

CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

DECEMBER 15, 1994

West Hollywood Park Auditorium
647 N. San Vicente Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90069

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Commissioner Litz at 7:00 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Litz.

B. Roll Call: Behr, Crowe, Fischer, Jones
Litz, Richmond, Smith

Others Present: Gay Forbes, Director; Lisa Heep, Planning Manager; Tim Foy, Associate Planner, Sarah Lejeune, Sunset Specific Plan Project Planner; Kris Miller-Fisher, Urban Design Consultant; Lucy Dyke, Transportation Manager; Angie Reynolds, Transportation Planner; Jody Hidey, Staff Assistant; Think Tran, Staff Assistant.

Approval of Agenda:

Action: To pull Item IV. B, C, and D, approve the Consent Calendar and approve the Agenda as revised.

Motion: Crowe Second: Fisher

Vote: All Ayes Motion carried.

D. This agenda was posted at City Hall, the Community Development Department counter, West Hollywood Library on San Vicente Boulevard and Plummer Park.

II. ITEMS FROM CITIZENS

A. Budd Kops, West Hollywood, expressed that the House of Blues accepted their conditions and now they should live by those conditions.

B. Lisa Rodriguez, West Hollywood, stated that the House of Blues has been cooperating with the city in trying to alleviate problems of noise, traffic and citizens' complaints.

- C. Richard Noble, Los Angeles, expressed that working at the House of Blues has been a valuable experience for him because they teach human values to their employees.
- D. Rick Priem, West Hollywood, spoke about how House of Blues is working with the community.
- E. Chris Shiflett, Los Angeles, voiced support for the way the House of Blues is interacting with the community.
- F. Sibyl Zaden, West Hollywood, spoke in favor of the House of Blues and likened their problems to Spago when they first opened.
- G. Gregg Paz, West Hollywood, expressed that he worked the phones at House of Blues and every complaint he took was dealt with and as a neighbor of the club he has no problems with noise.
- H. Bob Bouchard, West Hollywood, compared the area where the House of Blues is to the same area in the early eighties and he believes the area is better now.
- I. Beth Grant, West Hollywood, stated that as the assistant manager of the House of Blues, she has worked closely with staff as well as the community to resolve the club's issues.

III. PLANNING MANAGER'S REPORT

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Minutes from December 1, 1994.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS (7:15 p.m.)

- A. **Sunset Specific Plan (This item will be heard at 7:15 p.m. and will be concluded by 10:00 p.m.):** - Hearing to discuss the plan and receive public testimony. This is the fourth hearing in a series of hearings before the Planning Commission to receive public input and to discuss the plan. This hearing will focus on Geographic Areas 1, 2 and 3.

Applicant:	City of West Hollywood
Location:	Sunset Boulevard
Recommended Action:	Discuss Specific Plan issues and accept public testimony regarding the plan.

Kris Miller-Fisher gave a slide presentation on Areas 1, 2 and 3. Sarah Lejeune presented a brief slide description of billboards for these areas. Commissioner Litz reopened the public hearing.

The following spoke against the project:

1. Budd Kops, West Hollywood expressed his concern over 28,000 cars that will be dumped onto Sunset Boulevard over time and feels Sunset's current problems need to be resolved first.
2. James Mandelbaum, Los Angeles commented that the area is over-congested and under-managed as it is and before there is further development of the strip efforts need to be made to manage what is there now. He suggested that there are too many nightclubs creating nuisances for the neighborhoods and their number and scope of activities should be reduced, that all new buildings should have on-site parking, that buildings on the north side of Sunset should be limited to two stories and buildings on the south side should be limited to three stories.
3. Hank McCann, Los Angeles, stated he is concerned with crime, hi-rise buildings and traffic in this area.
4. Robert Knotek, Los Angeles, stated he would prefer that the City build a Third Street Promenade or an Old Town Pasadena rather than a Wilshire corridor or Century City. He sees no sense in building hi-rises.

The following commented on the project:

1. Paula Reddish Linneman, Beverly Hills, representing the parties who own an historically preserved 8 unit building on Havenhurst reported that in the last year they have had four cars stolen, usually occurring when there are activities at the clubs. She asked the activities at the clubs. She asked the Commission the whatever is done on Sunset, prohibitive uses must be a condition. The project needs to be scaled way down if there is to be a good quality of life in this area.
2. Pamela Wishard, Los Angeles, in Area 2 of the Plan. She expressed her concern over the number of liquor licenses issued the last couple of years and her hope that the Commission will make a Plan for Sunset Boulevard. She feels that the Plan is too unspecific, that the uses must be restricted and prohibited. She commented that this is an opportunity to make this area a better place to live and is hopeful that a Board is set up within the Commission to help design and review any new development with families in mind.
3. Jack Wishard, Los Angeles, agreed with everything his wife stated and further commented that they are also concerned about their two-hundred plus degree views, their quality of life and the resale value of their home. They endorse a plan but this one is too unspecific with regard to architecture and the use of buildings. They are fearful that Area 2 of Sunset is on its way to becoming another Hollywood Boulevard.
4. Bettie Wagner, Los Angeles, voiced concern about signage at the Chateau Marmont and the Marlboro man.

5. Candida McCollam, West Hollywood expressed her appreciation to the Commission for being a sounding board on difficult issues and is hopeful in the new year that the needs of the residents and the economic needs of the city can come together.

Public testimony was completed on these Areas. Discussion by Commissioners followed.

Gay Forbes responded to an inquiry by Commissioner Behr that the Public Safety Commission had the first of two meetings on the Plan on Monday night. A subcommittee was appointed to meet with staff in Public Safety, Transportation and Planning who will report back to the Commission on their findings and what recommendations they should make to the Planning Commission. The next meeting of this Commission is January 9, 1994 at 6:30 PM in the Werle building.

Commissioner Behr inquired about the status of the model to which Gay Forbes responded the model would be completed as follows: By January 19th the contours of the 1.2 square miles would be completed including hills and parts of the major massings of buildings in 4, 5 and 6; by February 2nd Areas 4, 5 and 6 will be completed; by February 16th Areas 7 and 8 will be completed and by February 28th all Areas will be completed.

Commissioner Behr discussed with Sarah Lejeune the size of 1B and the feasibility of it as a target site since a portion of the site is in Los Angeles.

Commissioner Jones expressed how important it was for the public to voice their fears before the Commission.

Commissioner Litz suggested that the Commission discuss the overall goals and objectives for Areas 1, 2 and 3.

The Commissioners agreed with the overall goals and objectives of Area 1 but Commissioner Fischer stressed the need to have the plan match the objectives. Commissioner Jones agreed that there is a need to scrutinize the Plan to be sure that what is wanted is what is actualized.

The goals and objectives of Area 2 were discussed.

Commissioner Fischer would like to add the objective of encouraging more residential use on the Sunset Strip, i.e. condominiums for this Area. The clarification was made that mixed-use meant retail on the street level, office space above that and residential above that.

Commissioner Behr voiced concern about achieving the objective of getting class A office space when there is nothing written to ensure this. Staff was asked to provide guidelines in accomplishing this.

Commissioner Smith inquired whether or not the problem of mixed-use was financing, marketing or simple resistance.

Commissioners and staff discussed the process of design review and how best to make it effective.

The goals and objectives of Area 3 were discussed.

Commissioner Fischer pointed out that it is difficult to discuss height, density or limits of buildings without a model.

Commissioner Litz asked where the sidewalks were to be widened in Areas 1, 2 and 3.

A discussion followed on the types of uses and whether or not there was a need to be more specific. An overall use mix for all of the Areas needs to be discussed at a future date. Sarah Lejeune reported that use mix according to the plan appears under the policy section of the study books given to each Commissioner.

The consensus was to discuss each site individually.

Area 1A- 8221-8225 Sunset Boulevard:

- A. What happens to the Marlboro billboard in terms of content if that company goes out of business.
- B. What analysis was used for Chateau Martmont in the views to it.
- C. Possible design guidelines for that particular triangle to maintain the view was suggested.
- D. Staff will provide the dimensions of the lots for each area and each site in addition to the footprints of existing landmarks which are already noted in the Plan.
- E. What is the variance on lines drawn on the Plans.
- F. Commissioner Behr asked that the addresses for Area 1A be corrected. 8221 is the address of the Chateau Martmont.
- G. The current use of Area 1A is the Roxbury.

