WEST LOS ANGELES SAWTELLE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
Joint Planning and Land Use Management Committee and Board of Directors Meeting –
MINUTES
Tue., Aug. 20, 2019 – 7:15 PM
Felicia Mahood Senior Center (11338 Santa Monica Blvd. - Los Angeles, Calif. 90025)

1. Call to order:
   A. PLUM Committee Members in Attendance: Jay Ross, Jay Handal, Arman Ghorbani, Teri Temme, Tim Sweeney, Karim Wataghani, Galen Pindell: quorum achieved.
   B. Board of Directors in Attendance (Joint Meeting): Jay Ross, Jay Handal, Korie Schmidt, Arman Ghorbani, Galen Pindell: quorum not achieved.

2. Administrative:
   a. Selection of Officers:
      i. Chair: Jay Ross.
      ii. Vice Chair: Jay Handal.
      iii. Secretary: Teri Temme.
   b. Minutes: Jay Ross moved to approve the minutes from the July PLUM meeting, Timothy Sweeny, seconded.
      i. Motion to approve the July meeting minutes. 5 Yes (Ross, Teri, Karim, Galen, Arman) 0 No. Motion passed.

3. Public Comment (stakeholders and government agencies)
   a. Brian Paul: Neighbor of 1733-1737 S. Westgate Ave. project and former Board Member. For 80 years his property has shared a driveway with the Westgate project which provides access to two (2) rent control units behind the main house.
      Issues:
      1. Drainage: When developers increase grade, enforce mitigating the issues caused to the surrounding neighbors.
      2. Access: Prescriptive easement or not, you can’t deny property access.

4. Government/Agency Updates: None

5. Ex parte communications: Jay Ross - clarified that all communications mentioned were about PLUM scheduling, and he did not offer any recommendations.
   B. 11600-11618 Santa Monica apartment: Jessica Hencier, Craig Lawson & Co. – PLUM scheduling.
D. 1729 S. Barrington Ave. condominiums: Michael Jones, Sidney Jones Architects – PLUM scheduling

6. **Tasks:** Compilation of all projects in West L.A. and list of those who have presented to PLUM.

7. **Santa Monica Blvd. Overlay Plan:** Report- USC student Kevin Barrow (School of Public Policy).

8. **New Business:**
   a. 1733-1737 S. Westgate Ave. small lot houses project: Request to keep promise to allow for driveway of 1743 Westgate Ave. to encroach 6-18 inched onto their property, as part of verbal contract for entitlement support of their project.
   
   **Resolution:** The PLUM voted, 6-0-0, to recommend that the Board request the following and authorize the Chair to submit Community Impact Statements in the future:

   1. The City shall mandate that the developer of 1733-1737 S. Westgate Ave. abide by his verbal promise to provide driveway access for the south neighbor by moving the site’s new south fence location inward 8-12 inches from the south property line, per the testimony of Mr. Brian Paul.

   2. The City shall enforce the stormwater ordinances for the 1733-1737 S. Westgate Ave. project site that mandate mitigation of all stormwater flows and prohibit runoff onto neighboring properties.

   b. West L.A. Civic Center: Presentation and Open House held on Monday, August 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm at the Felicia Mahood Senior Center. Teri Temme attended. The County is exploring the feasibility of purchasing and redeveloping the WLA Courthouse property at Purdue Avenue and Santa Monica Blvd. The County has the first right to purchase the property at fair market value which is $35.8 M. Because the County does not have enough funding for the acquisition, they are looking to partner with a developer to secure acquisition financing. An RFI was sent and responses were received in June. They are now engaging with the community to inform and receive input about the redevelopment, another information meeting is set for Thursday, September 5 at 6:00 pm. The target date to select a developer is December 2019. The acquisition is slated for completion in August 2021. The property that the County is considering purchasing is a portion of the superblock, which goes from Corinth Ave. to Butler Ave. depicted in the photos below.
c. **Motion:** The city shall clarify which agency and department is responsible for enforcing prohibitions on truck staging in neighborhoods that block driveway access ad illegally park in the streets and block vehicle access.

**Resolution:** The PLUM voted, 7-0-0, to recommend that the Board request that the City clarify which agency or department is responsible for enforcing prohibitions on truck staging in neighborhoods, when they block driveway access and illegal park in the public streets and alleys and block vehicle access.

d. **Motion:** The City shall strictly enforce the posting of building permits with a 24-hour phone number for complaints, so they can be cited or resolved immediately.

**Resolution:** The PLUM voted, 7-0-0, to recommend that the Board request that the City strictly enforce the posting of demolition and building permits with a 24-hour phone number for complaints, so the contractor can be cited or the problem solved immediately.

9. **Continuing business:**

a. **1160-11618 Santa Monica Blvd (car wash site):** Demolition of car wash and restaurant and new construction of 5-story building with 100 apartments (9 affordable). On-menu density bonus incentives (for FAR of 3.5: 1 and 11-foot height increase). Class 32 CEQA exemption. 29,000 cy of dirt (2,700 trucks). 2 trees to be removed. DIR-2019-2757-DB-SPR. ENV-2019-2758-CE.

Public Comment of 1160-11618 Santa Monica Blvd:

1. Alexander Alberts: Concern is blocking view, parking, traffic, cost of living going up and commercial use on the property. 3 years resident - concerned citizen – detriment to community, pursuit of happiness. Parking – clogs up streets. Add to current traffic. Blocks sunsets. Thought it was 5 stories – now a roof level. Obstruction of views. Increased cost of living. Keep land for commercial use please.

2. Thomas Harkey: 1620 Federal Avenue – one question: max. stories. 4 stories – affordable housing you get another story. Very large to him. Biggest concern – traffic is absolutely brutal. Each year worse and worse. He lives with 5 people in his unit. 2 parking spaces, therefore 3 cars are on the street just for him. They can walk but older residents can’t. Personal - view of
sunset — their building is 3 stories. Pay that much because of the view — it will
be gone. Wants to save Benito’s too.
3. Tina Turbeville: Has lived on Federal Ave. for 30 years, parking has gotten
worse and worse. Since the Expo line, traffic has doubled. 2 spaces for
every unit is better. She has 2 spaces — works from home — tandem parking.
She was grandfathered in. Access on Federal — park in front — more of a
nightmare than it is already. Loves the car wash…
4. Brian Paul - issue with retail leaving — restaurants especially. Known for food
on Sawtelle.

Committee comments:
JH: has questions…is parking to code? Yes, no variances or amendments. Not a by-right — on
menu incentive — least discretionary classification. No retail because of grading. A small step-
down is fine — they could make it work. Did a traffic study — approved. More affordable units —
unlikely — too expensive. Target down the street has empty retail spaces, there is 12,000 sf of
retail across the street. Concerned about traffic — you don’t want restaurants. Huge housing
crisis. Greenhouse gases. No one wants to get out of their car. City frowns on car usage.
The City loses tax dollars when the City loses retail. Citizens lose services then. For example:
potholes not repaired, no tree trimming. City can’t afford to lose more taxes. Pedestrian traffic is
important: less crime if people are walking around. Restaurants will do better than retail.
Amenities are really needed. More parking is the real issue — the developer doesn’t want to go
down a level for more parking. Vision is to enliven Santa Monica — like Colorado Blvd in Old
Town. Can be a great place, no more restaurants on Sawtelle — its already too much at night.
We are concerned about parking on every single project that comes. Planning needs to be
changed for that — no power to change that here. What we need: affordable housing and less
$3K studios. 10% requested - its 9% now. What is more expensive — removing homeless people
from the property or affordable housing? And add 2,500 - 3,000 sf for community restaurant.
More parking will be required — 30 new spaces estimated — one more level down.
KW: Disappointed by no restaurants. No problem by height. Definitely wants a restaurant.
Target — blocked his view, so that is not a concern of his. He will vote no on anything that
doesn’t have retail.
KS: Everyone mentioned parking — City is trying to crush walkability: more density — get people
out of car — incentivize to take bus or train. Loss of view — agreed is a bummer. Traffic will
increase in the alley. E.V. ready parking is important. Concern that all residential, and no retail is
an issue! Setbacks are an issue a lot because it’s close to a 6-story proposed building to the west.
Setbacks are right on the sidewalk. Response: it is a directive from the City — build right up to
Street.
Armen — He would like to see 15% Affordable Housing, like other buildings. Low and moderate
okay — not all very low necessary. Pushing for 50% EV ready (conduits).
Tim — vacant units for 5 years.
Teri — save Benito’s!
Galen — dead space — 8 years on planning commission — mandated retail — a lot sitting vacant.
Client thinks his vision is correct.
Jay R. — wants soil trees — 7 now, the rest in pots. 36’” – 48” deep — new rules requiring 48” so
the trees can grow.
Resolution: The PLUM voted, 6-1-0, to recommend that the Board oppose the project as designed, recommend a design that includes the following, and authorize the Chair to submit Community Impact Statements in the future:

1. Retail on the ground level of Santa Monica Blvd., preferably restaurant.
2. 15% of total unit count shall be affordable (30-60% AMI).
3. A landscaped rear setback of 10 ft. with 48-inch box trees shall be planted in soil to allow sufficient root growth and canopy growth (planters limit root growth and tree size).

b. Motion for Elevate project (Target):
Resolution: The PLUM voted, 4-0-0, to recommend that the Board of Directors request that CIM Group explain why the design was changed to include a big box retailer (Target), to eliminate public open space on the northwest corner and in the lobby entrance area, and to eliminate street furniture and lush landscaping along Santa Monica Blvd. These land use and design elements were promised during the NC hearings. CIM failed to build the project according to the attractive pedestrian-friendly design with public open space that they promised the NC, and created an inadequate design for a big mixed-use project on a prominent commercial corridor. The loading zone is in the alley, instead of inside the parking garage, which may have been promised.

Facts and background:
1. CIM Group promised a lush environment with landscaping and a comfortable environment for pedestrians and the public.
2. CIM Group installed small trees of the minimum size in sidewalk right-of-way that was required by the City and no additional landscaping. No landscaping was installed on private property in any of the three frontages of Santa Monica Blvd., Granville Ave. or Westagate Ave.
3. CIM Group did not install benches, public furniture or fountains or other aesthetic amenities to encourage the use as a public gathering space.
4. CIM Group may have promised to place the loading dock inside the garage, to reduce loud noise projected at neighbors in a concrete canyon alley with no trees or greenery to muffle the sound.

Findings and justifications:
1. Santa Monica Blvd. is a prominent commercial corridor, and it should have excellent design, not the minimum design required by the city, which is inadequate and sterile.
2. Neighbors deserve quiet time during early morning hours, which is impossible with a loading dock on the alley with no doors or trees to muffle the very loud noise from trucks and unloading.

c. Design Standards. A guide for developers when they present their projects to this committee for review and citizen comment. A general guide – not all of the points will fit each project. Some of the items are in the code now, those items should be deleted. What is important to our neighborhood (open spaces, affordable units)? Reduce to one page if possible. Checkbox for alignment. Will discuss next month and take to the board for approval.
10. New Business for next month’s meeting:
   a. 2415 S. Barrington Ave.: Proposed 7-story apartment. TOC – depends on location – geography. Controversy. Rapid buses, trains, all kinds of requirements. Nice map of Tiers. TOC still being litigated?
      1. KS: Concern about building site plan being property line to property line with little open space at ground level.
   b. 1720 S. Colby Ave.: Proposed 5-story apartment.
   c. 1452 S. Butler Ave.: Proposed 4 units.
   d. Holiday Inn (Santa Monica Blvd. and Beloit Ave.): Proposed roof deck with alcohol service CUB.

11. Public Comment: None.
12. Member announcements: None.
17. Public Comment:
   A. Brain Paul, Alexander Alberts, Thomas Harkey, and Tina Turbeville

18. Government/Agency Update:
      i. Leasing of affordable units: CD11 to meet with HCID on establishing a
         clearinghouse for new units under construction. CD5 motion to be considered by
         Council.

19. Ex parte communications: Jay Ross
   A. 2415 S. Barrington Ave, apartment: Daniel Ahadian, Nur Development
      Consulting – PLUM scheduling for September.
   B. 11600-11618 Santa Monica apartment: Jessica Hencier, Craig Lawson & Co. –
      PLUM scheduling.
   D. 1729 S. Barrington Ave. condominiums: Michael Jones, Sidney Jones Architects
      – PLUM scheduling

20. Tasks:
   A. Compilation of all projects in West L.A. and list of those who have presented to
      PLUM.
   B. Santa Monica Blvd. Overlay Plan: Report- USC student Kevin Barrow (School of
      Public Policy).

21. New Business:
   2. 1733-1737 S. Westgate Ave. small lot houses project: Request to keep promise to
      allow for driveway of 1743 Wesgate Ave. to encroach 6-18 inch onto their
      property, as part of verbal contract for entitlement support of their project.
   3. West L.A. Civic Center: County to issue RFP for possible land uses.
   4. Motion: The city shall clarify which agency and department is responsible for
      enforcing prohibitions on truck staging in neighborhoods that block driveway access
      ad illegally park in the streets and block vehicle access.
   5. 1160-11618 Santa Monica Blvd (car wash site): Demolition of car wash and
      restaurant and new construction of 5-story building with 100 apartments (9
      affordable). On0menu density bonus incentives (for FAR of 3.5: 1 and 11-foot height
      increase). Class 32 CEQA exemption. 29,000 cy of dirt (2,700 trucks). 2 trees to be

Public Comment of 1160-11618 Santa Monica Blvd:
1. Thomas Harkey: Concern was parking, maximum story
2. Tina Turbeville: Concern was parking and traffic
3. Alexander Alberts: Concern is blocking view, parking, traffic, cost of living
   going up and commercial use on the property.
Urban Design report

Urban Studio: John Kaliski, Martin Leitner, architects

Report: Community Design Overlay plans can be used to encourage / mandate attractive and functional urban design on the main streets in many neighborhoods of urbanized Los Angeles, including West L.A. (Wilshire, Santa Monica, Olympic, Pico).

Design of Toluca Lake CDO plan was funded by the NC.

Design elements:
1. Buildings that face the street.
2. Density that is designed well (architectural aesthetics, massing/ articulation, varied setbacks by floor, window/doors, awnings).
4. Residential, if per code parking.
5. Townhouses are buffer/transition to houses.

Lessons:
1. Cannot use CDO to change Zoning/Land uses, best used for design-only issues.
2. Use as part of Specific Plan, which is a legally binding document that codifies land uses.
3. Must explicitly preserve R1 houses in order to implement the CDOs that introduce Residential and higher densities.
4. No transitions between Residential land uses are in code.
5. CD offices prefer business-like and constructive collaboration.
6. Defensive design works, and it can be part of a comprehensive plan to reduce crime.
   a. Elements include placing windows/doors/entrances at ground level to allow for “natural surveillance” and promote activity along the street frontage.
   b. Parking should be “wrapped” by residential uses on the ground floor.
      Ground floor parking along the frontage creates dead spaces and allows criminals to loiter and burglarize cars and buildings.
7. Wide sidewalks are important to stimulate pedestrian activity, and should be at least 12 ft., preferably 15 ft. wide.
Letter from neighbor

Gloria Campbell
Wed 11/28/2018, 7:02 AM

I am a long-time resident/homeowner in West Los Angeles. My schedule conflicts with most of the WLASNC board and PLUM meetings so I'm sending this since I can't be there in person. Perhaps it is appropriate to read at this week's meeting.

I completely understand how popular our neighborhood is with developers and recognize the need for additional housing, especially affordable housing. HOWEVER, I'm looking to the Neighborhood Council and CD 11 to be leaders in approving projects that enhance our neighborhood. As I look at the minutes of the meetings and talk to people who attend meetings it appears that the WLA Neighborhood Council consistently approves projects without requiring/recommending any changes and improvements. That wasn't always the case.

It is critical that we retain and, hopefully increase, the number of trees and the amount of green space. As we learn more about climate change, we know that EVERY effort needs to be made to make sure there are trees that can grow to maturity and grass available for children and pets. All of these green efforts can make a difference in terms of air quality, air temperatures and providing quality of life for the residents.

Requiring set-backs it so important for open space and to maintain/improve the neighborhood's character for all of us, including the people living in the new units. Same with height limits, step backs and even simple perks like balconies or decks. Working closely with developers to maximize the number of affordable housing units in any given project can make a real difference.

A recent example of a project that could have/should have had some recommendations from the NC is the 11261 Santa Monica six-story project. AND, if I remember correctly, PLUM had some solid recommendations for the Whole Foods/apartment project at the old Von's space that were not made part of the NC's approval.

I understand that the Council is advisory but we need you/expect you to listen to our concerns and stand up with constructive improvements that can make the WLA/Sawtelle the neighborhood the best it can be. If the Council and CD11 act as leaders, the developers will learn to create projects that "work" with the neighborhood as well as within their budgets and timelines.

Gloria G. Campbell