ethics training in order to vote on funding Motions before the Board. The course is available online at <http://ethics.laCity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done>

In addition to Ethics training, all Board Members and alternates are also REQUIRED to take a new funding training course (about the new system of NC checking accounts that will be launched soon). The course is at <http://www.slideshare.net/EmpowerLA/nc-checking-account-training-62413>. The last page of the presentation contains a link <http://www.empowerla.org/Boardregistration> to a completion form you can submit to register your attendance. Board Members and alternates MUST complete both trainings to be eligible to vote on funding-related matters. [Tables are in the Agenda that show which Board Members and which Alternates have completed which trainings.]

Mr. Smith noted the above.

6. Local Government Updates

A. CD4 Update (Ben Seinfeld)

[*This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #8. B.*] Ben Seinfeld, Field Deputy for L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (213-485-3337; cell 213-804-2388; Ben.Seinfeld@LACity.org; <http://CD4.LACity.org>), encouraged advising him if a stormwater drain is clogged. He introduced Poonam Narewatt (Poonam.Narewatt@LACity.org), the Mayor's new Central Area Representative.

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; www.lacity.org/council/cd5), reported that the Melrose BID hired a consultant to study" parking issues on Melrose Blvd..

7. Community Concerns and Public Comments

A. Presentation of GWNC Citizen Recognition Award: Lyn Cohen (Fred Mariscal)

Mr. Mariscal described Lyn Cohen's extensive community service, including her work supporting the Los Angeles Fire Department.

Board Members Patricia Carroll, Jason Peers, Jane Usher and Greg Wittmann, the first group of Board Members to arrive later, arrived at this time, making 17 Board Members present (the GWNC quorum is 13).

Ms. Cohen thanked the GWNC, including for its support of Fire Station 29.

B. Other public comments

Oscar Winslow (www.OscarWinslow.com) and Carolyn Ramsey, City Council District Four Candidates, asked for support.

8. Treasurer's Report and Other Budget Items (Patti Carroll)

A. Monthly Budget Reports/Expenditures Approvals for the month of July

GWNC Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller reviewed the August Monthly Expenditure Report (MER) and reported that "we now have a checking account."

FUNDING MOTION (by Ms. Carroll, seconded by Ms. Usher): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves its "Monthly Expenditure Report for August 2014."

FUNDING MOTION PASSED unanimously by a roll call vote of the 17 eligible voters present with all 17 in favor ("Yes" or "Aye") (Carpenter, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Usher, and Whitley), 0 opposed and 0 abstained.

Copies were distributed of the GWNC "Monthly Expenditure Report for August 2014" and the GWNC "Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 APPROVED on August 13, 2014."

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council will approve the individual expenditure it made in August 2014.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a roll call vote of the 17 eligible voters present with all 17 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Usher, Whitley, and Winther), 0 opposed and 0 abstained.

B. Approval of upcoming expenses

- i. Larchmont Fair - \$300
- ii. Re-stock promotional pens - \$200
- iii. Additional mailbox key - \$20

DISCUSSION: Ms. Fuller explained that the Larchmont Fair outreach booth will cost \$350, not \$300.

FUNDING MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the following upcoming expenses: 2014 for Larchmont Fair - \$350; re-stock promotional pens - \$200; and additional mailbox key - \$25.

FUNDING MOTION PASSED unanimously by a roll call vote of the 17 eligible voters present with all 17 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Usher, Whitley, and Winther), 0 opposed and 0 abstained.

9. **DWP Oversight** (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the City and the DWP are still resolving the disputed \$40 million in two DWP-controlled trusts. There probably will be a 5% water rate increase; different pricing tiers are being considered. You can have the DWP audit your bill.

10. **City Budget Issues** (Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that there is a projected \$165 million deficit.

11. **LANCC Report** (Humphreville)

A. City Council proposals on sidewalk repairs – CF 14-0163-S4 & CF 14-0163-S3 (Humphreville)

Copies were distributed of a sample Community Impact Statement (CIS) from the L.A. Neighborhood Councils Coalition (LANCC; www.LANCCoalition.org) regarding “a proposed “fix and release” plan for the repair of our tree damaged sidewalks.” Mr. Humphreville reported that LANCC met last Saturday; City Councilman Paul Krekorian’s proposed sidewalk repair program was discussed. Mr. Humphreville read aloud a LANCC-passed Community Impact Statement which was used for the below Motion. He explained the program. He expects power rates to double over the next 10-15 years.

[*This Agenda Item was returned to after Item #14. D.*] Ms. Usher believed that the cost and funding source were not clarified. Mr. Humphreville “believes it can be serviced by the General Fund” and explained that Councilman Koretz wanted a CIS submitted by October 1st.

MOTION (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Mr. Mariscal): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports a “fix and release” plan for the repair of our tree-damaged sidewalks. The City will issue bonds to finance the repair. There will be no new taxes. The City may develop alternative plans (50/50 program, loan fund, Assessment Districts) that rely on the voluntary participation by Property Owners. Property Owners and the City may retain independent contractors and managers. The City will assess the status of our sidewalks and prioritize the necessary repairs. The City will establish a well-funded, independent Oversight Committee to ensure transparency throughout the process.

11-4-5

MOTION PASSED by a roll call vote with 11 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Funderburk, Genewick, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Stromberg, Winther and Wittmann), four opposed (Eggleston, Shapiro, Usher and Whitley) and five abstained (Carpenter, Carroll, Oie, Peers, Smith).

Board Members Jane Usher and Daniel Whitley left at this time and Ms. Usher’s Alternate, Karen Gilman, was Seated, making 19 Board Members (or their Alternate(s)) present (the GWNC quorum is 13).

12. Old Business – There was no old business at this time.

13. New Business – There was no new business at this time.

14. Transportation Committee (Julie Stromberg)

A. Subway issues update:

i. Metro variance for after-hours work

Ms. Stromberg reported that a Metro operational Variance will start Jan. 22, 2015; the next noise variance filing date is March 15, 2015.

ii. Updates from Sept. 4 small-group meeting

Ms. Stromberg updated about this.

B. Highlights from Chi Ming Gong talk at August 28 TC meeting

Ms. Stromberg gave highlights from the presentation by Chi Ming Gong, L.A. Street Services General Superintendent, including their pothole repair blitz.

C. Pedestrian Safety Concerns at 2nd and Sycamore

Ms. Stromberg explained the below Motion recommended by the Committee and that Stakeholders requested a four-way stop.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council accepts the recommendation of its Transportation Committee to

request that the L.A. Dept. of Transportation (LADOT) evaluate the pedestrian safety issues at Sycamore and 2nd Street, with possible remedies including: (a) converting the intersection to a 4-way stop; (b) raised crosswalk(s); and/or (c) at least prominently marking the intersection's crosswalks.

MOTION PASSED unanimously with 18 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Carroll, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gilman, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Whitley and Wittmann), 1 opposed (Peers) and 0 abstentions.

D. Transportation Committee meeting schedule

Ms. Stromberg reported that the Committee will meet on first Mondays of each month.

15. Outreach Committee (Fred Mariscal)

A. Approve planned outreach events:

i. Community walks:

a. Western Ave. streetscape visioning (Wittmann)

b. Sycamore Square history/issues (J. Gilman/Elizabeth Fuller)

Mr. Mariscal encouraged feedback.

ii. Community forum in early November: ReCode LA (Hoffman/Lombard)

[See above Item #15. A. i.]

iii. CD4 candidate forum in January

[See above Item #15. A. i.]

iv. Community forum in spring: Small Lot Subdivisions

[See above Item #15. A. i.]

v. Larchmont Fair Booth

[See above Item #15. A. i.]

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Humphreville): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves its planned outreach events described in this Agenda Items #15. A. i-v. of Western Ave. streetscape visioning; Community forum in early November: ReCode LA; CD4 candidate forum in January; Community forum in spring: Small Lot Subdivisions; and Larchmont Fair Booth.

MOTION PASSED unanimously with all 19 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Carroll, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gilman, Gresham, Hoffman,

Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Winther and Wittmann), 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

B. Brainstorming GWNC-sponsored community social events

Mr. Mariscal encouraged feedback.

C. Still seeking “Top 10 Issues” lists from our neighborhood associations (haven’t heard from Brookside, Country Club Heights, Fremont Place, Hancock Park, Larchmont Village, Melrose, Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews, Western-Wilton, Windsor Square)

Mr. Mariscal encouraged feedback.

16. Board Member Reports and Comments

Mr. Mariscal reported that Mr. Humphreville was re-elected as a Budget Advocate [www.BudgetAdvocatesLA.com].

17. Land Use Committee (Elizabeth Fuller)

[Each Item’s first paragraph is directly from the Agenda.] [This Item #17. A. wording through #3 is directly from the Agenda.]

A. Revised Zone Change, Variance and CUB Application for the Larchmont Bungalow (107 N. Larchmont Blvd.)

Issue: At the August 13 GWNC meeting, the Board voted to oppose all three requests made by the Larchmont Bungalow in an application filed in 2013: 1. to legalize operations by applying for a zone change (to remove the “Q” condition for the parcel in question and thus allow a sit-down restaurant at the location), 2. a variance (to allow 7 on-site parking spaces instead of the required 25) and 3. a new CUB permit to serve a full line of alcoholic beverages.

A few days later, however, the GWNC was notified by the Bungalow representatives that their scheduled City hearing on the application would be cancelled, so the application could be revised (based in part on discussion at the GWNC’s July Land Use Committee meeting).

On August 25, the day before the GWNC’s August 26 Land Use Committee meeting, however, the GWNC received a copy of a notice indicating a new hearing date of September 22 for the Bungalow’s revised application...which now lists the same request for a zone change to eliminate the “Q” condition and allow a full restaurant at the site, an application for a zone variance to require 18 parking spaces instead of the required 25, and an application for a permit to sell beer and wine (instead of a full line of alcoholic beverages, as originally requested).

Action Item: Because this notification came too late to be Agendized at the August 26 LUC meeting, the Committee was not able to vote on the revised application or to make a formal recommendation to the GWNC Board for action on the revisions. Unfortunately, with a new hearing date of September 22, the Land Use Committee will not be able to make such a recommendation before the hearing, since its next meeting is not until

September 23. So the Committee requests that the GWNC Board vote this month on the three provisions of the revised application:

1. The revised request for a new CUB to allow sales of beer and wine at the Larchmont Bungalow. (The original request had been for a full line of liquor sales.)
2. The revised request for a parking variance to allow 18 on-site parking spaces, in lieu of the required 25, at the Larchmont Bungalow. (The original request had been 7 spaces in lieu of the required 25.)
3. The application for a zone change to remove the “Q” condition from the parcel and thus allow a full restaurant at the Larchmont Bungalow location. (This request is unchanged from the original application.)

Copies were distributed of a September 22nd Public Hearing Notice for the project; a letter from the GWNC to Michael LoGrande, Director, L.A. Dept. of City Planning; a letter from John Welborne of the Windsor Square Association (WSA) to City Planning; and a letter from Mr. Welborne for the WSA to the L.A. Board Of Building and Safety Commissioners. Ms. Fuller reminded for Mr. Wolf that the Board voted “no” on all three requests at its previous [August 13, 2014] Meeting. The Bungalow submitted a revised Variance request for which there is a September 22nd Hearing. Mr. Humphreville read aloud the below Motion.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): Whereas the Larchmont Shopping District is entirely within the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Area, and Whereas the Neighborhood Council through its Land Use Committee thoroughly reviewed proposed changes and special privileges requested by the owner of the property at 107 North Larchmont Boulevard, and Whereas the Neighborhood Council on August 22, 2014, sent a detailed letter to the Director of Planning reporting the Neighborhood Council’s opposition to all aspects of the requests in the file then described as CPC-2013-924-ZC-ZV-CUB, and Whereas the essentially identical matter is before the Board of Directors of the Neighborhood Council tonight on a very slightly revised application with a new number (currently City Planning Case No. CPC-2013-924-ZC-CUB-MS), now, therefore The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council, following careful review of the revised application and accompanying materials, reaffirms its position as follows:

The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council affirms that the Larchmont Boulevard special zoning conditions adopted by the City Council should be followed by all property owners and (1) A Conditional Use Permit to sell beer and wine should NOT be granted for this property; (2) A parking variance should NOT be granted for this property; and (3) A zone change to remove the “Q” Condition from this property to allow a restaurant should NOT be granted. Further, the officers of the Council are directed to convey the Board’s decision to the appropriate City Planning officials.

MOTION PASSED with 17 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Carroll, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gilman, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, and Winther), 0 opposed and two abstentions (Wittmann, Mariscal).

B. Conversion of existing recreational space to a second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy

Issue: The property owner seeks to remodel the garage and replace an existing structure permitted as a recreational space with a new second dwelling unit in the rear yard of the property. Neighbors had originally objected to a proposed two-story structure, but the owners have spent several months discussing the project with the nearest neighbors and revising the project designs, which now call for a 1-story structure that more closely matches the architectural design of the main residence. The re-designed project now has the support of the nearest neighbors and the St. Andrews Square Neighborhood Association. LUC Recommended Motion: [see the below Motion].

Copies were distributed of project elevations. Ms. Fuller explained the issue.

MOTION (by Mr. Gresham, seconded by Mr. Hoffman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the revised plans for the conversion of an existing recreational space to a single-story second dwelling unit at 118 N. Gramercy.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by with all 19 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Carroll, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gilman, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Whitley, and Wittmann), 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

C. Small Lot Subdivision project at 665 S. Rimpau

Issue: This project, across from Farmers Insurance at Wilshire & Rimpau, will include 7 small-lot units, with 2 parking spaces per building and a total of 4 guest spaces. There will be 15-foot setbacks. The project has been extensively reviewed by the Park Mile Design Review Board, and Land Use Committee Members who attended those meetings reported that the developers have incorporated all of the DRB’s suggestions for project modifications. LUC Recommended Motion [see the below Motion].

Copies were distributed of project’s Master Land Use Permit Application. Ms. Fuller described the issue.

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Winther): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the application for a 7-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 665 S. Rimpau.

MOTION PASSED unanimously with all 19 in favor (“Yes” or “Aye”) (Carpenter, Carroll, Eggleston, Funderburk, Genewick, Gilman, Gresham, Hoffman, Humphreville, Lombard, Mariscal, McFall, Oie, Peers, Shapiro, Smith, Stromberg, Whitley and Witmann), 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

It was noted that the 15-foot setback is in the front yard, from Wilshire Blvd.

Ms. Fuller noted that the following items were presented for information only. No action was requested or required at this time.

D. Appeal of Morumbila Condominium project at 853-859 S. Lucerne

Issue: The GWNC Board voted to support the Windsor Village Association in its appeal of the City's approval of this project, which the WVA claimed violated the local HPOZ's preservation plan (the HPOZ's own vote on the project was a tie, after the forced recusal of an HPOZ Board Member from Windsor Village). The appeal Board, however, voted 3-1 on August 26 against the appeal (while granting a small additional setback that had been requested in the appeal), so the project will now move forward.

E. Development of a 162-unit, 7-story apartment complex at 700 S. Manhattan

Issue: The developers made a preliminary presentation of their plans, which include requests for a Floor Area Ratio increase on the site, a density variance and changes to parking requirements. Committee discussion centered on the appropriate project density for the area (which is near a major transit corridor), transitional height considerations, whether there is a hardship that would justify the density variance, and what kinds of open spaces, both private and semi-public, could or would be provided. Neighbors expressed their concerns about both height and density. The developers are still in the early stages of their planning process, and will return to the LUC with project updates before any City hearings are scheduled.

F. Density bonus for a 46-unit apartment project at 729-43 N. Hudson

Issue: Developers are seeking a 35% density increase over what the current zoning allows, in return for providing 4 very low income units for 35 years. The building will be 5 stories high with grade-level parking. The apartments will be a variety of sizes, including studios, studios with lofts, 2BR and 3Br units. Committee discussion centered on the kinds of buildings being replaced by this one, the need to break down the building's massing to make it look less big and flat, and the need to use planters instead of planted trees because of stormwater issues. This project is also still in the early stages (the Department of City Planning is still doing its MND study), and the developers will return with revisions as plans progress.

G. Development of 5 condominiums at 4806 W. Elmwood

Issue: Developers are seeking a tentative tract map for this project, which would create five 5BR/4BA condominiums on the site. (Each unit would be about 2,000 square feet.) Committee discussion centered on the lack of common space in the units (bedrooms take up most of the available space), the lack of distinctive design features in the project, and the lack of a specific landscaping plan. No hearing dates are set yet, and the Committee requested that the developers return to the LUC in a month or two with a landscaping plan.

H. Construction of a 4-story, 22-unit apartment complex with density bonus at 5022-5026 Rosewood

Issue: This project is still in the early stages of planning, and the developer did not bring full sets of plans to the August LUC meeting. He will return next month with a full presentation.

Potential agenda items for future LUC meetings:

- 30-unit development at 4180 W. Wilshire (at Crenshaw)
- Density bonus at 801-813 N. Hudson
- Development of a 5-unit single Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton
- Development of parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 N. Norton
- Change of use to non-profit museum at the former Scottish Rite Temple, 4357 Wilshire Blvd.

18. Announcements and Adjournment

A. Neighborhood Preparedness Workshops (see flier)

Copies of fliers were distributed.

B. Next meeting: Wednesday, October 8, 7:00 p.m. -- Mr. Smith noted the date.

Mr. Smith **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objection at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin, Minutes Writer
Edited by GWNC.