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# MINUTES

WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors (Virtual) January 18<sup>th</sup> 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

# 1. Welcome/Introductions

- a. The WRAC Board conducted its regular monthly meeting by on-line video and audio on January18, 2021. Chair Matt Wersinger called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.
- b. <u>Representatives present</u>: Matt Wersinger (DRNC), Christina Spitz (PPCC), Robin Greenberg (BABCNC), Ira Koslow (VNC), Olga Lexell (SORONC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC), Andrew Lewis (NWWNC), Jane Wishon (WNC), Steve Sann (WCC), Paula Gerez (NCWP) and Alternates Stacy Shure (MVCC) and Michelle Bisnoff (BCC)
- c. Non-voting Alternates present: Barbara Broide (WNC) & Nickie Miner (BABCNC)
- d. Also present: Marlene Savage & Kay Hartman (WRAC LUPC Co-Chairs)
- e. Chair Updates:
- **f. MLK Day:** Chair Wersinger paid tribute to Martin Luther King, as having voiced equality to everybody, a voice for being involved and making change happen, which speaks to what this group is doing as engaged leaders in our communities.
- g. Upcoming Guests:
  - i. March Congressman Ted Lieu, 33<sup>rd</sup> District
  - ii. April LA Councilmember Paul Koretz
  - **iii.** May LAPD Chief Michael Moore

# 2. Government Report

a. US Representative Ted Lieu – Janet Turner gave a brief update including but not limited to:
COVID relief package passed; Congressman Lieu voted for it but says it is not enough. He is eager to see the new package that will be proposed when President Elect Biden is inaugurated.
The Congressman introduced 55 bills last year and co-sponsored 771 others, many signed into law, one, the SAVE Act (Supporting At-risk Veterans in an Emergency Act), provides "grant per diem" money for homeless vets for food, blankets and toiletries during a crisis such as COVID.

- One of his Inspector General bills was passed and a website will be formed whereby any IG reports will be made public.

- He will make efforts to address the cyber-security attack with Russia.

- Regarding homelessness, he introduced an act and will reintroduce to the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, to give small loans to people who don't make a lot of money to pay a bill that would otherwise put them into homelessness. He introduced a bill to give \$750,000,000 to cities to help bolster their homeless programs and provide services. He cosponsored 10 other homeless bills.

- Tell your constituents that the USPS has been hard hit by COVID and they may not see mail for a few days but their mail is being kept safe.

- Q&A followed beginning with Member Gerez noting that we have raised a ton of money that created jobs and bureaucracy, and that it is important to have a plan. Janet would like to know our ideas as to what we think the federal government can do to address this.

Secretary Greenberg asked how people could ride bicycles through the VA. Janet noted that it is not allowed now because of COVID; VA is closed to any outsiders. She will speak to a principal developer who will explain how they are incorporating bike paths through the VA after COVID.
Chair Wersinger thanked her and she thanked us for giving her time to speak.

#### b. LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl – Zac Gaidzik was not present this evening.

**c.** Mayor Eric Garcetti – Brad Fingard introduced himself as the new West Area Representative for Mayor Garcetti and gave a brief update.

- Regarding vaccines, Supervisor Solis signed an executive order to make the vaccine available to those 65 and older after January 21<sup>st</sup>. See: <u>coronavirus.lacity.org/vaccine</u>

- Dodger Stadium opened as a vaccination site and four other sites will be opening this week. See <u>https://www.lamayor.org/city-county-transition-dodger-stadium-vaccination-site</u>

- Member Chapman asked how long is each phase. Brad thinks one or two months, depending.

- Member Gerez mentioned the photo and press ops by the Mayor and Governor during the Safer at Home order, and that they should heed the advice that we are asked to do, to stay at home.

- Chair Wersinger asked and Brad will follow up on bringing the Mayor back.

# d. Council Reports – None

# e. Raquel Beltran, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE):

- Regarding <u>DONE</u>, Ms. Beltran touched upon issues including but not limited to current proposed budget, election outreach strategy, policy procedures, digital media and possibly a Zoom policy, as well as virtual governance after the pandemic.

