



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, November 19, 2019
Approved Tuesday, January 28, 2020

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

a. Call to order (Philip Farha)

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, at Marlborough School, Collins Room – D200, 250 S. Rossmore Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90004. Chair Philip Farha called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

b. Roll Call (Cathy Roberts)

The Secretary called the roll. Four of the nine Committee Members were present at the Roll Call, which is not a quorum: Rory Cunningham, Jennifer DeVore, Philip Farha (Chair) and Cathy Roberts. Patricia Carroll and Dick Herman arrived later. Karen Gilman, John Gresham and Susan O’Connell were absent. 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 nine filled Committee Seats, or five Members, so at this time the Committee could only take public comments, could not have any official discussions, and could not make any Motions or take any votes. [To apply to become a Member, see www.GreaterWilshire.org]. Also attended: 22 Stakeholders and guests.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments at this time.

Committee Member Patti Carroll arrived at this time (6:38), making a quorum of five Members present. Now the Committee could take binding votes on Agendized Items.

3. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

a. Administrative

Mr. Farha reported that there would be a November 21st CEQA meeting.

Committee Member Dick Herman arrived at this time (6:39), making six Committee Members present (the Committee quorum was five).

Mr. Farha reported that BONC [the L.A. Board of Neighborhood Commissioners; 213-978-1551; Debbie.Wehe@LACity.org; Commissioners@EmpowerLA.org; www.EmpowerLA.org] is considering and taking input about mandating training for Land Use Committee Members.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

a. Review and approval of October 22, 2019 Minutes.

Mr. Farha requested and it was agreed to TABLE this Item.

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

Copies had been distributed of the “11/19/19 October/November Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area.” It was agreed to Agendize and invite a representative(s) of the 606 N. Manhattan Pl. [“Demolition of SFD and construction of 14-unit, 4-story condominium”]; 850 S. Gramercy Pl. [“Construction of a new childcare facility within an 18 unit apartment building in the R3 zone”]; 933 S. Gramercy Pl. [“Demolition of existing SFD and construction of new 17-unit, 6-story 67-feet in height, 16,373 SF apartment Building”]; and 4670 W. Beverly Blvd. [“Transit Oriented Communities project permitting 30 apartment dwelling units”] projects to present to the Committee.

5. OLD BUSINESS (Discussion and Possible Action)

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

a. **742 N. Highland Ave.:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (Ashlee Gardner) Renewal of an existing CUB. ZA-2004-6850-CUB, ENV-2019-5487 CE.

Copies had been distributed of letters supporting project conditions proposed by the South Hollywood Neighborhood Association (SHNA). It was reported that Owner Ashley Gardner agreed to many of the conditions, which were reviewed.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha, seconded by Ms. DeVore): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the renewal of the CUB with extended operating hours for the project located at 742 N Highland Ave. as presented with the request that the extended CUB be attached to the current operator.

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

b. **5279 W. Olympic Blvd.:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (Bruce Evans) 7-Eleven Convenience Store to renew a CUB. Proposed Project - approval of plans to allow the continued sale and dispensing of beer and wine for off site consumption in conjunction with a 2,537 sq. ft. convenience store (7-Eleven) operating 24 hours daily in a C2-1 zone. Renewal application – No Change Requested. ZA-2015-1026-CUB-CU-Pal, ENV-2019-2562-.CE.

Copies had been distributed of a project document(s). Mr. Evans presented again: the shopping center at La Brea is being remodeled and the CUB is expiring. He appeared before the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association, which wrote a support letter. No conditions will change. The LAPD wrote a “letter of no opposition”; “crime is down, no complaints.” Alcohol sales would be restricted to 11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

MOTION (by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Cunningham): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the CUB renewal for the 7-Eleven Convenience Store located at 5279 W. Olympic Blvd. as

presented with the conditions as outlined in the Sycamore Square Neighborhood Association letter dated November 18, 2019.

