

Contact Information

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Type of NC Board Action: Against Proposal

Impact Information

Date: 10/11/2011

Update to a Previous Input: No

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Agenda Date: 10/18/2011

Item Number:

Brief Summary: The GWNC opposes adoption of the revised citywide sign ordinance...because it would allow a proliferation of commercial advertising on both private and public property without a significant reduction in existing billboard and signage blight, and would allow new electronic signage without addressing energy use, light pollution, traffic safety and other issues that could negatively affect communities throughout the city.

Additional Information



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council General Meeting  
September 14, 2011  
DRAFT MINUTES

**1. Call to Order**

A duly noticed meeting of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2011, at the Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd., Los Angeles. President Owen Smith called the meeting to order at 7:06 p. m.

**2. Roll Call**

The Secretary called the roll. Board Members in attendance at the roll call were: Yigal Arens, Charles Dougherty, Elizabeth Fuller, John Gresham, Alex Jones-Moreno, Frances McFall, Fred Pickel, Joane Pickett (Alternate for Jane Gilman), Mary Rajswing, Owen Smith and James Wolf. Patricia Carroll, Charles D’Atri, Jack Humphreville and Jane Usher arrived later. Two Board seats (Area 9, Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews and Area 12, We-Wil) are vacant. Also attending: 27 Stakeholders and guests. Board Members absent and not represented by an Alternate: Barbara Kumetz, David Lunzer, Clinton Oie and Benjamin Rosenberg.

Eleven of the 19 Board Members or their Alternates were present at the roll call, which is not a quorum. The GWNC quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is 13, so at this time the Board could only have discussions without making any Motions or taking any binding votes.

**3. Reading of the Minutes**

A. Minutes of July 13, 2011. [This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5.]

**MOTION** (by Mr. Dougherty, seconded by Mr. Pickel): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its July 13, 2011 General Meeting as written.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

B. Minutes of August 10, 2011

**MOTION** (by Mr. Dougherty, seconded by Mr. D’Atri): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the Minutes of its August 10, 2011 General Meeting as written.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

#### **4. President's Report** (Owen Smith)

##### A. Board Vacancies

Mr. Smith noted the vacancies:

Area 2 (Citrus Square) – Alternate

Area 9 (Oakwood-Maplewood-St. Andrews) – Director and Alternate

Area 12 (We-Wil) – Director and Alternate (note: Matthew Oldham has resigned)

Education – Alternate

Other Non-Profit – Alternate

Renter – Alternate

##### B. Bylaws Conformation to DONE's new uniform Table of Contents (John Welborne)

Mr. Welborne was not present and there was no report.

##### C. Ethics Training – Board Members and Alternates who have not yet completed the training:

Carroll, D'Atri, Kumetz, Pickel, Rosenberg, Dwyer, Fox, Kaliski, Katz, Lombard, Rubin.

You MUST complete the course at

<http://ethics.lacity.org/education/ethics2007/?audience=done> or at an in-person session.

Mr. Smith encouraged Board Members to complete the Ethics Training.

##### D. Secretary and Treasurer Positions – Need volunteers for both positions, but Treasurer especially must be filled ASAP, so we can continue to pay our bills!

Ms. Fuller provided a brief description of the treasurer's duties and explained that the GWNC is "at a financial standstill" until a new treasurer is in place.

##### E. NC Election Cycle – Ms. Fuller reported that the City Council has not budgeted funds for 2012 elections, and may seek to postpone elections until 2014 (extending our terms by two years).

#### **5. Guest Speakers**

##### A. California State Assembly Member (District 42) Mike Feuer

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #7. B.] Assemblyman Feuer (310-285-5490; <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a42>) authored and is working to pass legislation to give the legislature authorization to reject insurance rate increases. He described his work regarding the proposed downtown sports stadium to retain all CEQA standards, allow a time frame to make the stadium "carbon neutral" and to facilitate a large percentage of attendees traveling by public transportation. He described work on legislation to create tax incentives for small business, overhaul high-speed train oversight, State budget balancing and pension reform. Assemblyman Feuer encouraged contacting his office with questions.

L.A. City District Four Councilman Tom LaBonge (323-957-6415;

[Councilmember.LaBonge@LACity.org](mailto:Councilmember.LaBonge@LACity.org); <http://CD4.LACity.org>) stated that he supports the proposed downtown stadium and described community developments and improvements. Mr. LaBonge said that he has asked new traffic signals along 4<sup>th</sup> Street at Highland and Rossmore not be implemented as previously discussed as part of the new Bike Plan, because of neighbors' objections. He also said Sixth Street is being considered for a "road diet" with one vehicle and one bike lane each going east and west. His Office will report next month regarding the train project. He described work to accommodate and

refine redistricting. Board Members strongly expressed their desire for the GWNC area east to Western Ave. to be brought back into Council District Four. Councilman LaBonge will write to LAPD Chief Beck regarding Police Division boundaries. He announced a Meet and Greet at the Hollywood Bowl with Congressman Adam Schiff (626-304-2727; <http://www.schiff.house.gov/index.html>).

