

MINUTES

WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 1986
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Schulte called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Richard Settle.

ROLL CALL: Present: Albert, Heilman, Schulte
(Councilmember Viterbi arrived at 7:15 P.M., just after Council adjourned to closed session.)

Also Present: City Manager Brotzman
City Attorney Jenkins

PROCLAMATION: A Proclamation was presented by Mayor Schulte to "Elvira," naming Elvira "Mistress of the Dark," and Honorary Mayor of West Hollywood during the Halloween Festivities. Elvira was also presented with a "key to the City," which was specially created by Brad Braverman for this occasion. (At this time photographs were taken of Elvira with the Councilmembers and with the City Manager and City Attorney.)

At 7:13 P.M. Council adjourned to an executive session to discuss matters of potential litigation and personnel matters.

The City Council reconvened at 7:51 P.M. and Mayor Schulte announced that the above matters had been discussed.

PRESENTATION BY FIRE DEPARTMENT: The City Manager gave a brief outline of the presentation to be given by representatives from the Fire Department, as follows: 1) General Overview; 2) Types of Problems; 3) State of the Service; 4) A Specific Discussion Regarding the Fire Station on Hancock.

The following three representatives spoke, who were from Fire Station 8, Los Angeles County Fire Department, in West Hollywood: Captain Dale Parker, Captain Jesus Burciaga, and Captain Ray Ribar.

Captain Parker presented a comprehensive report on the Fire Department, with some of the background and statistics.

Captain Jesus Burciaga presented a slide program which gave Council a view of many aspects of the Fire Department.

Captain Ribar stated that there is an anticipated lack of funds for the Fire Department, a 5.2 million dollar shortfall for 1986-87, and because of this there would be a "deferred purchase of fixed assets," and possibly other cutbacks in equipment and services in the Fire Department.

Mayor Schulte stated that Council is concerned about the condition of Fire Station 7 and wishes to replace it.

Mark Winogron, Community Development Department Director, reported on possible sites for a new fire station which would replace Fire Station 7. These sites include the Road Department site and some corners of the park. He stated that there were not many sites available, and that the most practical would be where the Road Department services are. However, the problem is that the Road Department says it must charge market rate rents and the Fire Department feels it cannot afford those rates.

At 8:25 p.m. the Council took a recess, and reconvened at 8:31 p.m.

PRESENTATION ON GENERAL PLAN:

At this time there was a presentation by Woody Tescher, Consultant, from Envicom. The following is a summary of the report by Woody Tescher:

Purpose of presentation: To bring Council up to date on the status of the General Plan. The process is almost to the point of major conclusions being reached.

Mr. Tescher stated that he would cover three major objectives: 1) where we stand on General Plan--overall time frame, time anticipated till completion; 2) to show Council the two principal documents that have been prepared as part of that General Plan program (Technical Background Report, and Issues/1986 Working Paper) ; and 3) to bring up some of the major issues that have been debated at length with the General Plan Advisory Committee and the general community. (There has been resolution of some of those issues, on some of those there is still considerable debate.)

A document that outlines the preliminary land-use element will be completed in two to three weeks--for a lot of people one of the prime centerpieces of the general plan. This is to go to GPAC for final review before going on to Planning Commission.

Mr. Tescher also stated that the public input has been a very useful part of the Planning program. To date there has been extensive public input. The Plan you will see would not be what it is without that input. Although it was expensive, it was an important step to have community participation.

Review of status of the General Plan: In the first few months, the consultant team set out to compile data about the City as it exists: what is out there, traffic on the streets, seismic conditions, problems and opportunities. That has been pulled together in a report on the status of the City--the Technical Background Report--this is the first real document--a comprehensive state-of-the-City report--basically tells us what the City is about today.

The second document is Issues/1986--this summarizes the significant issues for each of the major topics to be addressed in the General Plan. For each of the statements in this particular document, the General Plan is going to be shaping and has been shaping specific policy and program direction. It is an important document because it is a basic statement of the targets for which the policies will relate in the future, for instance, we have parking deficiencies in the City today. By making this kind of statement in this kind of document, the General Plan will be specifying policies on what to do about that particular problem. The Plan has to have that sort of framework on which to hinge its policy. Mr. Tescher invited the Council to look at this document with a critic's eye to decide whether there are any things they as a City Council perceive to be issues that need to be addressed in the General Plan program.

Both of these documents have grown out of a few key processes: one, the work of the consultant; also, a number of other processes--the Citywide workshop held in January, also a series of focus group workshops where meetings were conducted with 12 different groups within the community in the early part of the year. They also have grown out of the study sessions with the General Plan Advisory Committee, which will be up to their 16th meeting shortly. The documents have also grown out of input by the City staff, namely, the department heads.