- She noted that neighborhood councils (NCs) can see something about a proposed budget for 2021-22 in DONE's monthly profiles. They have not filled vacancies, and have fulfilled all the Mayor's instructions. With the cut of \$100,000 they ended with an increase of 7.5% because: 1) the General Manager's base budget is given by CEO's office. Taking into consideration citywide negotiations, labor organizations have agreed to put off labor salary increases for 2021-2022 with a few caveats. Increases were from Julien Antelin's and Grace Kim's positions with the Office of Innovation and the Office of Community Engagement respectively.

- Ms. Beltran noted that they are not able to support council alliances as before. Their priority is direct NC support, though she is trying to attend all alliance meetings.

- For <u>Election Outreach Strategy</u>, they're setting up "101" meetings for discussions with every NC. There was a lateral transfer of funds that the city wasn't going to be using from November of \$456,000, and dividing it will be based on strategy. They'll be having a regional meeting for all of the regions and are getting contracts set up for the election strategy. She noted that the vote by mail election process was created by the City Clerk's office after the pandemic set in.

- Regarding <u>Policies and Procedures</u>, Ms. Beltran noted that <u>Digital Media Policy</u> is at the forefront. She asked people to please identify the sections in the policy that you are and are not comfortable with. She noted that some of the sections in the policy were taken from the City policy. They have one more info session. This process will involve going back to BONC in February, summarizing and providing them a summary of the statements, then BONC will decide. She is still listening to what the NCs and the commissioners are saying.

- She reiterated her request that we please look at the Digital Media Policy and identify the sections we are comfortable with and separate the ones that are problematic, so they can drill down on those. She will propose amendments to the commission.

- Ms. Beltran related that there are <u>modifications to the Brown Act</u> that speak specifically to public agencies and their use of social media, and that in light of the attacks on The Capitol, City Council has cancelled all meetings this week for heightened security. They deferred to the Personnel Committee to begin a process to assess the role that City employees may have had in their engagement, including the extent of their social media. This process will apply to city employees and possibly other agencies.

- Ms. Beltran noted that they will be making decisions on the <u>use of Zoom</u>. As to virtual governance, she noted that they knew there were a lot of positives with using Zoom; however, they also knew that it has limitations. She has a meeting set up with one of the reps of Zoom. They have information from NCs about the features.

- RE: <u>Code of Conduct</u>, the Commission will make a decision as to the review period. They've discussed using a removal policy, likely a six-month process. She gave examples of situations, grievances that involved violating the code of conduct as seen on board members' personal social media. She discouraged saying "no" to the entire policy in favor of providing specifics.

- Q&A followed, beginning with Chair Wersinger asking about the role of BONC in regard to NCs, to which Ms. Beltran noted the <u>regulatory framework</u> in which they work as NC leaders, which plan originally adopted has been amended over and over; intended to be implemented through ordinance. They <u>provide support to NCs</u> and have an <u>oversight responsibility</u>. She understands NCs want support and not control, and she wants to be in a position to help support NCs, e.g., help get them set up.

- She favors changing the policy about your board seating so that all board members start on July 1<sup>st</sup> for the "on-boarding" process.

- Chair Wersinger noted, as to DONE's proposed Social Media Policy, that eight councils were strictly in opposition because two issues that she spoke of are already covered and there is a simple way to cover this rather than getting into people's personal accounts. He encouraged all reps to attend DONE's workshops and BONC meetings. He agreed that there should be some discussion but noted that there has been a lot of opposition to the way the Social Media Policy has been written. He noted that a second issue is the City Charter position that NCs not take any position to anyone but City Council, precluding us from notifying our County and State reps. He noted that we can do it as an individual but not as a NC and asked if she can help give us a chance to raise our voices outside of City Council.

- Member Koslow of VNC related that individuals on NCs coming due for their required trainings just prior to elections should be able to have those trainings done at a time when they make sense. As to elections, he asked regarding people who can't get out, with the vote by mail elections, how we reach people that don't have computers, with libraries closed. He also asked what we can do with regard to communicating with County, State & Assembly offices.

