



Minutes

WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors August 21, 2023 – 6:30pm

Webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87275111207>
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Items on the Agenda may be taken in any order at the discretion of the Chair

1. Welcome/Introductions:

a. Call to Order and Certification of Quorum: Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM, and welcomed everyone. Secretary/Treasurer Laferriere-Holloway called the roll, with 11 present initially, and quorum was met. Member Gerez arrived shortly thereafter for a total of 12 present.

12 Present: Robin Greenberg, (WRAC Chair) (BABCNC), Chris Spitz (WRAC Vice-Chair) (PPCC), Jeremy Schonwald (DRNC), Drew Ruesch (MVCC), Marcello Robinson (NWNC), Paula Gerez (NCWP) arrived at 6:44 pm, Josh Nadel (PalmsNC), Michael Lynn (SORONC), Brian Averill (VNC), Jane Wishon (WNC), Steve Sann (WCC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC).

Nonvoting Alternates Present: Nickie Miner (BABCNC), Andrew Marton (MVCC), Tanya Leal (PalmsNC), Barbara Broide (WNC) and Evan Curran (NWNC).

Also Present: Janet Turner from the Office of Congressman Ted Lieu, Michael Amster from the Office of Traci Park, CD11, Jessalyn Waldron, our recent Representative from the Office of Supervisor Holly Mitchell, and Tracy McGee, Deputy, Constituent Engagement, our new Representative from the Office of Supervisor Holly Mitchell, and Selena Inouye, WRAC's Mobility & Transportation Committee (MTC) Chair.

b. Chair Updates – Chair Greenberg led the group in a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the tragic Lahaina fires this month.

- 1) Chair Greenberg welcomed new Board reps (as of August 2023):
MVCC – Drew Ruesch, primary (Andrew Marton continues as alt.);
NWNC – Marcello Robinson, primary, & Evan Curran, alt.;
PalmsNC – Tanya Leal, alt. (Josh Nadel continues as primary)
WWNC – Ann Hayman, alt. (Lisa Chapman continues as primary)
- 2) Chair Greenberg shared the recent WRAC letter based on WRAC Statement of Principles with all in attendance:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WRAC-Letter-re-Statement-of-Principles.pdf>

- 3) WRAC website update (with WRAC Secretary Tyler Laferriere-Holloway)
Chair Greenberg and WRAC Secretary Tyler Laferriere updated the board on the status

of the new WRAC website, which looks great and is expected to be up and running soon. Vice-Chair Spitz gave thanks to Tyler for volunteering his time to work on this important project. He asked that if you have high-resolution photos of your communities (scenic/coastal/iconic images of areas in CDs 5 and 11), please email them to Tyler at tyler.laferriere.mvcc@gmail.com.

2. Government Reports/Speakers

- a) Mayor's Office: None present, while awaiting one to be appointed.
- b) Council Reports –
Fernando Morales, Deputy Chief of Staff from CD 5 / Yaroslavsky was not present.

Michael Amster, Field Deputy, Council District 11 / Park – Michael.amster@lacity.org

- 1) Michael discussed two City Hall actions: (a) the recent vote for the hotel project in Benedict Canyon owned by Bulgari, and (b), the Councilwoman has a motion to identify funding of \$800,000 to fix Temescal Canyon Road.
- 2) He discussed the Bringham Encampment next to the VA, noting that the road is divided down the middle separating the City and County, and that CD11 is looking for ways to help veterans.
- 3) He discussed a two-page letter released by HACLA (Housing Authority of the City of LA) to help speed up getting temporary waivers to help move veterans and other homeless individuals into housing and shelter available for them. The waivers will be in place until August 2024.
- 4) Last week their office posted a briefing on coyotes that was very informative.
- 5) On Sunday September 3rd, noon, there will be an Oaxacan community celebration.

Member Sann (WCC) expressed appreciation of the Councilwoman's critical 8th vote on the hotel. Member Miner (BABCNC) agreed with that. Vice-Chair Spitz related that she and Chair Greenberg wrote a letter on the importance of protecting Specific Plans, which went to the Councilwoman. Vice Chair Spitz also expressed appreciation of the Councilwoman and thanked Michael Amster for what he does with the homeless individuals & for the Palisades, especially his working on the problem on Temescal Road, which she noted is one of two evacuation routes in and out of the Palisades. Member Broide (WNC) opined on Certification for Homeless on Housing, that individuals released from jails should have necessary ID, planned ahead of release. Michael acknowledged this & recommended directing this to County & State reps as well.

