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Palms Neighborhood Council
South Robertson Neighborhoods Council
Venice Neighborhood Council
West LA-Sawtelle Neighborhood Council
Westside Neighborhood Council
Westwood Community Council
Westwood Neighborhood Council

MINUTES

WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors

October 24th 2022 – 6:30pm

Webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87275111207>

Or Dial (669) 900 9128 **Webinar ID** 872 7511 1207

ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT

<https://tinyurl.com/52x6pabr>

1. **Welcome/Introductions** Newly-elected Chair Robin Greenberg called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and gave welcoming comments on her first night as Chair, as did Co-Chair Christina Spitz.
10 Present: Robin Greenberg (WRAC Chair) (BABCNC), Chris Spitz (Co-Chair) (PPCC), Tyler Laferriere-Holloway (WRAC Secretary) (MVCC), Carolyn Jordan (BCC), Steve Sann (WCC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC), Jay Handal (WLASNC), Matt Wersinger (DRNC), Matthew Wait (PalmsNC), Jane Wishon (WNC)
Nonvoting Alternates: Nickie Miner (BABCNC) and Barbara Broide (WNC)
Also Present: Denzel Henderson, City Planning Department speaker, Janet Turner from the office of Congressman Ted Lieu & Veronica de la Cruz, from the LA City Attorney’s office, Neighborhood Prosecutor for WLA Police Station, Deborah Hong, from DWP; MTC chair Selena Inouye and Steve Twining.
 - a. **Chair Updates** – None
2. **Government Reports** –
City Planning Dept. – Denzel Henderson, Planning Assistant with the City Planning Dept., provided an update and answered questions about several Planning-related ordinances and measures, including the Oil, Transportation Management and Wildlife ordinances, the Community Plan update process/formation of the Westside Community Planning Advisory Group, and the updated Online Application System.
Mayor’s Office – TBD
Council Reports – Noah Fleishman CD11 & Jarrett Thompson CD 5 were not present.
Additional Government Reports –
 - Veronica de La Cruz, Neighborhood Prosecutor from the Criminal Branch of the City Attorney’s office spoke briefly, and reminded us of the importance of voting for City Attorney.
 - Deborah Hong from DWP said hello and introduced herself as community liaison for the Westside of LA. Reach out to her with any questions.

- Janet Turner, Deputy District Director for U.S. Rep. Ted Lieu, gave updates on anti-Semitic flyers distributed in Westside neighborhoods as well as on the Congressman’s support for the Iranian protest movement, and reminded us of an upcoming virtual event to honor military families on November 13th.
- Zac Gaidzik, West/Metro LA Field Deputy from Supervisor Kuehl, provided a written update.

3. Board Member Updates - None.

4. Committee Reports – Limited to 5 minutes total

- a. WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee** – Selena Inouye gave an update, and noted that the committee meets monthly on 3rd Wednesdays. They passed a motion with recommendations on the Venice Blvd. Improvements project (see item 7.b below). She asked that we extend time on the speed limit reduction motion.
- b. WRAC Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness Committee** – No report.
- c. WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee** – No report.
- d. WRAC Homelessness Committee** – No report.

5. Public Comment – Steve Twining urged this body to ensure that the two councilmembers who made disparaging remarks are removed from City Council.

6. Approval of Minutes –

- a. Motion (Robin Greenberg)** – The September 2022 meeting minutes were unanimously **approved** as **moved** by Member Sann (WCC) and **seconded** by Co-Chair Spitz (PPCC).

7. New Business

a. Motion (Carolyn Jordan/BCC) -

“ _____ NC/CC calls on the members of the Los Angeles City Council to introduce a motion in Council forthwith, directing the City Attorney and Planning Department to prepare for adoption by the City Council an ordinance amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code to provide that a conditional use permit - cannabis (CUC) is required in connection with any commercial cannabis storefront retailer doing business in Los Angeles.

“ _____ NC/CC further requests that the required CUC process resemble the existing conditional use permit – beverage process (not the streamlined over-the-counter process for certain restaurants under the "Restaurant Beverage Program"), to ensure that there is an open and transparent process that affords the opportunity for prior public comment, requires a public hearing that involves the expertise of the Planning Department and would allow for the input and expertise of the Police Department, prior to authorizing such use at any given location.

“ _____ NC/CC takes no position on the use of cannabis as permitted under California law.”

Member Jordan (BCC) introduced and **moved** this motion which asks that the City undertake a CUP-type process as part of the retail dispensary permit processing procedure for public comment and notification of the community and so that input from LAPD may be obtained as part of the process. The motion was **seconded** by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC).

