



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting  
September 11, 2013  
MINUTES  
Approved by the Board, 10/9/13

1. **Call to Order** (Owen Smith)

A duly noticed Meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2013, at Wilshire Park Elementary School, 40633 Ingraham St., Los Angeles, 90005. Secretary Jeffrey Carpenter called the meeting to order at 7:07 p. m.

2. **Roll Call** (Jeffrey Carpenter)

Secretary Jeffrey Carpenter called the roll. All 21 Board Seats were filled. No Board Seats were vacant (some Alternate Seats were vacant). Sixteen of the 21 Board Members or their Alternates were present at the beginning of the Meeting: Jeffrey Carpenter, Patricia Carroll, Ann Eggleston, Betty Fox, Michael Genewick, Robby O’Donnell (alternate for John Gresham), Jack Humphreville , Fred Mariscal, Frances McFall, Gerda McDonough (alternate for Clinton Oie), Jason Peers, Karen Gilman (alternate for Jane Usher), Briana Valdez, Daniel Whitley, Greg Wittmann and Cindy Chvatal-Keane (alternate for James Wolf). Clinton Oie arrived later. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: William Funderburk, Patricia Lombard, Jeff McManus, Joane Picket, and Owen Smith. The GWNC quorum (the minimum number of Board Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 13, so the Board could take such votes.

3. **Approval of the Minutes** (Jeffrey Carpenter)

**MOTION** (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Ms. Eggleston): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its August 14, 2013 General Meeting as written.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

4. **President’s Report** (Jeffrey Carpenter)

A. **Board Vacancies**

Mr. Smith noted that Alternates are needed for: Area 2 (Citrus Square); Area 9 (Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews); Area 12 (We-Wil); Other Non-Profit and Religion.

B. **Ethics & Funding Training**

Mr. Smith noted the following from the Agenda: All new board members and alternates (along with returning board members whose certification is more than two years old) must

complete both ethics and funding training in order to continue to be able to vote on funding motions before the board.

Board Members whose ethics training is incomplete or due for renewal:

Patricia Lombard - Not Completed

James Wolf – Expired 1/13/12

John Gresham – Expired 2/14/13

Joane Pickett – Expired 7/11/13

Board members who have not completed Funding training: Eggleston, Fox, Genewick, Humphreville, Lombard, McFall, McManus, Pickett and Wolf.

The ethics course is available online at

<http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done>

The funding 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.

## **5. Local Government Updates**

### **A. CD4 Update (Carolyn Ramsay)**

Ms. Ramsay reported that the CD4 office is working with a realtor to help find an alternate site (anywhere in the city) for the medical marijuana dispensary planned for 215 S. Larchmont. Also, construction has begun on the North Larchmont median, and new striping has been done on First Street. Ms. Ramsay said Mr. La Bonge supports the Metro Purple Line extension, wants construction to go smoothly, and would like to hear any concerns that stakeholders may have. Questions were raised about removal of trees on Larchmont and other locations, and also Mr. La Bonge’s position on the issue of raising taxes to re-pave area streets. Ms. Ramsay said she would check into these issues and get back to people.

### **B. CD5 Update (John Darnell)**

Mr. Darnell was not available so there was no report.

## **6. Presentation of Citizen Recognition Award (Fred Mariscal): Jane Gilman**

Mr. Mariscal cited Ms. Gilman’s 50 years as publisher of the Larchmont Chronicle, as well as her work with the local Civic Coalition, the Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society, the GWNC and other local organizations.

## **7. Community Concerns / Public Comments**

### **A. Metro Purple Line Extension Update (Jody Litvak, et. al.)**

Ms. Litvak and members of her outreach team from Metro provided an overview of the construction process for the tunnels in our area and the Wilshire/La Brea station. Ms. Litvak explained that there is no such thing as “immaculate construction,” but the completed Purple Line will be able to take people from Downtown to Westwood in just 25

minutes. Full details of the tunnel boring and station box construction process are shown in the handouts provided by Metro. They include the project schedule (including pre-construction utility relocations which have already begun), street closures, the full construction schedule (completion is scheduled for 2023), and a summary of the extended work hours permits Metro is seeking, including permission for construction to take place during peak traffic hours, overnight hours and the holiday period between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

#### **B. MCWCC Board Actions, Coordination on Metro Construction Issues (Tim Deegan)**

Mr. Deegan reported that the Mid-City West Community Council has been also been hearing details of the subway construction and related projects. The Council's Transportation Committee voted 4-1 to approve Metro's extended hours requests, but the full board had only 9 votes in favor of the permits, and did not support the request.