- c) **Office of Supervisor Holly Mitchell** – Tracy McGee, Deputy, Constituent Engagement. Jessalyn Waldron introduced Tracy as our new rep for the Westside. She can be reached at TMcGee@bos.lacounty.gov It was noted that DRNC & Westchester/Playa are the only two NCs of WRAC in their territory. Ms. McGee gave updates including:
 - 1) Stay out of the water for up to 72 hours after storms.
 - 2) Their office has met with “Streets for All” regarding the Marina Central Park.
 - 3) Thursday, 08/24, there is a community meeting with LA County Planning, regarding the Ladera Plan, with people in the unincorporated Del Rey area.
 - Westside Area Plan - LA County Planning:
<https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/westside-area-plan/>
 - 4) The Supervisor's Racial Justice Initiative meets monthly, with one in September.
 - Link to Racial Justice Learning Exchange events: <https://mitchell.lacounty.gov/racialjustice/>
 - Board of Supervisor's meeting info: <https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas/>

d) **Additional Government Reports** – At the discretion of the Chair:

Janet Turner, from Congressman Ted Lieu’s office gave update, noting that the Congressman introduced:

H.R.5017, Space Infrastructure Act with Secretary of Homeland Security issuing guidelines as to space stations and turning that into critical infrastructure;

H.R.4797 – Beilenson Trailhead Designation Act which designates Encinal Trailhead in the Santa Monica Mountains as Anthony “Tony” Beilenson Trailhead (a Congressman influential in the preservation of the SM Mountains.)

H.R.4623 Cyber Shield Act establishes a voluntary program to identify and promote internet connective products. Congressman Lieu would like there to be a voluntary certification so that constituents would know that there is good cyber security in products. Janet noted that her office is always here for our federal issues.

Jake Ettinger from the Office of Senator Ben Allen gave an update,

jake.ettinger@sen.ca.gov. He noted that the Senator is finishing his summer recess, that 09/14 is the end of session, and that the next four weeks will be busy in Sacramento.

A couple of bills relevant to water issues include 1) a water bill that would allow the Water Resources Board to go after pre-1914 water rates, to make sure we are not having water wasted in different parts of the state, and, 2) SB 867, a 15.5 billion dollar bond that if approved would go to voters next fall, to include about 5 billion dollars to address drought, flood, water resilience to improve our ability to store water and to make sure we have the ability to clean water, and for people to have access to clean drinking water. He noted that they are trying to invest in the climate now to save money down the road.

Jake noted that the State budget was recently approved and mentioned a 310 billion dollar budget, of which the Senator was able to get a few district budget asks on the Westside including (a) 6.5 million dollars to SMMC, for open space land preservation, and (b) one million dollars to go to the revitalization of Simon Meadows in the Pacific Palisades.

Member Wishon asked about the water rights bill, if applicable to the indigenous people or if that would be a federal issue (referring to an indigenous group that sold water rights for bottling water) to which Jake noted that he’d look into this and get back to her. Vice Chair Spitz and Chair Greenberg thanked Jake and the Senator for all they are doing.

Vice Chair Spitz opened discussion as regards two attendees, *Call-in User 1 & a number ending in 5439*, who, per the bylaws, were asked to identify themselves, as a friendly request, without a response. Only three members, Sann, Spitz and Gerez were in favor of removing them from the call and Chair Greenberg continued the meeting without taking further action on the request.

3. **Board Member Updates** – Limited to 5 minutes total

a. Chris Spitz, WRAC Vice-Chair – PPCC 50th Anniversary (est. 1973). Vice-Chair Spitz gave update on this 50-year anniversary celebration which would be held at Simon Meadow at Temescal Gateway Park Saturday September 23rd and noted that everyone is invited. Vice-Chair Spitz pointed out the following link about community councils: Info. about CCs:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/About-the-CCs-R.pdf>

b. Carolyn Jordan, BCC President – BCC 25th Anniversary (est. 1998). Vice-Chair Spitz, in the absence of Member Jordan, noted that BCC is having their 25th anniversary, she believes

in October. Chair Greenberg expressed her appreciation of these councils and neighborhood associations.

4. Committee Reports –

a. WRAC Mobility & Transportation Committee (MTC): Committee Chair Selena Inouye noted that the committee met last week and continues to meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm, still on Zoom, with the next meeting on September 20th. They have one pending motion on this agenda and two new motions for tonight. She noted that one of the pending motions is a cross-over with LUPC because they discuss things that impact both committees. Ms. Inouye noted that she worked with Vice Chair Spitz and Maryam Zar over the weekend for a compromise motion that both committees talked about regarding the Metro TCN program. She noted that the committee plans to have Metro come in September to talk about the two different Sepulveda Pass projects being proposed.

b. WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee: Vice-Chair Spitz gave a brief update in the absence of Maryam Zar, who apologized that she could not be here this evening, and as mentioned above, they worked on the compromise motion for the Metro TCN. She reported ~~in~~ that the LUPC meets regularly on the 2nd Monday of each month.

c. WRAC Homelessness Committee: Vice-Chair Spitz noted that the Chair, Jay Handal, who was not present, has set up a new meeting for August 29th, and that non-members may sit in.

5. Public Comment – There was no public comment on items NOT on the agenda.

6. Approval of Minutes

a) Motion (Robin Greenberg) – Motion to approve the July 17, 2023 minutes was moved by Chair Greenberg, seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz and **passed** by 10 yeses, 0 noes and 2 abstentions from Members Wishon (WNC) & Robinson (NWNC).

7. New Business

Chair Greenberg first directed attention to **item 7.c.**, which Vice-Chair Spitz explained is a compromise motion combining & streamlining the WRAC LUPC motion and the MTC motion to oppose the Metro TCN. Vice-Chair Spitz related the CPC will be holding its hearing on the proposed ordinances that would allow this to go forward in September; so it is time sensitive.

a. Motions (recommended by WRAC LUPC) –

(1) Request to revise the LAMC/Zoning:

“The ____ NC/CC requests that the City revises the LAMC/Zoning to be implemented **in** Community Plan updates, Westside Transit Neighborhood Plans and TOC/Density Bonus ordinances to standardize setbacks, landscaping, open and recreational space, setbacks, massing and zoning, in accordance with the specific preferences communicated to the City by the relevant NC/CC for each area.”

Vice-Chair Spitz introduced this as a rewrite or paring down from the very long motion from the last meeting that was requested to be sent back to the committee to pare down.

The motion was moved by Member Wishon (WNC) who noted that there is a word missing

(add the word “in” after “implemented). The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC). The motion passed by 12-0-0.

[Attention was next turned to Agenda item #8.]

(2) Oppose Adoption of Metro TCN Digital Advertising Program* (*see Item 7c below which replaces this item):

~~“Whereas on Jan. 12, 2022, the City Council entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with Metro to move forward with the Metro TCN program without any notice to or input from the public and prior to the commencement of an EIR process; and~~

~~“Whereas the City has given over its power as lead agency to Metro and the Metro Board moved forward and approved it on January 26, 2023 on consent including approval of an EIR with overriding considerations with impacts to City resources January 2023; and~~

~~“Whereas the Metro TCN program is a digital billboard advertising program whose changing images are designed and documented to distract drivers creating dangerous situations which will undermine the City’s Vision Zero goals; and~~

~~“Whereas the Metro TCN program will bring blight to the visual environment of 22 Community Plan areas from Sylmar to South Los Angeles; and~~

~~“Whereas the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) opposes 1) offsite signs, including digital billboards, installed outside of the 22 areas already zoned as Regional Commercial for high intensity commercial use (the 22 Areas), 2) digital signs installed in or near bus shelters outside of the 22 Areas, and 3) proposed "IKE" kiosks with digital signage in the public right of way; and~~

~~“Whereas WRAC’s Statement of Principles (Standing Rule 4 of the WRAC Bylaws) provides that WRAC expects governing bodies to “notify all affected parties.... of all proposed public infrastructure or other public property developments, whether or not discretionary, having a broad impact on WRAC neighborhoods or on the region as a whole.... of all proposed new planning and zoning codes and regulations and/or proposed changes to existing codes and regulations. Such notice should be provided sufficiently in advance of the governing body’s determination to allow ample time for WRAC Member Organizations to consider, review and comment on the proposal;~~

~~“Therefore, ___NC/CC opposes adoption of proposed City ordinances that would result in the adoption and implementation of the Metro TCN digital advertising program.”—~~

b. Motions (recommended by WRAC MTC):

(1) Request to refer Metro TCN to the LA City Council Transportation Committee and LADOT:

“The _____ CC/NC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils, requests that the Metro TCN program be referred to the LA City Council Transportation Committee and LADOT for their consideration before a final decision to implement the program is voted on by the City Council. The Transportation Committee and LADOT need to weigh in on the safety of this program

through the study and review of current and historical research that has been done on roadway user distraction with digital billboards and changing message signs.

Moved by Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC), seconded by Member Wishon (WNC). The item was discussed, with Member Broide mentioning that there was an intentional effort to keep this from ~~the~~ LADOT and that there has never been an assessment with regard to public safety.

There was no opposition to the motion, no abstentions, and the motion **passed** by 12-0-0.

[Attention was next turned to 7a. (1)]

(2) Oppose City participation in Metro TCN and proposed ordinances to fast track implementation*
(*see Item 7c below which replaces this item):

~~“The _____ CC/NC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils, opposes the City's participation in the Metro Transportation Communication Network (TCN) program and the three proposed ordinances being written by the Department of City Planning (DCP) that work around the City's Sign Ordinance to fast track implementing TCN within the City of Los Angeles.”~~

c. Proposed Revised Motion re Metro TCN (Chris Spitz):

_____ NC/CC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), has significant concerns about process and substance related to the Metro Transportation Communication Network (TCN) program, including the fact that:

- the program moved forward without notice to or substantive community input from stakeholders prior to implementation of an EIR process; this is in contravention of expected norms as well as WRAC's Statement of Principles (Standing Rule 4 of the WRAC Bylaws), which calls for advance notice and ample time to review and comment by WRAC's member councils on all proposed public infrastructure or other public property developments;
- the City ceded its power as lead agency for EIR purposes to the Metro board, which approved the EIR for Metro TCN on consent overriding considerations with impacts on City resources;
- Metro TCN is a digital billboard advertising program with moving images that will: (1) distract drivers and create dangerous situations which will undermine the City's Vision Zero goals, and (2) blight the visual environment of 22 Community Plan areas in Los Angeles;
- Metro TCN in substance contravenes longstanding WRAC positions opposed to digital billboards (outside of sign districts in areas already zoned as regional/commercial) and to digital advertising in the public right of way (proposed "IKE" kiosks);

Therefore, _____ NC/CC opposes the City's participation in the Metro TCN program and specifically opposes adoption of the proposed City ordinances that would fast track implementation of the Metro TCN program within the City of Los Angeles.

*Proposed by Chris Spitz, WRAC Vice-Chair, with input from and approval of:
Maryam Zar, WRAC LUPC Chair & Selena Inouye, WRAC MTC Chair*

Vice-Chair Spitz related that Member Broide (WNC) can explain this motion, the language of which was worked on this afternoon, and is a combination of the motions in items 7a.2 & 7b.2., circulated today, and on the website and on Google Drive. It was shown on screen for discussion. Vice-Chair Spitz related that we are referencing **Council File 22-0392** about a couple of ordinances referred to as one ordinance, which if passed in Council, the Metro TCN program will go forward. Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) moved the motion and explained the WRAC's prior position on the issue of digital signs. Member Wishon (WNC) seconded the motion.

Discussion was held, with Jeremy Schonwald, Vice Chair of DRNC, noting that with other problems that this brings about, these boards are blinding at night and potentially dangerous for all of the Westside; they will litter our areas with bright light, and, speaking as a lighting designer, this is an absolute a "no" for him. He hopes people will vote this down. Member Sann (WWC) agreed with Member Schonwald and noted that we are very fortunate to have in WRAC Travis Longcore, President of BABCNC and an expert as to the deleterious effects of light pollution, noting that he gave an incredible presentation on what this does to animals in laymen's terms. He noted that we need to think about the negative effects on our feathered friends and others that cannot vote on this who will be very much impacted if this goes forward. Brian Averill (VNC) agreed with the comments from Members Sann & Schonwald, and noted that his council just passed a CIS on this, in opposition to this, though using different language.

Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) noted that an email today from Planning says that the CPC date is tentatively set for September 14th and that if members have the ability to meet before then, try to do so, and let her know if you pass it. If eight councils pass the motion or take modified positions in the same spirit, WRAC can submit a letter and lobby on behalf of our position.

Member Broide (WNC) noted that tomorrow 4:00 pm is the deadline for written public comment to be sent to the Planning Department for consideration and inclusion in their report to the CPC that the Commission will receive in advance of their vote, and that if the deadline is tomorrow and the CPC meeting is 09/14, the Staff Report will land sometime in between, which doesn't give councils adequate time.

