

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council

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Date of NC Board Action: 05/14/2013

Type of NC Board Action: Against Proposal

Impact Information

Date: 05/28/2013

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 13-0046

Agenda Date: 05/28/2013

Item Number: 5

Brief Summary: The proposal would create a super-large Department which would have difficulty coordinating the enforcement functions by Building and Safety staff for conditional use agreements which the Dept. of City Planning has issued. Also, there has not been adequate review of this proposal by Neighborhood Councils and City residents.

Additional Information

Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council Board Meeting

135th Street Auditorium, 801 W. 135th Street

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

Present: Delores Allmond (Chairperson), Pamela Thornton (Vice Chairperson), Rosalie Preston (Recording Secretary), Neodros Bridgeforth (Corresponding Secretary), Joan Jacobs (Treasurer), Ramon Montoya (District 1), Adrian Valenzuela (District 2), Rey Paduani (District 3), Betty Hawkins (District 4), Llewyn Fowlkes (District 5), Rosario Rico (District 7 Representative), Mary Hinton (District 8), Deborah Lee (Community Organization Representative), Richard Lee (Youth Representative), Donald Cook (Outreach Representative), and Gloria Christmas (At-Large Representative)

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. by Chairperson Pamela Thornton

1) Public Comment: There were no public comments.

2) Approval of the April 9, 2013, Board minutes: It was moved by Richard Lee, seconded by Gloria Christmas, and passed 13-0 to approve the April 9 Board minutes as submitted.

(Delores Allmond entered the meeting at 9:14 p.m.)

3) Treasurer's report: Due to the delayed arrival of Treasurer Joan Jacobs, Recording Secretary Rosalie Preston gave the Treasurer's Report. Page 1 was the U.S. Bank statement for April 22 showing twelve p-card expenditures. Pages 2a and 2b showed the 2012-2013 expenditures as of May 13, totaling \$35,602. The DONE Google docs listing of demand warrant and auto-deduction status seems to show all HGNNC expenditures except those for Ricoh. Board members wondered if Ricoh can be contacted to send account status reports directly to HGNNC. It was moved by Ramon Montoya, seconded by Neodros Bridgeforth, and passed 14-0 to approve the Treasurer's report.

(Deborah Lee recused herself from the meeting at 7:30 p.m.)

3a. Eugenia Ramirez, member of the Volunteers for Southeast LAPD, asked the Board to consider a Neighborhood Purposes grant to support the purchase of school supplies which will be given away to those in elementary through high school who attend National Night Out at Southeast LAPD Station on Tues. August 6. The supplies would include pencils, notebooks, and binders. Similar support will be requested from Watts Neighborhood Council and Southeast Empowerment Neighborhood Council, as well as other groups. Board members asked how the event will be advertised and which children and young people were likely to participate. It was moved by Llewyn Fowlkes, seconded by Richard Lee, and passed 12-1-0 to support the request for a Neighborhood Purposes Grant of \$1,065 to purchase school supplies to support National Night Out at Southeast Station on Tues. August 6. The HGNNC will also have a booth at this event.

(Deborah Lee returned to the meeting at 7:43 p.m.),

3b. Since the HGNNC should have a small amount of 2012-2013 City funding left before June 30, it was moved by Neodros Bridgeforth, seconded by Gloria Christmas, and passed 13-1-0 to approve \$500 to support the Sat. September 28 Congress of Neighborhoods at City Hall.

(Joan Jacobs entered the meeting at 7:53 p.m.)

