



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee
June 23, 2015
MINUTES
Approved by the Committee 11/24/15

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

A. Call to order (James Wolf)

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, June 23, 2015, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:46 p.m.

B. Roll call (Barbara Savage)

Secretary Barbara Savage called the roll. Ten of the 16 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Patricia Carroll, Ann Eggleston, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, Joseph Hoffman, John Kaliski, Patty Lombard, Barbara Savage, Greg Wittmann and James Wolf. All Committee Members were eligible to vote due to having current Ethics Training. Six Committee Members were absent: Alan Bernstein, John Gresham, Dick Herman, Jeff McManus, Caroline Moser and Julie Stromberg. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is nine, so the Committee could take such votes. Also attending: 28 Stakeholders and guests.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Stakeholder Michelle Owen of the La Brea-Hancock Homeowners Association was concerned that a next-door neighbor was building a property-line wall, severely limiting access to her own driveway; she wants help opposing the wall.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

A. Review and adoption of May 26, 2015 Minutes

MOTION (by Ms. Gilman, seconded by Ms. Eggleston): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its May 26, 2015 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no opposition.

B. Review of Early Notification Report for possible future agenda items

Copies were distributed and reviewed of the latest “Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area.” GWNC Administrative Consultant Elizabeth Fuller noted the Mills Act property valuation limit of \$1.5 million; an application can be made for an exemption.

4. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

- A. Update, discussion and possible action on an application to install an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility atop an apartment building at 407 S. Gramercy (Mike Mounphiphak)

Presentation of revisions since first presentation at May LUC meeting.

Copies were distributed of the Conditional Use Permit Application. Mr. Mounphiphak distributed renderings and described the project. He said they are “trying to offload” four nearby facilities to “improve reception . . . the screening is going to match how the windows look on the existing building.” He explained that the construction drawings “would provide more details” than current materials. There was discussion of optimal uses of the facility. Mr. Mounphiphak will re-present after he receives more information.

MOTION (by Ms. Lombard, seconded by Ms. Eggleston): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support as presented the application to install an unmanned wireless telecommunications facility atop an apartment building at 407 S. Gramercy with the condition that the applicant will return and verify the details as presented.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no opposition.

- B. Update, discussion and possible action on plans to build 22 townhouses over subterranean parking at 612 S. Norton and adjacent condominiums at 4055 Wilshire Blvd. (Kay Lee)
Applicants have been working with Park Mile Design Review Board on revisions to plans previously presented.

Christopher Pak, Architect, and Shane Boland presented slides. There would be around 42,000 square feet of “21 townhome units along Norton” and around 41,000 square feet of “54 units along Wilshire.” An existing building would be demolished and replaced. They said the project is “within height limitations of the Park Mile Specific Plan.” The condos have one subterranean level of parking; the townhomes each have two spaces. A gym is included, and a community room available to the community. They again will present to the Design Review Board, which they said gave preliminary approval to the project’s “direction” pending more information. Mr. Kaliski commented that the rounded glass façade at Wilshire and Norton was “out of character with the surrounding neighborhood.” He would like “breaking” the “massing down” of the townhomes. Mr. Pak said they will consider splitting the rows of townhomes with driveways. No Motion was made or vote taken.

5. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

- A. Application for home remodel (not teardown) at 533 N Plymouth (Josh Brooks)

Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on behalf of long-time resident told by city that his home remodel plans (not a teardown) cannot be approved because of new ICO.

Elaine and Josh Brooks, Larchmont Village residents, presented. They described their intentions and communications with various City and County officials, during which they said they were given “no mention of an ICO” (Interim Control Ordinance). They already made financial commitments and are appealing the ICO and filed a grievance. They said “we have letters of support from our neighbors . . . we share the concern about Mansionization . . . it’s all to scale.” The home currently is 1,700 square feet; it would be 3,300 square feet and they are “building up . . . it would be the same footprint.” Mr. Brooks said a “full set of plans” is available to view. Mr. Kaliski read aloud “hardship exemption” wording from the City Ordinance. There was extensive discussion of what could be done and project details. Ms. Savage indicated she would support the project because the Brooks’ are residents, as opposed to developers who do not live in the area.

MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Ms. Lombard): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the application for a home remodel (not teardown) at 533 N Plymouth.

Committee Member Barbara Savage left at this time, making nine Committee Members present (the Committee quorum is nine).

AMENDMENT to the MOTION (by Mr. Genewick, seconded by Ms. Lombard): to add to the above Motion the words “with the condition that the applicant implement use of the wood and batten material as proposed on the front façade.”

AMENDMENT to the MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no opposition.

AMENDED MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with no opposition.

Committee Member Karen Gilman left at this time, making eight Members present, one short of the Committee quorum of nine.

B. Application for a CUB to serve a full line of alcoholic beverages for a new restaurant at 736 S. La Brea/5200 Wilshire Blvd. (Order Fire, in the Essex Wilshire-La Brea development) (Wes Zelio) Initial presentation, discussion and possible action. Development has three full line liquor licenses in place, each one needs specific approval for restaurants to open. Also won the lottery for a Type 47 full line liquor license from ABC. Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association voted on 6/15 to support the application, with a few requested conditions regarding parking and the outdoor patio.

Mr. Zelio said “this is an initial introduction.” The restaurant would be in the BRE building across from Firestone. It would have “global” food from many countries “sustainably sourced” including the alcohol. He said “it’s a blanket CUB . . . about 3,500 square feet” and an “independent” restaurant that would serve food until 1:00 a.m. Ms.