Member Broide asked that in addition to filing a CIS in the Council File, also send your statement to both the Planning Department (Terri.Osborne@lacity.org) using the CPC# and to the City Planning Commission (cpc@lacity.org). Member Broide noted that this is a new CPC that doesn't have the background and history of the complexities about signage. The CPC is reviewing the three proposed ordinances that would allow this program to go forward.

The motion **passed** unanimously by 12-0-0.

[Attention was next turned to 7b.(1)]

8. Old Business

- a. **23.01. Request re RSO Housing Replacements** – February 20, 2023 (passage deadline August 2023); 5 councils adopted: BABCNC, PalmsNC, WLASNC,* WNC, WWNC* (**modified version*) – *Possible motion to extend passage deadline one month*

Vice-Chair Spitz commented that no one has passed this since March. Member Ruesch (MVCC) noted that they might have taken it up last month; however, did not have the time.

Member Wishon (WNC) **moved** to extend this motion one month, noting that this is about rent stabilization units, making sure affordable units get replaced with affordable units; developers need to do the work to make sure we have enough affordable units getting added back. She hopes more councils take it up. The motion was **seconded** by Member Averill (VNC).

Member Broide (WNC) commented that we are seeing no net gain in affordable units and that we'll never get ahead if those units are not replaced. Member Ruesch (MVCC) opined that the background for this motion is very convoluted and confusing and that it would otherwise have been passed by more councils. Also, in his research to present it to Mar Vista, it took quite a bit. Vice-Chair Spitz acknowledged this, noting that a better job could have been done explaining it. Member Lynn (SORONC) related that he believed that his land use committee had tabled it until tomorrow night's committee meeting and that it might be on their agenda in September. Member Broide would like to simplify the background on the motion, to which Vice-Chair Spitz welcomed her to bring it back and she'd put it up on the website. Member Wishon explained it is now incumbent upon the tenant to come up with the documents to prove that they qualify, and this moves the responsibility to the developer. The motion to continue this one more month **passed** by all but Members Schonwald (DRNC) and Robinson (NWNC), who abstained.

b. 23.04. Minimize Light Pollution – May 15, 2023 (passage deadline August 2023); 7 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC, VNC -- *Possible motion to extend passage deadline one month*

A **motion** to continue this one month, was **approved** by all but Member Shonwald (DRNC), who opposed, as **moved** by Vice-Chair Spitz.

c. 23.05. Support for Director's Determination re Murphy Drill Site – May 15, 2023

(passage deadline August 2023 – *passed* August 2023); 9 councils adopted:

BABCNC, BCC, DRNC, MVCC, NCWP, PPCC, PalmsNC, WNC, WWNC

WRAC letter:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/WRAC-Letter-re-Murphy-Drill-Site.pdf>

d. 23.06. Parking Space Replacement Policy Request – July 21, 2023 (passage deadline October 2023); 1 council adopted: WWNC

9. **Adjourn:** Prior to adjournment, since Vice-Chair Spitz will be out of town during much of October, the Board consented to moving the October 16th meeting to Monday of October 30th

Member Sann warmly invited everyone on this call to attend the opening of the new UCLA Nimoy Theater in Westwood. Information is at this link below.

Free Community Open House Welcomes All on Sunday, September 17, 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

CAP UCLA's Inaugural Season at The Nimoy kicks off on Saturday, September 23 with Grammy Award-winning poet J. Ivy. Admission is free. Reservations open Friday, August 4, at 10:00 a.m.

<https://www.arts.ucla.edu/single/introducing-the-ucla-nimoy-theater/>

Member Miner asked for a report on the status of the Midvale parking lot, to which Member Broide noted that it has been proposed for a 30-unit homeless project, and discussed the community opposition as it is critical to business and restaurants due to shortage of parking. She noted that the Councilwoman has indicated that she is not willing to consider other alternatives. Briefly discussed was that of one of the lots in question is behind the Westside Pavilion, proposed to be set up with prefab plastic housing units, each module having its own personal bathroom. It was noted that there will be meetings.

Member Averill noted that the beach today is horrific, with enormous amount of garbage and dead animals. He'd like to have a talk about upstream infrastructure. He noted that tomorrow morning they are doing a massive cleanup at the Venice Pier at 7:30 a.m. Member Shonwald noted importance of pictures.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm to meet next on September 18th at 6:30 pm.