

09-2645

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council

Los Angeles, California

info@greaterwilshire.org

The Honorable Jose Huizar, Chair  
The Honorable Richard Alarcon  
The Honorable Greig Smith  
Public Works Committee  
City Hall  
200 N. Spring St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Chairperson Huizar and Members of the Public Works Committee:

It is the consensus of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council that cell tower equipment and related installations should only be allowed in locations that are necessary and appropriate from an aesthetic and land-use standpoint. Cell tower equipment has proliferated in our neighborhood and around the City of Los Angeles to the significant detriment of our residents. Cell towers and other wireless telecommunications equipment in the public right of way are one aspect of the problem. Timely notification (or lack thereof) of plans to install such equipment in the public right of way in front of homes and businesses is one of our highest priorities. Design elements are another priority. The equipment is unsightly, attracts graffiti, degrades the value of the property where it's sited as well as that of adjacent properties. The City had claimed to have no right to regulate their placement or require public notice and hearings. Recent court decisions and the actions of other California cities challenge that assumption. Now, the pending outcome of the City Attorney's Report in response to CF 09-2645, at today's meeting of the Public Works Committee, has the potential to propel the City to move forward.

Cell towers and support equipment on private property pose a slightly different problem. While public notice and hearings do take place, the City has been reluctant to impose meaningful restrictions on number, location, and appearance, regularly ignoring zoning, regulations and restrictions such as height limits in community and specific plans. Our neighborhood council created a screening tool for all proposals brought to the attention of our land use committee and our full council. We would like to see recommendations for a consolidated ordinance at the City level to assist in the permitting-with-notice and enforcement process regarding private property as well.

We recognize the need for cell towers and supporting equipment to accommodate the ever increasing use of cell phone and accompanying bandwidth requirements. We strongly feel, however, that the City of Los Angeles is ready to provide meaningful regulation of the industry and to forcefully interpret various Federal and State laws and inter-government agreements in a way that protects the rights of our residents and

stakeholders.

The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council voted at our Board meeting on June 8, 2011 to urge the City Attorney's office to complete the cell report directed by the Public Works Committee in CF 09-2645 as a first step in the drafting of a comprehensive new ordinance to regulate cell towers and their support equipment and to allow the ordinance to progress through the normal City approval process. We feel that the Position Paper on Wireless Telecommunications Facilities (WTF) Regulation, prepared by the Los Angeles WTF Working Group, provides a sound basis for the proposed ordinance and strongly recommend that the cited provisions be included. Thank you for following this issue. We are encouraged by the City Attorney's Cell Tower Report and support in general its recommendations regarding aesthetic considerations, expanded notice and elimination of the utility pole/light pole exemption. We encourage the Public Works Committee of the City Council to take steps to initiate regulatory reform as recommended in the report at today's hearing.

Thank you for helping us advocate to control the unregulated proliferation of cell towers and their detrimental effects on our residents.

Sincerely,

James Wolf, President, The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council

Delegates, alternates, Land Use Committee members and Stakeholders

Cc: The Honorable Tom La Bonge, CD 4

City Attorney's Office

Eric Villanueva, Legislative Staff, PWC Committee