- Ms. Beltran responded, as relates to the City Attorney's determination on our voice in relation to other jurisdictions, that there is nothing that DONE can do, and that we may need to have a conversation as to the next 20 years such as on ordinance changes.

- Member Broide of WNC related that she appreciates all the work going into the elections, but while it is important to get into the community to talk about elections and running, DONE is skipping an important step: the ability to build contributing board members before they get onto a board, to involve them in the NCs first. She asked if this has been discussed by DONE and if they find out why people succeed and don't succeed by compiling data on exit.

- As to recruiting, Ms. Beltran related that all NCs are not the same, there are variables that they consider, including but not limited to what was your voter turnout in 2019 and how many CISs have the NCs done. NCs that are struggling need help filling vacancies. This becomes an equity issue as they won't have a voice at City Hall as other NCs do. She noted that we need to train people to be successful in their roles, and need an "on-boarding" process.

- She stated that most NCs want July 1st to have all board members start at the same time.

- Ms. Beltran concluded that she has been contacting board members who have made known to her that they have resigned, noting that most were bullied off of their boards. She has done some informal exit interviews and is asking what the department could have done better.

- Chair Wersinger thanked her for joining us.

# 3. Board Member Updates – None

**4. Committee Reports:** Marlene Savage and Kay Hartman from the WRAC Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC) were present.

Ms. Savage related that meeting guidelines discussed last month were postponed until February and that they discussed having members send Ms. Hartman suggestions on possible future speakers.
Ms. Hartman added that they received a few suggestions and that the only motions that passed were on SB9 & SB10. At their next meeting, they'll have Haydee Urita-Lopez from Planning, on Community Plans. Chair Wersinger thanked them and noted that LUPC meetings are running more efficiently now.
Chair Wersinger spoke on behalf of Member Handal who is absent, being under the weather. Member Handal is talking about starting the Homelessness Committee soon.

- Chair Wersinger noted that the Transportation Committee is trying to schedule a meeting.

#### 5. Public Comment – None

# 6. Approval of Minutes

 a. Motion (Matt Wersinger) – Approval of December 2020 meeting minutes; <u>seconded</u> by Member Koslow of VNC; unanimously <u>approved</u> by all 12 voting.

# 7. New Business

# a. Motion (WRAC LUPC / Chris Spitz) -

Whereas, Senate Bill 9 violates the California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code §§30000 et seq.) by failing to exempt parcels within the Coastal zone, by purporting to eliminate hearings for Coastal Development Permits, and by requiring by-right/expedited approval of all projects permitted under the bill, including projects within the Coastal zone which otherwise require discretionary review, including hearings, under the Coastal Act;

Whereas, Senate Bill 9 violates the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21065 and 21080) and shortcuts required CEQA review by declaring preemptively that a project permitted under the bill is not a "project" under CEQA, without regard to the test established by controlling caselaw, that is, whether the ordinance in a given case is "capable of causing a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment" (*Union of Medical Marijuana Patients, Inc. v. City of San Diego (California Coastal Commission, Real Party in Interest*), (2019) 7 Cal.5th 1171);

Whereas, Senate Bill 9 compromises public safety and puts the lives and property of thousands of California residents in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) at risk from increased density by failing to provide any exemption for parcels within the VHFHSZ;

Whereas, Senate Bill 9 fails to address the state's affordable housing crisis or to further the purported goal of "ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing" by not specifying or requiring *any* particular amount or level of affordable housing (low to moderate income/workforce housing) in projects permitted pursuant to the bill;

Whereas, Councilmember Paul Koretz has introduced a resolution in Los Angeles City Council, CF 21-0002-S18, calling for the City of Los Angeles to oppose Senate Bill 9;

Therefore, the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) opposes Senate Bill 9 (Atkins) and supports the resolution in CF 21-0002-S18 (Koretz) calling for the City of Los Angeles to oppose Senate Bill 9.

- Vice Chair Spitz introduced items 7.a. and 7.b., which she described as similar motions, the first having to do with Senate Bill 9, the bill from California Senator, Toni Atkins, basically a redo of SB1120 that was opposed by a lot of people. This is the bill that people feel would more or less erase single family zoning. Chair Spitz emphasized that it does the same as SB50, which we opposed, a top-down measure that mandates upzoning and ignores local control.

<u>Moved</u> by Vice Chair Spitz; <u>seconded</u> by Member Bisnoff. Extensive discussion was held. It was noted that this is also supporting Paul Koretz's proposed resolution in which he proposes that the City oppose this bill. Member Lexell of SORONC related that she would oppose this motion, in favor of increasing housing. She pointed out that the wording in this feels misleading as to housing; and that this motion is favored by NIMBY groups.

- Member Bisnoff of BCC noted that BCC opposes SB9 and supports Paul Koretz's resolution. She pointed out that the motion would invalidate CC&Rs and they want to see mandated covenanted affordable units.

- Member Shure of MVCC asked the Chair to ask members not to use pejorative terms to describe members on the board who may have different opinions. Her concerns include: 1) does this address our housing shortage and 2) this motion invalidates the right of the stakeholders who have voted for any ordinance or initiative at the ballot box, and would set a dangerous precedent to potentially invalidate votes by local, municipal or charter. She suspects that SB9 and SB10 will be subject to gut and amend, and will be condensed into one. She noted that the funding mechanism is discussed at length in SB9 and she believes some of the text may be placed into 10. As to 9 & 10, she opined that these would set dangerous precedent to override the will of citizens and voters in chartered cities.

- Member Sann of WCC supported Member Shure's point to avoid pejorative terms such as NIMBY on this alliance; noting that the councils all need to evaluate the bills on their own merit.

- Secretary Greenberg related that the BABCNC supports the resolution by CM Paul Koretz opposing SB9. She noted that her council is in the hillsides, from Laurel Canyon to the 405, and this fails to contain any exemption for properties in the very high fire hazard severity zones.

- Member Wishon reported WNC has voted to support CM Koretz's motion.

- Member Koslow of VNC clarified and Chair Wersinger agreed that we are now voting on bringing these motions to our councils.

- Chair Wersinger related that he would like to come up with a way of making motions of what we support rather than just what we oppose, to discuss at the LUPC.

Vote was taken to bring this motion to our councils: <u>9 Yes</u>: Secretary Greenberg (BABCNC), Member Gerez (NCWP), Member Shure (MVCC), Member Sann (WCC), Member Wishon (WNC), Member Chapman (WWNC), Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC), Member Bisnoff (BCC); and Ira Koslow (VNC); <u>2 No</u>: Member Lewis (NWWNC) and Member Lexell (SORONC); <u>1 Abstention</u>: Chair Wersinger (DRNC). <u>Passed</u>

- Member Shure (MVCC) will bring information on State Constitutional Amendment 1 and State Constitutional Amendment 2 for creation of affordable housing.

#### b. Motion (WRAC LUPC / Chris Spitz) -

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 violates the California Constitution (Art. II, Sec. 10(c)) and principles of democracy and true local control by allowing local governments (i.e., a majority of the current or future City Council) to upzone single family residential properties and speed approval processes for increased density/multi-unit housing, without stakeholder involvement and by overriding community-driven local restrictions on adopting zoning ordinances, *including restrictions enacted by voter initiatives;* 

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 violates the California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code §§30000 et seq.) by failing to exempt parcels within the Coastal zone and by allowing by-right/expedited approval of development projects with up to 10 dwelling units on properties that are upzoned under the bill, including projects within the Coastal zone which require discretionary review under the Coastal Act;

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 violates the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §§ 21065 and 21080) and shortcuts required CEQA review by declaring preemptively that an ordinance by a local government (i.e., a majority of the current or future City Council) to upzone a single family residential property pursuant to the bill is not a "project" under CEQA, without consideration of whether the ordinance in a given case is "capable of causing a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment" (*Union of Medical Marijuana Patients, Inc. v. City of San Diego (California Coastal Commission, Real Party in Interest)*, (2019) 7 Cal.5th 1171);

