

## **SORO NC Officer Candidate Statements**

17 June 2010

### **Doug Fitzsimmons**

*Candidate for President*

I've been privileged to act as SORO NC's President for the past 20 months. In that time, I've helped build the Board into one of the City's most successful and effective Councils.

During my tenure, we've stabilized the makeup of the Board, strengthened our ties to the Neighborhood Associations and local organizations, built a NC-leading website, fought for Police and Fire resources, sponsored numerous community programs and events, opposed the poorly-considered freeway-ification of Pico and Olympic, transformed our Green Team into a true grassroots movement (pun slightly intended), campaigned for City regulation of marijuana dispensaries and billboards, and helped give voice to our constituents within City Hall. And in contrast to top-down SORO Boards of the past, I'm proud to say that it has all been a team effort.

If elected, I'd like to encourage the Board focus on the following:

- Continue to build awareness of and pride in the SORO neighborhoods identity, both within the community and within the City at large
- Look for new methods to effectively reach and communicate with our residents, businesses, and organizations, particularly within the faith-based community
- Leverage our business community, Neighborhood Associations and the 2011 opening of the Expo station to remake SORO as a commercial destination, not just a pass-through to the Freeway.
- Work through our committees and delegates to increase our ability to act as a bridge to City government and services for our 45,000 residents, closely working with our Council offices, City departments, and Fire, Police and emergency services
- Raise the SORO NC profile within the City government and NC system
- Strive to make being a part of SORO NC a rewarding and engaging experience

### **Joe Gjonola**

*Candidate for Vice President*

Dear Board Members:

I am running for Vice-President because I believe I have the experience to assist the President guide this council through its next phase of development. In my short time here I have come to understand that our board as we know it today was created by the will, drive, and effort of its members. These individuals, many of your fellow board members, conceived a vision for the community, molded this board into a catalyst for that vision, and took effective action in pursuit of their goals.

I want to continue building respectful relationships in the community, continue raising the board's profile in our neighborhoods through our unifying outreach and productive activities, and continue

our reputation as a reliable reflection of those we represent through our open debate and decision making.

Building on the board's exceptional work, I would like to help us organize our success into tangible operations. In the past, I assisted a small business achieve this very thing. We were a handful of people running a unique and successful business model, and wanting to expand. We examined what we were doing, prioritized it, edited it, and communicated it. We modeled it, so that others could, and did, replicate our success. In a sentence: Organize operations so that new board members and members who join in the future will have a history to work from and build on.

I would be honored to assist in this and all our future efforts as Vice-President.

Joe Gjonola

### **Brian Kite**

*Candidate for Vice President*

Dear Fellow Board Members and Neighbors,

I am interested in serving as our Board's Vice President. I am passionate about the potential our Neighborhood Council has to make a real difference in our community. We need to seize on the quality programs put into place by the previous Board, while at the same time, establish our own identity as the new leaders of our NC. The position of Vice President would allow me to serve on the Executive Committee and, if it pleases the Board, connect with other NC's, city officials, and community groups. The Vice President position could be used to expand our outreach to the larger community and raise our profile in the City. I will follow in the footsteps of our previous VP and make those connections on behalf of our Council. I bring extensive experience from other Boards on which I have served and already have many community and city relationships in place. I am eager, enthusiastic and ready to work. Please consider me for our VP position. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Kite

### **Kimber Smith**

*Candidate for Vice President*

I would appreciate your consideration for Vice President of the South Robertson Neighborhood Council. I would like to support the President and Executive Committee to make sure that the full Council has the structure, resources, confidence, and culture to successfully serve our neighborhood and accomplish the goals we set for ourselves. I would like to help nurture the vision of our organization, build consensus among stakeholders, and advocate for its goals in the community at large. To these efforts I will bring an honest desire to serve the will of the community and its representatives on the Council, the skill to negotiate diverse points of view, and the practice of formulating and implementing policies necessary to effect positive change. I would appreciate the opportunity to serve the Council in this capacity.



**Doug Fitzsimmons**  
President Pro-tem

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer Pro-tem

# Motion to approve Paula Waxman and Larry Hess as Co-Chairs of the Green Team

**Agenda Item:** GB061710-3

**Date:** June 17, 2010

**Proposed By:** The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council Green Team

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## Summary

Paula Waxman and Larry Hess have been nominated by the Green Team Committee to co-chair the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council Green Team

## Full Proposal

Paula Waxman and Larry Hess have accepted the nomination by the Green Team Committee to co chair the Green Team because of their continued interest in the environment and environmental policy and their desire to make the South Robertson Community a model of sustainable practices. They have plans to continue with projects currently in motion and to increase the committee's environmental advocacy.

## Proposed Motion

To approve Paula Waxman and Larry Hess as co chairs of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council Green Team.

## Considerations

**Pro**

**Con**

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## Board Notes

**Votes For:**

**Against:**

**Abstain:**

**Proposed Amendments:**

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# Motion to send a letter from the SORO NC Board thanking Christel Wilson and Stephanie Marquez, and the Festival Planning Committee, for their work on the SoRo Festival

**Agenda Item:** GB061710-4  
**Date:** June 17, 2010  
**Proposed By:** Paula Waxman, Bette Billet, Larry Hess

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## Summary

Christel Wilson and Stephanie Marquez, head of the SoRo Festival Planning committee, worked with the assistance of their committee, to put together a wonderful community event, which incorporated new ideas and was an example of extraordinary planning, and as a result cast a favorable light on our neighborhood council, neighbors, and community. In light of their months of work, and years of service, we propose that a letter of thanks and appreciation be sent to them from the Board of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council.

## Full Proposal

Members of the Green Team worked closely with the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual SoRo Festival Planning Committee headed year after year, by Christel Wilson and Stephanie Marquez. We were impressed with how calmly, professionally, and skillfully they moved the planning forward, and coordinated a very complicated event. That there were almost no problems during, or after, the festival is a testament to their attention to detail. They, and the planning committee, were committed to taking the SoRo Festival to a new, environmentally friendly level, incorporating ideas brought to them by the SORO NC Green Team such as zero waste practices, and presentation of a green business award. They put in horrendously long hours, over many months and contributed their own money when items were needed that fell outside the budget. The SoRo Festival was warmly reviewed in local blogs (see attached) shining a positive light on the activities of the neighborhood council, our neighbors and our community.

## Proposed Motion

The draft of the letter of thanks is as follows:

“Christel Wilson and Stephanie Marquez

2730 South Robertson Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90034

Dear Christel and Stephanie,

**Doug Fitzsimmons**  
President Pro-tem

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer Pro-tem

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The Board of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council, would like to express its sincere gratitude for the many hours, and years of service, and personal funds, that you both have committed to staging the Annual SoRo Festival.

The festival, more than any other sponsored event of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council, brings together our diverse neighborhoods in a shared activity of fun, volunteerism, and a sense of local and global community. Furthermore, the quality of this year’s festival, and the work of your Planning Committee, has brought positive recognition to the community work of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council, and its commitment to promoting constructive environmental practices.

We are so fortunate to have your boundless energies, and personal commitment, and the efforts of your Planning Committee, to making our neighborhood, and the world, a better place to live.

Once again, thank you to you and your committee.

Yours truly,

The Board of the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council”

## Considerations

Pro	Con
It is appropriate that we thank any person(s), or organization that puts in work and or personal funds, above and beyond what is customary to enhance our community.	None

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## Board Notes

**Votes For:**

**Against:**

**Abstain:**

**Proposed Amendments:**



# Motion to Approve Community Impact Statement Concerning Council File No. 05-1853 and 05-1853-S1 (Sidewalks)

**Agenda Item:** GB061710-5  
**Date:** 17 June 2010  
**Proposed By:** Joe Gjonola

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## Summary

Motion to oppose the proposed transfer of liability and cost of repair for sidewalks, damages by tree root growth, from the city to adjacent homeowners; adoption of Community Impact Statement.

## Full Proposal

Motion that SORO NC adopt the attached letter as its Community Impact Statement concerning the City Council's Motion (file numbers 05-1853 and 05-1853-S1) to remove the exception contained in Los Angeles Municipal Code section 61.104(e) that established city liability for the repair of curbs, driveways, and sidewalks due to tree root growth. The City's proposal would assign the liability and cost for repair to the adjacent homeowner, which could be enforced through a city issued notice to repair and legal action for failure to make repairs within a specified time period. Whether this will increase the homeowner's liability for injury arising from the tree damaged sidewalk is unknown.

A "yes" vote on this motion signifies opposition to the proposal, and adopts the attached letter as SORO NC's Community Impact Statement.

## Proposed Motion

- I. That SORO NC opposes the transfer of liability and cost of repair for sidewalks, damages by tree root growth, from the city to adjacent homeowners, as under consideration in City File number 05-1853 and 1853-S1.
- II. That the attached letter is SORO NC's Community Impact Statement concerning the proposal.

## Considerations

### Pro

Opportunity to represent the Neighborhoods' interests regarding a proposed change in city law.

Opportunity to prevent it from going into effect and to protect affected homeowners.

### Con

If the city does not otherwise fund sidewalk repair, they may not be repair except by the homeowner's choice.

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President Pro-tem

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Treasurer Pro-tem

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The Honorable City Council of the City of Los Angeles  
Room 395, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

17 June 2010

Re: South Robertson Neighborhoods Council's Community Impact Statement  
Concerning Council File No. 05-1853 and 05-1853-S1

Honorable Members:

South Robertson Neighborhoods Council ("SORO NC"), by a vote at its regular meeting, rejects the City Council's Motion (file numbers 05-1853 and 05-1853-S1) to remove the exception contained in Los Angeles Municipal Code section 61.104(e) that established city liability for the repair of curbs, driveways, and sidewalks due to tree root growth, because we believe the city has the duty to make these repairs for the benefit of the public, because the change will create an inequitable burden on affected homeowners, and because the city can effect repairs more economically.

The City Council is responsible for the city's infrastructure and for basic city services that enhance the safety and enjoyment to its inhabitants. These include the provision of a sufficiently staffed and funded police force and fire department, and the maintenance of city parks, roads, and other public conveniences, like sidewalks, that make Los Angeles a world class city.

Sidewalks are among the most "public" of public conveniences, as they are used by everyone and anyone regardless of their stakeholder status in our city. Undoubtedly, all who contribute tax money, especially those whose private property is covered by an easement and concrete walking path for the public's use, expect the city to bare the cost of repairing that sidewalk when it is damaged by trees the city planted or requested to be planted on the parkway. The city should remain responsible for these repairs for benefit the public and city at large.

In addition, SORO NC rejects the City's proposal for economic reasons. First, the city can repair sidewalks more economically through economies of scale. This is true whether it conducts repairs with city employees or private contractors. The volume of repairs it controls puts the city in a superior bargaining position with the ability to negotiate a lower per unit price. Homeowners are in an inferior bargaining position as one-time repair purchasers and unlikely to be familiar with the regulations governing repair. Their position becomes worse if they receive a notice to repair within a limited time and under threat of fines. The city has the additional ability to affect costs because it determines the regulations governing repair. But as long as the full cost of repair is born by unknown homeowners, there is less incentive to strive for the least costly options when making those determinations.

In terms of liability, when the city neglects sidewalks it has lawyers at its disposal and the ability to protect itself against civil suits. Any increase in homeowners' legal exposure due to the City Council's proposal will surely lead to a rise in insurance premiums to cover the new risk. Increased legal exposure, should it occur, may attach immediately, whether or not the city ever issues a notice to repair.

Given the financial instability so many homeowners are experiencing, evidenced by the current rate of foreclosures, now is not the time to suddenly burden them with new and unanticipated costs. SORO NC is aware of the city's financial troubles and



the need to balance its budget by cutting costs and not increasing taxes. But this proposal is, in effect, a disproportionate tax increase on affected homeowners who will be legally compelled to bare the full cost of repairing the public's sidewalk. SORO NC believes these expenditures are well within the scope of the city's duty to the public.

For these reasons, SORO NC urges the City Council to reject the proposal.

Sincerely,

First and Last Name  
South Robertson Neighborhoods Council

DRAFT





# Motion to fund \$1500 for Movies in the Park in conjunction with CD-10

**Agenda Item:** GB061710-6  
**Date:** 20 June 2010  
**Proposed By:** Marjan Safinia

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## Summary

That SORO NC fund \$1500 to sponsor CD-10's Movies in the Park event at Reynier Park on July 9<sup>th</sup> 2010.

## Full Proposal

This is the third year of CD-10's very successful Movies in the Park summer series. CD-10 has chosen once again to bring one of the evenings to SORO and host a community movie screening at Reynier Park on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

Based on last year's success, attendance is expected to be over 600 people. Last year, food was bought for 600 and ran out, indicating large community interest in this event.

SORO NC will have a significant outreach opportunity, and can continue to collaborate closely with CD-10 on events that serve our stakeholders, as we have done many times in the past.

Total cost for the event is estimated around \$2300. This motion passed unanimously at the Outreach Committee meeting of 6/10/10.

## Proposed Motion

- I. That SORO NC fund \$1500 to 101 Enterprises Foundation to sponsor CD-10's Movies in the Park event at Reynier Park on July 9<sup>th</sup> 2010.

## Considerations

<b>Pro</b>	<b>Con</b>
Movies in the park make people happy	Cost
Large outreach opportunity	Not specifically SORO NC branded

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President pro-tem

**Terrence Gomes**  
Treasurer pro-tem

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## Board Notes

**Votes For:**

**Against:**

**Abstain:**

**Proposed Amendments:**



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# Motion to allocate \$150 for site security upgrade

**Agenda Item:** GB061710-7

**Date:** 17 June 2010

**Proposed By:** Doug Fitzsimmons

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## Summary

Apparently, several NC websites have been hacked recently via insecure log in. Adding a CAPTCHA field will help make that more difficult.

## Full Proposal

The SORO NC site log in will require a username and password for Board log in. However, a number of NC websites have been hacked in the past few months using similar log in processes.

Adding a CAPTCHA field—basically, requiring a user to type distorted characters that are difficult for a computer to interpret—will help make the site more difficult to hack. Adding the field is additional development, outside the original developer agreement.

## Proposed Motion

- I. To allocate \$150 for SASNet to add a CAPTCHA field to the SORO NC website.

## Considerations

### Pro

The cost is minor compared to the potential benefit.

### Con

This will not ensure that the site is hack-proof, although it will make it more difficult.

Recovering from an attack is expensive, embarrassing, and time-consuming. Preventative measures are always best.

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## Board Notes

**Votes For:**

**Against:**

**Abstain:**

**Proposed Amendments:**