Questions were asked and answered, with Member Broide (WNC) asking about growth facilities in the area, and if there has been discussion of overconcentration of marijuana facilities in various areas, as previously done for liquor stores. Member Spitz noted that PPCC's concern was related to lack of notice and a hearing, and that many other cities in California do require CUP-type processes, i.e., Los Angeles is an outlier in this regard, as discussed in the background information document that was distributed with the agenda. Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) expressed the concerns of the Roscomare community (BAHA) as to a cannabis dispensary being approved very near an elementary school.

Member Handal (WLASNC) related that he owns cannabis shops and responded to concerns, including of BCC, noting that Brentwood has not reached "overconcentration," with six licenses in total in that area. He noted 1) as to zoning for cannabis and proximity to sensitive uses, they are by law the same as alcohol permits. 2) He noted that what this motion is asking for is already within permits. 3) He opined that the City is dysfunctional as to cannabis, that there are other motions that can be made, that CUP will just stall and cost more and there is no enforcement on the bad guys who don't have licenses.

Member Handal noted that he has been advocating for a process, unlike a CUP process (i.e., a Police Commission process), where the police can deny a permit; however, the City had backed off letting the Police Commission handle this. He spoke as an owner of five shops and would advocate that they have to go through the Police Commission. He noted that the bus issue (also discussed) would have been brought up in this setting and would have had a different result. He noted that there are other mitigation measures that are more effective and quicker to enact than this motion and that he would vote against it. As to notice, Member Handal noted that it would be required under the Police Commission process.

Motion: Member Sann (WCC) moved to refer this to the WRAC Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) to research the issues and consider the information that has been provided rather than asking for a CUP process now. The motion was seconded by Member Wishon, who also recommended selecting a subcommittee since the LUPC has not been meeting and its current status is uncertain. No action was taken on this motion because a superseding new motion was introduced and passed.

New Motion to form an ad-hoc committee to review the current motion and make recommendations at the next board meeting with an amended or same motion, whatever the ad hoc committee decides. Moved by Handal (WLASNC) and seconded. Member Sann (WCC) noted his support of the new motion, which **passed** by 8 yeases, 0 noes and 2 abstentions from Members Spitz & Jordan.

Member Handal volunteered for the ad hoc committee, and Members Jordan and Spitz said they would have to check and see if their respective boards wished to participate, but noted that they

had taken the position that a CUP-type process was needed. It was noted that other member Councils may also appoint representatives to work on this ad hoc committee.

b. **Motion (WRAC MTC) –**

“The _____ CC/NC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils, is concerned that removing one vehicle lane in each direction on Venice Blvd. between Inglewood Blvd and National Blvd. will divert traffic onto other adjacent local, collector and arterial streets. Until such time as LADOT conducts modeling studies to predict the volume of vehicular traffic that will be diverted off Venice Blvd. when the road diet component of this project is installed, our Council will be withholding its support for Phase One of the Venice Blvd Mobility Improvements project.

“The member Councils directly affected by this project are: Venice, Mar Vista, Palms and South Robertson. The member Councils which may be affected by redirected traffic include: Del Rey, WLA/Sawtelle and Westside.

“(Relevant Council File: Council File: 22-0694)”

The above motion was moved by Member Handal (WLASNC) and seconded by Member Wishon (WNC). Member Wersinger (DRNC) noted that this is worded with regard to a specific street and wondered how it becomes a regional issue, suggesting it be reworded to be more regional throughout WRAC and not just Venice Boulevard. Secretary Laferriere (MVCC) noted that outreach is still ongoing and he would to hold off on asking for studies until hearing from LADOT. Discussion was held on the issue of what is regional in this instance, with Vice-Chair Spitz noting that while there is no definition of the term “regional” in the bylaws, the LUPC policy document states that for LUPC purposes, a project is “regional” if it impacts two or more member Council neighborhoods; here, the proposed improvements directly affect four member Councils and the MTC determined that it may also have an impact on at least three additional member Councils.

Member Handal (WLASNC) noted that West LA definitely is affected when you narrow the streets and limit the traffic; there would also be a negative impact on taxes and sales and loss of business, in addition to the traffic impacts. As to outreach, he noted that it is a foregone conclusion that this will happen, and it almost happened until there was huge outcry from Venice, who noted that the City didn’t do outreach. Member Handal is strongly in favor of having real studies, and getting more information and not waiting for LADOT to say that they have done all the outreach, opining that’s how we get screwed on a regular basis by LADOT and Bonin’s office.

MTC Chair Selena Inouye commented that LADOT will be implementing Phase I which will affect Venice Boulevard in Mar Vista and Palms and that Phase II will impact Mar Vista and Venice NC as well as SORONC. She noted that the issue is, that in the process, LADOT hasn’t

addressed where the traffic will go. She noted that Culver City has done a road diet that has impacted traffic, so there is a real possibility that traffic will be moved regionally and affect different councils. She noted that LADOT will install speed bumps and stop signs on local streets and perhaps install lights on Venice. Member Broide noted that they have never come to her NC; she had asked about this and was referred to Culver City, and got what she felt was not a satisfactory response. Vice-Chair Spitz also noted that lead representatives of StreetsLA had been invited to attend this meeting to present information since many member Councils did not know about the proposal, but the representatives declined to attend, indicating that they believed that StreetsLA had already conducted sufficient outreach.

The motion **passed** by 6 yeases, 1 no from Member Wersinger, and 3 abstentions from Members Chapman, Wait & Laferriere.

- c. **Discussion & Possible Motion not on the circulated agenda:** Discussion was held as to whether the board could conditionally approve a motion for WRAC to call for the resignation of Councilmembers de Leon and Cedillo, pursuant to CF 22-1189, once either member Councils had passed motions calling for their resignation. Vice-Chair Spitz noted that two councils had already passed such motions and by next week, it is likely that approximately eight councils will have passed motions calling for the Councilmembers' resignation. She suggested that authorizing such a WRAC position letter, to be written after a majority (at least 8) member Councils had passed the motion, might be consistent with Art.V, Sec. 4.B of WRAC's bylaws.

Member Wishon noted that WNC had passed a motion calling for the Councilmembers' resignation under an earlier Council File (22-0004), which was updated to the new Council File 22-1189.

A motion was moved by Member Handal, that the WRAC executive board is empowered to write a letter advising the City of WRAC's position calling for the two remaining Councilmembers' resignation, once eight councils have approved the motion, with the Councils' names spelled out. The motion was seconded by Co-Chair Spitz.

Members Sann (WCC) and Wersinger (DRNC) noted that although this is a critical issue and we are all apparently in agreement on the substance, procedurally this was not on the agenda for action. Vice-Chair Spitz noted that under the bylaws a "special meeting" could be convened on 24-hours' notice. A superseding **motion** was then moved by Secretary Laferriere (MVCC) to hold a special meeting for the purpose of considering a motion to take up this matter and was seconded by Member Jordan. The motion **passed** by 5 yeases, 1 no from Member Handal, and 2 abstentions from Members Wishon & Wait. The special meeting will take place Wednesday 10/26/2022 at 5:30 pm.

8. Old Business

- a. **22.28. Support for Position re Ordinance 187427 (Speed Limit Reductions)** – July 18, 2022 (passage deadline October 2022); 2 council adopted: PPCC, WNC* (*modified version*).
A **motion** was made and **passed** unanimously to extend this for two months, to December 2022, as **moved** by Member Wersinger and **seconded** by Co-Chair Spitz.
- b. **22.29. Support for CF 22-0002-S58 re AB 2336 (Automated Speed Enforcement Program)** – July 18, 2022 (passage deadline October 2022); 2 councils adopted: DRNC, WNC* (**modified version*). **Underlying bill did not pass in the legislature and has died; motion is therefore moot. **Expires***
- c. **22.31. Support for Letter re Mistreatment of Animals at City Animal Shelters** – August 15, 2022 (passage deadline November 2022); 5 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, MVCC, WNC, WWNC.

8. **Adjourn** – Prior to adjournment, Member Sann noted that Chair Greenberg did great as Chair for her first meeting. He was glad to have Member Wersinger still here, and thanked Vice-Chair Spitz for continuing on. Member Broide seconded this sentiment. Vice-Chair Spitz then thanked Chair Greenberg, Secretary Tyler Laferriere and our assistant Cathy Palmer.

Member Broide noted that there is an amazing community Science Fair event taking place on Nov. 6th at UCLA, with the participation of JPL and others. UCLA takes minerals and other goodies out of collection storage to show and share. The event takes place in the science quad area and inside the geology building and beyond (nearest parking lot is Lot 2). Please share this with your community. <https://exploringyouruniverse.ucla.edu/>

Chair Greenberg also noted that Captain Jonathan Tom has been promoted to Commander, and he is assigned to Operations West Bureau beginning next week. Member Sann related that Captain (now Commander) Tom is the best, and recalled that there was an article in the LA Times in the past which was basically character assassination and must have been false. Capt./Commander Tom's reputation suffered briefly as a result of the LA Times article and it now seems particularly unjustified since he has been given such a promotion. Member Sann noted that we will miss Capt./Commander Tom in West LA, which other board members agreed with.

Chair Greenberg adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm to **October 26 at 5:30 pm** for a brief Special Meeting, and then to **November 21, 2022 at 6:30 pm** for our regular monthly meeting followed by the December meeting on December 19, 2022.