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 potentially compromises public safety and may put the lives and property of thousands of California residents in single family residential areas that are also in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) at risk from increased density by failing to provide for an unconditional exemption from upzoning under the bill for properties in the VHFHSZ;

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 prevents public scrutiny and bypasses democratic process by providing that state agencies alone, without local community input, would identify and maintain a controlling map of so-called "jobs-rich" areas throughout the state for purposes of upzoning single family residential properties under the bill;

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 circumvents controlling caselaw by, in effect, allowing for "spot zoning" by local governments (i.e., a majority of the current or future City Council) without consideration of whether upzoning a single family residential property would be of substantial benefit to the public in a given case (*Foothills Communities Coalition v. County of Orange* (2014) 222 Cal.App.4th 1302);

Whereas, Senate Bill 10 fails to address the state's affordable housing crisis or to further the purported goal of "ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing" by not requiring *any* particular amount or level of affordable (low to moderate income/workforce) housing in development projects to be built on properties that are upzoned under the bill;

Whereas, Councilmember Paul Koretz has introduced a resolution in Los Angeles City Council, CF 21-0002-S21, calling for the City of Los Angeles to oppose Senate Bill 10;

Therefore, the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) opposes Senate Bill 10 (Wiener) and supports the resolution in CF 21-0002-S21 (Koretz), calling for the City of Los Angeles City to oppose Senate Bill 10.

- Vice Chair Spitz introduced this motion, a repeat of Wiener's bill that didn't make it last year, and agreed with Member Shure of MVCC that the big concern is the provision that would allow voter initiatives to be overturned by a majority vote of city council, including changes in the charter. She noted that this violates basic rules of democracy, the California constitution, as you cannot amend a voter initiative by any act other than a vote of the voters, unless the initiative so provides, which this would not likely do.

<u>Moved</u> by Vice Chair Spitz; Motion <u>seconded</u> by Member Gerez. Brief discussion was held, beginning with Member Lexell who mentioned that, as previously noted, the wording in this feels misleading; no mention of public housing. She noted that this motion is opposed by

NIMBY groups. She opined that mention of fire hazard zones does not apply, as these would be in job centers near public transit, and that single family homes in Bel Air and Westwood wouldn't apply to this. Vice Chair Spitz disagreed, noting Pacific Palisades is in the fire zone, and that this bill does not have an exemption for the high fire zones; their issues include emergency evacuations and the like, which added density would result in.

Secretary Greenberg noted that BABCNC also supports Paul Koretz's position on this and noted that SB10 says you can put 10 dwelling units on a property, which we are not in favor of.
Member Gerez of NCWP related that her association has historically been against the attack on single family home zones, that is the area that should be preserved and they will agendize this.
Member Sann of WCC noted that this is the second time he has heard that this motion is opposed by NIMBY groups, equating those who oppose this with being a NIMBY group.
Member Sann clarified that his community is not a hillside community; no part of Westwood Community Plan falls in the hillside zone. He noted that they are a high transit area so that this directly affects his community. He noted that SB10 would obliterate local ordinances, which is completely unconstitutional, and based on that alone, this should be opposed.

Member Bisnoff from BCC related that they have people on fixed incomes and living in condos in their fire zones, and that this is not a single-family zoning NIMBY-type issue for her community. They have elderly who have had to be lifted from their homes at the last fire. She related that having a state-wide ordinance come in and tell you that you can upzone in the fire zone by the fact that there is no specific exemption for fire zones is a hazard. This is why Mike Bonin has asked the City and the Fire Department to look at fire zones in terms of upzoning. She added that once again, the state is trying to mandate a one-size-fits-all policy on land prices and areas where you are not going to get affordable housing. She would like to have the right to vote and have local ordinances, and opposes SB10, and in favor of Councilmember Koretz's motion.
Member Wishon of WNC related that her council has supported Paul Koretz's motion on this bill and will be voting yes on this motion. Chair Wersinger called the question.

