

**MINUTES
EASTSIDE WORKING GROUP
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
JUNE 28, 2016
6:35 P.M.**

**COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Garen Srabyan.

A. Pledge of Allegiance
Garen Srabyan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Reminder to Speak Clearly Into Microphone and to Turn Off All Cellular Phones and Pagers

Working Group Members and public were reminded to speak clearly into their microphones to accommodate the public record tapes and the hearing-impaired.

C. Roll Call

Working Group Members present:
Alexander Bazley, Marina Berkman, Justine Block, Chad Blouin, Carlos Florez, Emily Gable, Tod Hallman, Brian Keith Holt, Steve Martin, Dani Shaker, Jesse Slansky, Agassi Topchian

Working Group Members absent:
Rose Disarno, Jared Miesler, Neal Zaslavsky

Staff present:
Bianca Siegl, Long Range and Mobility Planning Manager
Garen Srabyan, Associate Planner
Elizabeth Savage, Director of the Department of Human Services and Rent Stabilization
Peter Noonan, Housing Manager
Danny Casillas, Administrative Specialist III

D. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Approve minutes, Working Group meeting of May 24, 2016

Moved:

Second:

Aye: Alexander Bazley, Justine Block, Chad Blouin, Rose Disarno, Carlos Florez, Emily Gable, Tod Hallman, Brian Keith Holt, Steve Martin, Jared Miesler, Jesse Slansky, Agassi Topchian, Neal Zaslavsky

Abstain: Marina Berkman, Dani Shaker
Motion passed.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the HPC survey

Michael Wojtkielewicz, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the automated parking garage and green space usage.

3. A. Housing and Future EWG Meetings Discussion

Following a brief survey, the EWG discussed their views and ideas on housing on the Eastside. Many different comments were presented and there did not appear to be a consensus on the desired future type, amount of level of affordability of housing. Several recommended programs were identified. A brief list of the comments are as follows:

- The EWG stressed the importance of preserving older buildings and rent stabilization. Most members felt that this was important.
- There was a discussion about condo development for wealth accumulation vs development of more rental units.
 - o Some disagreement among EWG members about which would be better.
 - o A comment was made that there are too many apartments supporting low income housing, not enough single family home development. Single family housing should be encouraged on the Eastside.
 - o It is difficult for people to enter the ownership market, but wealth accumulation is important.
- o Perhaps condo development would be preferred if there was down-payment assistance available
 - o A question was asked about whether the City could push developers to build condos.

- There were comments that a diversity of housing types is best for the Eastside.
- The level of affordability of housing was a major concern for all EWG members.
 - o There is a housing affordability crisis in the City; housing is too expensive and few people can afford to live in the City.
 - o The crisis is a regional one but particularly bad in a place like West Hollywood because of its popularity.
 - o Policies not mutually exclusive. Can create more affordable housing while also providing housing to wealthier residents
 - o Should encourage smaller unit development to create affordability
- The zoning code was identified as an issue for housing because it impacts the design of buildings, the number of units and the level of affordability. This includes the maximum density requirement, FAR that limits the number of units, and parking requirements.
 - o A recommendation was made to examine zoning requirements to be more flexible.
- A recommendation was made to identify programs to help younger tenants to enter the housing market. Other EWG members said that this would be difficult to control.
- The City should continue to look at incentives for landlord to make updates to their buildings. Code enforcement plays a key role in this. There was concern that there is less effort to maintain units on the Eastside than in other areas of the City.
- Continue to develop programs to support existing tenants since long term tenancy because that creates a better community
- Section 8 housing was discussed. The number of units with section 8 vouchers is on the decline.
- Recommendations were made to provide more special needs housing, especially for gay seniors, veterans
- Berkeley Rent Stabilization program was mentioned as a model to following (income model) for allowing renovation to existing buildings.
- Concerns were raised about corporate housing and Airbnb, especially in new buildings. This is driving prices up. Recommendations were made to provide better code compliance and to develop new rules against this type of tenant.
- The population growth in the City was discussed and there were questions about whether growth should be encouraged or slowed.

Michael Wojtkelewicz, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the origin of the City.

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about saving the mixes of housing through Historic Preservation.

Chuck Fisher, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the subsidizing of section 8 units.

Michael Dolan, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the importance of inclusionary housing.

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the population goal, density and perhaps a moratorium on new buildings.

4. WORKING GROUP MEMBER COMMENTS

Blouin

- Stricter and against pro-active code enforcement

Bazey

- Question of population growth

Gable

- Put policies in place to preserve one area, while encouraging density growth in others.

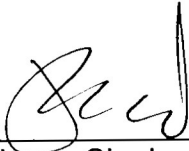
5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about stricter code enforcement, voluntary rent stabilization and parking problems.

6. ADJOURNMENT

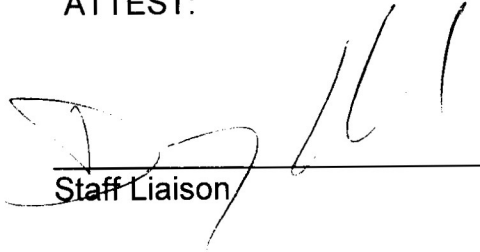
Action: The Eastside Working Group adjourned at 9:03 p.m. until the next meeting on July 26, 2016, 6:30 p.m., West Hollywood City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, Community Conference Room West Hollywood, California 90069

APPROVED BY MOTION OF THE EASTSIDE WORKING GROUP THIS 26TH DAY OF JULY 2016.



Bianca Siegl

ATTEST:



Staff Liaison