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Westwood Neighborhood Council

## Minutes

### WRAC Meeting of the Board of Directors April 21, 2025 – 6:30pm

#### **Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84095705158?pwd=JGw2s8bM4JsNzlaaLacZJuAMaxt0Md.1#success>

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

#### ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdf6pxpv> and <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/>

## **1. Welcome/Introductions**

- a. **Call to Order and Certification of Quorum** - Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM, providing welcoming comments and an appreciation of Vice-Chair Spitz. Host & WRAC Secretary/Treasurer Tyler Laferriere called the roll with quorum met.

#### **11 Board Members Present:**

Robin Greenberg, Chair (BABCNC); Chris Spitz, Vice-Chair (PPCC); Carolyn LoBuglio (BCC); Ravi Sankaran (DRNC); Reza Akef (PalmsNC); Jason Plummer (SORONC); Nico Ruderman (VNC); Steve Sann (WCC); Jay Handal (WLASNC); Terri Tippet (WNC); Lisa Chapman (WWNC).

#### **Also Present:**

- Janet Turner, Deputy District Director, Outreach - Congressman Ted Lieu
- Carlos Penilla, Senior Field Representative - Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
- Sherwin Schmoel, Senior Field Representative - Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur
- Zachary Gaidzik, Coastal & Westside Field Deputy - County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath
- Michael Amster, Field Deputy - Council District 11 / Traci Park
- Cairo Rodriguez, Sr. Field Deputy – Council District 5 / Katy Yaroslavsky
- Kalei Muñoz, Senior Public Relations Specialist - LADWP

## **b. Chair Updates –**

- (1) Next Board meeting: May 19, 2025
- (2) Update on the status of future in-person board meeting (July 21, 2025, in-person at Belmont Senior Living: breakfast 7:30am, mtg. start 8am; guest speaker TBD
  - Brief discussion was held on possible guests for the meeting, consideration for having the Mayor as first choice, and, if not available, Supervisor Horvath or Barger, as to recent developments in the County on the new Department on Homelessness. Per Zac, Supervisor Horvath's schedule would currently permit this.

## **2. Government Reports/Speakers**

- a. **LADWP Presentation on the Scattergood Modernization Project:** Katherine Rubin, Director of Environmental Affairs, and Nermina Rucic O'Neil, Director of Power System Planning -  
- Nermina provided a presentation on the Modernization Project, beginning with an explanation of the need for the project. She listed LADWP's accomplishments across the range of clean energy, which they've been committed to for a long time, particularly the restoration of older and providing new infrastructure. She noted that an important aspect of this project is electrification, for which investments would substantially improve air quality and that they'll continue to invest in similar

programs. She provided a detailed explanation as to types of energy involved and noted that they're divesting from coal while transitioning to renewable fuel. She stated that the future of electricity will depend on a diverse source of investments.

- Katherine explained the CEQA aspect, noting that the schedule of scoping started in 2023 with the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) in the summer 2023, which was released in October 2024. There was a virtual public meeting on the DEIR on November 20, 2024. They've received public comment and comment letters and will continue to have these types of outreach meetings. They are now preparing the final EIR, which they expect to get done by the winter of 2025, when there will be opportunity for further public comment. Questions were asked and answered.

**b. Mayor's Office** – Marian Ensley, West Area Representative was not present.

**c. Council Reports** –

(1) **Cairo Rodriguez, Sr. Field Deputy – Council District 5 / Katy Yaroslavsky**

- Cairo welcomed us to contact him by email at [cairo.rodriguez@lacity.org](mailto:cairo.rodriguez@lacity.org) or by phone at 323-866-1828. Some comments included that the Mayor's office put out her proposed City Budget for the next Fiscal Year, showing a shortfall of \$1 billion. She was assigned to be Budget Chair in January, and is currently hosting a meeting at this time. She'll host two others on Wednesday 04/23 at 6:00 PM at Pan Pacific Park and on Saturday 04/26 at 11:00 AM. Let him know if interested in attending these as the Councilmember wants to hear from everyone as to priorities.

- He noted that she joined the Cheviot Hills Block Captain meeting as to public safety concerns last spring and summer, and had allocated funds to LAPD which resulted in a decrease in the type of crimes being committed in these communities, though there is more work to do. Cairo noted that the Councilwoman wanted us to know that public safety is one of her top priorities.

