

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by WNC Chair Terri Tippit and LUC Chair Barbara Broide. WNC LUC members present: Barbara Broide, Joseph Roth, Jay Jacoby.

Attendees were welcomed, meeting plans reviewed, and meeting location logistics shared. It was announced that sign-ups for those interested to speak during the public comment period were being taken on a sign-up list accessible to all at the entry area to the meeting.

2. PRESENTATION: Representatives of the Council District 5 office were introduced and the floor was turned over to Deputy District Director Fernando Morales who gave a presentation with slides on the proposed interim housing project planned for the LA City Municipal Parking Lot 707 which includes a commercially zoned lot at the northwest corner of Pico and Midvale and a second lot zoned R1 across the alley.

Mr. Morales explained that the project is proposed as an interim program for a ten-year timespan and will consist of 30 (now 33) modular housing units produced by LifeArk in a manufacturing process using molds. Each unit would have its own bathroom “en suite”, sleeping area, closet and is sprinklered. The project would place male residents on the Pico side of the project and females north of the alley. There would be an internal outdoor courtyard on the Pico side where meals could be served. Renderings of the project layout are available to be viewed.

Following Mr. Morales’ presentation representatives of LA Family Services, the organization selected by CD 5 to operate the proposed project were introduced: Stephanie Klasky-Gamer, President and CEO of LA Family Housing and Kimberly Robers, Chief Programs Officer. Ms. Klasky-Gamer gave an overview of her agency’s 40 year background, a “full-service non-profit” and showed supporting slides. She referred to their website and indicated that over 13,000 clients were served last year with 2600 moving into permanent housing. She cited a 97% retention rate (later questioned in public comment). She stated that “we know that people end homelessness when they have a home.” She indicated that they love the LifeArk design model selected and that it would be the third modular construction project that they have been involved with and that they operate 31 properties with 800 units of interim and permanent supportive housing, with 9 developments coming. Their office headquarters is located in North Hollywood and she invited the public to visit them there. She indicated that the location selected is in close proximity to resources and services.

Ms. Roberts talked about their service model across the full continuum from street work to case management working to link clients to available resources. Interim housing is meant to be the transition to help stabilize residents and help get them to a permanent home. She indicated that the Midvale Pico location is to be staffed by 2 case managers and 1 security guard “to serve the larger community.” The goal would be to move the residents as quickly as possible with housing navigation support. Mental health clinicians are to be available to residents (on site and/or in the community). Immediate care will rely on local ERs. Security is meant to do bag checks when the residents enter the facility. Pet services will also be available.

Following the presentations there was a review by staff of the most frequently asked questions. The overview included information about participant intake, availability of open spots, what happens when residents cannot meet the rules established, where are the people coming from (Pico corridor, Westwood, Exposition area, and a little further west), hours of operation (24 hour site with comings and goings permitted at any hour), what would result in termination of residency, status of the project moving forward, safety and security measures for the community, what do folks want related to security, what does the 1000 foot enhanced enforcement area actually mean, what kinds of additional resources can be guaranteed, community involvement/mechanisms for input.

PUBLIC COMMENT: See list of sign ins. 46 people signed up to speak during public comment, with representation of local residents and businesses, and homeless advocates.

Of those who spoke, the following summary indicates the direction of the comments made: 34 spoke in opposition to the project, 6 spoke in favor, and 6 speakers made either general comments or posed questions or notes do not exist to properly record their position. Of the 40 comments recorded, 34 represents 85% of those comments in opposition and 15% in support. Notes indicate that of those voicing support, half (3) self identified as having attended the meeting from out of the area (DTLA, Hollywood, Hancock Park).

During testimony, a community member and residential realtor presented an available option for an interim housing project in the area that offers 26,000+ square feet of warehouse space sprinklered, wired and with plumbing already accessing the buildings, across five structures within the WNC area at 1977 Sepulveda Blvd. That location is available for lease or purchase and the CD 5 staff were invited and urged to check it out as a much better location that can house significantly higher numbers of individuals – both for interim and permanent housing. The site was described as large enough to host permanent supportive housing AND interim housing as well as Safe Parking should it be desired and was said to carry with it none of the negative impacts on adjacent residences or businesses. During public comments, the validity of the LADOT parking survey and its conclusion that the lot is “underutilized” was questioned.

Following public comment, Fernando Morales again took the floor to address some of the points raised. Mr. Morales responded to concerns about parking by indicating that the CD office is looking for replacement parking. Concerns were voiced about proximity, ADA compliance, and long-term availability given that the project is being proposed for 10 years.

Contract status and details of the contract not shared as there currently is no contract for services. Community interest in contract review: “it will be shared as soon as it is known.” Council approval for “exploration of a contract” will be sought to start the process. Morales indicated that the location “is not an acute treatment center” and that it will not remain open if it does not work.” “If it does not work, it will be closed.” He noted that homeless encampments will not be cleared so long as there are not valid options for housing. Regarding what keeping the area around the project open clear means, he responded that “any elements are up for conversation.”

Following the response to public comments, LUC Committee members had the opportunity to make their own comments. Jay Jacoby spoke, followed by Joseph Roth and Barbara Broide. Questions were raised specific to understanding the review and approval process. In concluding, Mr. Morales stated that “this project is moving forward.”

Ms. Broide reminded attendees that any additional questions could be recorded on the easel and will be given to the CD 5 office for response. Earlier Q & A docs are available on the WNC and HOA websites. No call for the committee to vote and forward a recommendation to the WNC Board was made. The project will be heard in full Westside Neighborhood Council at a future date.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: No speaker cards were received for item #3.

4. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Ms. Broide.