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

- c. **6535 Melrose Ave.:** (Daniel Ahadian) A new 3-4 story mixed use building ranging from 35' to 56' with 33 units (3 ELI) 4,895 sq. ft. of commercial space. DIR-2019-647-TOC, ENV-2019-648-EAF.

Mr. Farha noted that this is a TOC project and was concerned about driveway ingress and egress. The applicant was not present.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha, seconded by Ms. Roberts): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recognizes that, while the GWNC Board is on record opposing the project located at 6535 Melrose Ave., the Board would prefer to see a restricted 10-foot ingress off Highland and a 10-foot egress into the alley.

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

- d. **CF 19-0623:** (Discussion and Possible Action) Empty Homes Tax/Vacant and Habitable Housing Units

Copies had been distributed of the City Council Motion. Mr. Farha explained the issue. Ms. DeVore would like the City to consider why commercial space is empty, such as on Larchmont. There was discussion of merits and drawbacks of the proposed legislation. Ms. Roberts would support it if single-family homes are excluded. Mr. Farha noted that "enforcement could be really tricky." Ms. Roberts noted that "it's a research study."

MOTION (by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Farha): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee requests that the GWNC Board submit a Community Impact Statement in support of Council File 19-0623 as written and asks that single-family properties with a legal Accessory Dwelling Unit be exempted from the tax.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with five in favor; one opposed (Carroll); zero abstained.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **5030 9th St.:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (Rosemary Medel) A variance request to allow the proposed detached garage within the front 55' setback in lieu of the rear half of the site. ZA-2019-5501-ZV.

Copies had been distributed of a site plan, floor plans, elevations, and photos. Letters of support and against the requested variance were provided. Developer representative Ms. Medel said "the project is in compliance with the exception of the rear garage requirement" as it is on an irregular shaped site on a curved street. The 5,862 SF lot was legally subdivided in 2017 and currently is vacant. Architect Robert Collins showed project

renderings. He indicated that the challenge of the site is the “fairly aggressive topography with an 11-foot slope.” There is an existing garage on 9th St. He said “the location of our garage is not out of character” with nearby garages. They are “planning to bridge over” an active stream that runs through the site. He explained that the City’s 2018 Zoning Code interpretation dictated the lot lines. He described research and discussion to maximize site use while minimizing site impact. Ms. Medel said they started designing the project, however they had to make required “adjustments” due to the City’s “mid-design Code change.” The Brookside Single Family Overlay zone (R1V3-RG) implementation caused the Code change for rear facing garages. “If it hadn’t changed, we would be designing it by right.” The design presents as a one-story structure from the street with an overall height of 28 feet with three bedrooms and two baths. The “footprint” was designed with landscaping and proposed structures in a “French countryside” design. “Every effort was made to reduce the mass and scale... So it appears more cottage-like and romantic.” Three existing trees will be retained with eight new trees added, however eight existing trees will need to be removed.

The owners would consider not requesting a hearing waiver. A long-time nearby homeowner said “it could have been subdivided in the 60s... The homeowner never filed” documents. The owners said, “We want to keep it in the scale of the community.” A long-time neighbor who is directly adjacent said “there are 28 garages on Ninth St.... They’re all in the back ... It’ll set a precedent... that others would have to be granted... Some trees are 80-100 years old.” Another neighbor said “basically it’s a lot split ... completely at variance with the rest of the neighborhood. He believed the real problem “is spot zoning.” Mr. Farha noted that “a variance doesn’t necessarily set a precedent.”

Mr. Herman noted that “findings” take lot topography into consideration. A long-time neighbor said the neighbors all agreed “that we wanted garages in the rear... Much outreach was done.” Mr. Farha clarified regarding the Committee that “we do not have any allegiances... to any applicants.” The owner said “we don’t have room for a rear garage... This is going to be no different than existing near by properties; this was designed to be pretty.” Another neighbor said “we’re not taking issue with design as much as legality.” The architect explained that the house bridges the stream and that the garage is “minimized... 20x22” feet. The owner said the garage “doesn’t take out any trees.”