Ken Hixon, Vice President of the Miracle Mile Residential Association (MMRA) presented a letter from his organization opposing the extended hour permit request, saying that it would be premature to grant the permits before the design-build contractor has been hired. He also said there needs to be further study of the various staging sites, especially the one at Wilshire and La Brea, reminded people that "the devil is in the details," and cautioned everyone not to "write a blank check" to Metro.

Jim O'Sullivan, president of the MMRA, said the construction will definitely affect neighbors and that night noise is different from daytime noise. Dennis Mori, Metro's project director, said the requested permits will allow the process to be completed much faster than without the permits, and that "time is money." Board Member Jack Humphreville asked how much money would be saved with the extended hours permits in place, but Mr. Mori said he did not have specific numbers, though it would be "millions."

GWNC Secretary Jeffrey Carpenter invited Metro to stay in touch with the GWNC regarding the project, and said the Transportation Committee would be willing to host further meetings on the subject.

#### **C. Resolution in Support of the Statewide Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags, SB-405 (Baker Montgomery)**

Mr. Montgomery presented a brief summary of the bill to ban single-use plastic bags and requested the GWNC's support.

**MOTION** (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Ms. Valdez): That the GWNC support the ban outlined in SB-405.

**DISCUSSION:** Board Member Greg Wittmann questioned whether it would be appropriate or consistent for the board to weigh in on this subject, since it is not exclusively local to our area and we have declined involvement in other such issues recently. Mr. Montgomery noted that several state legislators have said they previously voted against such a ban because no one was specifically urging them to support it, so

community support is necessary. Board Member Mike Genewick noted possible health hazards of customers putting groceries in dirty reusable bags, but Mr. Baker said supermarket unions support the ban, and studies have shown no contamination hazards for reusable bags.

**MOTION PASSED** by a vote of 10 in favor, 4 opposed and 1 abstention.

**D. L.A. Team Mentoring Update on GWNC Grant (Sabrina Vegnone)**

Ms. Vegnone expressed her thanks and gratitude for the grant GWNC provided to her organization last May. She said the money was used for a summer student leadership camp for disadvantaged kids – many of them from John Burroughs Middle School. Several students who attended the camp also gave positive feedback and thanks for their experiences.

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

**A. Monthly Budget Report/approval**

Treasurer Patti Carroll reported that DONE is in the process of switching to new monthly reports and expense approval forms. She presented the new Monthly Expenditure Reports for July and August, 2013, and the 14 individual expenditures included on the reports

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Mr. Carpenter): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves Monthly Expenditure Report for July, 2013.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** with 10 of 10 eligible board members voting in favor.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Mr. Genewick): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Monthly Expenditure Report for August, 2013.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** with 10 of 10 eligible board members voting in favor.

**FUNDING MOTION:** (by Mr. Humphreville, seconded by Mr. Whitley): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the 14 individual expenditures listed on the July and August Monthly Expenditure Reports.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** with 10 of 10 eligible board members voting in favor.

**B. YTD Budget Report.**

Ms. Carroll said that because of the new report forms, she would not present the usual YTD report this month, but will resume YTD reporting next month.

**C. Enrichment Center Grant Update and Funding Request (Diann Farmer)**

Ms. Farmer did not attend, so there was no presentation.

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

Mr. Humphreville said the moth's biggest news is the extension of the IBEW contract, which still has an interest rate of 7.34%. It's a big improvement and an even bigger surprise was that Mayor Garcetti said it didn't go far enough. The city is forming a joint labor/management board, which should provide more transparency and a lot more information.

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

Mr. Humphreville said the DWP contract will affect negotiations with civilian unions as well. DWP workers did not make a contribution to their health plan, which will come up in the negotiations, as will the assumption of no raises. The "street repair tax" will also be an issue, and we need a plan for alleys, bridges, curbs...as well as better oversight. Mr. Humphreville said it would be better to finance these efforts through the general fund instead of pay increases and pension benefits, and that we need a balanced budget amendment to take care of our core problems.

**11. Old Business**

There was no old business at this time.

**12. New Business**

There was no new business at this time.

**13. Transportation Committee** (Gerda McDonough)

**A. City of Los Angeles Mobility Element Draft EIR Preparation**

Ms. McDonough reported that the documents will be available soon.

**B. LAPD Enforcement** – Ms. McDonough reported that there were 11 injury accidents in our area in June, and noted that accidents are not counted in this number unless a person is taken away in an ambulance.

**C. Alley Repaving Between Carling Way and Sixth Street**

Ms. McDonough reported that the alley will be patched in two weeks

**D. Save Our Streets Initiative**

Ms. McDonough reported that what was originally going to be a bond measure will not be on the ballot as an initiative asking all City Departments to evaluate our street issues. The Transportation Committee reviewed the proposed initiative and formulated a proposed motion on the topic:

**MOTION** (by Ms. McDonough, seconded by Mr. Whitley):

That the GWNC send a letter to the City Council stating that:

*The GWNC commends the sponsor's efforts to gather and inventory responses and concerns that are being raised about the proposed Save Our Streets bond program (Council File 13-130-S1)...but we would like to note the following:*

### **Outreach**

*Contrary to City statements, many Neighborhood Councils were not notified of the public hearings that Councilmembers Buscaino and Englander report were held. Going forward, the proposal has to have a genuine, on-going and dedicated outreach component that includes all stakeholders.*

### **Expert Independent Oversight**

*Many of the recommended instructions touch on complex issues that extend beyond the scope of the City's staff resources. No provisions are made for enlisting consultants or convening expert peer reviews on critical recommendations. Most important, no single, expert executive has been put in charge of overseeing the requested analyses and integrating them into a coordinated, coherent set of policy, fiscal, strategic planning and programming recommendations.*

### **Total Plan**

*The City needs a long-term operating plan for all of its streets, alleys, curbs, sidewalks and bridges. Once identified, the underlying revenue base should be funded to include ongoing maintenance. The plan must also include a balanced budget amendment.*

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously with a voice vote.

## **14. Outreach Committee** (Fred Mariscal)

Mr. Mariscal had to leave early, so the report was presented by Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller

### **A. Citizen Recognition Award**

Ms. Fuller noted that the committee is considering John Burroughs Middle School Principal Steve Martinez for its next award, but has not yet confirmed a presentation date.

### **B. Update on outreach ideas (to align with Strategic Plan) discussed:**

i. **Larchmont Zoning Walk/Discussion** – Ms. Fuller reported that the event, a joint effort with the Land Use Committee, will be held on Saturday, September 21. The public will be invited, as well as Larchmont business leaders and representatives from our City Council office.

#### **ii. GWNC Local Merchant Discount Cards**

Ms. Fuller reported that she and Ms. Carroll pitched the idea for a GWNC “Community Commerce” discount card program to the Larchmont Boulevard Association, but that organization said it was not in favor of the idea, so the Outreach Committee will look for new options.

#### **iii. Transit shelter/bus bench ads**

Ms. Fuller said the Outreach Committee is still looking into costs for this program

## **15. Board Member Reports and Comments**

Board Alternate Robby O'Donnell reported that she attended a Los Angeles Conservancy meeting about the ReCode LA program, which has issued an invitation for people to join its committee on revising the zoning codes. More information can be found at the ReCodeLA website and Facebook page.

## **16. Public Comments**

There were no public Comments

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

Mr. Wolf was absent, so the committee report was presented by LUC Secretary Greg Wittmann. Also, four board members left the meeting prior to this agenda item, resulting in a loss of the quorum required for board votes. All items were presented for information only

### **A. Medical Marijuana Dispensary at 215-217 N. Larchmont**

**Issue:** A medical marijuana dispensary has reportedly leased space in an upstairs unit at the above address. Community members and local business leaders are concerned about its potential impact on the neighborhood. A larger community meeting, featuring representatives from CD4, LAPD and the City Attorney, was held on the day after the Land Use meeting.

Board members present expressed opposition to the dispensary, and Mr. Genewick reported that the City Attorney is also looking into the one located near St. Brendan's Church.

### **B. Plan Approval at Marlborough School**

**Issue:** The applicant seeks a Plan Approval to modify its open space facilities built and approved by a CUP obtained in 1999. At that time, the applicant agreed with Arden Blvd. residents that any modification to the plans would require their support. Now the applicant plans to expand the pool, slightly alter the pool footprint, install a pool equipment area, and possibly construct a subterranean garage. Operating conditions and other parts of campus will not change. Neighbors have signed letters of support. The Committee members present at the LUC meeting were receptive to the applicant's request and voiced no concerns.

### **C. Request to Endorse Letter on Digital Billboards**

**Issue:** The GWNC was asked to sign a letter encouraging the removal of illegal digital billboard structures and opposing legislation to legalize or permit new digital billboards (see handout for letter draft). Committee members present at the LUC meeting agreed with the intent of the letter but hoped to see slightly revised language (the draft highlighted the concerns of Homeowners Associations in the Westside rather than Neighborhood Councils throughout the City). Update: Barbara Broide, the letter's author, suggested the GWNC revise the language and send its own letter.

### **D. Review of Settlement Agreement for 710-712 N. El Centro (Camerford Lofts)**

**Issue:** The applicant is currently constructing an 84-unit mixed use development on Melrose near the north terminus of Larchmont. The Land Use Committee was asked to review the plans pursuant to a settlement agreement between neighbors and the property's previous developer. The plans conformed with what neighbors sought in the settlement agreement including a total of 84 units, height step-backs, and extensive landscaping. The applicants requested support for a revocable permit to postpone street-widening and instead provide extra-wide sidewalks, planters and seating. The Committee members present were generally supportive of the request.

**E. Small-Lot Subdivision at 816-828 N. June St.**

**Issue:** The applicant seeks approval of a 12-unit small lot subdivision with a height variance. Mr. Kaliski noted that five-foot side setbacks might be inadequate for a three-story building, even though five-foot setbacks comply with the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance. Mr. Kaliski suggested a six-foot setback above the ground level. Stakeholder Don Hunt expressed concern about limited outreach to neighbors. The Committee members present decided to invite the applicant back for the September meeting after meeting with neighbors and producing a full set of plans.

**F. Small-Lot Subdivision at 851 N. Cherokee**

**Issue:** The applicants visited the LUC for a second time in August, seeking a small-lot subdivision to build three small houses on the RD1.5 lot at this address (which could hold 4 apartment units by right). They are also asking for a height variance, to allow a roof deck with guard rail on the 3-story middle unit (the other two units would be only 2 stories). As suggested at the July meeting, the applicant integrated a front door opening to the street. The applicant also spoke with the GWNC area representative and went door-to-door to discuss the project but says few neighbors (mostly renters) had interest. While Committee members present were generally satisfied with the modified proposal, stakeholder Don Hunt expressed concern that outreach was inadequate. The Committee members decided to postpone a vote until a third meeting, to allow for further public comment.

Other potential agenda items for future LUC meetings:

- Application for parcel map to divide a lot into two lots at 800 N. Sycamore
- Presentation on plans for mixed-use development at 5100 Wilshire Blvd. (Oasis Church site)
- CUB renewal for 3Twenty Wine Lounge (320 S. La Brea)
- CUB application for wine/beer sales at True Burger (850 S. La Brea)
- CUB renewal for a restaurant at 4001 Wilshire
- Condo development at 853-859 S. Lucerne

**18. Announcements and Adjournment**

Mr. Carpenter declared and the Board agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth Fuller  
Administrative Consultant