- B. Jo Ann Moss – L.A. Dept. of Public Works Wastewater Division  
Daniel Hackney, Environmental Supervisor, L.A. Dept. of Public Works (213-485-3684; [Daniel.Hackney@LACity.org](mailto:Daniel.Hackney@LACity.org)), spoke in place of Ms. Moss.

*Board Member Jack Humphreville arrived at this time, making 12 Board Members present, one short of a quorum.*

Mr. Hackney described the City’s aging infrastructure and the need to upgrade it. There have been few recent rate increases and L.A.’s rates are lower than many other major cities. Rates “would go from an average of \$30 per month now to \$58 per month in 10 years. Fixing a pipe before it breaks costs one-tenth of what it costs to fix a broken pipe. He said that many, including “all the environmental groups,” agree that increases are needed.

*Board Member Patricia Carroll arrived at this time, making a quorum of 13 Board Members present. Now the Board could take binding votes on Agendized Items.*

*Board Member Charles D’Atri arrived at this time.*

Mr. Hackney reported that the Department is “on schedule to replace the system in 168 years”; the system’s “life span is half of that . . . we went 14 years with no increase.’

*Board Member Jane Usher arrived at this time.*

## **6. Local Government Updates**

### **A. CD4 Update (Sheila Irani)**

Mr. La Bonge’s earlier remarks served as the report for this area.

### **B. CD5 Update (John Darnell)**

Mr. Darnell could not attend and there was no report at this time.

### **C. CD10 Update (Sylvia Lacy)**

Ms. Lacy could not attend and there was no report at this time.

### **D. 42nd Assembly District Update (Nicole Carcel)**

There was no report at this time.

### **E. 47th Assembly District Update (Charles Stewart)**

Mr. Stewart could not attend and there was no report at this time.

### **F. 26th Senate District Update (Andrew Lachman)**

Mr. Lachman could not attend and there was no report at this time.

## **7. Treasurer's Report and Budget Items**

A. Monthly budget report/approval - July-Sept. (Elizabeth Fuller)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #3.]

Ms. Fuller distributed and reviewed the "Monthly Spending Report – July 1, 2011 – September 14, 2011." She noted that there were no credit card expenditures for August or September but described the need to pay various other bills, and the need for a Treasurer to sign the Demand Warrants. Vendors have sent letters to the GWNC asking for payments, which we cannot process.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by [**CONFIRM:** \_\_\_] M\_. \_\_\_, seconded by M\_. \_\_\_): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council approves the "Monthly Spending Report – July 1, 2011 – September 14, 2011."

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

Ms. Fuller described the Treasurer responsibilities.

B. YTD Spending Report (please note amounts available under COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS/OTHER (\$8,830) and OUTREACH/SPONSORSHIPS (\$1,000) categories, in preparation for votes on requests in next Agenda item).

Ms. Fuller reviewed the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 as of September 14, 2011, and pointed out the above amounts available for community projects and events.

## **8. Community Concerns / Funding Requests**

A. John Burroughs Beautification Project Support Request (Joanne Madeiro) (Note: discussed at last meeting; no votes taken because no quorum).

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #5. A.] Stakeholder Cindy Chvatal-Keane requested support for the Project and described community outreach, maintenance and beautification efforts. Funding is being requested for landscaping of a main corner at Wilshire and McCadden. Ms. Usher described the need for an annual GWNC "call for projects." There was spirited discussion regarding the need for Board Members to bring projects to the Board.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Ms. Rajswing, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council allocates \$2,800 for the John Burroughs School Beautification Project.

**DISCUSSION:** Ms. Fuller would like the GWNC to be able to consider funding various projects, described allocation procedures including for Neighborhood Purpose Grants (NPGs) and recommended that the School submit an NPG application.

Ms. Usher suggested and Ms. Rajswing and Mr. Dougherty agreed to amend the funding Motion as follows:

**AMENDED FUNDING MOTION** (by Ms. Rajswing, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council allocates \$2,800 for the John Burroughs School Beautification Project subject to completion of a Neighborhood Purpose Grant application.

**AMENDED FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote; Ms. Fuller abstained.

- B. Larchmont Family Fair Participation (Jane Gilman) (Note: discussed at last meeting; no votes taken because no quorum).

Ms. Rajswing reported that the Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC) agreed to do another tree distribution at the Fair.

**FUNDING MOTION** (by Ms. Rajswing, seconded by Ms. McFall): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council allocates funding not to exceed \$400 for a booth at the Larchmont Family Fair.

**FUNDING MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

**9. DWP Oversight** (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the Ratepayer Advocate establishment process is going slow. The DWP has proposed to increase the sewer fee by 30% over five years; the amount “is constantly changing.”

**10. City Budget Issues** (Jack Humphreville)

Mr. Humphreville reported that the City had “overly optimistic projections in regard to revenues.”

**11. Old Business**

- A. Citywide Sign Ordinance (Note: discussed at last meeting; no votes taken because no quorum).

Suggested motion (adopted by several other NCs): [see below].

Ms. Fuller relayed that other Neighborhood Councils have supported the below Motion, which she read aloud.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Dougherty, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council opposes adoption of the revised citywide sign ordinance now pending before the City Council Planning and Land Use Management committee because it would allow a proliferation of commercial advertising on both private and public property without a significant reduction in existing billboard and signage blight, and would allow new electronic signage without addressing energy use, light pollution, traffic safety, and other issues that could negatively affect communities throughout the City.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

*[There was no Item #11. B.]*

- C. California Redistricting (Note: discussed at last meeting; no votes taken because no quorum). Ms. Usher reported that the GWNC sent a letter to appropriate city and state officials in August, requesting that they “Do not split the Historic Greater Wilshire Neighborhood in half” in the ongoing redistricting process. The deadline for comment submissions was before the letter could be approved at a board meeting, so she requested ratification of the letter that has been sent.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Dougherty, seconded by Mr. D’Atri): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council hereby ratifies the August letter to redistricting authorities, requesting that they “Do not split the Historic Greater Wilshire Neighborhood in half.”

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

D. 4th Street Traffic Signals at Highland and Rossmore (Note: discussed at last meeting; no votes taken because no quorum).

Ms. Fuller reported that the GWNC received “close to a hundred letters from neighbors in opposition to the proposal.” Tim Fremaux of the LADOT said “we have abandoned those two signals” and described alternate possibilities on 4<sup>th</sup> St., especially “east of Wilton . . . we are no longer considering” signals at Highland and Rossmore. Hancock Park Homeowners’ Association (Est. 1948) President Cindy Chvatal distributed “Traffic/Bike Signals on 4th Street” survey results and an “On-Street Bicycle Facility Development and Installation Flow Chart” and reported that “over 200 signatures” have been collected “to stop these signals.” Residents “want to be involved” in the project. Stakeholders Jennifer DeVore and John Jones spoke in opposition to the signals. Stakeholders Colin Bogart and Niall Huffman spoke in support of the signals “to help pedestrians and bicyclists use intersections . . . comfortably and safely.” Gerta McDonough opposes the signals and would like to speak with bicyclist organizations “to discuss options.” R. A. McDonough and Arsine Phillips also oppose the signals. Glenn Bailey, City Bicycle Advisory Committee Vice-Chair, described previous outreach to Neighborhood Councils and urged further outreach and inclusion of groups in and near 4<sup>th</sup> St. Jeff Jacobberger, City Council District 10 Bicycle Advisory Committee Representative, encouraged support for enforcement of traffic laws, especially for pedestrians in crosswalks. Board Member Alternate Joane Pickett, a cyclist, already feels safe and opposes the signals. Board Member Alternate Robby O’Donnell said she believes “bicycles on the sidewalk” are a bigger problem.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Pickel, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council opposes signal lights at the intersections of 4<sup>th</sup> and Highland and 4<sup>th</sup> and Rossmore; supports City Councilman LaBonge regarding not removing the existing stop signs at those intersections; and would like to be involved in the traffic planning for those intersections.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

*Board Member Jane Usher had to leave at this time.*

## **12. Outreach Committee** (Gilman/Arens/Carroll)

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #15.] Ms. Rajswing is working to schedule LAPD Olympic Division Captain Tina Nieto (213-382-9039; 26900@LAPD.LACity.org; [http://www.LAPDonline.org/olympic\\_community\\_police\\_station](http://www.LAPDonline.org/olympic_community_police_station)) to speak at an upcoming GWNC board meeting. Ms. Fuller encouraged submitting ideas for other meeting topics and speakers to the Outreach Committee.

Upcoming meeting speakers/events (organizers in parentheses):

October – Senior Citizen Issues (Federico Mariscal/Margaret Sowma)  
November – LAPD Wilshire and Olympic Division Captains  
December – Trust for Public Land (Patti Carroll)  
Other ideas: area history (e.g. WS/HPHS and/or Ebell)  
Suggestions for guest speakers?

### **13. Other Committee / Project Reports**

There were no other reports at this time.

### **14. Board Member Comments**

Mr. Humphreville was concerned that the proposed high-speed rail project will cost much more money than the State is saying. Ms. McFall requested that the Pledge of Allegiance be said at these Meetings and asked that we look into the cost of buying a flag.

### **15. Land Use Committee** (LUC) (James Wolf)

*[Each section's first paragraph is directly from the Agenda.]*

#### **A. Genwa Barbecue Expansion CUP – 5115 Wilshire Blvd.**

Issue: Restaurant is applying for a permit to expand the restaurant space into an adjacent storefront. On-site parking is available in the building's parking structure, in a level shared with a building next door. Restaurant has a good record and relationship with nearby neighbors, and is planning to do neighborhood notification and outreach.

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #11.] At this Meeting Mr. Wolf reviewed the project and read the below Motion. A "Notice of Application" was distributed.

Restaurant representative Brett Engstrom "sent 162 fliers" and hasn't "received any responses"; they "will follow the conditions." At their September 21<sup>st</sup> Hearing they "will gladly accept" as well the condition of no outside music and will be open the same hours as before including the 11:00 p.m. closing time.

**MOTION** (by Mr. Pickel, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the Genwa Barbecue CUP application pending neighbors' approval and with the following conditions: 1) That the restaurant seek a written covenant for its in-building, off-street parking arrangement. 2) That the owners meet with adjacent residential neighbors regarding the expansion. 3) That the applicants provide a written list of voluntary conditions with their application. 4) That any outdoor dining areas be placed along the Wilshire Boulevard face of the restaurant only, and that there be no outdoor music of any kind.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

#### **B. LA Tennis Club Parking Variance Application**

Issue: The Tennis Club is seeking to legalize a parking lot built on former tennis court space. The City initially instructed the club that the area could be called a "loading area," but is now requiring a variance to legalize the parking. Club representatives have presented 82 letters from neighbors in support of the project. One neighbor, who lives adjacent to the parking lot, asks that the Club be required to obtain all necessary permits for the parking and impose mitigation measures to deal with light, noise (especially car alarm beeps), hours of operation and security concerns.



At this Meeting Mr. Wolf reviewed the project and read the below Motion. John McCarthy of the Tennis Club said “the lighting is already adjusted” and they’ve received “82 letters of support including everyone in the neighborhood except the immediately adjacent neighbor . . . the Club will very definitely be asking people to be quiet.” There will be a Hearing October 6<sup>th</sup> at City Hall.

**MOTION** (by Mr. D’Atri, seconded by Mr. Dougherty): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the LA Tennis Club’s variance application, with mitigation measures to address neighbors’ concerns regarding: 1) lighting, 2) noise (e.g. ask club members to program vehicle alarms to signal engagement with vehicle lights instead of beeps), 3) hours of operation and 4) security.

**MOTION PASSED** by a voice vote.

*Board Member Charles D’Atri had to leave at this time.*

Potential Agenda Items for September LUC Meeting (in addition to those above):

- Update on cell phone poles proposed for 1st/Wilton and 9th/Mansfield
- Senior Apartments planned for 4114 W. 9th St.
- Nara Bank parking lot (200 block of S. Manhattan Pl.)
- Update on conversion of apartments to board and care facility at 901 S. Wilton
- Update on Eastern Presbyterian Church expansion plans at 4720 W. 6th St.
- Update on Won Jo Kokerang Agurang Restaurant CUP application, 533 S. Western

## **12. Public Comments [the second #12 on the Agenda]**

[The following public comment was made during Item #14.] Mr. Bailey encouraged participating in the Neighborhood Council Board Members’ Facebook group.

## **13. Announcements and Adjournment [the second #13 on the Agenda]**

[This Agenda Item was addressed after Item #14.]

### **A. Congress of Neighborhoods (Fuller)**

Saturday, September 24 – 7:45 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., City Hall. Online registration:  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCCongressRegistration>.

[More information: <http://www.NCCongressLA.com>].

Ms. Fuller encouraged attending the Congress.

### **B. City meeting on NC election procedures (Fuller)**

Thursday, September 22, 2011, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Piper Technical Center, Election Division Office, Third Floor, Space 300, 555 Ramirez St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

Ms. Fuller announced the Meeting.

### **C. Next meeting: Wednesday, October 12, 7:00 p.m.**

Mr. Smith declared and the Board agreed to **ADJOURN** the Meeting at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Levin  
Minutes Writer