

Westwood South of Santa Monica Blvd
Homeowner's Association
Incorporated November 8, 1971
P. O. Box 64213
Los Angeles, CA 90064-0213

Planning Committee
Los Angeles City Council
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Via email: Sharon.Gin@lacity.org

RE: Council File 11-0923 / Mural Ordinance

Dear Chair Huizar and Members Cedillo and Englander:

We are grateful that the Mural Ordinance has returned to the Council's Planning Committee for further consideration. We are supportive of the return of murals to the communities across Los Angeles and look forward to the return of this wonderful and unique art form. However, we hope that the ordinance that will be adopted will exclude single family zoned properties from the locations where murals may be installed (unless the mural on a single family property is not visible from the public right-of-way). We have been supportive of an ordinance that follows the recommendations of the Planning Dept. report that sought to limit murals to multi-family zoned parcels and commercial properties. We have appeared before your committee on previous occasions to voice some concerns about specific aspects of the pending ordinance and trust that the issues that those in the community have raised will be addressed by your committee before the measure moves on for full Council consideration.

1. Whether murals should be prohibited in R1, on single-family homes and/or in any other low density zoned properties;
2. Whether murals on any dwellings in residential zones should be limited to areas that are not visible from the public right of way (e.g., back yard fences, rear walls no higher than one -story);
3. Whether communities that wish to have murals should be required to enact specific plans to allow murals on single -family homes (Version B) or on other dwellings in residential zones, and not the other way around (Version A). We are strong supporters of an ordinance that creates a process whereby communities would OPT IN to allow for signage on residential properties (especially on low density residential properties) and are opposed to a process that would require communities to OPT OUT.
4. Whether a 90 -day waiting period before the Ordinance becomes operative would be sufficient time for enactment of specific plans either to allow or disallow murals on single - family homes or other dwellings in residential zones;
5. Whether illumination of murals should be allowed at all and in particular on any dwellings in or near residential zones;

6. Whether the ordinance's definition of a "commercial message" is clear, adequate and/or sufficient. There is a great deal at stake in making certain that a window of unintended opportunity is not created that would allow for murals to be hijacked by those who seek to use them for commercial benefit and could also be used to undermine the intent of City's sign ordinance;

7. Whether the ordinance's definition of "digitally printed image" is clear, adequate and/or sufficient, and whether the definition of "Original Art Mural" should include "digitally printed" images;

8. Whether the "administrative rules" governing the "Neighborhood Involvement Requirement" should be adopted and set forth in the Ordinance prior to its enactment, and whether the provisions for notice and community involvement are adequate. Language should be added to recognize Community Councils and other groups (business and residential) in addition to Neighborhood Councils. However, of greater concern is the fact that the Neighborhood Involvement Requirement is procedural in nature only and that no recognition or response to community input is incorporated;

9. Whether existing murals are or should be clearly grandfathered under the Ordinance, and under what circumstances. If this is not clarified, it will be very difficult if not impossible for inspectors to make determinations of murals that existed at the time that the ordinance was adopted and those created under its provisions;

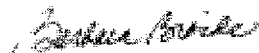
10. Whether any aspects of the Ordinance may impact public safety and/or quiet enjoyment of residential property, including the height and illumination provisions;

11. Whether there will be sufficient enforcement of the Ordinance provisions.

Because the placement of murals has become entangled in the unfortunate mess related to the placement of advertising signage in Los Angeles, it is extremely critical that the Mural Ordinance that is adopted by the City be one that is clear and legally defensible. It should also respect the fact that our communities across the City may have very different notions as to what constitutes their "community character."

Thank you for your consideration. We regret that we will be unable to attend the Planning Committee's meeting on this matter today. We request that our letter be included in the record and filed in CF 11-0923.

Sincerely,



Barbara Broide
President, WSSM

Cc: June Lagmay, City Clerk
Councilmember Paul Koretz and Planning Deputy Shawn Bayliss-CD 5