



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee

November 25, 2014

MINUTES

Approved by the Committee, 1/27/15

1. WELCOMING REMARKS:

A. Call to Order

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, November 25, 2014, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Secretary Barbara Savage called the roll. Nine of the 17 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Ann Eggleston, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Joseph Hoffman, Caroline Moser, Barbara Savage, and James Wolf. Patricia Carroll and John Kaliski arrived later. Six Committee Members were absent: Alan Bernstein, Patty Lombard, Jeff McManus, Dorian Shapiro, Julie Stromberg and Greg Wittmann). 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: 12 Stakeholders and guests.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments at this time.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

A. Review and adoption of October 28, 2014 minutes

MOTION (by Ms. Eggleston, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its October 28, 2014 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a voice vote with no objection.

B. Early Planning Report

Copies of the “11/25/14 October-November Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” of recent land use applications received by the City were distributed and reviewed by GWNC Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller. She requested and Mr. Wolf agreed to Agendize for discussion the project at 4680 W. Wilshire Blvd. There was discussion of the project at 3950 W. Ingraham, which is outside the GWNC boundary.

4. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. 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.

Copies were distributed of a letter “To: GWNC Land Use Committee” from Arlin Low, President, Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association. Jared Sopko, project architect, distributed renderings and site plan copies, displayed slides and said “the principal change made” since the last presentation is “regarding affordable public housing.” He said “the building spans the entire block.”

Committee Member Patti Carroll arrived at this time, making 10 Committee Members present (the Committee quorum is nine).

Mr. Sopko said “we’re proposing 121 allowable units plus” a 35% density bonus (instead of the density variance originally noted in the application), with some affordable units.

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

Mr. Sopko said the project would include 6,000 square feet of commercial space. All units would be one or two bedrooms in a structure “a total of seven stories” in blue and gold. He indicated that the property at Western and 7th is a separate property with a separate owner. He met with the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association to discuss concerns. He said “we’re presently over-parked compared to what’s required” and believed the City Plan already is “anticipating” increased density. He described efforts to comply with City codes and requirements. Mr. Sopko indicated they will consider a “zip car” for residents’ transportation and said “we’re in the middle of preparing our traffic study”; he will bring more information. Mr. Wolf expressed concern that a large percentage of the Western frontage is devoted to the parking entrance, rather than actively engaging pedestrians or enhancing the streetscape. Ms. Fuller relayed that neighbors are concerned about the project’s height. Mr. Kaliski suggested “parkways,” not just trees and agreed that more should be done to create a good pedestrian experience on Western. No Motion was made.

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

After reviewing the project in both September and October, the GWNC Board voted in for a second time in October 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 recommended design revisions before city hearings are scheduled.

Copies were distributed of renderings, floor plans and elevations. Mr. Ma described the project as 50 feet by 145 feet and “three stories, including the basement parking” in “Spanish style” in an R-3 zone. The height would be 39 feet, six inches “from the street level.” He indicated that ten parking spaces are required; they would provide thirteen. They are requesting support of their Tract Map. There was very extensive discussion of building facilities and design, including HVAC placement, drainage issues and the overall quality of the design. No Hearing date has been set.

MOTION (by Ms. Eggleston, seconded by Mr. Kaliski): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the development of five condominiums at 4806 W. Elmwood as presented.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with five in favor; three opposed; two abstained (Presiding Officer Mr. Wolf did not vote).

- C. Update, discussion and possible action on progress on issues with crime, lighting and other [Q] condition violations at Avalon Wilshire building. (Barbara Savage) GWNC has voted to support neighbors in seeking enforcement of security and green space [Q] conditions in the building’s CUP. Recent efforts by neighbors, the La Brea-Hancock Homeowners Association and GWNC have led to renewed discussions with property owners.

Ms. Savage reported that she “had a meeting with Avalon’s Counsel.” She described security possibilities including a gate and “a hi-end security camera.” Mr. Gresham reminded that building management still needs to work with the community. Mr. Wolf said “the issue here is responsiveness.”

MOTION (by Mr. Hoffman, seconded by Ms. Moser): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee requests that Avalon Bay, owner and manager of the Avalon Wilshire Apartments at 5151 Wilshire, propose, implement and continuously monitor performance-based solutions to fulfill their Conditional Use Permit requirements, including the “Q” conditions and the covenant with the La Brea-Hancock Homeowners Association (LBHHOA), in regular consultation with the LBHHOA Board.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with 0 opposed and 0 abstained.

Committee Member John Gresham had to leave around this time, making 10 Committee Members present (the Committee quorum is nine).

- D. Update, discussion and possible action on the development of 5-unit small Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton (Matthew Hayden)
Project was first presented to the Committee in May, 2014. Committee members at that time expressed concerns with neighborhood context and design compatibility, as well as the orientation of the buildings and lack of green/open space for the units.

