



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee
September 24, 2013

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee as corrected, 10/22/13

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, September 24, 2013, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Approval of the Minutes

Secretary Greg Wittmann called the roll. Eight of the 14 Committee Members were present at the beginning of the Meeting: Ann Eggleston, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Patty Lombard, Jeff McManus, Caroline Moser, Greg Wittmann and James Wolf. Patricia Carroll, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman and Bill Funderburk arrived later. Committee Members absent: John Kaliski and Gerda McDonough. Also attending: 33 Stakeholders and guests. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is eight, so the Committee could take such votes.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. McManus): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its July 23, 2013 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Mr. Herman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its August 27, 2013 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED without any objections.

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

Mr. Wittmann distributed and reviewed the “August-September Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City. The 127 N. Lucerne application is in an HPOZ. The 201 N. Western application is a renewal.

Committee Member Patti Carroll arrived at this time.

4. New Business

a. **Beer and wine CUB at True Burger at 850 S. La Brea (Alex Woo).**

Copies of a Notice of Public Hearing and the GWNC Liquor License Policy were distributed. Consultant Mr. Woo said the owner is “seeking beer and wine to add to the existing restaurant” that is around 1,000 square feet. Current hours are 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. daily; they’re seeking to remain open until 11:00 p.m. They spoke with LAPD Sgt. Rick Estevez, who had “no concerns.” Their Hearing will be October 2nd. Ms. Eggleston indicated the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association had not heard from the applicants yet, so the SSNA does not have a position because they don’t have enough information.

Committee Members Mike Genewick and Karen Gilman arrived at this time.

Committee Members urged Mr. Woo to tell the owner to address neighborhood groups. Stakeholder Elizabeth Fuller, who lives near the restaurant, was concerned that “liquor laws run with the land” and potential noise; nearby restaurants seem to be doing well without liquor licenses. There was discussion of what the Committee should do.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Ms. Moser): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board ask the Applicant to contact the Sycamore Square Association and neighbors and ask the City Zoning Administrator to postpone the hearing for 45 days; otherwise, the Committee will oppose the CUB Application for beer and wine at True Burger at 850 S. La Brea Ave.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote; Mr. Genewick abstained.

Mr. Woo said that he cannot ask for the Hearing to be postponed but will ask the Zoning Administrator to keep the case open. Also, that the owner asked to be on the GWNC’s August meeting Agenda, which was full.

Committee Member Bill Fundeburk arrived at this time.

b. **Beer and wine CUB at 3Twenty Wine Lounge at 320 S. La Brea (William Bergstrom).**

Copies of a Conditional Use Approval letter were distributed. Consultant Mr. Bergstrom said they’re “asking for a renewal with no changes” and they’ve “had no complaints.” Also, “they did a good job of mitigating noise”, have “been a good neighbor.” There will be “no music” and they’ve “hosted several charitable events for the police.” They need to renew every three years and by early next year. There was discussion of whether current and proposed seating is in the public right-of-way. Mr. Wolf explained that the Applicant needs to clearly identify the seating without the Committee having to ask or “prospect.” Ms. Fuller also noted that the business owner, Edgar Pouresough, told the committee a few months ago, before he filed the renewal application, that it might contain a few small changes from the current CUB. Mr. Bergstrom did not know what the changes might be, but agreed to present again to the Committee.

c. **Applications for repeal of building line and continued use of two adjacent lots as parking lots at Kangnam Restaurant – 4103 W. Olympic (Bill Robinson).**

Copies of a completed CUP application were distributed. Consultant Mr. Robinson described the Application for the property at the corner of Olympic and Bronson to move a “30-foot building line . . . from the 1920’s . . . The restaurant has been there since 1988.”

Mr. Wolf clarified that the owner is allowing parking within the setback, which is not allowed. Mr. Robinson said the owners are seeking to legalize use of that part of the property for parking (for which it has been used since 1989). Committee members urged Mr. Robinson to provide a full site plan, and to meet with the Wilshire Park Association and the local HPOZ board, to see how neighbors feel about the parking use. He agreed to do so, and to return to the committee after those meetings.

d. Procedural change to Small Lot Subdivision processing (to allow granting of construction permits before final maps are filed) (Greg Wittmann).

Copies of Mr. Wittmann's "Summary of Small Lot Subdivision Process Change" report were distributed. He explained that the ordinance will allow developers to begin construction on Small Lot Subdivision projects after the tract maps have been approved, but before the maps have been fully recorded by the city. He explained that there can be as much as a year's delay between approval and filing, which either causes expensive delays for developers, or forces them to seek a variance for early construction starts. Mr. Wittmann further explained that there should be no risks or adverse effects from the proposed change, since all project approvals will be in hand when the map is approved, and that no Certificate of Occupancy can be granted until after the map is filed. There was discussion of whether all relevant city departments would have a chance to approve a project before construction begins, but the consensus was that the standard approval process would not be affected.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Mr. McManus): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support "a proposed ordinance amending Section 17.06 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to allow building permits for small lot subdivisions to be obtained prior to the recordation of the final map when a covenant and agreement is filed."

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote without any objections.

5. Old Business

a. Small Lot Subdivision at 816-828 N. June (Brian Gelt).

Copies of a Vesting Tentative Tract Map and Findings were distributed. Consultant Mr. Gelt indicated the owner wants "support for a 12-lot subdivision just a little north of Waring . . . We're here for an early start approval." It's an RD1.5 zone. They want a variance for the setback, passageway and height. He believes the City may require street widening and street lights.