Vote was taken to bring this motion to our councils with <u>9 Yes</u>: Secretary Greenberg (BABCNC), Member Bisnoff (BCC), Member Sann (WCC), Member Shure (MVCC), Member Chapman, (WWNC) Member Gerez (NCWP), Member Koslow (VNC), Member Wishon (WNC), Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) <u>1 No</u>: Member Lexell (SORONC) <u>2 Abstentions:</u> Chair Wersinger (DRNC) and Member Lewis (NWWNC) <u>Passed</u>

#### 8. Old Business

- **MAJORITY PASSAGE 20-01 Allow NCs to speak with non-City entities/electeds** June 17, 2020; 10 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, DRNC, MVCC, NCWP, NWWNC, WNC, WWNC, DRNC, PNC<u>Adopted</u>
- b. 20-02 Oppose State Housing Density Bills/Support Other Measures re Affordable Housing

   August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020; 0 Councils Adopted <u>Moot</u>
- c. MAJORITY PASSAGE 20-04 Eliminate Gut and Amend bill process September 16, 2020;
   9 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC,\* DRNC, MVCC, NCWP, NWWNC, PPCC, WNC, WWNC

- d. 20-07 Support CF 20-1174 (unfinished development/enforcement) October 19, 2020 (*passage deadline January 2021*); 7 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, DRNC, NCWP, PPCC, WNC, WWNC Secretary Greenberg <u>moved</u> & Member Wishon <u>seconded</u> to extend to February.
- e. MAJORITY PASSAGE 20-09 Oppose BONC digital media policy December 21, 2020 (*passage deadline March 2021*); 9 councils adopted: BABCNC,\* BCC, DRNC, NCWP,\* NWWNC, PNC,\* PPCC, WWNC, WNC (*\*modified version*) Adopted
- **f. 20-10 Prioritize school reopenings** December 21, 2020 (*passage deadline March 2021*); 4 councils adopted: DRNC, NCWP,\* PPCC,\* WWNC (*\*modified version*)
- g. 20-11 Support CF 20-1536 (STAP program/digital signs in bus shelters) December 21, 2020 (passage deadline March 2021); 8 councils adopted: BABCNC,\* BCC,\* NCWP, PPCC,\* WCC, WWNCM, WNC, DRNC (\*modified version)

9. Adjourn: In closing, Chair Wersinger gave tribute to Chris Spitz who is working hard. He noted that February 15<sup>th</sup> is President's Day. He will take agenda items. Let him know whom you want to hear from and keep an eye on charter reforms.

- Member Broide of WNC noted that comments are due on the STAP report, the revised sign ordinance by January 29th, and mentioned the many NCs who have voted to support version B+ are now supporting the current version, drafted by the PLUM committee, and just realized by STAP, which says basically that digital signs can be put on almost any commercial manufacturing zone corridor and two to three sign districts, so you'll want to clarify that you are in favor of version B+ and that the middle of next month is the deadline for comments on the housing element.

- Member Chapman of WWNC asked if the letters that Chair Wersinger writes go to BONC, to which he noted that he posts to the commission, and writes to Eli on the side. He'll include DONE as well.

- Member Shure of MVCC related that there are ongoing RHNA calculation hearings that the Department of Planning is participating in, and they have sent an email regarding revised dates for six hearings, this concerns other cities that are challenging the RHNA numbers, primarily; go to planning see the initial document. As they start the scoping meetings, that everyone take a look at the document. Tuesday 26th 5:15-6:30 Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> from 11:15-12:30.

- Steve Sann of WCC mentioned that they are 1) lining up guest speakers, suggests that in February, having a conversation on whom we would like to be inviting over 12 months. He noted that redistricting is going to be a very important issue in CD11 and CD5 with a push to make CD5 a Valley majority seat; that we may want to address redistricting on a regional basis, as this has regional issues. He pointed out that today is a holiday, next month will be President's Day, and that often the third Mondays are holidays. He noted that we used to meet the third Wednesday and suggested moving meetings to 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays. Chair Wersinger will look at this.

- Member Chapman noted that her neighborhood council had Rocky Delgadillo speak on redistricting, and would recommend inviting him to speak on this.

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m. The next meeting will be held on February 15<sup>th</sup> 2021 at 6 p.m.