Area 1B- 8222 - 8240 Sunset Boulevard and 1438 Harper (the southeast corner of Sunset and Harper) (Target Site):

- A. Current use of 1B is a small office complex, a three story office building, Casa Blanca and surface parking, zoned R4PK, at 1438 Harper.
- B. The consensus was this should not be a target site. It is too small, there are egress problems, there is an historical building adjacent to the site, it straddles city boundaries, there are accessibility problems and it does not have a good circulation pattern.
- C. Staff reported it was selected as a target site because it is an ideal spot for mixed use, it steps down well

from the grade for interesting architectural design possibilities and it provides Class A office space.

- D. Commissioner Richmond pointed out that in terms of the selection process it appeared that only "urban design" and "development feasibility" were used in selecting this site.
- E. The Commissioners concluded that this site should be removed as a target site, reduce FAR to 1.5 as per the other sites in Area 1, leave the .5 bonus for residential and note it as a potential zoning change from R4PK to strict commercial.

Area 1C- 8250-8288 Sunset Boulevard between Harper and Sweetzer on the south side of the street:

- A. Current use of 1C is The Body Shop, Fred Sands Building, and a Thai Restaurant.
- B. The shape of the site was discussed and was determined to be correct.

Area 1D- 8227-8295 Sunset Boulevard from Roxbury Road to Sweetzer:

- A. Current use of 1D is a parking lot, a four story building, a 2-3 story apartment building now converted to a commercial building.
- B. It was decided to postpone this discussion until the model is available.
- C. It was pointed out that four or five lots in the back of this Area are in Los Angeles.

Area 2A- 8301-8383 Sunset Boulevard on the north from Sweetzer to Kings Road:

- A. Current use of 2A is The Source, a vacant lot, a small office building, Thunder Roadhouse and Carney's.
- B. Commissioner Behr pointed out that there is a street about 200 feet west of Sweetzer that is not on the map and the existing height maps appear to be wrong. Staff was asked to check these and correct as necessary.

Area 2B- 8300 Sunset Boulevard (Target Site):

- A. Current use of 2B is the Golden Crest Retirement Home.
- B. Commissioner Behr inquired why this was picked as a target site inasmuch as it was not going to be developed and therefore ignored in the EIR analysis. Sarah Lejeune responded that it meets urban design criteria; it provides an opportunity for mixed use; it is located next to Hart Park and allows for excellent design; it is currently under one ownership; it is deep enough for underground parking and it has accessibility.

- C. Lucy Dyke gave some insights on the traffic analysis for this Area.
- D. Staff was directed to bring back to the Commissioners the reasoning behind making this a target site. Gay Forbes commented generally on the Plan that the intent was to create possibilities and potentials for a long term plan with the idea that something better could be created in the future.

Area 2C - Hart Park:

There was a discussion on the widening of the sidewalk and how it would affect the park, the St. James stairway, foot traffic, whether or not it should be 15 feet or 10 feet especially in the eastern end.

Staff was directed to correct the addresses on page 149 and consider a sidewalk less than 15 feet.

Area 2D- The Argyle/St. James Club:

- A. Sarah Lejeune explained that the height maps show what the preferred heights would be if the present building was not there.
- B. The Commissioners and staff discussed the rationale for the 65 foot building on the east side of Hart Park and the 45 foot limitation on the other side of the park and the shadows that might be created by tall buildings.

Commissioner Litz continued the discussion of the Sunset Specific Plan tentatively to January 19th, 1995 with Geographic Area 3, Site 2B.

- B. General Plan Amendment 93-03, Zoning Map Amendment 94-04, General Plan Text Amendment 94-05, Demolition Permit 94-06, Final Environmental Impact Report and Negative Declaration.

Applicant:	City of West Hollywood
Owner:	City of West Hollywood
Location:	City-wide 8383 Santa Monica Boulevard
Recommended Action:	Continue the hearing to January 5, 1995.

- C. Commissioner Litz announced that on Monday, December 19, 1994 there is a Design Review Subcommittee Meeting at 6:00PM at the Community Conference Room at 8615 Santa Monica Boulevard, to review plans for the municipal parking structure at 8383 Santa Monica Boulevard. Commissioners Jones and Behr are on this subcommittee.

VI. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR

the impact their decision will have on all concerned.

6. J. R. Starr, West Hollywood, stated he lives across the street from the House of Blues and that people need to realize they do not live in the country; they live in a busy city and the House of Blues is part of that. He expressed his approval of the House of Blues and what they bring to the community.
7. Diana Graham, West Hollywood, owner, operator of Budget Car Rentals on Sunset. She has had many dealings with the House of Blues and they have increased her volume of business as well as many of the nearby hotels. We should be happy to have them in our community, we need them, she stated.
8. Tony Melia, Los Angeles, made two points. The House of Blues should not be made the whipping post for unrelated gripes and generalized comments and secondly, once the true issue has been identified the Commission needs to find a solution for all parties involved.
9. Stephen Pace, Burbank, stated that 1,000 jobs would be affected if the House of Blues is shut down.
10. James Reyes, West Hollywood, employed at House of Blues for the last year and one-half. He invited the Commissioners to come find out what the House of Blues is about.
11. Steve Strauss, General Manager of the House of Blues. Given time by James Cafarelli. He stated they have held meetings with their immediate neighbors in an attempt to find solutions to their problems. The next meeting will be held January 10th at 6:00 PM. They have increased the number of sheriffs who will walk the beat instead of standing outside the House and they have started a trash patrol, both the result of these meetings. They have changed their valet in the hope of better parking. They will continue to operate in the spirit of cooperation.
12. Keith Murch, Encino, moved here specifically to work at the House of Blues. One of the philosophies of the House is to show how a business can be successful and work with their neighbors and set an example for other businesses.
13. Kenneth Hinkle, West Hollywood, has worked in many restaurants and has never seen a business work with its neighbors as the House of Blues does. He believes the revenue that the House generates for the City is enormous and should not be ignored.
14. Lee Fowler, Valley Village, works for the House of Blues. The owners have vision and heart; they're not just businessmen.

15. Rebecca Miles, West Hollywood, live across the street from the House of Blues and works there also. Her job is to work with the neighbors. She responds to every complaint she receives.
16. Jim Dunn, Cambridge, MA. Executive Vice President of Operations for the House of Blues stated they have made and will continue to make efforts to get all issues resolved.
17. Kevin Morrow, West Hollywood, Talent Buyer at the House of Blues who moved here from San Diego. He stated every complaint is dealt with and the House of Blues will only get better.
18. Jacqueline Tedesco, West Hollywood, Manager at House of Blues stated there will be more House of Blues. They believe in what they do and they are community-oriented.
19. Stephanie Anderson, Santa Monica, Manager at the House of Blues who started as a cocktail waitress, stated she was given the opportunity to advance and learn at the House and that that is their philosophy.
20. Chase Masterson, West Hollywood, stated House of Blues is more than a club. They have a Foundation to educate school children, they feed the homeless and they care about their neighbors.
21. Jerry Nieto, West Hollywood, expressed that of all the negative things that occur on Sunset Boulevard, the House of Blues is the least of it.

The following spoke against the House of Blues:

1. Jeanne Dobrin, West Hollywood, stated that the people here tonight are being paid by the House of Blues. She spoke about revocation and the issues therein.

The following commented on the House of Blues:

1. Jim Berland, West Hollywood. Given time by Brenda Berland. He stated he was not against the House of Blues but he is for Butterfield's. He wants the House of Blues to live up to what they said they would do and also it is up to the Commissioners to make them do it. Parking is a nightmare among other things.
2. Thomas Crail, West Hollywood, and Executive Director of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce expressed that his concern has been the long-term economic vitality of the City and feels that headway is being made as a result of the success of the House of Blues.

Commissioner Litz commented that he and other Commissioners had met with House of Blues' representatives as well as staff members to discuss the various issues. He explained that the Commission

is trying to deal with the results of the House of Blues' success and that they want them to continue to be successful.

Commissioner Richmond suggested that two issues have come out of all the discussions:

1. Concern about existing conditions in the neighborhood and whether or not the condition of approval and the project description that were approved in 1992 need to be modified to address those existing conditions.
2. The frustration some commissioners have felt with the way the City dealt with the House of Blues' opening and compliance with the original conditions.

Also, he suggested that if another hearing is scheduled that the option of "revocation" be dropped and "modification" be used.

Commissioner Behr noted that 315 parking spaces are now required. He asked staff how that had increased to 506 before. It is incorrect because according to page 9.376 of the Zoning Ordinance there must be 28 spaces per 1,000 square feet of dance floor area.

Commissioner Jones would like to see a set of plans to compare what was presented and what was actually done.

Action: To schedule a modification hearing on the House of Blues Conditional Use Permit for February 16, 1994.

Motion: Crowe

Second: Smith

Motion carried unanimously.

Staff will provide a list of options for modification, a report on the neighborhood meetings, parking feasibility, a list of items that are different from the originally approved conditional use permit and some operational details such as capacity versus parking, shows and related traffic flows.

VIII. ITEMS FROM CITIZENS

- A. Jeanne Dobrin, West Hollywood, commented that important issues are entitled to reasonable hours to be heard. She suggested that the Sunset Specific Plan be allocated one meeting a month and the other issues be given attention by the Commissioners and the community. Also, she commented on the text amendment which would allow residential hotels to admit the public for food and drink.

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

- A. Commissioner Behr was requested to make a change in the minutes of December 1st as follows:

"In response to Commissioner Litz' question about the private club at the House of Blues, Paul Brotzman replied that the City does not know the legal status of this and is consulting the city attorney."

- B. Commissioner Behr suggested that the meeting on the House of Blues be exclusive to the House of Blues.
- C. Commissioners Richmond and Crowe do not want to see the second issue Commissioner Richmond brought up relating to House of Blues be dropped. A discussion followed on how to safeguard a repeat of the House of Blues issues happening again. A subcommittee was suggested comprised of Commissioners Richmond and Crowe who will report back next meeting with suggestions of how this subcommittee could function.
- D. Commissioner Litz requested staff to provide him with another copy of the memoranda from Lisa Heep regarding the House of Blues' revocation/modification.
- E. Commissioner Litz inquired why the Sunset Marquis appeal had not been scheduled. Staff advised they will get back to him with the answer.

X. ITEMS FROM STAFF

- A. Memo regarding SCUP for the Roxbury at 8225 Sunset Boulevard.
- B. Gay Forbes announced that ride-alongs with sheriffs have been arranged. One Commissioner per car is allowed. Arrangements should be made with Nancy Greenstein.
- C. She also announced that the tapes of the original House of Blues hearings, requested by Chair Litz, were in the process of being consolidated into one tape and copied. She will call when the tapes are completed.
- D. Gay Forbes asked for a retreat to be scheduled. The date of January 25th was established and details would be announced at the next meeting.
- F. Gay Forbes advised Commissioners that the property at 1234 Formosa, which had been red-tagged and vacated except for homeless people, would be boarded up tomorrow.

- E. Lisa Heep announced that the Economic Summit would be held January 23, 1995 and February 13, 1995 both at 6:00 PM.
- F. Staff was directed to schedule the January 5th meeting as follows: 1. The Rainbow 2. The parking structure 3. Carney's appeal

XI. ADJOURNMENT

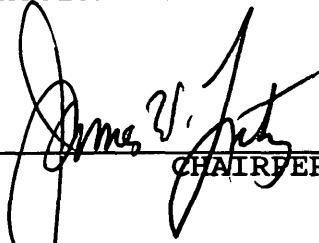
Action: To adjourn to the next meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Thursday, January 5, 1995, from 7:00 p.m. until completion, at the West Hollywood Park Auditorium, 647 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood, California.

Motion: Crowe

Second: Smith

Vote: All Ayes

Motion carried.



CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT