



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee
October 28, 2014
Approved by the Committee 11/25/14

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

A. Call to order (James Wolf)

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, October 28, 2014, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

B. Roll call (Barbara Savage)

The roll was called. Ten of the 17 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Patricia Carroll, Karen Gilman, Dick Herman, Joseph Hoffman, John Kaliski, Jeff McManus, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg, Greg Wittmann and James Wolf. Barbara Savage arrived later. Six Committee Members were absent: Alan Bernstein, Ann Eggleston, Mike Genewick, John Gresham, Patty Lombard, 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 nine, so the Committee could take such votes. Also attending: 17 Stakeholders and guests.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

GWNC Administrator Elizabeth Fuller read a letter from stakeholder Elspeth Kuang, citing several community concerns regarding the proposed conversion of the historic Gilmore gas station to a Starbucks on Highland Ave. (which the GWNC voted to support earlier this year).

Stakeholder John Welborne distributed the Central Area Planning Commission report on the denial of the zone change, zone variance and CUB applications by the Larchmont Bungalow restaurant. He noted that the business has until November 13 to file an appeal.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

A. Review and adoption of September 23, 2014 Minutes

It was noted that the word “fund” in the second paragraph of item 5B should be “find.”

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski., seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its September 23, 2014 Meeting as corrected.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote with none opposed or abstained.

Committee Member Barbara Savage arrived at this time, making 11 Members present (the Committee quorum is nine).

Copies of the “10/28/14 September-October Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City were distributed and reviewed. It was requested that applications from 743 S. Luceren (the Ebell of Los Angeles) and 101 N. La Brea be reviewed as possible future agenda items.

4. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. Discussion and possible action on an application for a density bonus for 46-unit apartment project at 729-743 N. Hudson (Eric Lieberman)

Applicant first presented to the LUC in August. Project is a 27,000 sf, five-story building, zoned R3-1. It would have 46 units, including four very low income units. Parking is ground-level, per code, with 62 spaces plus ten “surplus” and 51 bicycle parking spaces. Applicants request additional height to create the fifth floor. Two curb cuts facilitate traffic flow. Committee members recommended adjustments to the landscaping and massing of the 5-story building and also that applicants seek input from neighbors before returning with revised designs.

Robert Green and Rick Dreyfus, Owners and General Contractors, presented. No Variance was requested. Landscaping was increased since their last presentation. Rents for studios to three-bedroom apartments would be from \$543-\$776 per month for very low income units. They said they are “over-parking the building,” which would be gated. There was discussion of the optimal amount of vehicle and bicycle parking. Committee member John Kaliski recommended that the parking area at the rear of the building be re-designed as additional green space.

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Mr. Wittmann): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the application for a density bonus for 46-unit apartment project at 729-43 N. Hudson with the condition that the Applicant provide a landscaped rear yard setback and that the Applicant return by the next Board Meeting with a plan to accomplish same.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Green said he “will take a fresh look” at the rear yard landscaping.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with seven in favor, two opposed and one abstention (Mr. Wolf did not vote).

Mr. Green agreed to email a revised landscaping plan to Ms. Savage and GWNC Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller.

B. Discussion and possible action on development of a 162-unit, 7-story apartment complex at 700 S. Manhattan Pl. (Jared Sopko)

Applicant first presented to LUC in August. Project is a 48,000 square-foot, 121-unit apartment complex. Current lot is allowed 91 units; developer is seeking a variance for the added density, and to transfer some of the R4-2 residential zoning to C2-1 commercial zoning. Includes 305 parking spaces, with some for commercial parking. Entrances on 7th and Western; residential parking entrance on Manhattan Pl. Neighbors expressed concerns about size, density and height. First discussion addressed appropriateness for the location and neighborhood context, as well as whether or not application for a Density Bonus (including low income units) would be more appropriate than the requested variance. Committee members also recommended that developers consult further with the Country Club Heights neighbors before returning with any project revisions.

It was agreed to TABLE this Item.

C. Discussion and possible action on development of 5 condominiums at 4806 W. Elmwood (Ronald Liu, Darrell Cheng, Alex Ma)

The GWNC Board voted in September to oppose the project as originally presented, due to concerns about neighborhood context and compatibility, garage openings and vents below windows of residential spaces, design of planter areas, lack of usable outdoor space and other details...but encouraged applicants to return with any recommended design revisions before city hearings are scheduled.

It was said that “the major revision is . . . we closed . . . the openings” in the front and replaced it with a trellis; “ventilation is next to the driveway gate.” Mr. Wolf was concerned about how the garage ventilation would work, and where ventilation equipment would be placed. There was discussion of the property line and of the grade level, especially in regard to adjacent properties. Concern was expressed about the accuracy of the site plan and elevations.

MOTION (by Mr. Shapiro, seconded by Ms. Gilman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board not support the development of five condominiums at 4806 W. Elmwood as presented.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with 11 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

D. Discussion and possible action on proposed Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) in the La Brea/Hancock neighborhood while city works on revisions to its anti-mansionization ordinance (Barbara Savage)

The GWNC Board voted in August to support the La Brea-Hancock neighborhood's application for a Residential Floor Area overlay zone that would help discourage mansionization by setting a formula for allowable square footage in new buildings, relative to their lot size. The City is processing that request, along with revisions to its Baseline Mansionization Ordinance, which may make RFA overlay zones less necessary. Neighbors are requesting an ICO to help control the pace of construction while the city's deliberations play out.

Proposed Motion: The GWNC, recognizing that considerable time is elapsing before the City can process and fully implement needed amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance, applications for Residential Area Amendments, applications for Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, and other neighborhood conservation measures, urges the City Council to move forward with the immediate implementation of an Interim Control Ordinance to protect the neighborhoods that have currently applied to these processes, and furthermore to provide that, until appropriate amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance have been adopted and put into force, additional neighborhoods can subsequently petition for protection under the Interim Control Ordinance.

Ms. Savage explained the issue. Some developers and homeowners are building attached units not counted as part of their floor area. Also, homes are being demolished, often on Saturdays, which contain asbestos, without any notice or protections for nearby homeowners. An ICO would "stop building immediately . . . we've lost 20 homes . . . in less than two years," she said. The Motion would "stop building Permits" while "allowing for remodeling."

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Mr. Shapiro): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the following statement: The GWNC, recognizing that considerable time is elapsing before the City can process and fully implement needed amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance, applications for Residential Floor Area Amendments, applications for Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, and other neighborhood conservation measures, urges the City Council to adopt an Interim Control Ordinance to prohibit the demolition of single-family residences ["SFRs"] in proposed HPOZ and RFA districts until appropriate amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance have been adopted and put into force, and allowing additional neighborhoods to subsequently petition for protection under the Interim Control Ordinance.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with 11 in favor, zero opposed and zero abstentions.

- E. Discussion and possible action on construction of a 4-story, 22-unit apartment complex with Density Bonus at 5022-5026 Rosewood Ave. (Frank Afari)

Applicant first came to LUC in August to briefly introduce the project, which requests a 32 ½% density bonus in return for providing two low-income units. Property is in the R3-1 zone. Neighbors are concerned about the size and scale of the project. Committee

members said other options may be available for the density addition. Applicant was asked to return with a fuller set of plans and a more detailed presentation before any votes are taken.

General Contractor Iraj Yazdi presented. There would be 40 vehicle parking spaces and bicycle parking. They are seeking a height Variance of “51 feet in lieu of 45 feet” and a Floor Area Ratio increase from 3.1 to 3.2. There was extensive discussion of possible project improvements and of the rendering accuracy (e.g. the project is not on a corner, but appears to be so in the drawings presented). Stakeholder Mark Gilman was “concerned with the scale”; Sandra Fleck with over-densification and traffic. Ms. Gilman mentioned “the old tree is proposed not to be saved.” There would be no residents’ roof access or barbecuing. Mr. Kaliski reviewed many concerns expressed by the Committee and Stakeholders about the project. Mr. Yazdi said “Permit approval is near completion.”

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Hoffman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the construction of a 4-story, 22-unit apartment complex with Density Bonus at 5022-5026 Rosewood Ave. as currently proposed, with a request that the developers address the following concerns: context and topography; orientation of balconies; details of east-west facing boundary walls; to what extent the Floor Area increase is necessary; and a true landscaping plan.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with nine in favor, zero opposed and one abstained (Mr. Wolf did not vote).

5. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

- A. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on application for a CUB to allow sales of a full line of alcoholic beverages at a restaurant at 3700 W. Olympic Blvd. (Kevin Franklin)

Project is just across GWNC’s southern border, but of interest because it abuts and affects the GWNC area.

Mr. Franklin described Bakung Korean Barbeque, a “Korean-style . . . sit-down restaurant . . . no live music, no karaoke.” He said he “talked with the Police Department” and “the Vice Squad”; they haven’t indicated any problems with the Applicant. No Motion was made.

- B. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on application to construct a 4-story, 11-unit apartment complex, with Density Bonus and two on-menu incentives at 5036 Rosewood Ave. (Frank Afari)

Project requests an 8.3% density increase in exchange for including 1 very low income unit. Also requesting a 20% reduction in required open space.

No representative was present and there was no action.

- C. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on application to construct a 30-unit apartment building at 4180 W. Wilshire (Matt Dzurec)

Project is within the Park Mile area, and has been extensively reviewed by the Park Mile Design Review Board.

No representative was present and there was no action.

- D. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on application for a Change of Use to convert the old Scottish Rite Temple to a private, non-profit museum at 4357 W. Wilshire Blvd. (Michael Gruber)

Project is within the Park Mile area and has been reviewed by the Park Mile Design Review Board.

No representative was present and there was no action.

- E. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on application to construct an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility atop an apartment building at 407 S. Gramercy (Mark Berline)

Facility will consist of 12 panel antennas and a microwave dish behind rooftop screening, and 4 equipment cabinets on a steel equipment platform. According to renderings, equipment screens and cabinets will be visible above the roofline from the street.

No representative was present and there was no action.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS (including discussion and possible action items, if listed):

- A. Transportation Committee Liaison Report (Stromberg)
Update on local transportation issues GWNC is monitoring.

Ms. Stromberg updated. The Committee next will meet December 1st.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next meeting, Tuesday, November 25, 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

- B. Possible agenda items for upcoming meetings:

- i. Full-line liquor CUB renewal (with later closing time) at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne (Lyndi Vaughan)
- ii. CUP for beer and wine sales at 7-Eleven, 150 S. Citrus (Darlene Chacon)
- iii. Development of parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 Norton (Jared Sopko)

- iv. Development of 5-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton (Matthew Hayden)
- v. Density bonus project at 801-813 N. Hudson (Michael Cohanzad)

Mr. Wolf noted the above Items.

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

[The second Item #7.] There were no requests.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wolf **ADJOURNED** the Meeting without any objection at 9:41 p.m.

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