Eggleston reported that the applicant agreed to noise-limiting measures including signage, “smaller parties” and “everybody out” by 2:00 a.m. There would only be acoustic music, not amplified. Ms. Fuller noted that the restaurant would have 35 parking spaces for up to 15 employees and also customers. She indicated that neighbors want the restaurant to have valet parking and an “outdoor patio limit of 12” customers, and that dumpsters be placed well inside the property line to minimize noise.

A straw poll of the Committee was taken. The Committee agreed to recommend that the GWNC Board support Order Fire’s application for a CUB to serve a full line of alcoholic beverages for a new restaurant at 736 S. La Brea/5200 Wilshire Blvd. in the Essex Wilshire-La Brea development, including the issues raised by the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association as follows: 1) the restaurant will post signs discouraging patrons from parking on neighborhood streets (e.g. "Please respect our neighbors and park in the parking structure or use our valet parking service."); 2) the restaurant will pursue its proposed agreement with the Firestone facility across the street to rent space for valet parking; 3) valet fees will be held to a maximum of \$5, if possible; and 4) parties in the outdoor patio space be limited to a maximum of 12 people.

C. Application for 24-hour operation and a CUB for beer and wine sales at a new 7-Eleven store at 5273 W. Olympic Blvd. (Tara Devine)

Initial presentation, discussion and possible action. Applicant has signed a lease for the property, which would allow a by-right store with no alcohol sales and hours from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Requesting additional privileges of 24-hour operations and a CUB for sales of beer and wine. In negotiations with Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, which originally opposed the requests, applicant has revised the plans and is now offering significant renovations to the property and a list of volunteered conditions for the CUP.

Ms. Devine displayed site plans and renderings and presented. The 7-Eleven would be at the northeast corner of Olympic and La Brea where there “was a 7-Eleven a long time ago.” She said that they have received and implemented resident’s recommendations. There would be “no change to the existing pole sign”; she described limited signage. Beer and wine sales would be from 11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. There would be “a minimum of five security cameras” and “conditions with regard to daily sweeping and cleaning of the lot . . . we’re increasing the landscaping area.” Mr. Kaliski was concerned that the store would not be well-managed, including tolerating loitering. Ms. Eggleston noted that conditions will be in the contract and that the SSNA will be contracted to meet twice yearly with store management regarding conditions compliance. Ms. Fuller said that the SSNA “has serious concerns . . . we’ve conditioned our support as much as we” can. Ms. Devine noted that “the conditions of approval can go into the Franchisee Agreement.”

Committee Member Mike Genewick left at this time, making seven Members present, two short of the Committee quorum of nine.

Ms. Devine continued that “we’ll have exterior cameras at the front and at the trash enclosure.” There was discussion of the importance of liquor sales to the store. No Motion was made or vote taken.

D. Use of sign postings to discourage home sales to developers in the South Hollywood neighborhood.

Initial presentation, discussion and possible action. The South Hollywood Neighborhood Association has been posting signs to discourage neighborhood homeowners from selling homes to developers of small lot subdivisions, pending efforts to secure a zoning overlay that would limit or prohibit such developments. Some neighbors, however, object to the use of the signs and claim that they artificially depress sale prices and disadvantage homeowners.

Sallie Higgins displayed an example of the “Stop Small Lot Subdivisions” signs that have been posted at some homes. She described the 806 Las Palmas property and plans. She believed that some residents have “sneaked out” of the neighborhood. Stakeholder Don Hunt described work with officials regarding the ICO and Small Lot Subdivision issues. They are “waiting” for City legislation to support their position. They said “neighbors are being inundated with offers to buy” and signs only are posted on private property with owners’ consent. Stakeholders expressed that such projects are “ugly” and too big for the approximately 50 feet by 150 feet lots. Mr. Wolf explained that “it’s not our charter” to advise regarding this issue. No Motion was made or vote taken.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS (including discussion and possible action items, if listed):

A. Transportation Committee Liaison Report (Stromberg)

Update on local transportation issues GWNC is monitoring.

Chair Ms. Stromberg was not present and there was no report.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Possible agenda items for upcoming meetings:

- Initial presentation and possible action on plans to build 6,000 square feet of retail space at 101 N. La Brea (Matthew Wister)
- Demolition of 9 single family residences and development of a 5-story, 88-unit apartment building at 501-543 N. Wilton (John Reed)
- Update on application for a tract map to allow construction of a new 8-unit condominium building at 800 S. Lorraine (Kamran Kazemi, Frank Toloui)
- Update on application to build a new 5-story, 44-unit condominium building at 836-850 S. Crenshaw (Camille Zeitouny)
- Application for a tract map for new condominiums at 850 N. Sycamore Ave. (Michael Gonzales)
- Application to demolish existing structures and build 169 apartments at 904-932 N. La Brea Ave. (Michael Gonzales)
- Application for a Change of Use to convert the old Scottish Rite Temple to a private, non-profit museum at 4357 W. Wilshire Blvd. (Michael Gruber)

Mr. Kaliski announced that, due to another commitment, he must resign from the Committee.

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

[This was the second Agenda Item #7.] There were no requests.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Levin

Minutes Writer

The first paragraph of some Items, Motions/Resolutions and other wording may have been directly copied from the Agenda. Edited by GWNC. The GWNC Minutes page is <http://www.greaterwilshire.org/site/site/?q=node/580>.