



Motion Requesting Board Letter Opposing Early Start Variance for Project at 3233 Fay Avenue

Agenda Item: GB121008-3
Date: December 10, 2008
Proposed By: Sandra Willard

Summary

That the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council send a letter to the Planning Department of the City of Los Angeles stating its opposition to the Early Start Variance requested by Modative for their project at 3233 Fay Avenue, and to the project itself, listing the concerns detailed within the full proposal.

Full Proposal

This motion has been written by myself, representing the concerns of the Fay Avenue residents who attended the December 2 meeting of the Land Use Committee. Due to time constraints, the residents were not able to fully present their objections and concerns, nor were the Modative representatives able to address them in any way. Therefore, the Land Use Committee was unable to reach any decisions concerning the project. This motion is being presented so that the Board can reach a decision about the variance request prior to the City Planning hearing scheduled for December 17.

Modative, which came to the Board with the Venice Boulevard project, has purchased a three-lot parcel on Fay Avenue, a street between Venice and Washington Boulevards that is zoned RD2-1 and which contains a variety of single-family homes (mainly Spanish style), duplexes and two-story apartment buildings. Using the city's Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance, they wish to build the "Fay Avenue Art District Dwellings", consisting of seven units that will sell individually (not condominiums or townhomes).

The City Council passed the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance in late 2004 as a way of encouraging denser development in multi-family zoned areas. In order to do this, all yard setbacks were eliminated, with the exception of a five-foot setback from all properties not developed as small lot subdivisions. This means there is no front yard setback at all. A separation of only four inches between units is permitted. Height restrictions are based on the underlying zoning for the area (for R2 zoning, see attached PDF; the height limit for this area is 45 feet, or four stories).

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They are requesting an "Early Start Variance", so that they may begin construction on the project without waiting for the tract map approval, a process that could take over a year. Please note: this variance is only related to the start date; the setback and other code (not stylistic) issues being contested are covered by the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance.

The community's objections to the projects fall under the following categories:

1. Reduced setbacks

The project will have a 5-foot setback on the side and rear property lines, as determined by the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance--single family/multi-unit dwelling setbacks range from 5-15 feet. There are 7-10 foot front yard setbacks, instead of the normal 15-foot. There is a space of 4 inches between units. This puts the project dwellings closer to the existing dwellings and to the street, creating a more claustrophobic feel and creating privacy and light issues.

2. Increased Density

The project will create seven residential units on three lots originally zoned for six units. In addition, there is a reduction in open space. The community feels this increased density will adversely affect the street in terms of appearance and increased traffic/parking needs.

3. Height

The project will reach a height of 35 feet, or three stories. All the other buildings on Fay are one or two stories, making the development the tallest on the street. In addition, the resident directly north of the project is in the process of having solar panels installed on his house. His shading projections indicate that the units would block 80-100% of the sunlight to his roof for 70% of the year. The community again objects on privacy, light and air space issues, and feels this project will set a precedent that will attract other taller developments.

4. Aesthetics

The project has an extremely modern architectural style. It in no way matches any of the other structures on the block, particularly the Spanish style single family homes and duplexes.

5. Trash Collection

Because the proposed units are considered single family dwellings, they will each have their own City of L.A. bins--trash, recycling and greens, making a total of 21 bins on the street on trash collection day. The residents feel this



could create problems with parking, which is already limited. (If the complex uses a maintenance association for landscaping, the association will deal with greens, reducing the number of bins on the street to 14).

6. Parking

The project provides 14 spaces for the seven units. The eight spaces provided for the rear units are tandem (stacked). The six spaces in the front are narrow, measuring 7 feet, 6 inches wide. The community feels that the residents of the rear units will not want to deal with the inconvenience of tandem parking and put one car on the street, stressing the already limited parking situation. The front spaces are too narrow for larger SUV-ish vehicles, and again may result in more street parking.

Proposed Motion

That SORO NC write a letter to the Los Angeles Department of City Planning, stating its objection to the Early Start Variance requested by Modative for the proposed project at 3233 Fay Avenue, and to the project itself, based on the following criteria:

- I. Reduced setbacks
- II. Increased density
- III. Increased height
- IV. Aesthetics
- V. Trash Collection Issues
- VI. Inadequate parking

Considerations

Pro

Project will bring increased density to an already stressed street.

Project appearance is completely out of keeping with the rest of the street.

Height of the units will block sunlight to the house located on the north. Given the city's commitment to solar energy, residents seeking to reduce their carbon footprint should not be punished.

Such a project will accelerate development on the street--single family homes will become undesirable and only viewed as teardowns.

Con

Project density, setbacks and height follow existing city codes.

Los Angeles is filled with examples of modern architecture mixed in with Spanish, ranch, etc.

Modative has been a good neighbor in the past.

A much larger, taller apartment or condo building could go up instead.



Motion to Request Extension of Public Comment Period on the Museum of Tolerance Draft Environmental Impact Report

Agenda Item: GB121008-4
Date: December 10, 2008
Proposed By: Daniel Fink

Summary

SORO NC supports a request by stakeholder Susan Gans, on behalf of H.O.M.E. (Homeowners Opposed to Museum Expansion) for extension of the public comment period on the Museum of Tolerance Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

Full Proposal

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning has released the DEIR for the Museum of Tolerance expansion project. This DEIR totals 2,892 pages. The public comment period ends on January 7, 2009. To allow the public the opportunity for careful consideration and review of the DEIR, in light of the unusual circumstances (e.g., the numerous significant variances being requested from the zoning code; the significant amendments being requested in both the City's General Plan and the West Los Angeles Community Plan; the numerous and very radical changes being requested in the conditions of the current Conditional Use Permit governing the Museum's operations; the length of the filing; and the fact that the current comment period covers the very busy holiday season), the public comment period should be extended for 30 days, until February 7, 2009. SORO NC will send a letter supporting Susan Gans' request for an extension of the public comment period.

Proposed Motion

The SORO NC Board supports Susan Gans' request that the public comment period for the Museum of Tolerance DEIR be extended 30 days. A letter to this effect will be sent to Diana Kitching at the Los Angeles Department of City Planning. A draft of the letter is attached.

Considerations

Pro

Allows the public adequate time to review and comment on the project

Con

30 day delay in the project, which is currently scheduled for completion in 2011

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SORO NC Letter to LAPD & Mayor

Agenda Item: Letter Opposing Staffing Reduction at WLA Division of LAPD

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Jon Liberman

Summary

LAPD wants to reduce staffing at WLA from 241 to 215 in order to transfer officers to staff two new divisions. This will severely impact public safety in South Robertson communities.

Full Proposal

Send a letter voicing strong opposition to the proposed change. This letter will go to Chief Bratton and Mayor Villaregosa making the following points:

(a) SORO is not a light crime area. We need these officers in our community.

(b) The geographical area of coverage for the WLA Division is the largest of all current LAPD divisions. We are already stretched thin on coverage. Any further reduction will result in inadequate protection for our community.

(c) Depending on the shift there are at maximum only 5 or 6 cars to patrol the 65 square mile territory.

(d) Reduction in staffing could deplete staff of specialized officers such as burglary, gang unit & narcotics. This would result in a loss of institutionalized knowledge specific to West Los Angeles.

(e) The Citizens of LA were promised *increased* levels of police in exchange for imposition of an increase in the trash collection services. Since these fees are derived by taxation the reduction in staffing is contra to the promise of the city.

(f) Other means can be developed to staff these divisions that will not result in a reduction of services to this division.

Proposed Motion

- I. To approve sending a letter in accordance with the proposal shown above. (A copy of the proposed letter will be available prior to the vote on this motion.)

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Considerations

Pro

To keep the community protection at current levels.

We are paying for increased levels of staffing through increases to our trash collection fees. Any reduction in staffing constitutes taxation with no benefits to our community.

Con

None.

Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:



Motion for Yard Signs for CD-5 Candidates Forum

Agenda Item: GB121008-6

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Marjan Safinia

Summary

That SORO NC fund up to \$250 for yard signs to promote the 2009 Town Hall – a Candidates Forum for the Council District 5 seat.

Full Proposal

SORO NC's 2009 Town Hall event will be a Candidates Forum for the Council District 5 seat. The event will be held on Thursday 5th February 2009.

We propose the purchase of about 50 yard signs, at no more than \$250, to promote the event within the sections of our boundaries that fall under CD-5.

Proposed Motion

- I. That SORO NC fund up to \$250 for the purchase of yard signs to promote the 2009 SORO NC Town Hall event, a Candidates Forum for CD-5 to be held on 5th February 2009.

Considerations

Pro

Promotes better outreach for the event

Continues to promote SORO NC visibly through the community

Con

Cost

We spend a lot of money on yard signs.

Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:

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Motion to co-sponsor student art contest

Agenda Item: GB121008-7

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Marjan Safinia

Summary

That SORO NC co-sponsor with the 2009 SoRo Festival a student art contest on the theme of "Living Green". No SORO NC funds required.

Full Proposal

It is recommended that SORONC co-sponsor, with the 2009 SoRo Festival, a student art contest on the theme of "Living Green". This ties in nicely with the subject of our 2008 Town Hall.

No supplementary SORONC funds are required. This is an outreach opportunity for SORO NC within the community and the schools.

Proposed Motion

- I. That SORO NC co-sponsor the Living Green Student Art Contest with the 2009 SoRo Festival.

Considerations

Pro	Con
Enhanced SORO NC outreach into local schools	None.
Enhanced support for arts in the schools.	

Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:



Motion to correct Fresh Fruit on Fridays school allocations

Agenda Item: GB121008-8

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Marj Safinia

Summary

Reduce by \$2800 the previous allocation for Fresh Fruit on Fridays for Shenandoah Elementary School and allocate \$2800 to allow continuation of the program at Robertson Recreation Center and Canfield Avenue Elementary School.

Full Proposal

At its April 9, 2008 General Board meeting, the SORO NC Board considered a motion to extend coverage of the Fresh Fruit on Fridays program, then in place at Canfield Elementary School and Robertson Recreation Center, to also include Shenandoah Elementary School, for 20 weeks, at an estimated cost of \$6,720. The Board decided to table the motion (GB040908-4) until a more specific budget was presented.

At its May 14, 2008 General Board meeting, the SORO NC Board considered a revised proposal (GB051408-4), to cover the costs of continuing the program at Canfield Elementary School and Robertson Recreation Center and the costs of adding Shenandoah Elementary School to the program. A revised budget, provided by email to all Board members in advance of the meeting by Barry Levine, Chairman of the sponsoring Education Committee, provided the detail of the proposed allocation of \$6,720 across the three sites, with the coverage period decreased from 20 weeks to 13 weeks. On the basis of this information, the motion was approved (12-Y, 1-N, 3-A).

Thus the intent of the original motion was to cover all three schools, but the actual motion, which was submitted as documentation to DONE, mistakenly appeared in one place to specify all \$6,720 was intended for Shenandoah, and the minutes for the May 14, 2008 General Board meeting did not sufficiently document that the motion covered all three sites. Therefore, DONE only honored an invoice for \$3,920 from Shenandoah.

This motion corrects that oversight and assures that the original intention of the approved motion, i.e. to cover Canfield Elementary and Robertson Recreation Center, is fulfilled.

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Proposed Motion

South Robertson Neighborhoods Council will:

- I. Cap Shenandoah's allocation from GB051408-4 at the amount already paid out (\$3,920) to ensure no additional invoices covering Shenandoah are paid.
- II. Allocate up to \$2,800 for Fresh Fruit on Fridays at Canfield Elementary School and Robertson Recreation Center for 13 weeks.

Considerations

Pro	Con
Corrects an oversight in documentation.	None
Allows the intent of the approved motion to be fulfilled.	

Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:



Motion for inclusion of Neighborhood Councils in the City planning process

Agenda Item: GB121008-9

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Doug Fitzsimmons

Summary

SORO NC and the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is asking the City of Los Angeles to include neighborhood organizations in City planning efforts.

Full Proposal

In an effort to encourage the City of Los Angeles to better include Neighborhood and Community Councils in planning decisions that effect their communities, the following motions was drafted at the November 20 meeting of the WRAC, of which SORO NC is a member.

This motion is being considered by all member organizations in the WRAC, with the hope that by speaking with one, unified voice, our opinion will be heard.

Proposed Motion

- I. That Early Notification of all applications to the Department of City Planning, the Bureau of Engineering and to the Department of Building and Safety shall be sent to all impacted certified Neighborhood and Community Councils recognized by their Councilperson (hereafter, "council"), and the applicant shall be required to send notice, by certified RRR mail, to the applicable council, of all subsequent requests for modifications, adjustments, amendments, alterations, or revisions to the application.
- II. Planning and Building and Safety shall review all such applications, and such review shall include, prior to approval, compliance with all relevant Community Plans, Specific Plans, and Overlay Districts.
- III. With respect to all applications to Planning and Building and Safety for which a public hearing is not required, notice shall be sent to the applicable council of the terms of the proposed approval, no later than 10 calendar days prior to issuance of the approval, and consideration shall be given by the decision maker to any objections, comments, or questions submitted in writing by the applicable council during the 10-day period.

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- IV. Planning and Building and Safety shall each establish an ombudsman or community advocate who is accessible to officers of a council and whose responsibilities shall include facilitating access to Department personnel, procedures, and documents.

Considerations

Pro

Empowers the Neighborhood Council and allows us to better represent our constituency

A unanimous votes by all WRAC organizations will carry more weight

Con

The City may still not listen to us.

Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:



Motion to request accounting of 5117 parking and Quimby funds

Agenda Item: GB121008-10

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Doug Fitzsimmons

Summary

SORO NC and the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is asking the City of Los Angeles to provide full accounting of revenues from 5117 Parking and Quimby Funds.

Full Proposal

The City collects a fee from multi-unit housing developers for each residential unit they build to offset the costs of increasing the City's population density. Quimby funds are earmarked for Parks & Recreation, 5117 Parking for solving transportation issues. In the case of Quimby, the fee can range from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per unit.

Some neighborhoods feel they are not receiving the benefit of the funds they are entitled to.

This motion is being considered by all member organizations in the WRAC, with the hope that by speaking with one, unified voice, our opinion will be heard.

Proposed Motion

- I. That the Los Angeles City Council be requested to supply each Neighborhood or Community Council with an accounting of both 5117 parking funds, and Quimby Funds for its district.

Considerations

Pro

Hopefully will lead to a more equitable distribution of funds due to our community

A unanimous votes by all WRAC organizations will carry more weight

Con

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Motion to request moratorium on offsite and supergraphic signs

Agenda Item: GB121008-11

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Doug Fitzsimmons

Summary

SORO NC and the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is asking the City of Los Angeles to temporarily prohibit new offsite and supergraphic signs until a new ordinance can be drafted.

Full Proposal

The rapid proliferation of large-format and electronic signs in the City has taken community groups off-guard. The current sign ordinances were not drafted with these new formats in mind. The motion seeks to put a temporary hold on such signs until a new, more appropriate ordinance can be drafted.

This motion is being considered by all member organizations in the WRAC, with the hope that by speaking with one, unified voice, our opinion will be heard.

Proposed Motion

- I. SORO NC hereby supports adoption of an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) / moratorium as proposed by the City Planning Commission temporarily prohibiting the installation of all new offsite advertising signs and supergraphic signs, as well as prohibiting alteration to existing offsite signs and supergraphic signs, until a new offsite sign ordinance can be developed, adopted and implemented. There should be no exceptions that might weaken the enforceability of the moratorium.

Considerations

Pro

Allows the Council time to make informed decisions about the new sign formats

A unanimous votes by all WRAC organizations will carry more weight

Con

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Motion to request enforcement of intersection gridlock regulations

Agenda Item: GB121008-12

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Doug Fitzsimmons

Summary

SORO NC and the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is asking the City of Los Angeles to enforce its existing intersection gridlock regulations.

Full Proposal

While the City has found it both effective and profitable to implement "Tiger Teams" to clear "No Parking, Tow Away Zones" during peak hours, the city has been unable to control gridlock.

This motion is being considered by all member organizations in the WRAC, with the hope that by speaking with one, unified voice, our opinion will be heard.

Proposed Motion

- I. As gridlock is a major quality of life issue, the City of Los Angeles City Council is hereby requested to implement an enforcement mechanism and fine system to alleviate the constant gridlock in intersections in the City Limits.

Considerations

Pro

Should help with traffic issues on major thoroughways and intersections

A unanimous votes by all WRAC organizations will carry more weight

Con

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Board Notes

Votes For:

Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments:



Motion to request that Neighborhood Councils have the right to appeal City department decisions

Agenda Item: GB121008-13

Date: December 10, 2008

Proposed By: Doug Fitzsimmons

Summary

SORO NC and the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) is asking the City of Los Angeles to amend the existing working documents to allow Neighborhood Councils the right to appeal city department decisions.

Full Proposal

Currently, Neighborhood and Community Councils have little recourse when a City department makes a determination that the Councils disagree with. The motion seeks to create a mechanism for appealing those decisions.

This motion is being considered by all member organizations in the WRAC, with the hope that by speaking with one, unified voice, our opinion will be heard.

Proposed Motion

- I. That the Los Angeles City Council be requested to amend the working documents for Neighborhood and Community Councils, thereby allowing Neighborhood and Community Councils the right to appeal city department decisions.

Considerations

Pro

Allows the NCs to better represent their constituents' concerns with the City.

A unanimous votes by all WRAC organizations will carry more weight

Con

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Against:

Abstain:

Proposed Amendments: