

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MINUTES

OCTOBER 11, 2017

WESTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 10822 WILSHIRE BLVD. LOS ANGELES, CA
90024

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Lisa Chapman called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Board members in attendance were Lisa Chapman, Laura Winikow, Mark Rogo, Chantelle Eastman, Connie Boukidis, Sandy Brown, Scott Whittle, Angus Beverly, Philip Gabriel, Ann Hayman, Stephen Resnick, Roozbeh Farahanipour, Caroline Conway, Marcello Robinson, and Naomi Kisel. Board members excused were Mitchell Keiter, Trent Jolly, and Cyrus Baragoush. 30 in attendance

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Scott Whittle motioned to approve, Stephen Resnick seconded. The vote to approve was unanimous. Lisa Chapman introduced a motion to table agenda items until next meeting, saying number 4 would not be heard tonight on request of Stephanie Cohen from LA County Supervisor's office since the sobering center initiative had been delayed. Item number 11 would not be heard tonight, but would be heard next month, and Lisa Chapman explained that she was expecting data from Empower LA about items in the relevant discussion. The vote to table was unanimous.

3. COMMENTS BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

A. Janet Turner from Congressman Ted Lieu's office submitted a report regarding the post office, saying that the new village post office would be opening at the end of October, early November, with a press release as soon as the date is announced. The USPS said the work needed to prepare the new location was taking longer than expected.

B. Lisa said that CD5 Field Deputy Jasmine Shamolian would not be present for the meeting.

C. Stephanie Cohen was recognized from LA County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's office to talk about the sobering center on agenda tonight, planned for between Butler and Perdue. They have since terminated the lease for the project because they felt the Department of Health Services and the CLARE Foundation moved too quickly over the summer, and the supervisor wanted to have a more thorough vetting process. Once appropriate locations are identified, they will move to assess for minimal community impact.

1. Ann Hayman asked what exactly the center was supposed to be. Stephanie explained that the counseling center's purpose was to reduce the amount of time first responders spend in emergency departments after having to

admit a person with substance abuse problems. It's an alternative to jail and prison, and a touchpoint for people to move into permanent residential treatment programs.

2. Philip Gabriel asked if someone was arrested with a substance abuse problem but no life-threatening injury, if they'd be sent to the center? Stephanie confirmed, and explained that you could only be transported there by law enforcement, special homeless care teams, or first responders.

3. Connie Boukidis asked how many people the center was supposed to serve, and Stephanie said it was supposed to have 30 beds, and the average stay was 8-10 hours. After discharge, first option is to be transferred to a permanent shelter or residential service, which is why they partner with the CLARE Foundation which has permanent beds and housing. The other option is they just walk out the door.

4. Roozbeh asked if they had any update on the sober living house, and Stephanie explained they'd been talking about that, and that they'd terminated the lease.

5. Stephanie explained that they'd just sited and are planning to open the converted Sylmar armory to support finding bridge housing for women and senior citizens, as a way of bridging to more permanent housing. The department of public health declared a public health crisis regarding Hepatitis A in Los Angeles; the supervisor's office is working to expand vaccinations and raise awareness of and disease prevention.

6. One thing that was missed last month was that the board voted in august to reevaluate how it manages conservatorships regarding individuals with mental health issues. The board looked into ways to track mental patients with repeat 5150's and ways to track conservatorships, and a report is expected in 4 months.

A. Lisa asked if the venture would make conservatorships easier, especially with older patients with repeat 5150's, and Stephanie said that was the hope.

D. Assemblymember Sebastian Ridley-Thomas explained that his job was to assemble good public policy, and invited constituents to come to a seminar on State Boards and Commissions Appointments on October 18th regarding state commissions to offer perspectives on health, education, and other opportunities to serve.

1. He explained that a lot happened in Sacramento this year, and he personally worked on the ability to keep a couple single-gender academies as an option for students to attend, one for boys, one for girls, which grew out of an initiative separating STEM classes into boys and girls classes to encourage attendance and student performance, and summarized his office's efforts regarding infrastructure improvement and addressing issues arising from climate change.

