**North Westwood Neighborhood Council**

**Special Full Board Meeting**

**May 27th, 2020 from 7:00 to 9:30pm**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call-to-order and roll call (2 minutes)**

* Call to order at 7:04 pm. Peters, Skiles, Russel, Trifunovic, Ranadive, Lewis, Arfin, May, Ahmed, Clinco, Arciniega, Crummy, Navab present. Quorum met.

**2. Announcements (10 minutes)**

* Russel
  + City Clerk’s office has finalized a process for allowing the roll-over of excess funds. Board can “encumber funds” by voting to put an expense to a vendor on a list. Those earmarked funds will be rolled over the next year but can only be spent as designated. Far Out Fest and WestCal Academy are refunding their NPGs, Friends of the Westwood Library was unable to receive it because the library mailbox was closed. Board still looking for NPGs, Budget Committee doing outreach for non-event NPGs.

**3. Multiple Agenda Item Comment Period. (Up to 3 minutes per speaker)**

* Steve Sann
  + Hostile architecture not a major issue for people experiencing homelessness in Westwood. Village benches part of a streetscape approved by the board of public works, cost over $1,000 each. Difficult to commandeer hotels, need sign-off from lender. City not yet occupying half of the rooms available through Project Roomkey. Important to outreach to affected stakeholders before making a decision on slow streets. Street repairs already underway ex. On Sunset, but the window for accelerated subway construction is closed.
* Furkan Yalcin
  + Why exempt bus stop benches from a motion? Please clarify when that item is discussed.

**4. General Public Comment (Up to 2 minutes per speaker)**

* Steve Sann
  + Significant business impacts and closures due to coronavirus. Before making a decision that would impact businesses, consult with business community. Stan’s Donuts, 800 Degrees, Flame Broiler, Helen’s Cycles, Victoria’s Secret, American Vintage, Le Pain Quotidien, others closed. Businesses harmed by online summer classes at UCLA, potentially fall quarter.

**5. Discussion regarding “Hostile Architecture” and policing of community members experiencing homelessness and possible council resolution. (30 minutes)**

* Lewis
  + Unhoused people are community members. In 2019, homeless count found 142 in Westwood. Approximately 50-50,000 individuals experiencing homelessness in LA County, increased 16% from 2018 to 2019. Shouldn’t make the living conditions of unhoused people any harder. Daily Bruin article explained how hostile architecture targets unhoused community.
* Peters
  + Transportation and Safety Committee recommended that bus stop benches be excluded because homeless people sleeping on them might create a perception of danger and decrease transit ridership. Bench dividers in Westwood force people to sleep upright between dividers or on the ground, neither is a public good.
* Ahmed
  + Important to discuss stigmatization and marginalization of homeless people. Hostile architecture is a symbol of marginalization and exclusion.
* Trifunovic
  + Who would regulate uses of hostile architecture?
* Skiles
  + Council regulation would signal for the future that we oppose hostile architecture without a good purpose.
* Lewis moves that the NWWNC adopt the following resolution:
  + WHEREAS the City of Los Angeles generally and North Westwood specifically are in the midst of a homelessness crisis.
  + WHEREAS dividers on public benches and public architecture serve as hostile infrastructure and prevent people experiencing homelessness from sleeping in a way that greatly impedes on their quality of life and sometimes makes public furnishings uncomfortable for people who aren’t experiencing homelessness as well.
  + BE IT RESOLVED the North Westwood Neighborhood Council recommends the removal of dividers from benches and public spaces in Westwood Village, with the exception of those at bus stops, which prevent people from sleeping on those benches.
  + BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NWWNC requests that, once the city of Los Angeles’s current bus stop contract with JC Deceaux expires in 2021, the Los Angeles City Council put forth an open RFP for a bench vendor with consideration to a vendor that will not utilize this design.
  + BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NWWNC encourages the City of Los Angeles and any public domain in North Westwood to minimize the use of dividers on planters and seating areas in recognition that many people experiencing homelessness unfortunately have no other place to sleep.
* Peters seconds
* Clinco
  + There used to be a homeless woman who slept in an alcove for his restaurant which hurt business. Should take a more proactive approach to homelessness, finding them shelter. What kind of message does this send to business owners? Motion is hostile to the business community because it elevates homeless above paying customers. Council should instead state support for homeless shelters in or near Westwood.
* Trifunovic
  + Definition of hostile architecture is too vague and open to interpretation, could create problems for business owners at the design review board . 80% of this board are not business owners.
* Skiles
  + Mission of LADOT, Metro, and Caltrans is to promote transit. If they feel that having bus shelters with dividers creates an environment in which multiple riders can sit and feel safe, that is good. Mission of businesses, represented by the BID, is to function and succeed. No affirmative requirement to provide homeless people a place to sleep. City of LA has no specific mission, is supposed to represent all people, should be providing for people experiencing homelessness to sleep comfortably.
* May
  + Divided benches are hostile to everyone, uncomfortable. A larger person may not be able to sit comfortably on a divided bench.
* Arfin
  + Hostile architecture is intentional, hostile by design. If benches aren’t available, people will sleep on the ground or on ledges. While solving shelter issue, shouldn’t be hostile as a board and community.
* Crummy
  + This resolution does nothing to address root problems or encourage a solution. This would privatize public space for a small segment of the community which is hostile to the rest of the community. Why exclude bus stop benches for a perception of danger but allow other benches to seem dangerous? People shouldn’t have to sleep on benches.
* Skiles
  + Can’t tell people that they can’t be anywhere, but society has the right to say people can’t be in some specific cases ex. We can say you can’t sleep on the 405. Question is whether or not we believe homeless people should be in the business district.
* Motion carries 10 yeas to 3 nays

**6. Discussion and possible resolution and CIS concerning Project Roomkey, providing shelter for Los Angeles community members experiencing homelessness in hotel rooms, motel rooms, and trailers, and whether the City of Los Angeles should commandeer the rooms of hotels that are unwilling to participate. (25 minutes)**

* Ahmed moves that the council pass the following motion and authorize the president to file a CIS with respect to Council File 20-0478
  + North Westwood Community Impact Statement
  + Support: Council File 20-0478 Expanding Project Roomkey Efforts in L..A. City
  + The North Westwood Neighborhood Council expresses our support of Project Roomkey, a collaboration by the state, the county, and LAHSA that plans to secure 15,000 hotel and motel rooms for unhoused populations across LA County during COVID-19. As of May 15, 2020, the county has only secured 3,200 rooms.
  + Project Roomkey, first and foremost, is a demonstration that we value the livelihoods of those who may suffer the greatest impacts from this pandemic in our shared city. Secondly, the initiative is necessary to minimize the spread of COVID-19 *everywhere* and is more effective from a public health lens than solely increasing and maintaining handwashing stations or expanding intake at recreation centers. The closely packed shetlers have already demonstrated widespread and rapid transmission, resulting in some shelters with more than 35% positive COVID-postiive cases, a concern for housed and unhoused community members aliked. Hotels and motels have lost significant revenue due to the pandemic, but can earn income from leasing rooms. The Federal Emergency Management Agency will reimburse 75% of their costs and their solvency will benefit our City Treasury.
  + We urge our City Councilmembers to do everything in their power to secure vacant rooms at hotels across the City, especially in downtown L.A., near the epicenter of the homelessness crisis. We are in a circumstance that measures the humanity and character of our City officials and citizens. We ask that your actions display your commitment to both the represented and underrepresented members of our society.
* Motion carries 8-5

**7. Discussion and possible resolution urging that the City of Los Angeles accelerate road repaving during Covid in a manner consistent with implementing the bike lanes, bus lanes, and pedestrian improvements called for in the 2035 Mobility Plan. (25 minutes)**

* Skiles: Transportation and Safety Committee recommended the passage of Streets for All’s recommended resolution
* Michael Schneider, Streets for All
  + ADAPT: Adjusted Deployment to Accelerate Paving in High Traffic Corridors. In 2016, LACC passed a 2035 Mobility Plan promising freedom of choice with new bus and bike lanes with bus lanes, bike lanes, protected bike lanes. To save money, LA changes street configurations ex. adding bus/bike lanes when they need to be repaved. StreetsLA paves streets, LADOT stripes streets. ADAPT is an effort to prioritize repaving major streets during COVID-19. Makes sense, but no commitment from the city to implement the bus and bike lanes on the mobility plan during or after ADAPT. StreetsLA which paves streets, moves quickly but LADOT community outreach moves slowly. Because the community outreach process can’t move as quickly as repaving, city may leave the street configurations as they are, locking us into car culture for 25+ years. This would make us miss our Green New Deal commitments, lock us into poor air quality and gridlock for decades. Restriping a street after the fact can cost up to $1 million/mile, impossible in our upcoming era of austerity. The city must commit to implementing the Mobility Plan while repaving or otherwise delay repaving.
* Skiles: Transportation and Safety Committee voted unanimously to recommend the passage of the resolution
* Skiles moves that the NWWNC adopt the following resolution:

TO: Seleta Reynolds, General Manager, LADOT

Adel Hagekhalil, General Manager, StreetsLA

Eric Garcetti, Mayor, City of Los Angeles

Councilmember Koretz

*Whereas emissions from cars are the largest contributor to poor air quality and climate change in Los Angeles;*

*Whereas Los Angeles has one of the highest rates of childhood asthma in the country and gridlock costs our economy $19 billion per year;*

*Whereas the average Angenelo spends 168 hours per year stuck in traffic;*

*Whereas the Los Angeles City Council adopted a “2035 Mobility Plan” in 2015;*

*Whereas the City’s normal modus operandi is to implement street reconfigurations (such as adding bike or bus lanes) while repaving a street;*

*Whereas COVID-19 has resulted in a dramatic reduction of vehicle traffic in Los Angeles;*

*Whereas the Bureau of Street Services (StreetsLA) has chosen to take advantage of the drop in vehicle traffic to accelerate the repaving of major streets in the City through the “ADAPT” program;*

*Whereas the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has responsibility to stripe the street and therefore choose how the space is used;*

*Whereas LADOT is responsible for community outreach and generating the necessary political will to make changes to our streets (such as implementing bus or bike lanes);*

*Whereas LADOT cannot keep up with the pace ADAPT is moving, resulting in streets on the Mobility Plan being repaved without the plan being implemented;*

*Whereas it is expensive and unrealistic during austerity that the City will go back and add bus or bike lanes to streets that were recently striped before they have to be repaved again (potentially in decades);*

*Whereas Mayor Eric Garcetti issued an Executive Directive on February 10, 2020, instructing city departments to “deliver more and better bus transit” “activate streets” with more active transportation options and “prioritize the Right-of-Way” fulfilling commitments under L.A.’s Green New Deal;*

*Whereas bus lanes could help provide for more frequent and efficient buses, helping to reduce crowding post COVID-19;*

*Whereas a comprehensive bus lane and bike lane network could dramatically reduce single occupancy vehicle use and traffic congestion;*

*Whereas post COVID-19 transit riders that can afford to may opt to buy cars for fear of getting sick, with no good alternative available to them, increasing gridlock;*

*Whereas Los Angeles’ streets cannot support the normal vehicle traffic volume even at today’s car ownership rates;*

Therefore be it resolved that the North Westwood Neighborhood Council requests that the City implement the 2035 Mobility Plan (including any bus or bike lanes as specified in the plan) when repaving streets under the ADAPT program (and after the ADAPT program), or delay such repaving until such a time that the 2035 Mobility Plan can be implemented.

* Russel seconds.
* Motion carries unanimously

**8. Discussion and possible resolution requesting that Los Angeles Department of Transportation establish a "slow streets" program in Westwood for the duration of the city's stay-at-home order, to promote more walkable streets at a time when there’s less traffic and more need to get exercise while maintaining social distancing. (20 minutes)**

* Skiles moves that the NWWNC request the following slow streets program for Westwood,
  + Street Segments:
    - BROXTON AV: LE CONTE AV to WEYBURN AV - 90024
    - BROXTON AV: WEYBURN AV south of the municipal parking structure to KINROSS AV - 90024
    - KELTON AV: GAYLEY AV to OPHIR DR - 90024
    - KELTON AV: WILKINS AV to OHIO AV - 90024
    - LANDFAIR AV: GAYLEY AV to MIDVALE AV - 90024
    - LANDFAIR AV: MIDVALE AV to OPHIR DR - 90024
    - LANDFAIR AV: ROEBLING AV to GAYLEY AV - 90024
    - LE CONTE AV: GAYLEY AV to LEVERING AV - 90024
    - LEVERING AV: VETERAN AV to 330' S/O VETERAN AV - 90024
    - LEVERING AV: 330' S/O VETERAN AV to KELTON AV - 90024
    - LEVERING AV: LE CONTE AV to GAYLEY AV - 90024
    - MIDVALE AV: WILKINS AV to OHIO AV - 90024
    - OPHIR DR: KELTON AV to VETERAN AV - 90024
    - STRATHMORE DR: GAYLEY AV to LANDFAIR AV - 90024
    - STRATHMORE DR: KELTON AV to VETERAN AV - 90024
    - Number of Intersections Impacted: 25
    - Council District: 5
    - Neighborhood Council District: NORTH WESTWOOD NC
    - Total Street Mileage: 1.21 Miles
  + Peters seconds
  + Motion carries 11 yeas, 1 nay

**9. Discussion and possible approval of April 2020 monthly expenditure report. (7 minutes)**

* Russel moves to approve the April 2020 monthly expenditure report, Skiles seconds.
* Motion carries unanimously

**10. Adjournment at 10:02 pm**