4) Position on review of proposed changes to Neighborhood Council funding with requirement for additional Board training and Ethics Training: The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment will be moving to a new method of funding the 95 Neighborhood Councils as of July 1 and is seeking comment on the proposal. The draft version was handed out and Rosalie commented on key changes and their possible ramifications for being able to carry out Neighborhood Council functions in an efficient manner without an undue burden on the Board. Of particular concern was whether there would be a debit card to replace the current credit or p-card and the amount of money which would be allocated for debit and electronic checking each month, as well as the necessity for bringing original receipts to each Board meeting. In light of the types of expenditures which the HGNNC made during April 2013, it was recommended that the limit on individual expenditures for the debit card be as high as possible. Neodros Bridgeforth moved, Donald Cook seconded, and it was passed 15-0-0 to support a letter to DONE reflecting the Boards suggestions for the new funding program.

5) Position on proposal to combine L.A. City Planning Dept. with Building and Safety Dept.:

Neighborhood Councils only received notice of this planned combining of the two Departments about six weeks ago. No one from the HGNNC was able to go to the April 13 PlanCheck meeting when this was discussed. Diana Nave of the Northwest San Pedro NC did go and said the planned combination would strengthen enforcement of conditional use approvals which the Planning Department makes and improve communication between the two elements. Rosalie had skimmed over the report posted on the Planning Department's website and thought that the details provided in that report were rather vague. District 5 stakeholder Lu Watson expressed concern that the two existing Departments are both large ones and that when an extremely large Department is created, it is hard to have accountability and efficiency. It was moved by Ramon Montoya, seconded by Joan Jacobs, and passed 15-0-0 to support writing a letter expressing the need for maintaining the current protections in regards to development projects which the Dept. of City Planning currently provides, the importance of having strong oversight for developments in order to safeguard the rights of current residents and for maintaining the quality of life of City residents, and great concern for how the proposal is being rushed through the approval process without time or opportunity for adequate input by residents.

6) Planning details for Sat. June 15 Board training, including refreshments: The Board training by Councils4Councils is being held on Sat. June 15. Board members expressed a preference for having the training at a location other than the Harbor Gateway Community Center. Donald Cook offered the Rhema Church Fellowship Hall, 11180 S. Avalon Blvd. in District 8. It was moved by Llewyn Fowlkes, seconded by Rey Paduani, and passed 15-0-0 to spend up to \$100 for refreshments for this training to which stakeholders will be invited.

7) Discussion of a possible "Movie in the Park" event for August: United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council supports a Movies in the Park series which Councilman Herb Wesson sponsors each summer and the cities of Inglewood and Torrance offer such programs. There are a number of costs involved, including the rental of the pop up inflatable screen, movie screening rights, and popcorn, hotdogs, and beverages, plus advertising to stakeholders. It was moved by Richard Lee, seconded by Llewyn Fowlkes, and passed 15-0-0 to support moving forward with this event. The Outreach Committee will set a meeting to work out further details.

8) Update on HGNNC plans and events (clean up days in Districts 4 and 8; Sat. May 11 Mayoral Candidates' Forum; possible Movie in the Park during the summer; possible certified Farmers' Market in District 8; and National Night Out on August 6): Betty Hawkins reported on a very successful clean up day in District 4 on Sat. May 11 with all three large bins provided by the City being filled to overflowing. The Dept. of Sanitation worked very closely with the 135th Street Neighborhood Watch on this event while the Conservation Corps. provided fewer staff than usual this year but managed to remove all of the illegally posted signs off fences and poles throughout the neighborhood. Mary Hinton said that she had realized that Sat. May 25 fell during the Memorial Day weekend and so the District 8 clean up will be postponed until the fall, probably September. Rosario Rico reported that the Sat. May 11 Mayoral Candidates' Forum sponsored by SLAANC went well with over 200 in attendance and Rosario ending up as one of the four Neighborhood Council panelists. HGNNC provided water, cups, and forks as well as the translation equipment. In the end, only candidates Eric Garcetti and Mike Feuer participated. Donald Cook said that the Rhema Church is continuing to work on sponsoring a weekly Saturday morning Farmers' Market at their church parking lot in District 8. Rey Paduani volunteered to be the coordinator for HGNNC participation in the Tues. August 6 National Night Out at Southeast Station.

9) Report on Harbor Alliance meeting of May 1: Rosalie reported that topics covered were how to deal with those who scavenge recyclables (David Hackney – Bureau of Sanitation), the proposed LAUSD budget (Freddie Quintana, Policy – Dr. Vladovic's office), the Presidents' meeting with Council District 15 on April 29, a DONE report by Grayce Liu, and the proposed new language on the factual basis stakeholder.

10) Announcements: Richard Lee reported that he will follow up with District 7 stakeholder Kevin Collins who attended the April 23 General Membership meeting on possible afterschool programs provided by Collins' non-profit Central City Human Services.

Richard also noted that he could not attend the April 23 General Membership meeting due to being in the hospital after surgery. He thanked his wife Deborah Lee for providing exemplary support to him after his surgery and said that now he is recovered he wants to move forward on providing more programs for HGNNC youth.

Ramon Montoya reported that the Merit Tract neighborhood in District 1 held a neighborhood watch meeting that brought out over 60 residents. Senior Lead Officer Hugo Valdez attended and also a new resident Thay Chou talked about using a private social network, , to keep up with neighborhood incidents and news. Thay is also a licensed Ham radio operator.

Llewyn Fowlkes announced that on Sat. May 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Athens on the Hill would be having the first phase of a clean up project of the Laconia Place median in the 600 block of Laconia Place. In July, new plantings will take place and Athens on the Hill hopes to ask for funding for this from the HGNNC.

Rosario Rico announced a community walk and resource fair at Ted Watkins Park on Sat. May 18. One organization that will be present will help those offering day care from their homes become licensed.

The retirement party for Principal Antonio Camacho of the 135th Street School will be held on Thurs. June 20 at 5 p.m. at Tamayo's Restaurant, 5300 E. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90022. Tickets are \$50 per person and will help fund the AMAE Scholarship in the name of Sal Castro.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes taken by Rosalie Preston, Recording Secretary

Delores Allmond - Chairperson
Pamela Thornton - Vice Chairperson
Rosalie Preston - Recording Secretary
Neodros Bridgeforth – Corres. Secretary
Joan Jacobs - Treasurer
Ramon Montoya - District 1 Rep.
Adrian Valenzuela - District 2 Rep.
Reynaldo Paduani - District 3 Rep.
Betty Hawkins - District 4 Representative



Harbor Gateway North
Neighborhood Council

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Llewyn Fowlkes - District 5 Rep.
Marvin Bell - District 6 Rep.
Rosario Rico - District 7 Rep.
Mary Hinton - District 8 Rep.
Deborah Lee – Community Org. Rep.
Richard Lee - Youth Representative
Donald Cook – At-Large Rep.
Gloria Christmas - At-Large Rep.

May 24, 2013

Councilman Joe Buscaino
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: Council File 13-0046 Realignment of City Departments

Dear Councilman Buscaino:

On May 14, 2013, our Board voted 12-0-0 to oppose the proposal to combine the Planning Department and the Building and Safety Department (CF 13-0046). While there does need to be better coordination between the two Departments in some areas, a combining of the Departments would not be the best solution. The consolidation would create one huge Department and we all know that this often means more bureaucracy and less ability for various sections of such a large Department to work together.

We are also concerned about the haste which with this proposal has come about, thus not allowing for proper review and input from City residents. We are very concerned that the awareness by and oversight from residents in regards to the planning process which we currently have would be weakened, thereby giving large developers greater ability to rush through projects without adequate review. Strong oversight of new developments must be maintained so that residents have a voice in their quality of life.

Sincerely,

Neodros Bridgeforth
Neodros Bridgeforth, Corresponding Secretary
Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council

cc: Alison Becker, Economic Development and Planning Director – Council District 15
Daisy Ybarra, Field Deputy – Council District 15
Michael LoGrande, Director– Department of City Planning
Robert “Bud” Ovrom, General Manager – Department of Building and Safety