2. Connie Boukidis asked about AB649, which he voted against, and what he knew. Assemblymember Ridley-Thomas discussed his outreach to the governor, and the potential problems arising from the bill's provisions. He thinks that if the council can get letters and prepare an amicus brief it would help pressure courts to strike provisions of it down or ask to redo the bill.

3. Connie Boukidis asked if Brown was going to sign it, since Ridley-Thomas seems to think he would. He said he would not be surprised if Brown signed it with stipulations for exempting areas like schools, residential neighborhoods, etc.

4. UCLA student Joshua Baum asked what the priorities would be for the next legislative session. Ridley-Thomas said long-term care for the elderly and mental and behavioral health are going to be big. Another big thing is dealing with the fallout from Equifax, and ensuring people can freeze their credit once for free with all three credit bureaus simultaneously.

5. Philip Gabriel asked if Ridley-Thomas' office would lead the charge against the abuse of handicapped parking. Ridley-Thomas explained that there was a huge dragnet of sweeps by police to establish evidence and determine the scope of the problem, and that they would need to research through December to be ready to introduce necessary legislation by January. He invited the council to come back in December with their research and asked the council's transportation committee to come up with their needs and recommendations. Lisa

Chapman thanked the assemblyman.

E. UCLA Representative Marco Perez thanked the assemblyman's support of local health programs and science/technology programs. Next weekend after coming weekend, Bruin Family Weekend is taking place. Expecting about 3,000 on campus, biggest day will be Friday Oct 20th with a dinner at 5 PM. Following day is football day, so families will board buses and attend game. Sunday will be a lighter activity day. Weekend of the 29th there is the LA Cancer Challenge run/walk on campus, registration 6 AM.

1. Marco went on to talk about the 16th of October, UCLA will have its Free Speech 101 week, a week of preserving and supporting free speech on campus with a series of events taking place on different dates. More information available at equity.ucla.edu, office of University Equity and Inclusion.

2. Marco discussed Lot Parking Structure 5, which will be closing, so the ADA access onto campus has been transferred over to Dixon Plaza by the flag turnaround.

3. Scott Whittle asked if he was going to say anything about the Regents Meeting which would be public. Marco Perez didn't have specific details. Whittle said they'd be talking about the proposed expansions of the village and the dormitories on the agenda for any interested.

4. Sandy Brown reiterated that nobody was concerned about the rooms of the students, but rather the height of the buildings. They don't want to hear the regents talk about it, they want to see UCLA do something to limit the impact on the village.

5. Philip Gabriel asked why they can't put some housing on North Campus too to limit student's walk times from dorms, or come up with multi-use buildings.

F. West LAPD SLO Chris Ragsdale said that they have a new Area Captain, Val Thomas, who comes from West Traffic Division. Crime is down in every category; key to continuing downward trend is prevention; some crimes up-ticking are car break-ins: people leaving things like backpacks and purses in cars attract window-smashers.

1. Mark Rogo asked what happened with bank robbery on Wilshire today. Ragsdale said it was a serial bandit in the region, but being handled by the FBI and Robbery division.

2. Connie Boukidis asked what the law was for tinted windows. Connie says tremendous increase in SUVs, Teslas, Maseratis with tinted windows, going through lights randomly on Wilshire and in Beverly Hills. Ragsdale said they were aware of it but not cracking down per se.

3. Philip Gabriel asked if they could get a meeting with the captain regarding a full-time foot patrol beat in the village. Ragsdale said they could email or call the captain's office.

4. Stephen Resnick has noticed motor officers in the early morning 6:30/7:30, and wanted to know if anything particular is going on. Ragsdale said they were just addressing traffic problems in complaint areas and increasing visibility.

G. Executive Director Andrew Thomas from the Westwood Village improvement district reported that they had completed more sidewalk construction this time. The block party event held September 24th was very successful. 8-9,000 attendees, lots of vendors donating food. Annual meeting coming up October 26th on UCLA campus starting at 8:30 in the morning, have to RSVP to info@thewestwoodvillage.com.

4. PRESENTATION ON A NEW ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING CENTER IN WEST LOS ANGELES

A. Tabled by request of Stephanie Cohen.

5. WESTWOOD VILLAGE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A. Proposed Restaurant Delegation Language

Westwood Village BID Executive Director Andrew Thomas was introduced and summarized the Westwood Village board's research into amending their specific food plan regarding food use zoning in the Village. Fast food uses are well over capacity, and the board made a recommendation to remove all incidental food uses from any type of food category in the plan, and remove any distinction between "restaurant" and "fast food" food uses.

1. Philip Gabriel said they seemed to be focusing on food issues rather than shopping and retail stores. There is an appetite for retail, and the board should encourage property owners to look more at retail even though they get more rent from restaurants.
2. Sandy Brown asked if Andrew was talking about putting food use in places that are not allowed by the plan to have any food use? In other words, if a street is over or at capacity but there's a storefront vacancy, food use should go in that storefront? Not addressing parking or percentage of food use to retail.
3. Connie posed hypothetical: three stores vacant on Broxton, but no food use available; would reallocation of food uses across other streets solve the problem? Andrew said they were over by more than one on most streets, three or four.
4. President Lisa Chapman asked if they do pull out incidental food uses from the plan, what they would go under? Andrew Thomas said it would just be a retail establishment even though they sell meals, like 7-11, and Whole Foods, and Ralphs.
5. Ann Hayman talked about Century City Mall's official opening, lots of sit-down restaurants, can't understand why if Century City can have half a dozen or more sit-downs, they can't expect the same in Westwood Village. Andrew Thomas is familiar with Century City mall, but its concept is mostly fast-casual. Angus Beverly said it was a very distinct area in Westwood, like comparing apples and oranges.
6. Stakeholder Steve Sann said the BID funded a study that compared Westwood and comparable areas in Los Angeles and other university towns: Westwood has vastly more food uses than 3rd Street Promenade, more than Berkeley, way more than any area you can think of in condensed area. The Daily Bruin has reported on churn and burn of fast food/restaurants in the villa: pizzeria opens here, closes over there.

6. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Michael Styles was introduced. Appreciated putting 2018 selection on agenda, encouraged committing to online voting. For any concerns of voter fraud, thousands of students would be voting in election, except that elections have been happening on one day on finals week out of range of student's transportation. Does council want to actually be representative or stay an illegitimate nimby council. President Lisa Chapman reiterated that the discussion is tabled until next month, and that the council would be receiving relevant data regarding the debate.

UCLA Student Joshua Baum congratulated Naomi Kisel on being named to the council, and began reading comments from last meeting that seem to point to them wanting to disenfranchise people who do not own property, and that the board's claim of being pro-UCLA will proven or disproven by their votes on crucial issues.

Stakeholder Steve Sann addressed something said during the last meeting in September when the Graduate Student Association president said Westwood Village sucks, and pointed out that their Village has had larger and better amenities than comparable California university towns for years.

John Heidt, newest member of the Westwood BID, challenged the council to come up with one thing in advance of their specific plan review process to improve upon as a benefit to the village.

EmpowerLA Neighborhood Council Advocate Gibson Nyambura said that the LA City Council did vote on elections to push to 2019, and that now the City Clerk's office will be the ones administering neighborhood council elections. Neighborhood councils have option to choose selection process, doesn't have answer to how much city clerk will spend on elections, but city clerk is asking councils to set aside money. He would verify exactly how much. He also confirmed that bylaws would have to reflect the change in the election, and that he was currently working on amendments to them.

A. Philip Gabriel asked whether the vote could be done over the internet. Gibson said it was discussed and voted upon as an option.

7. STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS/REPORTS

A. Executive – Lisa Chapman

President Lisa Chapman was just going to bring up what Gibson brought up.

B. Treasurer

Treasurer Laura Winikow motioned to vote on a line-item change to their budget changing \$100 per month for facility set-up for meetings and \$75 per month for facility rental to \$75 per month for facility setup and \$100 per month for facility rental. Seconded by Ann Hayman, vote is unanimous. Then motioned individually to approve set-up payment of \$75, facility rental payment of \$100, and temporary staffing payment for minute-taking in the September meeting of \$289.91. All motions seconded and approved unanimously. Of the council's \$42,000 budget, they've paid \$683.08 and have \$783.22 to be paid. Net available is \$40,533.70.

C. Land Use and Planning

1. Discussion/Action

BROXTON

Connie Boukidis said the Broxton was off the table for the time being.

2. Discussion/Action (previously discussed on December 16, 2016)

EUROMART

Case Number: ZA 2016-3918-CUB

Project Title: EUROMART

Project Address: 10845-57 Santa Monica Boulevard and 1794 Westwood Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA
90024

Contact Info: Larry Mondragon, 310-621-2309

Project Description: West Side Euromart (present use: Gas Station/Convenience Store) - A CUP to allow t

he sale and dispensing of beer and wine for off-site consumption in conjunction with an existing

925 square-foot gas station/convenience store with hours of operation of 24 hours daily in the [Q]C-2-

1VL-O Zone.

Connie Boukidis said that the gas station has been approved for selling liquor 24 hours a day, and that the appeal time had passed. She explained that they were sent a determination letter with the results of the hearings to approve this, but did not receive the notice in time to appeal it due to possible issues with post office. Lisa suggests speaking with Jasmine Shamolian and Senior Planning Deputy Faisel Alserri about how this happened and have them report back. Connie would spearhead this and contact City Council's office and find out why Westwood neighborhood council and Westwood Homeowners Association didn't receive proper notice.

D. Outreach and Communications

Naomi Kisel said she was looking at December 5th at 6 PM to host neighborhood council meet and greet.

E. Homeless task force

President Lisa Chapman and council member Chantelle Eastman attended the LA Homeless Services Authority event, held in Santa Monica, and thought that it was great event and made great contacts. Santa Monica has been working on homeless issue for long time, can learn a lot from their crew. One of the things that struck Chapman that Santa Monica does that she'd like to see in Westwood is having street teams that go out with medical and mental health professionals to identify people in communities and work on-site.

Chantelle talked about the Welcome Home Project, where Santa Monica sends people out to make relationships with homeless and inform them of services, and will talk with Santa Monica about how they set up their program. She will also be working with communications director to vamp up website for faster information dissemination.

There was discussion about efforts to prevent homelessness in addition to fighting it, and President Lisa Chapman introduced a motion to opt in to Los Angeles's annual homeless count that was seconded and unanimously approved.

F. Budget Advocates – Marcello Robinson

Marcello Robinson reported that the next meeting of budget advocates will be October 21st at 10 AM at the West LA Municipal Building.

G. Public Safety – Marcello Robinson

In light of recent earthquakes and hurricanes, Chair Marcello Robinson was trying to get representatives from Los Angeles County government to do presentations on how community can be better prepared.

H. Transportation and Parking – Angus Beverly

1. Introduction of motion – ADA compliance within the North Village

Had a few incidents with students saying a few buildings there don't have ramps for accessibility.

Angus Beverly moved,

“WWNC requests Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember Paul Koretz, and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to renovate sidewalks and install ramps on the corner of sidewalks that are currently not wheelchair accessible within the North Village to make the area more-accessible for residents and other stakeholders with a disability.”

Marcello Robinson seconded. Stakeholder Steve Sann said that the motion doesn't go far enough, and suggested naming specific sidewalks. Lisa Chapman asked if Angus Beverly would like to pass it as it is now, then revise it. Scott Whittle seconded. Another comment was made from UCLA teacher who had an undergraduate student in a wheelchair who wanted to have her statement to the council read aloud. The statement regarding the difficulty of accessing apartment housing and parts of the village outside UCLA campus was read. Angus Beverly called for a vote, and it was voted unanimously.

2. Introduction of motion: Affordable and abundant transportation for Students

Students wanted more frequent stops in the village, and with increasing rent more students are commuting, so they would like more stops throughout the area surrounding Westwood Village.

