

Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council General Membership Meeting of April 24, 2012

Present: Rosalie Preston (Chairperson), Delores Allmond (Vice Chairperson), Neodros Bridgeforth (Corresponding Secretary), Joan Jacobs (Treasurer), Ramon Montoya (District 1), Rey Paduani (District 3), Betty Hawkins (District 4), Llewyn Fowlkes (District 5), Marvin Bell (District 6), Gloria Christmas (District 8), Deborah Lee (Community Organization Representative), Kandee Lewis (Youth Representative), Leo Youngblood (At-Large Representative), and Eva Cooper (At-Large Representative)

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Chairperson Rosalie Preston

1) Public Comment: Deborah Lee reminded stakeholders that the Southeast Division's Clergy Council Walk along Figueroa Street will be Wed. May 30, with walkers gathering at 6:30 a.m. at the Mark Twain Branch Library, 9621 S. Figueroa Street. Walkers will hand out social services information to prostitutes, drug dealers, and others who are seeking a more positive life path.

A District 2 stakeholder who lives in an apartment along Redondo Beach Blvd. across from the new Gateway Crossroads Center said that she was concerned that with so many UEI College students now parking along the south side of Redondo Beach Blvd., she and other apartment dwellers will have no place to park except in the residential area to the south. If apartment dwellers park their vehicles in the alley behind their buildings to the south of Redondo Beach Blvd., then Parking Enforcement gives them tickets for parking there illegally.

Leo Youngblood expressed his appreciation for all of the work that Chairperson Preston does on behalf of the Neighborhood Council and asked for a round of applause.

District 5 stakeholder Gail Moore asked that further beautification efforts be made for the Vermont Street median which runs from 120th Street to Imperial Highway. Urban Forestry did plant a number of young pine trees there two years ago, but she would like to see it kept better weeded and more fully planted.

When asked how many had received the meeting flyer on their door handle or fence post as delivered by CIPS Marketing, there were a number of hands raised. Certain streets are skipped during the delivery process.

District 1 stakeholder Art Cramer remarked on the ongoing problem along Figueroa Street south of 168th Street and north of the 91 Artesia Freeway where he lives. The 18-wheeler truck traffic along the east side of Figueroa Street (City of Carson) has dramatically increased over the last year and a half and is incompatible with the residential uses on the west side of the street (City of Los Angeles). At times there are seventeen 18-wheeler trucks going by per minute. He also commented on the traffic and parking issues caused by the heavy usage of El Antojito Taco, 16717 S. Figueroa Street.

2) L.A. Police Dept.: Senior Lead Officer Hugo Valdez reported that there have been some crimes committed within the 18A97 car area, such as a car that was stolen when a woman loading groceries into the car left her key in the ignition. However, the suspects were caught within an hour. There was a grand theft auto at Gardena Blvd. and Vermont Avenue, the arrest of a gang member with a shotgun at Gardena Blvd. and Ainsworth. Athens on the Hill has recently been the location where a number of stolen cars have been left abandoned. And there have been a number of complaints about loud weekend parties.

3) L.A. Fire Dept.: No one was present to make a report.

4) Appointment of new member to the Planning and Land Use Committee: It was moved by Leo Youngblood, seconded by Joan Jacobs, and passed 13-0 to appoint Thomasina Curry of District 6 to the Planning and Land Use Committee.

Councilman Joe Buscaino: The 15th District Councilman, elected January 17 in the run-off election, stopped by as part of his effort to visit the meetings of all eight Neighborhood Councils located within the District. He said that he will do all that he can to support the work of the Neighborhood Councils.

Neighborhood Council Boards are elected, and he plans to use the Neighborhood Councils as advisors on key issues and service needs. It is important for the community to be involved with governance. Please visit his website www.la15th.com to get more information about his staff, office locations, issues, and services. He will be hosting a "Meet and Greet" on Saturday, May 5 from 8 to 10:30 a.m. at the Harbor Gateway Community Center, 802 W. Gardena Blvd. He said that he was glad to see that Planning Department staff were present to squash rumors that the City would be taking away homes as part of the Project RENEW overlay districts.

5) How the Project RENEW overlays will impact Districts 5, 6, 7, and 8: Lynell Washington, Project Manager for Project RENEW- a grant-funded initiative of the Los Angeles Department of City Planning and County of Los Angeles Health Department (with funding from the Federal Dept. of Health and Human Services), began by saying that there was some misunderstanding about Project RENEW and implementing it via eminent domain. Actually, Project RENEW is an initiative to encourage people to get out of their cars and walk or bicycle. It is the land use policy of the City to encourage development over time to make Project RENEW's goals work. For example, having to pass liquor stores while walking from home to retail destinations or the Green Line discourages residents from walking. The partners for this initiative were the Community Health Councils for outreach meetings and RAW International for design work.

For the three Green Line stations within the HGNNC boundaries, the Avalon, Harbor Freeway (Figueroa Street), and Vermont stations, the proposed changes are land use changes and not specific building proposals. The overlay districts would encourage the types of buildings to achieve the Project RENEW goals. Project RENEW went out and looked at the neighborhoods to see what changes were needed, such as to encourage more bicycle usage. There were three outreach meetings in March of 2011. Then three follow-up meetings outreach meetings after the plans were formulated, in February 2012. What the Project RENEW staff heard was that residents wanted more affordable housing, jobs, and more retail. A transit-oriented district, which Project RENEW is proposing for the areas around the three Green Line stations, encourages walking, biking, use of public transit, and provides a mix of retail and more dense residential units while providing a defined sense of space. It is also sustainable.

Under Project RENEW, which includes the Blue Line stations in Watts and along the Washington Street corridor, there are three types of neighborhood development plans, depending on the current zoning of the major streets: Neighborhood Village (with heights of 25 to 55 feet), Urban Village (with heights of 40 to 105 feet, which would not be used in the HGNNC area), and Hybrid Industrial and Industrial Preserve (which would not apply to the HGNNC area). The seven goals of the proposed Transit-Oriented District, which is a type of Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) are to 1) Create perceptibly safe transit neighborhoods that have daytime and nighttime commercial activity 2) Improve walkability near transit stations by enhancing pedestrian environments, 3) Complement the existing character of transit neighborhoods while maximizing the housing and retail potential of nearby stations, 4) Use health, recreation and retail amenities to improve local quality of life in transit neighborhoods, 5) Promote environmental sustainability through multi-modal transportation and resource- efficient design, 6) Create mixed-income communities as an alternative to displacement, and 7) Streamline the Environmental review process for development projects near transit stations that meet basic design requirements

Utilizing form-based development standards, the City Planning Department wants to discourage an oversupply of parking (providing less parking the closer a building is located to a Green Line station) and plans on a one-to-one replacement of any existing low-income housing which is demolished, with the current tenants being given first right of refusal for the newly created housing. The City will protect existing single-family home neighborhoods. "Low income" is dependent on the level of income and the income to qualify for such housing is set by the State of California. The rental of low-income housing is handled by the City's Housing Authority.

Alex Campbell, Project RENEW staff member, then explained that the proposed denser development would occur along major streets of Districts 6, 7, and 8. For example, along 120th Street, the zone is currently RD1.5 and this would allow apartment buildings of up to 45 feet in height. The City would then discourage the building of new single-family houses along these streets.

Some of the stakeholder concerns were that if the details of Project RENEW are e-mailed to the HGNNC and then forwarded, not everyone has e-mail access. Another stakeholder remarked that the proposal was 40 years too late for her and she is now too elderly and disabled to be able to walk to stores and public transit and the same applies to many in the audience. Another stakeholder pointed out that they have seen mixed use housing over retail in other areas and that the retail units on the bottom floor stand empty. Another stakeholder expressed concern about living on 115th Street, with an alley behind her house which separates her property from the apartments on Imperial Highway. If there are new, more dense units built along Imperial Highway, this will impact her home which is part of an R1-1 neighborhood. A stakeholder living on 119th Street near Figueroa wondered about the impact of overflow parking from the more dense developments along Figueroa on the streets of the adjacent R1-1 neighborhoods. Nancy Trojan, District 6 stakeholder, remarked that the zoning code currently does not require adequate parking for apartment buildings and that Project RENEW would actually encourage even fewer parking spaces for the affordable housing units.

Lynell Washington further explained that under Project RENEW a developer would buy a vacant property and would then be able to build to the zoned potential of that property. Project RENEW is only encouraging transit-oriented elements and includes design guidelines.

It was agreed that a further meeting was needed to see the current zoning and understand how the proposals would fit with the proposed new Community Plan updates.

(Leo Youngblood left the meeting at 9:05 p.m.)

6) Approval of the January 24 Membership meeting minutes: It was moved by Ray Montoya, seconded by Neodros Bridgeforth, and passed 12-0 to approve the January 24 General Membership meeting minutes as submitted.

7) Treasurer's report; approval of spending up to \$1,150 for lunch for 200 people for the South L.A. People's Convention on Sat. May 12: The Treasurer's report consisted of the summary of expenditures to date and the annual budget. It was moved by Llewyn Fowlkes, seconded by Delores Allmond, and passed 12-0 to approve the Treasurer's report.

Kokayi Kwa Jitahidi of the South L.A. Power Coalition asked for the Board to support the May 12 L.A. People's Convention by sponsoring the lunches for 200 attendees. It was moved by Neodros Bridgeforth, seconded by Llewyn Fowlkes, and passed 8-0 with 3 abstentions to approve spending up to \$1,150 for this purpose.

8) Report on HGNNC planning issues and fall Board election: After a hiatus caused by the City's budget woes, the South L.A. and Southeast L.A. Community Plan revisions are now moving forward. Details on these plans can be viewed at <https://sites.google.com/site/southlaplan> and <https://sites.google.com/site/seastlancp>.

The fall Board election will take place in October, most likely Sat. October 20.

9) Announcements: The 2nd Annual South Los Angeles People's Convention and Candidates' Forum will take place Sat. May 12 from 9:30 am to 3 pm, with registration beginning at 8:30 am. A free continental breakfast and lunch will be served. The Convention takes place at the Maya Angelou Community High School, 300 E. 53rd Street and will include workshops on public education, jobs, housing, re-entry/prison policy, immigration, and the upcoming November ballot tax proposals by Governor Jerry Brown and Molly Munger. The Convention is sponsored by the South L.A. Power Coalition.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes taken by Neodros Bridgeforth and Rosalie Preston