Stakeholder Don Hunt, Chair of the new South Hollywood Neighborhood Association, indicated that many neighbors, including about 40 who attended their meeting, are opposed to the four-story project. He said the project's "decks will overlook everybody's properties and destroy all sense of privacy." Nearby setbacks "are 25 feet, not 15 feet." Stakeholders Laura Whipple and Debra Rosenbaum believed the neighborhood is being overrun by small lot developments and resulting increased traffic. Stakeholder Vanessa Carmichael was concerned that the project will destroy the "quaint" feeling of the neighborhood. Stakeholder Nadia Villareal was concerned that the project will depreciate nearby home values. Stakeholder Sallie Higgins believed that the project would destroy a possible future HPOZ designation.

Committee Member John Gresham had to leave at this time.

Mr. Gelt said he was genuinely surprised at the opposition and would be happy to meet with the neighbors to discuss their objections...and to request a delay in the city's hearing date for the project, which is currently scheduled for next month. He asked if the project could be withdrawn from the committee agenda at this meeting, but committee members said they should take this chance to weigh in on what has been presented so far.

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Mr. Herman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the current small lot division application, including height and setbacks, but would consider a renewed proposal after the Applicant discusses the project with the community and provides a letter indicating that the Applicant requested that the City postpone its October 9th Hearing.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote without any objections.

b. Small Lot Subdivision at 851 N. Cherokee (Antonio Hidalgo).

Mr. Wittmann explained that this is the third appearance of this project before the committee. The committee's request at the first appearance was that a better street frontage be provided, and the applicants did come back with an improved front door. At the second appearance, committee members requested that the developers do more community outreach. Architect Bogdan Tomaleoski said they are proposing three units on a parcel that could legally contain 4, and are asking for a height variance on the middle unit only, to allow for a roof deck with parapets. Since the last LUC visit, he said they met with the new South Hollywood Neighborhood Association, which had two votes to support the project, two abstentions and no one opposed. Don Hunt, president of the SoHo Association, said the group did not have time for a full discussion of the project, and did do a further survey, which received nine votes in favor, 20 undecided and none opposed. He said that his own opinion is that this is the best of this type of project that he has seen, but that it is still out of character with the neighborhood. He also said, however, that he would like to keep working with the developers and thinks they can come to a consensus on most of the issues under discussion. Five neighbors agreed that more discussions would be helpful, and offered qualified support or hope for successful mitigations, with a consensus that the project would be much more acceptable if the proposed roof deck parapet was no more than 18" above what is allowed by right.

MOTION (by Ms. Eggleston, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the Small Lot Subdivision project at 851 N. Cherokee as proposed, including setback and height.

MOTION FAILED by a hand vote with three in favor; four opposed; four abstained.

Mr. Tomaleoski clarified that they're asking for an 18-inch variance over the 30-foot height limit to include a roof deck for outdoor space.

MOTION (by Mr. Funderburk, seconded by Ms. Gilman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the Small Lot Subdivision project at 851 N. Cherokee as presented.

MOTION FAILED by a hand vote with three in favor; six opposed.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Ms. Carroll): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the Small Lot Subdivision project at 851 N. Cherokee, with the condition that the height of the roof deck parapet be no more than 18” above what is allowed by right.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with seven in favor; two opposed.

c. **Possible joint meeting with Hollywood Studio District Neighborhood Council to discuss temporary landscaping in place of street widening on Melrose at 710-712 N. Centro**

There was discussion that Committee Members can provide individual comments.

d. **Request to Endorse Letter Regarding Digital Billboards (note: discussed at last month’s meeting, but lacked quorum for formal vote).**

Copies of a draft letter to the Mayor and others from the Westwood South of Santa Monica Boulevard Homeowners’ Association were distributed. Mr. Wittmann reviewed this.

e. **Update and possible vote on potential new medical marijuana dispensary at 215 N. Larchmont Blvd. (note: discussed at last month’s meeting, but lacked quorum for formal vote).**

Ms. Carroll reported that “the owner of the building is not communicating or cooperating with anybody . . . Frank Fox has said he will proceed with the lease . . . The Hancock Park Homeowners Association” is getting legal counsel. Ms. Lombard added that “they’re confident they’ll get an injunction . . . it’s not in compliance with Proposition D.”

f. **Possible vote on plans for outdoor facilities at Marlborough School (note: discussed at last month’s meeting, but lacked quorum for formal vote).**

Mr. Wittmann noted that this was already approved.

6. Committee Member Comments and Reports

a. **Housing Element Updates and Meetings (Lombard/Wittmann)**

Copies of a Recommendation Report and draft Resolution were distributed. Mr. Wittmann offered to provide update information.

b. **Transportation Committee**

Mr. Wolf noted that Ms. McDonough was unable to attend this meeting.

c. **Potential development at Wilshire/Crenshaw (Greg Wittmann)**

Mr. Wittmann noted that “construction fences are up.”

7. Public Comments

Mr. Wolf clarified that any Stakeholder can apply to be a Land Use Committee Member.

8. Announcements and Adjournment

a. **Next meeting:** Tuesday, October 22, 6:30 p.m. On the horizon (possible future agenda items): Mr. Wolf noted this.

b. **ReCode LA looking for Zoning Advisory Committee volunteers (see handouts).**
Copies of a “Zoning Advisory Committee Participation” letter from the Dept. of City Planning were distributed. Mr. Wolf noted this.

c. **Possible future agenda items:**

- Parcel split at 800 N. Sycamore
- Zone change and site plan review for mixed-use development at 5100 Wilshire
- Repeal of 30-foot setbacks at Kangnam Restaurant, 4113 W. Olympic
- Density bonus for 23 unit project at 807 N. Hudson

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

Mr. Wolf declared and the Committee agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer