



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Transportation Committee Meeting January 28, 2019
MINUTES: Approved by the Committee on April 15, 2019

1. WELCOMING REMARKS:

A. Call to order

A duly noticed meeting of the Transportation Committee of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Monday, January 28, 2019, at

Marlborough School, Collins Room, 250 S. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90004. Chairperson Conrad Starr called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Mr. Starr called the roll. Three of the four Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Jeffry Carpenter, Julie Stromberg, and Mr. Starr (Chair). Member Justin Urcis was absent. The GWNC Transportation Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) was 51% of 4 Committee Seats, or three, so the Committee could take such votes. Also in attendance were Rob Fisher from CD4 and Bhuvan Bajaj from LADOT. There were 30 additional attendees to the meeting. GWNC stakeholders in attendance were from Areas 2 (Mr. Carpenter), 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 (Mr. Starr), 14, and 15 (Ms. Stromberg); and outside guests.

C. Welcome.

Mr. Starr welcomed the assembled group, noting that speaker cards were not available and asking attendees to please note their desire to speak and that he would call upon them in order.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Stakeholder Jerry Bowen reported that he and Val Bowen reside at 221 S Van Ness, where it has become a “raceway” during the morning and evening commute hours. He also mentioned issues with construction-related vehicles being parked in the same location for up to 6 days; he has called Traffic Control, and they report a two-week backlog. Mr. Bowen said they have towed cars when his driveway was blocked. He expressed that more parking control is needed, including during the overnight hours. He noted that he plans to petition for a preferential parking district. Ms. Stromberg noted that there is only one person at LADOT who oversees parking for all of Los Angeles, and that areas of high crime are prioritized. Stakeholder Cindy Chvatal-Keane noted that there is currently a moratorium within the City on new Preferential Parking Districts. Ms. Stromberg suggested working with Senior Lead Officer Joe Pelayo of LAPD Olympic Division.

Stakeholder Mary Rajswing reported that she and her neighbors have been trying for years to resolve the issue of signal light protocol at W 2nd Street and S Wilton Ave. She said they have been living with flashing yellow lights from 9pm to 6am for 8 months, to which she is opposed. She would also like to understand the threshold for moving violations.

Stakeholder Kimberly Klein, who works in Windsor Square, reports traffic attempting to proceed northbound on Plymouth through the intersection with W 3rd Street. Council District Four representative, Rob Fisher, confirmed that a right-turn-only restriction had been approved for northbound traffic at that intersection.

Stakeholder Bob Eisele raised the issue of W 6th Street between Highland Ave and La Brea Ave being in poor repair. He said he favors right-turn-only restrictions for both northbound and southbound traffic on Citrus Ave, Mansfield Ave, Orange Dr, and Sycamore Ave. He added that foliage covers stop signs and that a fence had been recently run over when a car ran off the road.

3. **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS** (Discussion and Action)

(This item was taken up after Item #4.A)

A. Review and Adoption of April 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

B. Review and Adoption of October 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Starr moved that the April 16, 2018 and October 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes be approved as submitted. Ms. Stromberg seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

C. Appointment of GWNC Transportation Committee Secretary.

No motion was made or vote taken.

4. **GUEST Panel Discussion: “Working with LADOT and the City Council Office for Traffic Solutions”**

Mr. Starr introduced Bhuvan Bajaj, Transportation Engineer, LA Department of Transportation, Hollywood-Wilshire District Operations; and Rob Fisher, Field Deputy/Community Planner for Council District Four (Councilmember David Ryu).

Mr. Bajaj described an online request system for LADOT, while referring to PowerPoint slides projected on the screen behind him.

He noted that his office, Hollywood Wilshire, is the busiest in the city, servicing Council Districts 4, 10, and 13.

During the informational presentation, he informed the gathered group how they can make requests through the myladot.lacity.org website.

He mentioned that some speed hump applications were denied where it might affect Fire Department response times.

He noted the Mayor’s Vision Zero initiative to reduce traffic fatalities, as well as the “Complete Streets” program to enhance the roadway for all users, not just motor vehicles, which has included protected bike lanes, floating bus platforms, and bus-only lanes.

He noted that recent capital improvements prioritize the pedestrian experience, bike lanes, and lighting.

Mr. Bajaj also noted what he described as “collateral damage” of some roadway reconfigurations, including cut-through traffic enabled by intelligent navigation systems like the Waze application.

He added that the program allowing handicapped residents to request designated handicapped parking through the painting blue of city curbs had been on hiatus for 9-10 years due to lawsuits but that it would soon be back in the form of a pilot program.

Mr. Bajaj noted that any traffic mitigation that is regulatory requires a full traffic engineering study, which relies on “manpower” and any already-available data. All fieldwork is done in-house, during the past 5-6 years, there have been multiple retirements of field staff and engineers. Currently the department is trying to increase its staffing levels.

He cited as an example of the staffing challenge faced by LADOT the single employee tasked with posting signs for the entire Western Yard, which covers from Western Ave to the Pacific Ocean, from Rodeo Rd to Mulholland Dr. He said there should soon be 5 new sign posters for the yard.

Mr. Bajaj went on to describe the other services that can be accessed by a separate website, ladot.lacity.org.

Mr. Fisher then described the Councilmember Ryu’s perspective on traffic mitigations: he said Ryu believes in the validity of anecdotal information coming out of communities, noting that the LAPD will provide safety alerts but that most of the time “it’s from residents.”

He noted the challenges of large numbers of drivers using apps to cross busy streets that lack signals and where drivers are not always paying attention. He said ride-sharing and dockless bikes and scooters can be part of the solution, but community input is important to evaluate these new forms of transportation.

He noted that there is currently no option to exclude certain neighborhoods from use by apps like Waze. He added that full street closures which restrict traffic to residents only are no longer allowed except for events and are temporary.

He also said that speed humps, designed to slow traffic to 15 miles per hour, are not always effective, but that speed feedback signs [and he showed an example from CD4] are a proven traffic slowing measure.

Mr. Fisher added that “bump-out curbs” and bollards can increase safety at intersections.

On the subject of turn restrictions, he noted that studies are required and that collision data must be supplied from LAPD police reports before they will be approved, even though community members will often have anecdotal evidence of multiple collisions at a single location. CD4 will request action based on community-generated reports, but that action may come in the form of increased enforcement of traffic laws rather than an engineering solution.

Mr. Starr invited Mitchell Jacoves, who was present, to introduce himself. Mr. Jacoves said he is the Chair of the Community-Police Advisory Board Traffic Committee, which meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7pm in the Wilshire Division Community Room. He said that committee is collecting data to assist police in their spot-enforcement efforts throughout Wilshire Division as a way to address safety issues from traffic violations.

Mr. Fisher also mentioned that “Center Line Striping” is sometimes unpopular in historic areas, but that it has a proven effect in reducing vehicle speeds by giving the impression of a narrower road, and that bike lanes have a similar effect.

Mr. Curtis Clark identified himself as a board member of the Olympic Park Neighborhood Council and expressed distrust of the facts as provided by the guest presenters, citing Vision Zero, and noting that bike-focused measures serve a miniscule portion of the overall users of the roads. [Mr. Clark was cut off by Committee Member Julie Stromberg on the basis of his decorum, at which time he departed the meeting.]

Another stakeholder noted that three acquaintances had been knocked down by riders on dockless scooters, and asked what can be done. Mr. Fisher replied it would be an enforcement issue in this case.

An attendee from N Cherokee Ave noted that his street is used as a “parking lot” by drivers accessing Melrose Ave to the north. He was told that Permit Parking would be a possible solution.

Ms. Stromberg asked how citizens can advocate for more personnel at LADOT. Mr. Bajaj said he recently knew of 30 job openings with only 18 applicants, so it’s not just a matter of funding but of qualified applicants. He said his personal challenge is currently project delivery, noting that all resources are currently going toward Vision Zero.

Stakeholder, Virginia Kazor, referred to the blinking light signal at N Wilton Pl which had been mentioned previously. The guests said that national and state standards had changed. Ms. Kazor said she’d been trying to collaborate with LADOT on a solution.

The guests also noted that stop sign guidelines had also changed, with funding no longer as much of a challenge as previously. A new stop sign might be approved in as short as 8 months.

Another stakeholder noted the difficulty in accessing the 300 and 400 blocks of N June St, noting the turn restrictions on McCadden and Las Palmas, and the not being able to turn left onto June when traveling westbound [note: on Melrose (?)]. She asked whether a signal might be installed to address the problem. The guests noted they’d need more information and would consult at a later time.

Stakeholder Patty Lombard asked whether trees were a known traffic-calming measure and whether Urban Forestry were ever consulted around traffic calming. The guests did not have any knowledge of any such collaborations between the two city departments.

Mr. Starr thanked the guests and the audience for engaging in the discussion and encouraged anyone who wished to remain for the duration of the meeting to do so, at which time the majority of the audience began to file out.

5. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. Discussion, Planning, and Possible Motion on GWNC Transportation Committee Outreach and Action Measures.

Discussion on ways to grow the committee and action items to support and/or organize.

No motion was made nor action taken.

6. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

No motion was made nor action taken.

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

Mr. Starr reported on the November 2018 LABSS Small Asphalt Repair Blitz:

On November 19th, 2018, the Bureau of Street Services performed small asphalt repairs in the Greater Wilshire Area as part of their Neighborhood Council Initiative – “Blitz Program.”

All GWNC Area representatives and alternates, as well as HOA and Neighborhood Associations (for whom he had contact information) were invited to nominate potholes in their areas. Nominations were received from areas 5, 6, 10, and 11 with 19 locations in total. 11 of those nominations were approved – for areas 6, 10, and 11. According to Mr. Hans Duran, Neighborhood Council Initiative Rep at the Bureau of Street Services, 10 of the 11 approved locations were repaired and one, 623 S. Sycamore, was repaired at a later date.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next GWNC Transportation Committee meeting will be held on Monday, January 21, 2019, at Marlborough School, 250 S. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles, CA.

Mr. Starr announced the above.

8. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.

None were discussed. There were no more requests or Motions.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Starr declared the Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Conrad Starr

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