- Events include Operations Sparkle April 26<sup>th</sup> 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Sierra Bonita, for a cleanup. There will be another cleanup event on April 27<sup>th</sup> at the Queen Anne Recreation Center, where they will also have shade trees and rain barrels and invited us to join them. There will be CERT training from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM on May 8th at Pan Pacific Park.

(2) **Michael Amster, Field Deputy – Council District 11 / Traci Park** [Michael.amster@lacity.org](mailto:Michael.amster@lacity.org)

- Michael provided updates on areas throughout CD11, including efforts around homelessness. He noted that the Councilwoman was proud to partner with the Mayor for another Inside Safe Operation 03/27<sup>th</sup> at the Bundy Triangle, Bundy and Santa Monica Boulevard, a site that has long been a homelessness encampment. Now the sidewalks are clear and nearby businesses are safer for it. As to Special Enforcement Zones, late last year there was a resolution for the signs, which they are getting done. This week, they got signs at Culver Circle and the Lincoln underpass, and have signs posted today underneath the 10 Freeway along Barrington in WLA, toward an improvement to deter encampments longstanding there. They will continue to post at additional sites.

- With regard to Dockweiler Beach, they're having bonfire education and enforcement effort, in partnership with Beaches and Harbors, LAFD and LAPD.

- Events: Last weekend, with DRNC, they had a tree adoption day at Marina del Rey Middle School, with a resource component for the community. This weekend will have a tax prep resource fair at Oakwood Rec Center in Venice offering free assistance for people with incomes of \$67,000 or less, also with a resource component and items for the general public. Tomorrow the Insurance Commissioner's office will hold an insurance town hall, which CD 5 will be watching. On April 27<sup>th</sup>, they'll have an Assessor Tax Relief Town Hall with the Councilwoman and Assessor Jeff Prang at the LA Airport Police Facility, to educate individuals on property tax relief and other calamity relief that is available for those impacted by the wildfires.

- Member Sann (WCC) shared, as to Inside Safe Programs, that Kenneth Miller who has joined the Councilwoman's office, told him that recently, he and the Mayor's office were working diligently for an Inside Safe action on Olympic Boulevard, under the freeway, where CD 5 & CD 11 connect and, when preparing, Kenneth was viciously assaulted, suffering serious physical damage. The attack by an unhoused individual was unprovoked. The individual followed him and hit him, causing him to suffer serious injuries. The assailant was caught and arrested and is in jail, having pled guilty to the assault. Member Sann expressed great concern that someone on the Mayor's staff could walk by and 100% unprovoked be viciously assaulted. He noted that this still goes on at the border of CD 5 & 11 and these outreach efforts don't always have happy endings. Michael related that he was familiar with this.

**d. Additional Government Reports – At the discretion of the Chair**

**Janet Turner, Deputy District Director/Outreach - Congressman Ted Lieu -**

[janet.turner@mail.house.gov](mailto:janet.turner@mail.house.gov) Janet noted that Representative Lieu sent his best wishes.

- Janet mentioned several of the Congressman's legislative items include HR 2787, which requires government entities to require a search warrant for electronic communications. She mentioned the Freedom to invest in tomorrow's Workforce Act and HR 8745, the Credit Improvement Act, which he co-sponsored, for financing \$2 million in affordable homes, as well as the California Coast Act, which, if passed, would permanently prohibit oil and gas leasing off the coast. Questions were asked and answered, including as to the Housing for All bill.

**Carlos Penilla Senior Field Representative - Senator Lola Smallwood Cuevas**

- Carlos noted that they've received comments about SB 79; some of which went to his inbox that he responded to and forwarded to Sacramento. He noted that the system of the Senator's inbox is a different system whereby emails are received and tabulated; they're sent to Sacramento, and the legislative staff has them. Feel free at any time to comment on legislation, whether you send it to him by email to [carlos.penilla@sen.ca.gov](mailto:carlos.penilla@sen.ca.gov) or the Senator's inbox; all are received and tabulated.

- Carlos related that they have a legislative package put together, with two bills on people previously incarcerated, one for women and one for men, to welcome them back to the job market, and a total of 24 bills. Reach out to him about their program.

- Carlos noted that they had a meeting with representatives of the Del Rey area with CHP at their headquarters in Culver City with a good amount of participation, Public works, Assembly offices, Caltrans and CHP, a full room and good discussion on how to deal with the homeless on Caltrans, County and City property. Reach out to him, feel free to email or call him **213-745-6656** about these efforts and related issues whether regarding EDD, Caltrans or the State.

