

**Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council
Planning and Land Use Committee May 23, 2024
Held via Zoom**

Present: Rosalie Preston (Vice Chair), Majenni Nixon (Secretary), Craig Kusunoki, Arvie Powell, Janeshia Robinson, Angela Springs and Luetta Watson

1) Welcome/call to order/roll call: Committee Vice Chair Rosalie Preston called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. followed by roll call, which determined that a quorum was present.

(Angela Springs entered the meeting at 6:41pm)

2) General public comment on non-agenda items that are within the Neighborhood Council’s subject matter jurisdiction: District 8 stakeholder Del Trent expressed her appreciation and thanks to the HGCNC for getting a light on an LADWP pole on Wadsworth south of 116th Place and assisting with other issues in her neighborhood.

3) Approval of minutes from April 25, 2024, meeting: It was moved by Luetta Watson, seconded by Craig Kusunoki and passed 6-0-0 to approve the minutes as submitted.

4) Possible comment letter on the Rexford warehouse/office building at 14400 S. Figueroa Street (LA City) and 400-422 W. Rosecrans Blvd. (LA County), with a recommendation to the HGNNC Board: For details of the proposal, see Rexford’s PowerPoint presentation from the April 25, 2024, PLU Committee meeting. The HGNNC letter, as currently drafted, would only support the redesign of the façade and landscaping of the office area at 14400 S. Figueroa Street, which is located in the City of Los Angeles; the rest of the project, which includes the warehouse and truck docks with entry from 400-422 W. Rosecrans, is in LA County, where the Neighborhood Council does not have standing. However, concerns about potential impacts to HGNNC stakeholders living within 500 feet of the project would be expressed as listed. The letter will also be sent to the Los Angeles County Planner overseeing the project, Elsa Rodriguez.

- The project falls under the County of Los Angeles Green Zones Program which seeks to “enhance public health and land use” and therefore a number of Rexford’s proposals relate to those requirements, such as having the exterior wall along Rosecrans Avenue at 12’ feet high (Green Zones requirement is 10 to 12’) and the trees and landscaping along Rosecrans Avenue
- Per the Green Zones Program, warehousing, trucking and manufacturing should be located at least 500 feet from residential uses. Some of the homes along Figueroa Street in HGNNC District 3 are less than 300 feet away, per Dr. Tom Williams, technical advisor to HGNNC
- The Los Angeles County reviewed the project on April 9th but it needed to be revised. Details of that review are not posted on the LA County Regional Planning website for public viewing.
- Because the project comes under the Green Zones Program, it has to get a conditional use permit (CUP) and so is not “by right.” Therefore, there will be a public hearing. The

remodeling of the office section at 14400 S. Figueroa Street is “by right” and is being overseen by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety.

- It would be preferable to have another use than trucking/warehousing at the 400-422 W. Rosecrans Avenue location, such as biotech, research and development, clean tech, and other non-trucking-related uses, in keeping with the HGNNC vision for the Figueroa business corridor.

Luetta Watson said that she opposes and does not support this project and thinks that the HGNNC concerns should be clearly stated and put on the record. She asked that the following be included as concerns:

- No air conditioning provided, which seems barbaric and similar to a sweatshop
- A bare minimum study on impact of noise and air pollution – all they have proposed is planting trees. No noise study/sound impact, no traffic study, and closeness of the homes on the west side of Figueroa Street
- Objection to the proposed 24/7 operation

Maj Nixon said that she agreed with Lu’s opposition points, specifically the bare minimum study on air pollution and traffic impacts, no noise study, and the location of homes within 500 feet of the project.

Angela Springs said that she agrees with the draft letter comments of concern for the impact on the residential area, including noise and truck impacts.

It was moved by Luetta Watson, seconded by Majenni Nixon and passed 6-0-0 to recommend that the HGNNC Board approve the revised draft comment letter on the Rexford warehouse/office building at 14400 S. Figueroa Street (LA City) and 400-422 W. Rosecrans Blvd. (LA County).

5) Presentation on the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance (CPC-2022-4856-CA; ENV-2022-4857-ND): Rosalie screen shared the PowerPoint provided by the Department of City Planning and pointed out highlights for new design standards from the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance. Department of City Planning reviewed this at the May 11 NC PlanCheck meeting. It is a more detailed and objective approach than the City’s previous design guidelines and covers new residential buildings with five units or more and also commercial, industrial, and hybrid industrial developments.

The Department of City Planning is proposing amendments to the City’s current 1996 Landscape Ordinance to create new Landscape and Site Design objective standards. The new Ordinance responds to emerging research linking public health outcomes with the built environment. Using a performance-based approach, the new Ordinance recalibrates the point-based system in place today to better link site design, climate resilience, livability, and strategies for environmental

design. In alignment with Mayor Bass' Executive Directive (ED) Number 7, the new Ordinance streamlines implementation and improves interdepartmental coordination.

Additionally, the Ordinance supports the provision of additional on-site open space through a Zoning Code amendment to encourage Outdoor Amenity Areas. Partially covered outdoor areas such as lattice roofs, terraces, or balconies would no longer be counted towards Floor Area, removing a barrier that exists today to providing shaded and functional outdoor areas.

The Landscape and Site Design Point System is organized into the following three Landscape and Site Design approaches: Pedestrian-First Design, 360 Degree Design, and Climate-Adapted Design

Under each design approach, objective design standards are further organized under nine topic-specific categories, accompanied by corresponding weighted point values. To comply with the Landscape and Site Design ordinance, projects must meet a total of 27 points; nine of which are Mandatory Standards and the remaining 18 which may be self-selected from a menu of Elective Standards. Additionally, a project must achieve three points in each of the nine categories listed below:

1. Pedestrian-First Design
 - 1.1 Pedestrian Circulation
 - 1.2 Quality Public Space Linkages
2. 360 Degree Design
 - 2.1 Context Sensitive Design
 - 2.2 Screened or Reduced Vehicle Parking
3. Climate-Adapted Design
 - 3.1 Climate Resilient Buildings
 - 3.2 Site Amenities
 - 3.3 Conservation
 - 3.4 Healthy Soil and Water Quality
 - 3.5 Biodiversity and Habitat

According to their studies, several strategies are specifically tied to positive health outcomes and all projects will be required to achieve at least eight Health Related Standards included in the total of 27 required points.

(Majenni Nixon left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.; Arvie Powell entered the meeting at 7:30 p.m.)

6) Reports on other planning and land use issues

a) Update on opening of the Weingart Willows – The grand opening date is still set for July (exact date TBD).

b) U.S. Department of the Interior funds to plug and remediate “orphan” wells -- Some exciting news on the oil well front. The US Department of the Interior is sending major funds to various states, including California, which will then distribute them to cities around the state. The funds can be used to plug and remediate so-called “orphan” or idle oil wells. The HGNNC will have a letter on the June 4 Special Board meeting agenda which asks Councilmember

McOsker to prioritize some of the money which comes to the City of LA for the idle wells in the HGNNC. There is one in the north part of District 4 and eight in District 5. There are also many others that were closed up, but that are probably leaking toxic gases.

c) Status of Arco gas station, 854 W. El Segundo Blvd.: Rosalie talked with owner Nancy Kaskas who said that they have been waiting since March 2024 for a response from LADWP on which switch gear to purchase and install in the equipment cabinet. The switch gear is needed to run the electrical system of the gas station. Rosalie will reach out to the LADWP Neighborhood Council liaison as well as Nicholas Chavez, CD 15 Field Deputy, to see if they can get LADWP to respond. The delay is costing the owners a monthly fee to Arco. The car wash will re-open later in the year, as final approval from Building and Safety is still pending.

d) Other Planning and Land Use issues: The HGNNC needs to write another letter to ask Councilmember McOsker to place interim controls on the oversized duplexes in Districts 7 and 8 on the R2 lots.

The HGNNC received an email from Michael Saghian, consultant for VMSCANN Inc., the owners of the other retail cannabis store at 11500 S. Vermont Avenue. They have been operating with State approval for about a year and now are applying for their City of Los Angeles approval through the Department of Cannabis Regulation. One of the new requirements for their approval is present to the Neighborhood Council. This location is in Council District 8, (Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson) and Field Deputy Laura Garcia.

7) Announcements:

Next meeting will be set June 27, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom (virtual meeting).

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes taken by Majenni Nixon, Secretary