

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Venice Neighborhood Council

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(12) Nay(0) Abstain(1) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 09/19/2017

Type of NC Board Action: For

Impact Information

Date: 09/27/2017

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 17-0167

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Summary: Venice NC Motion In Opposition to the Implementation of Survey LA in the Venice Coastal Zone and recommending Changes To The Current Use of Survey Information.



Venice Neighborhood Council

LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 www.VeniceNC.org
Email: Chair-LUPC@VeniceNC.org



REPORT DATE:	1/12/2016
STAFF:	MR
LUPC DATE:	1/12/2016
VNC DATE:	2/21/2016

STAFF REPORT - SurveyLA Community Impact

Background

As Stated by the City in its Master Report published in August 2016, SurveyLA was not meant to establish policy in and of itself, rather it was meant as a **planning tool** to assist in establishing future policies:

"In 2005, the City of Los Angeles entered into a multi-year grant agreement with the J. Paul Getty Trust to complete a citywide historic resources survey, a process of systematically identifying and recording information on properties and neighborhoods that reflect Los Angeles' architectural, social, and cultural history. The project, called SurveyLA, has been managed by the staff of the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) within the Department of City Planning (DCP).

SurveyLA is first and foremost a **planning tool**. The information gathered during the surveys provides baseline information to inform planning decisions and support City policy goals and processes. Survey findings also provide vast opportunities for public engagement and education in areas relating to curriculum development, heritage tourism, economic development, and marketing historic neighborhoods and properties. "

In addition, paragraph II of the Master Report correctly states why SurveyLA cannot be used to implement policy simply by being published. Any published results must be vetted by the community through outreach and clear notification to impacted homeowners.

"...Resources identified through SurveyLA are **not designated resources**. Designation by the City of Los Angeles and nominations to the California or National Registers are separate processes which include property **owner notification and public hearings....**"

Staff Recommendation

SurveyLA is considered by many to be an admirable first step research document, however Staff recommends that LUPC and the VNC Board find that there has been and continues to be significant negative community impacts on Venice Stakeholders related to the City of Los Angeles' questionable interpretation of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) as it relates to the publishing of SurveyLA reports. Negative impacts include but are not limited to, loss of property value, significant delays in the permitting process for single family homes of ordinary longtime residents and being required to hire onerously expensive land use/historic consultants and attorneys. Staff doubts that the information provided in the reconnaissance level SurveyLA is sufficient to justify the extra burden placed upon property owners and developers. Staff has found the outreach from the City regarding the potential for these negative impacts prior to publication of the reports was minimal if not done at all, and urges the passing of the recommended motion below.

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Community Outreach

During the Summer of 2016, LUPC staff were contacted by numerous homeowners complaining of an arduous, lengthy, and unpredictable approval process for properties labeled as "contributing structures" or even just located within "proposed historic districts". LUPC staff requested an outreach presentation on 10/13/2016 from Ken Bernstein, head of the Dept of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources. After the presentation, it was apparent most, if not all of the residents had never heard an explanation of the City's CEQA policy in regards to SurveyLA until that meeting. If the City wishes to continue its current policy, it must embark on an intensive outreach effort including community meetings, and mailings to all households identified in SurveyLA. Any final policy should be vetted by the community and be considered by the VNC Board.

Conclusion

SurveyLA was intended as a research document to aid the City and its citizens in crafting new policies, community plans and identifying **truly** historic resources. This is a long, complex, subjective process. It requires significant community outreach be done, and input be received from stakeholders so that everyone clearly understands the impact. In the absence of adequate outreach, the time and cost burdens being placed on unsophisticated, ordinary homeowners is unwarranted.

Recommended Motion

LUPC recommends that the VNC Board demand that the City of Los Angeles adopt the following policy:

1. The results of SurveyLA do not constitute fair argument of substantial evidence of a potential significant impact to historic resources under CEQA or otherwise. This should be noted on all published documents including Zoning Information Bulletins available on ZIMAS.
2. SurveyLA is a planning tool only that may be used when updating community plans, specific plans and coastal plans; it should not be used on an individual case-by-case basis
3. The burden is on the City to prove substantial evidence of a potential significant impact to historic resources on a case-by-case basis
4. No clearances related to SurveyLA shall be required on discretionary or non-discretionary permits unless the City proves substantial evidence exists above and beyond information in SurveyLA

The VNC Board demands that the City of Los Angeles adopt the following policy:

1. The results of SurveyLA do not constitute fair argument of substantial evidence of a potential significant impact to historic resources under CEQA or otherwise. This should be noted on all published documents including Zoning Information Bulletins available on ZIMAS.
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3. The burden is on the City to prove substantial evidence of a potential significant impact to historic resources on a case-by-case basis
4. No clearances related to SurveyLA shall be required on discretionary or non-discretionary permits unless the City proves substantial evidence exists above and beyond information in SurveyLA