- His area for the Senate District is from Palms to Century City to Westchester, the western portion of the district. He goes to Westchester, Palms, Del Rey, and SORO, areas. He is available to attend any meetings we have and will be there.

**Sherwin Shamoeil, Senior Field Representative - Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur**

[Sherwin.Shamoeil@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Sherwin.Shamoeil@asm.ca.gov) Sherwin gave a brief update noting that the Assemblymember is authoring 15 active bills, eight await votes, and seven have advanced; two passed unanimously on bipartisan basis one of which is to do with CEQA reform to reduce time needed for critical energy infrastructure projects. He's always available; reach out to him.

**Zachary Gaidzik, Coastal & Westside Field Deputy - County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath -**

[Zgaidzik@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:Zgaidzik@bos.lacounty.gov) Zac related that Supervisor Horvath's focus continues to be ongoing recovery efforts in Pacific Palisades fire area; the office has been calling up homes, especially along PCH. He noted that they are having one of the fastest debris clearing operations with over 50 parcels a day, 1,500 properties a month and expect to be 75% cleared by the end of May. One hundred crews are working on those efforts for those along PCH and those that did not apply. He discussed the new department deadline for the consolidated department to be set up, to combine various services and

departments addressing the silo effect and related that last year they passed Measure G, to implement overhauling LA government structure. Feel free to reach out to him.

**Kalei Munoz LADWP Community Affairs** introduced herself, noting she had no report.

**3. Board Member Updates –**

- Member Handal (WLASNC) gave a brief report to the Neighborhood Councils and Community Councils regarding the budget that was released today, noting that the funds for NCs will be reduced to \$25,000 according to the budget but they're not taking away any rollover monies. He stated that this will be a difficult year, and hopes everyone has read the Budget Advocate's report. If not, please go to [www.BudgetAdvocates.org](http://www.BudgetAdvocates.org) to see several specific recommendations of the many that the Budget Advocates made. He noted that while budgets aren't sexy, they dictate services and if you don't watch the budget you won't get services in your community.

- Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) gave an update on the DOJ Homelessness and Corruption Task Force. See letter sent 4/10/25 by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Homelessness Committee Chair:

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/WRAC-letter-to-DOJ-re-Task-Force.pdf>

Additional position letter re vehicle dwelling (based on WRAC's long-time positions):

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/WRAC-Letter-LAMC-85.02.pdf>

Vice Spitz related that she is hopeful to get them to a meeting to discuss the task force.

Vice Chair Spitz noted that she and Chair Greenberg wanted us to know we did send a position letter on vehicle dwelling. Link above.

**4. Committee Reports –**

- a. **WRAC Transportation & Mobility Committee (MTC)** – met 3/19/25; next mtg. 4/30/25.

Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC) related that Selena was unable to attend this evening due to a car-related situation. Selena is having a meeting on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

- b. **WRAC Homelessness Committee (HOC)** – met 3/25/25; no April mtg; next mtg 5/27/25.

HOC Chairman, Member Handal (WLASNC), said the reason we didn't hold the HOC this month was knowing the budget was coming out and, as LAHSA is being slashed, the city and county are doing their own thing, the two watch dogs are going to do it independently. He noted that the decision was made, and we are in for a very rocky road moving forward for homelessness. He thinks the level of dysfunction may worsen.

- c. **WRAC Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC)** – no mtgs since Oct. 2024.

Vice-Chair Spitz noted that this committee has not met for six months, and she doesn't know what the status is going forward. The current chair is Maryam Zar whom she noted is not sure if she wants to continue.

Vice-Chair Spitz related that this was a very active committee for years and it should be revived, as it is a standing committee. She hopes that we can find a solution.

- 5. Public Comment** – Tyler Laferriere wanted to provide public comment on item 7.b., the motion by Councilmembers Lee and Park to oppose SB 79 in CF 25-0002-19, and was asked by Chair Greenberg and Vice-Chair Spitz to do so under Public Comment rather than under the item. Some of Tyler's comments included that the motion in the council file has vexed him a bit, as it has brought us back to an annual cycle where we go back and forth about Sacramento presenting something, neighborhood groups get angry and don't feel heard, and it creates a cycle, where we continue to fight each other, especially when the eyes of the nation are on us to find a way to solve our housing crisis. He thinks in some ways, for those who value local control, the affirmative case, he hasn't seen it yet, and how local control can help us meet our RHNA goals, which we are woefully behind on. He thinks sometimes we lose perspective on the other form of local control, which is the ability of the property owner to make use of their property within the confines of the

law, often not spoken about in the context of local control. He also wanted to say that he deeply understands the sentiments behind the motion, especially since for communities that experience developments, experience or perceive really concentrated costs and diffuse benefits, if any benefits at all, things do not necessarily get better. He noted that he thinks these conversations overlook families like that of his husband and himself, who make too much to qualify for affordable housing but don't have enough money yet to pay for a house, and even when they do, don't want to spend millions on something built in the '70s or '80s and then have to spend thousands or millions more to update the house. He concluded with Edmund Burke's idea that we legislate not just for ourselves but for the future. He encourages us to promote and embrace a pro-growth mindset, as a city only survives by growing and inviting new people. He asked that as you go forward with work to legislate and weigh in on these really important issues that you keep in mind that we are doing so not just for the LA as it is but for the LA as we want it to be. He'd be happy to engage in these issues here and offline, and appreciate us for doing the work we do for our communities.

## 6. Approval of Minutes

- a. **Motion (Robin Greenberg)** – Approval of March 2025 meeting minutes passed 9-0-0 as moved by Chair Greenberg (BABCNC) and seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC). *(It was noted that Member Sankaran (DRNC) and Member Akef (PalmsNC) left at 7:38 PM.)*

## 7. New Business

- a. **Motion (MTC/Steve Sann) – Amend LAMC 56.16 – No riding e-bicycles on sidewalks:**  
“\_\_\_\_\_ NC/CC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), supports changing the Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 56.15. BICYCLE RIDING – SIDEWALKS to read: No person shall ride, operate or use an e-bicycle on a sidewalk or boardwalk in the City of Los Angeles.”  
Moved by Member Sann (WCC) and seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz (PPCC). Vice Chair Spitz (PPCC) supports this and thinks her council would too but doesn't feel the motion is complete; it has very broad language and needs to be more specific as to which part they want to see amended and in what way.  
**Motion:** Member Handal (WLANC) moved to send it back to committee to be redone. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Spitz and passed 9-0-0.

- b. **Motion (PPCC/C. Spitz & WNC/T. Tippit) – Oppose SB 79 / Support CF 25-0002-19:**  
“\_\_\_\_\_ NC/CC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), opposes SB 79 (Wiener), which further erodes local control over land use and zoning decisions, requires streamlined approval of very high multifamily buildings near certain bus stops and rail lines in single-family neighborhoods even when municipalities such as Los Angeles already have a state-approved and compliant Housing Element, and compromises public safety by failing to include an unconditional exemption for the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.  
“\_\_\_\_\_ NC/CC further supports the resolution in City Council by Councilmember John S. Lee, second by Councilwoman Traci Park (CF 25-0002-S19), for the City Council to add to its State Legislative Program for 2025-26 opposition to SB 79 unless amended to exempt municipalities with a state-approved and compliant Housing Element.”  
*Background information for all motions on Google Drive & website Meetings page; link above.*

The motion was moved by Vice-Chair Spitz and seconded by Member Tippit (WNC). Vice Chair Spitz explained that the reasons for the motion are well laid out in the background docs, as previously in other WRAC motions. One of PPCC's concerns is the issue of density. She noted that we are not opposed to looking at projects on a regular basis to see whether or not there is an impact on her community but we have more density and if there is no exemption for the fire zone, we have more and more problems as seen by the Palisades fire where the current level of density caused people to leave cars and flee on foot. She expressed objection that this requires mandatory streamlining without a review in her area, but there may be other objections in other areas related to local control. She appreciates Tyler's comments earlier.

Vice-Chair Spitz noted that the Palisades are constantly thinking of the future, what's best for our council and she personally and knows of others who do want to see more affordable housing, not only in the Palisades but elsewhere, if it is possible to do, but when you add more density in the hillside areas (in and outside our area) you are risking life and safety when you add more density on a mandatory basis as opposed to having proper review to see whether or not there will be those types of impacts, including what's the infrastructure capability, water available if there is a fire in the future, will the roads be too crowded so fire first responders can't even get in, and so forth; very similar to positions taken in the past by WRAC.

Jason Plummer (SORONC) commented on the density argument, noting that it seems the issue is the car oriented development because the streets just fill up regardless. He wouldn't say the Palisades is dense, noting that there is a lot of vegetation between each home. He doesn't see merits for that argument.

The motion **passed** by 8 yeases from Chair Greenberg, Vice-Chair Spitz, Members LoBuglio, Ruderman, Sann, Handal, Tippit, and Chapman, 0 noes, and 1 abstention from Member Plummer.

## 8. Old Business

**Oldest pending motions** – a. through d., all introduced in Sept. 2024 (numerous deadline extensions)

### a. 24.16. Request Revision of Landscape Ordinance to Clarify that Front Yard Paving for

**Extra Parking is Prohibited** – September 2024 (passage deadline May 2025). **7** councils adopted: BABCNC,\* BCC, NCWP, NWNC, WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (\*modified version).

WRAC letter (re position of 6 member councils):

<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/WRAC-Letter-Landscape-Ordinance.pdf>

Status: City Council on 1/7/25 directed City Attorney to prepare final ordinance with provisions similar to the WRAC motion (draft approved by the City Planning Commission):

[https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2024/24-1399\\_misc\\_11-05-24.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2024/24-1399_misc_11-05-24.pdf) (see Sec. 7 on unnumbered p.13)

- No Councils present are taking it up this week.

### b. 24.12. Request CW Yaroslavsky to Send Similar Letter re Governor's Executive Order # N-1-24 / Addressing Encampments on State Land in CD 5 – September 2024 (passage deadline May 2025). **7**

councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, PPCC, WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC.

- No Councils present are taking it up.

### c. 24.13. Support for Brentwood Community Council Resolution and Requests to LA County Board of Supervisors – September 2024 (passage deadline May 2025). **6** councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP,\* PPCC, WLASNC, WWNC (\*modified version)

- No Councils present are taking it up.

### d. 24.15. Request Suspension of Work on Westside Community Plans until Housing Element Policies and Mapping are Adopted – September 2024 (passage deadline May 2025). **5** councils adopted: BCC, NCWP, WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC.

**Note:** No change in passage number (5) since November 2024 (5 months ago); the Housing Element Rezoning Program was adopted in February 2025, per the Planning Dept., i.e., **motion may be moot**.

See: <https://planning.lacity.gov/plans-policies/housing-element-rezoning-program>

- None are taking it up. Vice-Chair Spitz feels this motion has become moot, people haven't passed in months, and though it doesn't expire until May, we can leave it on but we already have an adopted housing element motion.



**Most recent pending motion** – e., introduced in Feb.2025

- e. **25.05. Allocation of Revenues from Bus Lane Violation Enforcement Pilot Program** - February 2025 (passage deadline May 2025).  
6 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, VNC, WNC, WWNC  
- WLASNC will take it up Wednesday.

**Passed motions** – f.-i., introduced in Feb.-March; passed in April 2025

- f. **25.01. Support Council File 25-0006-S38 re Creation of Climate Resilience District** – February 2025 (passed April 2025). 10 councils adopted: BABCNC,\* BCC, DRNC, NCWP, NWNC, PalmsNC, PPCC,\* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (\*modified versions). Position letter:  
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/WRAC-Letter-Climate-Resilience-Dist.pdf>
- g. **25.02. Support CF 25-0172 re repair of fire hydrants** – February 2025 (passed April 2025).  
8 councils adopted: BCC, DRNC, PPCC, NCWP, NWNC, WLASNC, WNC, and WWNC. Position letter:  
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/WRAC-Letter-Fire-Hydrants-Repair.pdf>
- h. **25.03. Request to Address Wildfire Coastal Debris Catastrophe** – March 2025 (passed April 2025). 9 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, NWNC, PPCC,\* VNC,\* WLASNC, WNC, WWNC (\*modified versions). Position letter:  
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/WRAC-letter-Hazardous-Coastal-Debris.pdf>
- i. **25.04. Oppose SB 677 (Wiener)** – March 2025 (passed April 2025). 8 councils adopted: BABCNC, BCC, NCWP, PPCC,\* WLASNC, WCC, WNC, WWNC. Position letters:  
(to state officials)  
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/WRAC-letter-state-re-SB-677.pdf>  
(to Councilmembers)  
<https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/WRAC-letter-Councilmembers-SB-677.pdf>
9. **Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.**

Next meeting to be held on **May 19, 2025** (via Zoom at 6:30pm)