MOTION (by Mr. Herman, seconded by Ms. DeVore): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board support the variance for the project at located 5030 9th St. as presented.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with five in favor; one opposed (Roberts); zero abstained.

- b. **307 N. Wilton Pl.:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (Mariam Sanchez) Demolition Pre-inspection Application No. 18019-20000-06318/B18VN21939.

Copies had been distributed of project documents. Mr. Sanchez presented. A single family home in an R-3 zone would be demolished. He said that “our project complies with full

Code requirements.” The “by right” project would have 3 to 5 three-story units. The owner promised not to plant palm trees and said “the property is very challenging” because of the “topography.” Mr. Cunningham emphasized that the design is “out of character.” Mr. Sanchez promised to include elements of local design.

No Motion was made or vote taken.

- c. **816 N. Orange Drive:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (George Poda) Demolition Pre-inspection Application No. 19019-10000-05316.

The applicant was not present.

MOTION (by Mr. Farha, seconded by Ms. Roberts): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board oppose the demolition at 816 N. Orange Drive.

- d. **726-732 S. Wilton Pl.:** (Discussion and Possible Action) (Daniel Pourbaba) Pursuant to TOC guidelines a new 25 unit apartment with base incentive to allow increase in density, FAR to 3.77:1, reduced parking with additional incentives to allow height at 61’, reduction to side yards to 6’-4” in lieu of 9’, reduced open space. Dir-2019-3158-TOC, PAR-2019-372-TOC.

Mr. Pourbaba said that “outreach has been a challenge” and that the GWNC representative had not responded. “This is a double lot that is currently vacant. There’s a mountain of dirt on our site from other developers.” He described the design and “old world feel”; one-size 4’x4’ “large, hinged windows”; “irrigation schedule”; and landscaping.

MOTION (by Ms. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Herman): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWMC Board support the project located at 726-732 Wilton place as presented.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with five in favor; one opposed (Cunningham); zero abstained.

7. REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. **607 N. Manhattan Pl.:** (Matthew Hayden) Demolition of SFD with the construction, use and maintenance of a new 6-story, 67 ft 10-unit apartment building (1 ELI DU and 9 MKT rate DU) with at grade parking for 17 vehicle and 12 bicycle spaces. Landscaping to be retained or removed/replaced. DIR-2019-553-TOC, ENV-2019-554-EAF.
- b. **611 N. Manhattan Pl.:** (Matthew Hayden) Applicant will provide more information when it becomes available.
- c. **985-991 3rd Ave.:** (Laszlo Faerstein) Project is exempt from CEQA. Qualifying Tier 2 Project totaling 50 dwelling units (6) Very Low Income with basic incentives and additional incentives. DIR-2018-2234-TOC, ENV-2018-2235-CE.

- d. **371-377 N. St. Andrews Pl.:** (Shapour Shajirat) A new 15 unit 4-story apartment building over St. level parking and one level of subterranean parking. DIR-20194911-TOC, ENV-2019-4912-EAF.
- e. **743-749 S. Gramercy Drive:** (Sami Kohamin, Michelle Chen) Demolition Pre-inspection Application No. 19019-10000-03861 / No. 19019-10000-03864 / No. 19019-10000-03867-991.

There were no additional requests.

8. PROJECTS COVERED BY OTHER BOARDS (for information only)

- a. None this month

9. REVIEW OF PENDING LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

- a. **TOC/TNP:** Continued discussion on Transit Oriented Communities and Transit Neighborhood Plans.
- b. **Reorganization of Administrative Provisions:** Formerly known as: Processes and Procedures Ordinance
The above were not addressed.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Next GWNC Land Use Committee Meeting will be held at 6:30pm on Tuesday, December 17, 2019 at Marlborough School, 250 S. Rossmore Ave, the Collins Room, 200-D, Los Angeles, CA 90004.
Mr. Farha noted that the next meeting will be “a week early.”
- b. **ADJOURNMENT**
Mr. Farha declared the Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:51 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>.