Angus Beverly moved,

“WWNC requests Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember Paul Koretz, UCLA Transportation, the City of Culver City and METRO Board to provide affordable student rates for METRO, Bruin Bus, and Green Bus Line transportation lines as well as provide more-frequent stops within the North Village of Westwood and other areas where students reside like Palms, Playa del Rey, the San Fernando Valley, East Los Angeles, South Central, and Mid-Wilshire.”

Discussion resulted between several board members and members of the public as to whether the language was too vague, and specific locations should be named, as well as how to determine where new stops should go. A UCLA student made those present aware that legislation for reduced student rates state-wide was currently on the governor’s desk, bill AB-17, and encouraged people to call and email governor’s office.

Angus Beverly called for a vote on the item as-is. It was seconded by Marcello Robinson, and approved unanimously.

I. Bylaws – no report

J. WRAC – no report

K. Zoning and Violations

Chair Roozbeh Farahanipour reported that the bagel place that changed to a Persian restaurant is now changing back, and confirmed that they were using an outdated health score, which the city had already been out to address. Under vandalization of the trees, he reported that most of the trees were replaced last week, Jasmine was supposed to give more detailed reports. On replacing the missing trees, city of LA is coordinating with landlord/management company in the village to replace about 100 more trees.

8. DISCUSSION WITH THE UCLA DAILY BRUIN EDITORIAL BOARD

Two members of the editorial board came up to explain how the editorial board functions, Managing Editor Madeleine Pauker and Opinion Editor Keshav Tadimeti. Lisa Chapman brought up that the board gets concerned when editorial pieces come out where they’re portrayed as obstructionist in initiatives that they can support but really can’t do or generate, for example generating affordable housing. Another example cited was editorials about bringing business into the Village, since the council can’t do that directly, and other editorials about things like dancing being forbidden being factually inaccurate.

Philip Gabriel said that he finds the Daily Bruin to be much less involved with the community, advertising, and merchants than they used to be, and should work on getting better print distribution in the village.

Stakeholder Steve Sann said he was disappointed in the coverage of the meeting about the housing project, which he found very condescending in tone about certain proposals. He alleged the opening sentence of the editorial misrepresented the point of some of his statements.

9. REMARKS ON NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS BY CALIFORNIA SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE KEVIN DE LEON

Sandy Brown reported that De Leon spoke on September 24th on KNBC: “We have been strangled, we have been handcuffed by nimbyisms and threats from neighborhood councils” and about 90 neighborhood councils spoke out and wrote an email on behalf of council members. Sandy wouldn’t recommend putting in a motion to join it; Kevin has been warned that should he run for higher office he’ll face stiff opposition. The motion was subsequently withdrawn.

10. UPDATE ON THE REMODELING OF THE BATHROOMS AND THE PAINTING OF THE BENCHES AND TRASH RECEPTACLES AT HOLMBY PARK

Sandy Brown reported that even with \$750,000 to spend, the city is sitting on it and doesn’t do anything. She wrote a letter to Mark Jackson, liaison through parks, and that they’re starting to move on it. Sandy said that she and representatives from the Rec and Parks walked through the existing facilities and the plan had been approved for the bathrooms. It was simply a matter of government moving exceptionally slowly. A student asked if students could go in and use the bathrooms at night when the park itself is closed, and Lisa Chapman replied that she thought they could.

Sandy Brown said there was a Park Advisory Board of which she is not a member. She’s gone to meetings and pushed the committee about the money, but the totality is that it must come from the Park Advisory Board. For some reason, this board doesn’t do anything with regard to capital improvements. Jasmine Shamolian has assured that the city will pay for the sidewalk around the park. All they have to do in addition to the bathrooms is pay for security concerns. Sandy suggested inviting Robert Ringler to the next meeting.

11. DISCUSSION OF SELECTION IN 2018 VS. ELECTION IN 2019

Agenda item tabled by Lisa Chapman until next meeting in November.

12. COUNCIL'S POSITION ON INCREASING HOME SUPPLY

Angus Beverly moved,

“WWNC, affirmatively stands for increasing the number of defined Low Income Housing units that will comply with federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) standards within the Westwood Area, West Los Angeles Area, and Greater Los Angeles Area. We shall also incentivize the development of these Low Income Housing units by supporting variances, zoning amendments and other incentives for select developments that keep in mind environmental concerns. Additionally, the Westwood Neighborhood Council supports providing incentives in the fashion of variances, zoning amendments and other pro-housing incentives to certain market-rate rental units and other housing entities that would increase the supply of housing for all stakeholders that keep in mind environmental concerns in Westwood, West Los Angeles, and the Greater Los Angeles Area. Furthermore, Mayor Eric Garcetti, Councilmember Paul Koretz and other city, state, federal, and County leaders should work to promote more housing developments within Westwood, West Los Angeles, and the Greater Los Angeles Area.”

- A. Scott Whittle, other board members, and stakeholders brought up problems with the language of the bill, noting that the council can't “incentivize” anything.
- B. Sandy Brown said they should never say they would support zoning variances, zoning amendments, and incentivizing development before a project is in front of them, since it would bind the council to support it. BID member John Heidt, a property developer said it was a terrible idea. A developer will look at it and go, “I can build a 20-story building in the middle of historic neighborhoods and everyone will support it if I call it low-income housing.”
- C. Stakeholder Steve Sann suggested referring the motion to the Land Use committee and noted that it had tons of inherent inconsistencies, and that “Affordable” means you make 50-60% of the average median income in LA county, which most students won't meet.
- D. UCLA student Michael Styles said that the language is great, and explains that it is explicitly committing to “select” projects and that the council would be willing to allow variances. Connie countered that they have no authority to allow variances. Michael continued that on their Land Use committee they have the power to allow variances in housing and zoning and basically summarized what's in the actual motion.
- E. Philip Gabriel said he doesn't feel comfortable voting on this since it might handcuff them later on, possibly placing them in legal or moral jeopardy on a project that they haven't even seen yet.

F. Naomi is glad he's passionate about it and she's passionate about it too, but thinks they have to consider opinions from experts and knowledge that they can learn from, suggests revising the parts that are problematic and then passing it.

G. UCLA Student Gabriella believes that the motion is dedicated solely to us as a sort of symbolism to work with students on affordable housing. Mentioned earlier there's no way to incentivize housing, but this is a way. Since it is up to their discretion to approve or deny this, you have the discretion to say "build it". Most of the council said that they don't have the authority to do that.

H. Cyrus Baragoush added that generally we all agree that we want affordable housing in Westwood for everyone. The issue is the language isn't exact, but a specialist or an expert might be able to weigh in and work with Angus. That being said, the next step is to try to pass it today, or move forward and refer it to somebody.

I. Roozbeh Farahanipour said that the motion should be discussed in the Land Use committee. Lisa Chapman disagreed, since it's a general statement about affordable housing.

J. A UCLA student said that there's been no rush to put the motion together as some have commented considering they've spent a month revising and drafting language. Regarding comments saying this sort of language will open door to a lot of different projects coming in, the student affirmed that Westwood needs that influx and encouraged the council to pass the motion as-is.

K. Stephen Resnick thought the motion was well-intentioned and complimented Angus Beverly for taking this on, but that it wasn't something neighborhood council can or should support.

Scott Whittle moved to table motion and refer back to Angus Beverly's committee, Mark Rogo seconded. Connie Boukidis announced that she had an amended version, and Angus wanted to hear it. Connie Boukidis didn't think anyone had any interest or should have any interest in incentivizing market-rate housing. She then read through her amended version.

A. Michael Styles then commented it took out all the teeth, to which Lisa Chapman said the developer John Heidt said it was terrible, and Connie Boukidis said that it had very little teeth to begin with.

Mark Rogo then reminded the council that there was a motion to table the statement still active, which had been seconded. A UCLA student said that he would like more opportunity to review language in Connie Boukidis' draft, and Lisa Chapman requested Connie spend time with Angus' committee. Lisa then called for a vote to table the motion until November's meeting, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

13. ADJOURNMENT

President Lisa Chapman adjourned the meeting at 10:14 p.m.