

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Westwood Neighborhood Council

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Type of NC Board Action: Against Proposal

Impact Information

Date: 10/11/2011

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 08-2020

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Brief Summary: "The Westwood Neighborhood Council 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 & signage blight, & would allow new electronic signage without addressing energy use, light pollution, traffic safety, & other issues that could negatively effect communities throughout the city."

Additional Information

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2011  
WESTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
10822 WILSHIRE BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Jerry Brown called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. Board members in attendance were Jerry Brown, Roozbeh Farahanipour, Brent Gaisford, Joseph Gilliard, Mark Herd, Stephen Resnick, Tom Schneider, Clinton Schudy, Kurt Smalberg, Michael Stajura, Scott Whittle, and Laura Winikow. Board members absent were Connie Boukidis, Lisa Chapman, David Crew, Toni Gray, Mark Rogo, Steve Somers, and George Torbay. There were also 12 stakeholders and guests in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brent Gaisford moved to approve the August minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Clinton Schudy and carried unanimously.

3. COMMENTS BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Councilmember Koretz's field deputy Sarah Mallory said that his transportation deputy Jay Greenstein is holding weekly meetings about the upcoming 90 day closure of Wilshire Blvd.'s freeway ramps, looking at possible detours for the closure. Sarah will update WWNC about detours for the closure at the next meeting.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stakeholder Steve Sann announced that the Westwood Community Council will have its next meeting on September 20th at 6:30 p.m. at Belmont Village. Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's transportation deputy Vivian Rescalvo and Metro representatives will be there to give a presentation on the Westside Subway Extension.

Stakeholder Roxane Stern commented about WWNC's website, which had not been updated. Brent Gaisford explained that he had just returned from out of town 4 1/2 hours ago. Though he was formerly the only one who was able to post information on the website, he has just trained Michael Stajura to do so as well so this should not happen in the future.

## 5. STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

The Executive Committee has not met.

Budget Committee Chair Brent Gaisford stated that Neighborhood Council budgets have been reduced by 10% for this fiscal year, going from \$45,000 to \$40,500. WWNC has not spent much money yet so there will be a good amount for Neighborhood Purposes Grants, and possibly more money should be spent on outreach. Brent announced that he has received a credit card to pay for WWNC's expenses and requested agendaization of how to prioritize funding expenditures for the next meeting. He is as yet unsure of how to pay for the Congress of Neighborhood Councils. Jerry Brown announced that the \$8,000 granted to Fairburn Avenue Elementary School in February 2011 is being processed now by DONE.

The Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC) met this afternoon, with Barney's Westwood on the agenda.

The LUPC discussed Native Foods at its meeting last month. Valerie Sacks, on behalf of Native Foods, spoke about its relocation and remodel within the same building. It will have a larger space more conducive to a relaxing meal and is requesting a CUP to serve wine and beer. The Land Use Committee requested that Native Foods not have happy hours or serve alcohol in pitchers, which Native Foods agreed to comply with. It will have food specials but not drink specials. Because it is in a historic building, there are no parking requirement changes. Jerry Brown moved that, "WWNC accepts the Land Use & Planning Committee's recommendation to support the request of Native Foods for a CUP for a wine & beer license on the condition that Native Foods has no happy hours and does not serve alcohol in pitchers." Michael Stajura seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Barney's Westwood was discussed at today's LUPC meeting. Mark Herd said that the LUPC voted on five requests for modification of its conditions by Barney's Westwood. The five requests were to change the closing hour from 1:30 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. seven days a week; to install three video games; to have the ability to extend karaoke hours; to have happy hours from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.; and to install five television monitors on the patio. The LUPC supported the requests for extended hours, video games, and extended karaoke hours but not the requests for happy hours and television monitors on the patio. Co-owner David Houston and consultant Ira Handelman then stated that Barney's Westwood is not doing as well as Barney's restaurants in other locations because the conditions in Westwood are more restrictive. They stated that they are not about to go out of business but need 10% to 15% more profits to make it viable, and are requesting the five modifications which they believe will help.

Ira Handelman said that he had a letter from West L. A. Vice Squad Sergeant Todd Schmitz stating that happy hours were all right.

Mark Herd moved that, "WWNC accepts the LUPC's recommendation to support the request of Barney's Westwood for extension of closing hours from 1:30 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. seven days a week." Michael Stajura seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mark Herd moved that, "WWNC accepts the LUPC's recommendation to support the request of Barney's Westwood for an extension of karaoke hours." Michael Stajura seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mark Herd moved that, "WWNC accepts the LUPC's recommendation to support the request of Barney's Westwood to install three video games." Clinton Schudy seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mark Herd said that the LUPC voted 3 to 1 against supporting Barney's request to install television monitors on the patio. Co-owner David Houston said that they would be monitors only with no speakers or sound. Jerry Brown moved that, "WWNC accepts the LUPC's recommendation to oppose the request of Barney's Westwood to install television monitors on the patio." Scott Whittle seconded the motion. Mark Herd then moved to amend the motion: "WWNC approves the request of Barney's Westwood to install television monitors on the patio as long as they don't project below the awning and are oriented predominantly to face patrons and not the street." Brent Gaisford seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of Yes: 8, No: 3, and Abstain: 1. The original motion was then voted upon, with 2 votes for and 10 against.

Mark Herd told the board of the LUPC's 3 to 1 vote to deny Barney's Westwood request to allow on premises happy hours. Jerry Brown moved to accept the LUPC's recommendation to oppose the request of Barney's Westwood to hold happy hours. Stephen Resnick seconded the motion. Brent Gaisford moved to amend the motion to allow Barney's Westwood to hold happy hours between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m." Michael Stajura seconded the motion which passed by a vote of 6 Yes, 5 No, and 1 abstention. Jerry Brown's original motion was then voted on and was defeated by a vote of Yes: 6, No: 6.

## 6. CITYWIDE SIGN ORDINANCE

Michael Stajura stated that the proposed sign ordinance will monetize every flat surface in the city. WRAC has asked all boards to oppose the ordinance. Councilmember Koretz is opposed to it. He wants more time to review and amend it. Other comments were that unnamed law firms and lobbyists have had access to the writing of the ordinance and there are tremendous loopholes

in it, and that originally it was heard 30 months ago and included public input but since then it has basically been written by lobbyists with no public input.

Michael Stajura moved that WWNC supports WRAC's position opposing the sign ordinance and will file a Community Impact Statement to that effect. The motion reads, "WWNC 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." Scott Whittle seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

#### 7. WRAC TOWN HALL WITH DONE

Michael Stajura explained that the upcoming meeting with WRAC and DONE to discuss changes to neighborhood councils will be an informational and discussion meeting, without taking a vote on proposed changes. All are invited. Of the four agenda items, item c) is important since DONE's staff has been decimated, and this item is about a proposal for WRAC to take up some administrative duties.

Michael also announced that UCLA's 3rd annual volunteer day is next Tuesday September 20th. UCLA will send 7,500 volunteers around the city to help in various capacities.

#### 8. TELEPHONE NUMBER AND P.O. BOX FOR WWNC

The City will not give WWNC business cards until it has a phone number and address. Jerry Brown suggested that WWNC should get a Google phone number so that phone calls can be transcribed and sent as email. Stephen Resnick looked into P.O. Boxes and said that boxes at the post office in the Federal Building were available in four sizes for between \$96 and \$510 per year. Objections to a box there were raised because that post office is slated for closure in the future, therefore a private box may be preferable.

Stephen Resnick moved that, "WWNC will obtain a Google phone number set up to go to the website, and obtain a P.O. Box from a location in Westwood Village to be determined at a cost of not to exceed \$200 per year." Roozbeh Farahanipour seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

#### 9. BYLAWS/POSTING LOCATIONS

Michael Stajura said that all posting locations at UCLA are equal, meaning that they are all equally ineffective. Physical posting of meetings is archaic now. Posting of meetings needs to be done digitally or in the Daily Bruin. Michael said that posting locations are not specifically listed in the bylaws, but in a document referred to by the bylaws. According to the Brown Act, WWNC needs at least one physical posting location. Brent Gaisford talked to the Daily Bruin's editor and found out that WWNC's meeting announcements can be printed for free if a letter is written stating that it is a non-profit organization. Michael Stajura volunteered to write the letter to the editor.

#### 10. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

President Jerry Brown adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.