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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 September 18, 2023 – 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/ye533p9t> and <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/>

1. Welcome/Introductions

- a. Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. WRAC Secretary/Treasurer, Tyler Laferriere-Holloway, called the roll with quorum met, and provided technical support for the entire meeting.
13 Present: Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC), Chris Spitz, Vice-Chair (PPCC), Ravi Sankaran (DRNC), Paula Gerez (NCWP), Marcello Robinson (NWNC), Tanya Leal (PalmsNC), Michael Lynn (SORONC), Nico Ruderman (VNC), Walton Chiu (WLASNC), Jane Wishon (WNC), Sandy Brown (WCC), Lisa Chapman (WWNC), and Andrew Marton (MVCC) who arrived at 7:26 PM.
- Member Leal (PalmsNC) related that Josh Nadel (former PalmsNC primary rep to WRAC) had to resign from Palms NC which is why she was standing in as Alternate this evening.
- Larry Watts (BCC) dropped in briefly at 6:35 PM and left shortly thereafter.
Nonvoting Alternates Present: Nickie Miner (BABCNC), Alexandra Polin (WLASNC), and Barbara Broide (WNC) who arrived at 7:38 PM.
Also Present: Michael Amster, Field Deputy for CD 11 / Councilwoman Traci Park; Jake Ettinger, District Representative for State Senator Ben Allen; Janet Turner, Deputy District Director for Congressman Ted Lieu, Michelle Persoff, Sr. Field Representative for Assemblymember / Majority Leader Isaac Bryan, WLA Neighborhood Prosecutor Veronica De La Cruz, from the LA City Attorney's office, Jessie Johnson from LADWP, Community Affairs, and Ellen Evans, BABCNC Vice President of Legislative Affairs.

b. Chair Updates –

- (1) Chair Greenberg welcomed new WRAC Board alternate reps (as of September 2023): Nico Ruderman, VNC, & Sandy Brown, WCC. (Both served as alternates this evening.)
- (2) Chair Greenberg noted the WRAC Policy re non-member attendee identification request (provide name & any affiliation, if requested by the Chair)
- (3) The next Board meeting will be October 30, 2023 (5th Monday in October.)

2. Government Reports/Speakers

- a. Mayor's Office – representative to be appointed

b. Council Reports –

(1) Fernando Morales, Deputy Chief of Staff – CD5/Yaroslavsky was not present.

(2) **Michael Amster, Field Deputy – CD 11/Park** provided City Hall & Field Updates.

City Hall Updates: 1) The Councilwoman introduced a motion to create an ordinance on a type of 41.18 equivalent for RVs, to create designated areas with facilities for RVs & “sensitive” areas.

2) Measure H is the County sales tax that funds the actions and initiatives to address homelessness. The Councilwoman is calling for the City to negotiate with the County for a renewal of Measure H that includes an equitable allocation (details provided).

3) The Councilwoman supported approval of the new four-year contract with the LAPD Union, with a pay increase for law enforcement, for those serving and those joining.

4) The Councilwoman hosted a meeting in City Hall of the Wildland-Interface Hazard Mitigation Working Group, to discuss how we are prepared for emergencies, wildfires, and earthquakes, and measures that the City has already taken. He noted that more is to be done.

5) Funding for repairs to Temescal Canyon Road in the Palisades, necessary for Emergency Preparedness, has been approved by the City Council. There will be two lanes going uphill, two lanes going downhill, and one yellow median by the end of October. CD11 will convey all steps moving forward.

Field Updates: 1) A community meeting is planned with a non-profit called the SAB Center, which proposes to build a headquarters on current City-owned property along bluffs above PCH in the Castellammare area of the Palisades.

2) A big priority for WLASNC is that the Carmel Development at Expo and Bundy is communicating with the community and will have a coffee at the end of September.

3) Michael is working with WLASNC in putting together an ad hoc committee on how to use the funds to beautify the Bundy Triangle.

4) Two weeks ago, the Councilwoman was proud to support the Oaxacan festival.

c. Additional Government Reports:

Jake Ettinger from the Office of Senator Ben Allen noted that his office is hoping to have the Senator join WRAC’s November meeting. He noted that the legislative session ended last week with hundreds of bills moving through, and passing almost half a dozen bills.

Michelle Persoff, from the Office of Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, gave a report.

Janet Turner from the Office of Congressman Ted Lieu gave an update.

Jessie Johnson from LADWP, on behalf of Deborah Hong, was available for questions or concerns for LADWP, to take back to Deborah Hong at Community Affairs.

3. Board Member Updates –

Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) spoke in the stead of Member Broide (WNC), noting that WRAC submitted a letter in opposition to Metro’s Transportation Communication Network (TCN) program, and that the City Planning Commission (CPC) voted this past week to approve the program with a few minor modifications; the matter is now moving forward in City Council. Chair Greenberg expressed appreciation on behalf of the board for all that Barbara Broide does.

Member Sankaran (DRNC) related that the hearing on the Murphy Oil Drill site appeal is taking place on October 3rd with the South LA Area Planning Commission. He'll comment on behalf of DRNC and invited members whose councils have passed the motion to come and speak on behalf of their NCs. Vice-Chair Spitz noted that neither she nor Chair Greenberg will be able to attend the hearing but if no other member is available, Member Sankaran is authorized to relate WRAC's position if he is able to do so.

4. Committee Reports –

a. WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee: Vice-Chair Spitz related that MTC Chairwoman Selena Inouye was unable to attend. The next MTC meeting is in two days.

b. WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee: In the absence of LUPC Chairwoman Maryam Zar, Vice-Chair Spitz related that the LUPC met on September 9th and passed a couple of motions which are on the agenda this evening. They will meet again on October 9th.

c. WRAC Homelessness Committee: In the absence of HOC Chairman Jay Handal, Vice-Chair Spitz related that the HOC has met and recommended a motion that is on the agenda this evening. The HOC will now be meeting on the 4th Tuesday of each month with the next meeting scheduled for September 26th.

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

6. Approval of Minutes

a. Motion (Robin Greenberg) – The August 2023 meeting minutes were approved by 12-0-0, as moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and seconded by Mike Lynn (SORONC).

7. New Business

a. Motion (Robin Greenberg / BABCNC; with BABCNC board member Ellen Evans) – Request DCP to report back on short-term rental enforcement (*Requested action: Board approval of motion and either (1) letter to be sent directly to DCP, as a request for compliance based on WRAC's Statement of Principles, standing policies & positions, or alternatively, (2) motion to be recommended to Member Councils for possible adoption*):

“With reference to CF 14-1635-S10 (short term rental enforcement):

“The Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is greatly concerned that the Dept. of City Planning (DCP) has not submitted a report-back to the City Council as it was directed to do on April 29, 2022, with an analysis related to improving enforcement of home-sharing (short-term rentals) in Los Angeles – report-back due more than a year ago, on July 28, 2022.

“In the ensuing 13+ months, improvement in home sharing enforcement has not occurred. Many permits are held by persons who do not live in the homes being rented and merely claim that they do. In numerous other instances, housing units are on the short-term rental market without permits. Much-needed housing stock is being taken off the market, contributing to the short supply of affordable housing. Shootings and violence have continued to take place at short-term rental units in WRAC Member Council neighborhoods, most notably in the area represented by Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council. Properties continue to be rented out in violation of the home-sharing ordinance and the principles underlying the ordinance.

“WRAC has long-supported appropriate regulation of short-term rentals. It is WRAC's standing policy, held since 2016, that the City must comply with its own ordinances and laws and must immediately enforce all

applicable zoning and building codes unless duly amended (including ordinances related to short-term rentals).

“For these reasons, WRAC respectfully urges the DCP to complete the report-back on short-term rental enforcement without further delay, in order to safeguard our housing stock, protect the safety of the public and prevent nuisance behavior.”

Chair Greenberg introduced BABCNC’s Vice President of Legislative Affairs, Ellen Evans, who provided a brief history on the issue. The motion was moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and seconded by Member Wishon (WNC).

Discussion was held on whether to go through the regular WRAC process or send this directly to the City officials to avoid a time lag, as we have taken a position on this in the past, and we can speak with that voice and empower our officers to send the letter directly. The board consensus was that the letter should be sent directly to City officials.

The motion passed by 11 yeases by Chair Greenberg, Vice-Chair Spitz, and Members Sankaran, Gerez, Leal, Lynn, Ruderman, Brown, Chiu, Wishon and Chapman, 1 no by Member Robinson and 0 abstentions.
[The letter would be written and sent within a few days.]

b. Motion (Chris Spitz / Steve Sann / recommended by WRAC HOC) – Request data from the Mayor on Inside Safe (*Requested action: Board approval of a letter to be communicated directly to the Mayor as a request for information*):

“The WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC) requests that the WRAC board send a positive, supportive letter to the Mayor [cc to LAHSA and other relevant officials], asking for the following information as soon as possible. The letter should stress the need for the WRAC HOC to have all available data in order to adequately study the issues and make constructive and meaningful recommendations to address the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles.

“The information requested is as follows:

- Up to date data of the number of people brought inside as part of Inside Safe
- Geographic areas addressed as part of Inside Safe thus far
- Number of people who have transitioned from temporary housing to permanent housing
- **Number of people who have dropped out of transitional housing from the Inside Safe Program**
- Names and information on third-party organizations that the city is partnering with as part of Inside Safe
- Timeline outlining next steps for those in temporary housing, as well as those individuals who have not been sheltered as part of Inside Safe.

"The HOC believes that it is not necessary for a motion to be passed by the WRAC board for recommendation to member councils for this purpose, as this is merely an inquiry/request for information, not a policy motion."

Vice-Chair Spitz moved, Member Wishon seconded. Vice-Chair Spitz explained the motion, which is a request for board approval of a letter asking for this information.

An amendment to include that we hope to have the information provided by October 23 for use at our October 24th HOC meeting passed unanimously as moved by Member Lynn (SORONC) and seconded by Member Wishon (WNC). A second amendment to add a bullet point after the number of people who transitioned saying the “number of people who have dropped out of transitional housing from the Inside Safe

Program” was added and the motion passed unanimously as moved by Member Sankaran (DRNC) and seconded by Member Chapman (WWNC).

c. Motions (recommended by WRAC LUPC) –

(i) Request re abandonment / vacation of land / easements in the public right of way:

“The ____ NC/CC requests the City end its policy of conveying, without compensation, abandonments and vacations of fee simple ownership or easements in the public right of way. We recommend, instead, that an independent determination be made of the fair market value that would establish a process whereby an effort to capture the value of the land/easement is reflected in the project developed or community benefits received (*e.g.*, green space, trees, open space, affordable housing units, etc.), on a case-by-case basis.”

Moved by Member Wishon (WNC) and seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) for purposes of discussion. Member Chiu (WLASNC) provided context for this motion which he noted was designed by and for Sawtelle, though he did *not* attend the PLUM meeting. Vice-Chair Spitz acknowledged that this motion does *not* only apply to Sawtelle, and may benefit from going back to committee. Member Lynn (SORONC) asked who this would go to, and as there was no council file yet established, and recommended that the letter be sent to councilmembers or the City Planning Department, requesting that a council file be created. Members commented that the motion as worded was confusing and difficult to understand.

Motion: To refer this back to committee with specific items: 1) to simplify and clarify the language, and, 2) to indicate what actual action is being asked for, was moved by Members Wishon and Lynn. The motion passed unanimously by all 13 present and voting.

(ii) Support for Public Park / Skateboard Facility at West LA Commons:

“The ____ NC/CC requests that the LA City support WLASNC’s request for a public park and skateboard facility, as part of the West L.A. Commons project that maintains high-density housing and numerous affordable units. This park would serve the 2,500 tenants of the project as well as the 5,000 neighbors who live on the south and don’t have a park (many are low-income households), and visitors from Westwood, Mar Vista, Bel Air-Beverly Crest and Brentwood who visit the Felicia Mahood Senior Center and the West L.A. Municipal Building.”

Moved by Vice-Chair Spitz seconded by Member Walton. Discussion was held on this, with Vice-Chair Spitz noting that the question is whether it is regional or not. She noted that this could go to the councilmembers, particularly CD11 CM Traci Park, the Supervisors, the Mayor, and Planning officials.

Member Chiu (WLASNC) provided further context, noting that the courtyard of the building has been an unofficial legendary location for skateboarders from around the world, and is a very symbolic and important place for the skateboarding community. He noted that we want to have a sort of holdover space as the space transforms. Member Sankaran (DRNC) asked Member Chiu about the status of the request, *e.g.*, who has reviewed it. It was noted that this involves building a greener region and is a regional issue, not just a Sawtelle issue. Member Miner (BABCNC) wanted to know about the area/building proposed to house 5000 people, to which Member Chiu noted that the project of the WLA Municipal Court, the Mahood Senior Center, and the area with parking will be demolished, and that the WLA Commons is a collaboration of the County and the City. He noted that they originally fought for green space and parks, noting the need for more green spaces in the region. The LAPD WLA station, the public library and the recording studio will all stay; everything else will go. Member Chiu noted that they are fighting to keep the façade of the court house.

Vice-Chair Spitz noted that this motion will go to the member councils, and suggested that HOC Chair Jay Handal (WLASNC), LUPC Member Jay Ross (WLASNC) and Member Walton (WLASNC) reach out to councils to encourage taking up the motion and to answer questions. The motion **passed** by 13-0-0.

8. Old Business

a. 23.01. Request re RSO Housing Replacements – February 20, 2023 (passage deadline September 2023); 5 councils adopted: BABCNC, PalmsNC, WLASNC,* WNC, WWNC* (*modified positions in the spirit of the motion). The board declined to extend the deadline further.

b. 23.04. Minimize Light Pollution – May 15, 2023 (*passed* September 2023); 8 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, DRNC,* PPCC, WLASNC, VNC, WNC, WWNC (*modified position in the spirit of the motion) [*WRAC letter pending*]

Vice-Chair Spitz asked that any others who have approved this let her know, and that a position letter will be written soon.

c. 23.06. Parking Space Replacement Policy Request – July 21, 2023 (passage deadline October 2023); 3 councils adopted: BABCNC, WNC, WWNC

d. 23.07. Request to Revise the LAMC/Zoning – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 2 councils adopted: WNC, WWNC

e. 23.08. Request to Transfer Metro TCN to Transportation Committee & LADOT – August 21, 2023 (passage deadline November 2023); 2 councils adopted: WNC, WWNC

Member Broide gave an update on item 8.e, noting that in light of how this matter is progressing in the City she does not think taking it to the Transportation Committee is needed or will be effective now, and that this issue will require community members to advocate with individual councilmembers for the City's best interest. Discussion was held on how to get the word out, e.g., advocating with CD11 and CD5 to remove the signs from the program in those districts, e.g., at the 405/10, at Ballona Creek, etc.

f. 23.09. Oppose City's Participation in Metro TCN Program. August 21, 2023 (*passed* September 2023); 9 councils adopted: BCC,* DRNC,* MVCC,* NCWP, PPCC,* VNC,* WCC, WLASNC,* WNC,* WWNC* (*modified positions in the spirit of the motion)

WRAC letter: <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/WRAC-Letter-CPC-re-Metro-CTN-.pdf>

9. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 8:00

Chair Greenberg expressed the holiday message of forgiveness, and thanked everyone for sharing their evening with us.

Next meeting will be held on **October 30, 2023** (5th Monday in October) at 6:30 pm.