The next step after completion of these two documents has been the process of defining what are the things that can be done about the problems that have been identified. This is really the statement of alternative policies for the General Plan process. The principal step was the conducting of eight neighborhood workshops a number of months ago. The primary focus was on land use. Out of that process came a summary of the optional directions that residents would like to see. Those options were presented to the General Plan Advisory Committee. On Council

direction the process with the GPAC was shortened. With Council's concurrence, and based upon the principles and directions and strategies outlined by the General Plan Advisory Committee, the Consultant wrote the draft land use element, with the advisory committee to review it at that point. Now that document is about two to three weeks off.

The Consultant is now in the process of conducting a second series of five "topic" workshops, other than land use. The first one last week focused on economic development. There will be three this week: on community design, housing, circulation and parking, and then one on human services and human resources. The Council is invited to attend these. The feedback, as land use, will be formalized as preliminary policy in late November which will then go to the General Plan Advisory Committee.

In addition, a survey of 500 households has just been completed, and the results are being tabulated.

Overall schedule: The General Plan Advisory Committee will be reviewing the land use element in late November through December of this year; the GPAC will be reviewing the other elements in January and February of next year; and it is anticipated that the formal preliminary draft for public review and public hearing before the Planning Commission will be out there approximately in March of next year. This is probably about two or three months off the original targeted schedule, but not a bad delay in time.

At the time the preliminary draft plan is made available to the public, the Consultant will be conducting a second round of neighborhood workshops. There will be maps, and basic policies will be reviewed with the public, so that they will be able to comment at the Planning Commission and ultimately the City Council hearings.

Next, Mr. Tescher did an oral summary for the Council of the Technical Background Report. There are four principle divisions in the report: 1) Community Development; 2) Infrastructure; 3) Natural Resources; 4) Hazards. Some of the data is little out of date, as it was compiled in January, February, and March of this year. The reason it was held off longer was that at Council direction the scope of the General Plan was expanded after the earlier work had started, to include investigation of seismic analyses of the City, and also human services studies. City staff was extensively involved in the human services analyses. The seismic studies and human services studies are very new material.

Mr. Tescher also commented on the following subjects covered in the Technical Background Report:

Land Use (Section 2.1);
Building Conditions;
Urban and Community Design;
Population/Human Resources--how population will change, etc.
--broken down into specific analyses according to the unique characteristics of West Hollywood--immigrant, elderly, gay male and lesbian, various contingencies--at conclusion, statements about the needs of these various groups--this will be supplemented by the community survey just completed;
Housing--a statistical discussion;
Community Development (on page 2-100, a breakdown of types of businesses in West Hollywood);
Chapter 3--Infrastructure and Community Services--
infrastructure being the utilities, sewer lines, water, etc.;
Parks;
Circulation and Traffic (Approximately 70 graphics have been prepared, which may be useful in the future.)
Natural Resources (not much wildlife in West Hollywood);
Natural and Manmade Hazards--first is noise--second, seismic --a graphic summation of seismic issues. The information is different than that prepared in an earlier analysis by the County of Los Angeles--the earthquake fault they thought was in the center of the City isn't in the center, and some of the previous data is not credible. There is also a section on natural gas pockets. The City of Los Angeles defined a boundary of a methane gas zone--we think that boundary is not where the problems may cut off.

Issues/1986 Working Paper: There is a summary in the back of the meetings themselves that were conducted--put together by Irvin Hampton Company. Council will shortly be receiving a memorandum package, with summaries of the neighborhood workshops conducted a couple of months ago.

Mr. Tescher reviewed some of the key issues that are confronted in developing a land use policy, to indicate some general directions: With respect to land use, the major issue is the density, extent, scale of development that should be permitted for the future. A large number in the community would say there should be no additional development, zero growth, literally. Others say this General Plan should not opt for massive growth, but also not opt for no-growth, they suggest there should be certain areas (targeted opportunity parcels), and development in the future should be focused on those targeted parcels, and densities should be reduced in between those targeted locations.

(Some examples: the movie studio area, the area east near La Brea, the parcels on south side of Santa Monica to the immediate east and west of existing movie studio area--because of their size, not immediately abutted by single-family residential, area is deteriorated; also, La Brea is recognized as a corridor that may have some potential, also the area in the west--Santa Monica-Melrose-Robertson Triangle area--could be a Gateway to the city; in addition, targeted locations along Sunset. Fourth, the Beverly-San Vicente-Sherbourne area.) The common notion in the Community is also, when that development occurs, make that development give something back to the community, in terms of a major asset for the future.

The third philosophy is to increase densities everywhere.

The GPAC in its preliminary recommendations is between the second and third approach. Frankly the consultant has a problem with some of the recommendations of the GPAC. An initial calculation was done--the recommendation of the advisory committee would yield an increase of 14 million square feet on Santa Monica Blvd., equivalent to 14 Arco towers; the traffic impact might be somewhat substantial. The consultant recommendation will be down from that. GPAC has recommended that what is now the parking overlay zone on the zoning map would be removed and that parking overlay also be made eligible for commercial use. The impact of that would be loss of between 600 and 900 residential units. The consultant thinks at this point in time that the targeted opportunity sites hold some merit in terms of recommendation. Also the concept of incentive zoning, basically, holding a certain threshold of development as a maximum, but with the opportunity for exceeding that if certain things are given back to the community itself.

A couple of other issues are: the idea of mixed use is considered a good concept. The concerns are, can we market residential above commercial in the City. Can someone really live above a ground level retail use. Another concern is noise. What about all that traffic? Building costs escalate. Would seniors live in that kind of place? Conceptually, there is a lot of support for the idea of mixed use.

Other concepts and issues: residential neighborhoods. There is uniform consensus in the community that the neighborhood preservation areas are still valid and should be maintained. There has also been the desire to target some additional neighborhood preservation areas: the area of Romaine-Harper-La Jolla west of Crescent Heights, south of Santa Monica Blvd. The consensus of GPAC is to reduce land use densities in that area from what is permitted. Other area discussed is Lexington between Genesee and Curson as a possible neighborhood

preservation area. Another area is Sherman area--advisory committee recommended against it. Also mentioned Huntley--haven't come up yet with boundary.

Another item is the issue of specific plan sites. The idea is if these projects give something back to the city we give them extra height and density. The community would like to see more specific guidelines. Specific plan sites may be analogous to the targeted opportunity sites. Also, there is opinion that Fairfax, Santa Monica intersection should be deleted as specific plan area because of metro rail station.

Professional office overlay: Recommendation of committee to keep but not to expand.

Next, preservation of neighborhood commercial--whole series of options: free market; establishment of a neighborhood commercial zone; if there is a restriction or limitation, to limit that restriction to what would be publicly subsidized spaces; fourth, the requirement to provide a certain minimum percentage of square footage to neighborhood serving retail uses; fifth, a combination of free market and publicly subsidized neighborhood commercial parking structure concept.

Housing: In its infancy. We're trying to stay away from the issue of rent control. How much additional housing should we be providing in this community, irrespective of rent control? Different viewpoints. Data says seniors will be declining as a total percentage. Biggest growth, 15 to 54 year old age bracket over time.

Circulation and parking: We are greatly affected by what happens around the City, such as Beverly Hills. The solutions will be dealing with signals, turning lanes, on-street parking, etc. The City must take a look at the issue of shuttle and transit.

Human Services: A very major concern, our staff is working with your staff.

Community Design: Guidelines relative to private architecture, public improvements. GPAC endorsed an ambitious program. Guidelines should be established; but not a particular theme; there should be diversity. But design guidelines should place some limits, to ensure some compatibility--certain parameters, but the key is flexibility and creativity. There should be a formal design review procedure. There is a lot of support for streetscape improvements. Well-defined entries. There is consensus pedestrian overlay is a good idea. The community likes having districts.

Seismic: The policy is not there. Will be looking at how to mitigate concerns--retrofit existing unreinforced masonry, upgrading buildings. Design standards for critical risk facilities such as hospitals, fire stations. We are flanked by two faults. Another concept we will be dealing with is the whole issue of emergency preparedness. The use of neighborhood watch groups as another arm in emergency preparedness program.

Council will be receiving a memorandum listing some of these key policy options. We are coming to a key point, where policy decisions will be before Council for consideration.

At this time Mr. Tescher invited Council to ask questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Viterbi asked Mr. Tescher to outline again the steps in the General Plan process. Mr. Tescher stated that right now they are in the process of finishing the initial draft land use element. That will be going to the GPAC in late November for their review. The consultant will reflect upon their comments on that draft land use element, and will be making revisions as necessary and be finalizing that document hopefully in January. While consultant is finalizing that document, in December the GPAC will be reviewing the drafts of the other elements. That will extend into February. Any final revisions on those elements will probably be prepared in early March. We are anticipating early March to April delivery on the document.

Mayor Schulte asked whether the Planning Commission is the step right before Council.

Tescher: Before going to the Planning Commission the General Plan is submitted to staff, particularly the Community Development Director, and the City staff will review that document and submit their recommendations in addition along with the General Plan to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will be conducting hearings on that Plan. Once the Planning Commission takes action, that document is then submitted to City Council for public hearings. The final adoption will probably be in April, May, or maybe June.

Council adjourned at 9:42 p.m. to an executive session to discuss personnel matters. Council reconvened at 10:00 p.m.

Action: To adopt Resolution No. 258, "MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD AND AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, LOCAL NO. 3339, SETTING FORTH THE TERMS, CONDITIONS, BENEFITS, SALARIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF THE COUNCIL DEPUTY UNIT."

Motion by Councilmember Heilman, seconded by Councilmember Albert. Ayes: Albert, Heilman, Viterbi, Mayor Schulte.

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There were two dates set by Council for a City Manager evaluation: November 17, 1986, at 5:00 p.m., and November 24, 1986, at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m. to Monday, November 3, 1986, at 7:00 p.m. at West Hollywood Park.