Copies were distributed of a Vesting Tentative Map application, renderings, floor plans and elevations. Mr. Hayden indicated they want support for a Tract Map. No Hearing date has been set. The project was for five units; now (after a meeting with neighbors in which the adjacent neighbor agreed to sell his lot to the developers, allowing the project to expand into the additional space, it is for ten units and includes 862 S. Wilton in an R3-1 multi-family zone; “the block is about 67% multi-family.” He said they are allowed 18 units and a 45-foot height. Units would be approximately 1,559 square feet each with an average \$650,000 price per unit. They are considering two possible setbacks, both larger than the Small Lot Subdivision requirements. Units “will have ground floor yards and patios . . . two parking spaces for each as required . . . there’s no roof deck proposed.” They expect the Dept. of Transportation to request them to widen the street; Mr. Hayden said “we’re going to ask them not to widen it.” He indicated that they are aware that at least half the driveway must be permeable. He reported that “approximately 125 letters were mailed” to neighbors and they did “door-to-door” outreach. Ms. Moser wanted the design to do more to recognize the neighborhood’s “historic standards.” Committee Members suggested design improvements that Mr. Hayden indicated would be considered. He said “we’ll address” storm water drainage “for sure.” He stated “we will work on that front entry.”

MOTION (by Mr. Kaliski, seconded by Mr. Hoffman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the development of a five-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 856 S. Wilton with the conditions that the Applicant will revisit the elevation sequence for the west façade facing Wilton; add windows on the east facade; provide a quality hardscape treatment at the entry driveway with no street widening on Wilton and no additional guest parking; and that the Applicant present a revised design to Committee Members prior to the GWNC December Board Meeting.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote with 0 opposed and 0 abstained.

5. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. 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.

Mr. Wolf indicated that the presenter was not present and there was no report.

B. 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.

Ms. Fuller relayed that the owner indicated that extra Permits are being obtained to do unexpected repairs. The project representative requested that a fuller presentation be tabled until a future meeting.

- C. 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.

Mr. Wolf indicated that the presenter was not present and there was no report.

- D. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on the development of a parking lot into 22 townhouse units over subterranean parking at 612 S. Norton (Jared Sopko)
Further details will be provided by the applicant.

Mr. Sopko said “we’re not asking for any action . . . we’re working diligently with the Park Mile Design Review Board.” He distributed copies of renderings and site plans which he indicated are preliminary. They are developing 22- and 33-unit condominium buildings (at both 612 S. Norton and the adjacent 4055 Wilshire Blvd.). He said they are “providing the full required 58 parking spaces . . . [and] an additional six parking spaces over what’s required . . . we’re vacating the alley . . . most of these units are RD3.1 . . . will have a 20-foot setback on the Wilshire side.” He indicated that there would be ground and subterranean parking levels and both buildings would be under height limits. He said “we’re still working on developing our landscape plans.” There was very extensive discussion of design elements and possible improvements which Mr. Sopko agreed will be considered as design work continues. No hearings are scheduled yet.

- E. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on the installation of a wireless telecommunications facility atop an apartment building at 407 S. Gramercy (Mark Berline)
Verizon proposes to install 12 panel antennas and a microwave dish behind screens, and 4 equipment cabinets on a steel platform, on the roof of a 1920s brick apartment building. Equipment will be visible over the building parapet from the street.

Mr. Wolf indicated that the presenter was not present and there was no report. *[Note: this was an accidental duplication of item 5C.]*

- F. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on an application for a CUP for construction of new 6,000sf commercial retail space at 101 N. La Brea (Matthew Wister)
This property is just across the street from the GWNC’s western boundary on La Brea Ave. Currently used as a parking lot.

Mr. Wolf indicated that the presenter was not present and there was no report.

- G. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on an application for a CUB to allow sales of a full line of alcoholic beverages at an existing restaurant space on the 7th floor of the existing structure at 4680 W. Wilshire (Farmers Insurance building). (Michael Gonzales) A 9,740-square foot, 138-seat space, in the historic Farmers Insurance building in the Park Mile Specific Plan area, has been permitted as and occupied by restaurant uses since 1948. Request is for a full line of alcohol sales, from 7 am to 11 pm, 7 days a week. Restaurant would be open to both commercial tenants of the building and members of the

public. Application includes request for “Happy Hour”/discounted drinks, but no live music or entertainment.

Mr. Wolf indicated that the presenter was not present and there was no report.

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. Fuller reported for Ms. Stromberg that the Committee may meet December 1st.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Gilman was concerned about the City’s density bonus hearings. Following up on discussions as previous Committee meetings, she said she has learned from our CD4 office that Density Bonus projects do have public hearings. Mr. Kaliski noted that that is true only for cases where extra incentives are being requested, according to Section 12.22A25 of the city code.

- A. No meeting in December. Next meeting, Tuesday, January 27, 6:30 p.m.

The Committee may have a Special Meeting before its January 27th Meeting.

B. Possible agenda items for upcoming meetings:

- i. Application for a CUB renewal for full-line liquor service (with later closing time) at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd. (Andrew Jorgensen)

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

- ii. Construction of a 4-story, 22-unit apartment complex with Density Bonus at 5022-5026 Rosewood Ave. (Frank Afari)

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

- iii. Application to construct a 4-story, 11-unit apartment complex, with Density Bonus and two on-menu incentives at 5036 Rosewood Ave. (Frank Afari)

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

- iv. Density bonus project at 801-813 N. Hudson (Michael Cohanad)

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

[This was the second Item #7 on the Agenda.]

There were no more requests at this time.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman): to **ADJOURN** the Meeting.

MOTION PASSED with no objection.

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Levin

Minutes Writer

The first paragraph of some Items is directly from the Agenda. Edited by GWNC.