



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, August 28, 2018
Approved September 25, 2018

I. WELCOMING REMARKS

a. Call to order (Caroline Labiner Moser)

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, August 28, 2018, at Marlborough School, Collins Room – D200, 250 S. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90004. Chairwoman Caroline Moser called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

b. Roll Call (secretary)

Philip Farha called the roll. Eight of the 12 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Rory Cunningham, Philip Farha, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Caroline Moser (Chair) and Cathy Roberts. Four Committee Members were absent Patricia Carroll, Joseph Hoffman, Max Kirkham (Secretary) and James Wolf. Julie Stromberg no longer is on the Committee. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) was 51% of the 12 filled Committee Seats, or seven Members, so the Committee could take such votes. [To apply to become a Member, see www.GreaterWilshire.org]. Also attended: approximately 62 Stakeholders and guests.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Stakeholder Jeff Carpenter reported that four old-growth trees were illegally cut down recently by homeowners. He wanted the City Attorney to develop penalties and enforcement. Mr. Gresham has “pre-warned” the L.A. City Building and Safety Dept. of homeowner intentions to cut down trees; the trees still got cut down. Mr. Carpenter believed there are problems with funding, enforcement, prosecution and restitution. He added that “these were City trees in the public right-of-way.” Rob Fisher, Deputy for L.A. City District Four Councilman David Ryu (323-957-6415; Rob.Fisher@LACity.org; <http://CD4.LACity.org>), encouraged contacting him with information and offered help.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

a. Review and adoption of July 24, 2018 minutes.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its July 24, 2018 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED unanimously; zero opposed; zero abstained.

b. Review of Early Planning Report for possible future action items.

Copies were distributed of and the “08/28/18 JULY/AUGUST Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area” were reviewed. It was agreed to invite a representative(s) of the 639 N. Larchmont Blvd. [Café Gratitude; “CUB for the sale and dispensing of beer and

wine for on-site consumption in existing 3,085 sq. ft. restaurant with 52 indoor seats inclusive of 440 sq. ft. outdoor covered patio with 26 seats”] and 611 S. Manhattan Pl. [“construction of a new apartment complex (14 units)”] projects to present to the Committee. Ms. Roberts will research the 628 S. Orange Dr. project [“conversion of an existing garage and an addition thereto into an accessory dwelling unit.”]

IV. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

[The following sub-section first paragraphs are copied from the Agenda.]

- a. 250 S Wilton Place: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Fred Maidenberg) Proposing to create new 5-small lots for single family residential purposes. Each residence will have attached garages. VTT-77081- SL, ENV-2017-3703-CE.

[The project address is 250 North Wilton Place, not “250 S Wilton Place.”] Copies were distributed of a project document(s) and, from neighbor Greg Wittmann, of a letter and alleged “Municipal Code Violations for . . . 250 N. Wilton Place.” Mr. Maidenberg displayed a rendering and presented. Last week he met with the Ridgewood Wilton Neighborhood Association (RWNA), which supports the project. Designer Amit Apel also presented, saying they “changed the white bright stucco with wood sidings.” He indicated that there have not been any Plan Check comments from the City. Mr. Wittmann stated that “it’s . . . an official City Historic District.” He questioned what information the applicant provided to the Building and Safety Dept; he claimed that Application Attachment information conflicted with previous acts of and documents provided by the developer. He believed that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is needed, especially because the building is a historic structure. Liz Gabor, President. St. Andrews Street Association, said “there was no outreach” regarding the project; she requested a traffic study and was concerned about traffic safety and circulation. Long-time neighbor and former RWNA Board Member Marita Geraghy believed that the developer did “permit-splitting.” She said the home “was a contributing structure in that Historic District.” She noted that that “microcosm” is “solidly R-1”-zoned, without any R-3. She wanted “the scale and the setback” to be the same as the surrounding structures.

Architect Jim Auld displayed a site plan and said “there’re standards” for the Historic District” and that the developer “didn’t follow the spirit of the design standards . . . of the Small Lot Ordinance.” Architect Susan O’Connell displayed photos and said “there is nothing at all about that architecture that draws upon where we live . . . the 45-foot [height] is so out-of-character . . . it is completely out of scale.” She described details that are not incorporated that would be compatible with “historic dwelling units.” Long-time resident and Historic District co-founder Virginia Kazor encouraged having monetary fines and not issuing permits to law breakers. Long-time resident Timothy Gogan said “if this was an apartment . . . you’d have to have underground parking . . . it’s going to be \$995,000 per unit . . . there’s no elevators . . . it’s discriminating to seniors . . . where are the construction people going to park . . . if this goes to AirBNB units, you’ll have 35-40 people there . . . this is the first house that’s been torn down since the 50’s.” Resident Gregory Anderson believed “it’s colossally ugly . . . the City can still review this project . . . under any other authority” than an EIR. Nearby resident Rick Rhodes cited heavy traffic in the area and noted that traffic apps have caused much cut-through traffic; “it is already a nightmare.”

Mr. Gresham stated that “it’s the lawyer’s responsibility to do research . . . and it’s the sellers responsibility” to reveal relevant information. He believed that “the traffic in the area was never properly research.” Mr. Farha believed that the developer “was shift with the rules.” Mr. Herman believed that “we should focus on the project itself.” Ms. Roberts

noted that “we have to find a way forward . . . it’s an empty lot . . . the scale is an issue . . . the setback is an issue . . . the traffic is a huge issue.” Mr. Genewick believed that “it’s completely out-of-character . . . [and] should not be built.” Mr. Cunningham noted that the developer earlier declined to appear before the Committee [then later appeared]. Ms. Moser was “dissatisfied” with the design and noted that the architects did not do much to comply with the Committee’s design recommendations.

MOTION (by Mr. Cunningham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the following resolution:

Whereas, after careful consideration of the circumstances leading to the demolition of the historic home at 250 N. Wilton Place, the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council finds credible evidence that the applicant, Mr. Roni Efron, knowingly made false statements to the Department of Building and Safety to improperly obtain a demolition permit;

Whereas, regardless of any error by the Department of Building and Safety, the applicant’s false statements circumvented proper environmental review to the Planning Department which would have prevent issuance of a demolition permit without CEQA review; and

Whereas, demolitions of historic structures conducted in bad faith are a gross breach of community standards, threaten the integrity of historic structures and districts across the City, and warrant severe punitive measures to deter such conduct in the future;

Therefore, the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council recommends:

1. That the Department of City Planning require an Environmental Impact Report disclosing and analyzing the impacts of demolishing an historic resource, and analyze an alternative considering development of a structure of comparable height, scale, massing and design as the demolished structure; and
2. That Councilmember Ryu present a motion to City Council instructing the City Attorney to investigate possible criminal violation of LAMC 91.106.4.4.2 by the applicant, owner of other parties in knowingly making false material statements to the Department of Building and Safety.

MOTION FAILED for lack of a second.

MOTION (by Mr. Herman, seconded by Ms. Roberts): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee will work with the GWNC Board to craft a letter to the City stating the position of the Board regarding the project at 250 N. Wilton Place, adding more detail to the previous opposition.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote; zero opposed; zero abstained.

- b. 985-991 3rd Avenue: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Laszlo Faerstain, Michael Ko, Irina Tudorache) Demolition of an existing SFD for new construction, use and maintenance of 6 story 51 unit apartments with 11 units set aside for low income. Requested entitlement: Pursuant to LAMC 12.22.a31, applicant requests approval for the construction of a tier 2 TOC development. A 6-story and 51 unit apartment building with 11 units set aside as low income. Utilizing TOC base incentives: 1. Far 2. Density 3.

Parking reduction and two additional incentives: 1. Yard reduction to RAS 3 standards 2. Tier 2 Transitional Height Option. DIR-2018-2234-TOC

Mr. Faerstain presented and said “nothing changed since the last meeting.” He said they outreached to the [Wilshire Park] Association (WPA), which is concerned about the design. He stated that “the plans are not fully developed yet.” They are required to provide 34 parking spaces but are providing 68 spaces. He passed around a site plan and elevation. Neighbor Robert Henry said “it’s so profoundly out-of-scale with the neighborhood.” Linda Henry said “it will destroy the whole neighborhood.” Neighbor Kat Becher said “six stories is too large and too dense for this neighborhood . . . this is going to kill our HPOZ . . . it’s also going to affect property value.” Gary Ichihara, WPA Zoning & Land Use Chair, believed that the developer was not forthcoming with project information and noted that the architect has not talked with the WPA. Mr. Faerstain said that the project “conforms to the guidelines of the City” while acknowledging that “it’s R-1 to the north.” Ms. Moser encouraged Mr. Faerstain to work with the architect and neighbors. No Motion was made or vote taken.

- c. 3323 W. Olympic Blvd. & 975-987 S. Manhattan Pl.: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Kevin Reed and Dominic Hong) 7-story residential building w/ 95 apartments, 2 levels of subterranean parking w/ 162 parking stalls. Total gross building square footage = 123,445 sq. ft. Building height 95’ CPC-2018-656- DB-SPR, ENV-2018-657-EAF. Density Bonus Review. The Manhattan Project I

Mr. Reed described working with CD4; the height has been reduced by one story, so “the shade-shadow’s a little lower.” He will re-present to the Committee. No Motion was made or vote taken.

- d. 3323 W. Olympic Blvd & 970-996 S. Manhattan Place: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Kevin Reed and Dominic Hong) 7-story mixed use building w/114 apartments and 3,550 sq. ft. of retail (hours of operation 9am to 9 pm) fronting Olympic Blvd., with 2 levels of subterranean parking w/ 216 parking stalls. Total gross building square footage = 159,186 sq. ft. Building height 95’ CPC-2018-617-DBSPR, ENV-2018-618-EAF. Density Bonus Site Plan Review. The Manhattan Project II.

See above Item #IV. c.

V. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

- a. 5784 W Melrose Ave: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Adan Madrid) 7-11 Convenience Store

Copies were distributed of a project document(s). Ms. Gilman communicated with 7-Eleven representative Mr. Madrid. He said they would lease the former Radio Shack site and need to apply for a CUP “for 24 hours” operation. He promised that “we’ll maintain maximum visibility on the storefront.” They have the same parking requirement as the Radio Shack had: one space per 250 square feet. Ms. Moser recommended for Mr. Madrid to contact the 7-Eleven at Wilshire and Wilton regarding how they handle issues. Mr. Madrid indicated they would have “no alcohol . . . no alcoholic beverages whatsoever.” Ms. Moser recommended for Mr. Madrid to contact the Hancock Park and Larchmont Village Neighborhood Associations.

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Mr. Farha): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the CUP application for a 7-Eleven Convenience Store at 5784 W. Melrose Ave. as presented, expecting that the 7-Eleven representative will meet with the Larchmont Village and Hancock Park Neighborhood Associations.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote; zero opposed; zero abstained.

- b. 644 Irving Boulevard/4155 Wilshire Boulevard: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Pastor Jung Oh Kim, Brian Chong): Illegal use of vacant lot

Pastor Kim said that, until a year ago, the lot was “used by movie companies to park the large trucks.” Ms. Moser explained that “it’s never been legal to use as a parking lot.” Pastor Kim replied that “we’ve not been aware of that.” Ms. Moser noted that “since 2003 we’ve noted to the owners that it’s not a legal use.” Neighbor Patty Hill said the lot “occupies the whole block . . . everything that’s on it is illegal . . . curb cuts were made . . . illegally . . . we want those curb cuts restored . . . the fencing is not permitted . . . it’s in dilapidated condition”; she described accumulated trash, including “human waste . . . dirty needles,” with curb cuts “facing Bronson” and one on Irving. Ms. Moser noted that “it’s subject to the Park Mile” Specific Plan. Pastor Kim said “I’ll make sure we’ll communicate.”

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Mr. Herman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the project at 644 Irving Blvd./4155 Wilshire Blvd.; and request that curb cuts on Irving and on Bronson be restored to their original conditions; the driveways removed; and that the property be used in accordance with Building and Zoning Codes.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote; zero opposed; zero abstained.

- c. 845 S. St Andrews Place: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Sa Har Khazani) Demolish a vacant school and Construct a 6-story 25-unit apartment building. TOC DIR-2018-3524-TOC, ENV-2018-3525-EAF.

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the project at 845 S. St Andrews Pl. because the applicant did not appear before the Committee.

MOTION PASSED unanimously by a hand vote; zero opposed; zero abstained.

- d. 5123 W. Clinton Street: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Gavin McKiernan) Present use: Duplex. One Lot Subdivision into two Condominiums. Project is already under construction. AA-2018-2625-PMLACN, ENV-2018-2626-CE

Copies were distributed of a project document(s). Mr. McKiernan described the property and that “both have two interior car spaces and one on the driveway . . . built fully within the Code . . . we don’t even have a Hearing date yet.” There was discussion of what the Committee could or should do.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board not oppose the project at 5123 W. Clinton St,

MOTION FAILED for lack of a second.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha, seconded by Mr. Gresham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the project at 5123 W. Clinton St, as presented.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote; zero opposed; one abstained (the GWNC counts abstentions as neither “yes” votes nor “no” votes) (Genewick).

- e. 4749 N. Elmwood Ave: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Don Tolentino) Notice of Proposed Demolition per LAMC effective January 10, 2018 that requires that the LADBS notify, by mail, the Council District Office of the site regarding the Proposed Demolition of a building or structure. Demolition Preinspection Application No. 18019-10000-03932

Copies were distributed of a project document(s). No presenter was present. No Motion was made or vote taken.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS (Including Discussion and Possible Action)

- a. Possible agenda items for upcoming meeting:

Ms. Moser noted that the following items were presented for information only. No action was requested or required at this time:

- i. 236 Larchmont Boulevard, The Jane Club: (Discussion and Possible Action) (Jennifer and John Rissier, Dominique Gallotta)

It was reported that The Jane Club is still at that address.

Mr. Cunningham showed photos of the eight-unit Small Lot Subdivision at 117 N. Manhattan Pl.; he believed they show a very different design than what was originally proposed and presented to the Committee. Mr. Fisher said “I’ll look into what happened.”

- b. Next meeting, September 25, 2018 at 6:30 pm., Marlborough School, 250 S. Rossmore Avenue, Rm. D- 200, Los Angeles, CA 90004
The above was noted.

VII. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests or Motions at this time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Moser declared the Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer

The first paragraph of some Items, Motions/Resolutions and other wording may have been copied from the Agenda. Edited by GWNC. The GWNC Minutes page is <http://greaterwilshire.org/land-use-committee-agendas-minutes>.