

**SILVER LAKE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL  
URBAN DESIGN & PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES - APPROVED  
Wednesday, August 10, 2016  
6:30 pm  
St. Teresa of Avila Church-Parish Hall  
2215 Fargo Street  
Los Angeles, CA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting began at 6:31pm

Attending Committee Members:

Joe Ferrell  
Scott Plante  
Barbara Ringuette  
Jerome Courshon  
Robert Lisauskas  
Rusty Millar  
Carol Cetrone  
Cliff Towne  
Kevin Santiago  
Rosa Max  
Anne-Marie Johnson  
Georgene Smith-Goodin

**2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

*Rosa Max:*

Rosa Max (Los Angeles City construction services expeditor, green space agent and local beekeeper/city farmer) started a foundation called Urban Sustainable Initiatives (USI).

Secretary-Courtney Barriger (Managing Partner Naz Court; United Nations endorsed Sustainable Fashion brand made in LA); Vice President-Digna D'Arcy (President of the Ladies Rock Foundation; a nonprofit that helps teen mothers and victims of domestic violence); Director-Jay Handal (co-chair LA Budget Advocates and independent election manager); Treasurer-Terence Gomes (president of LANCC and running for council in district #7).

USI: "Our mission is to expand our environmental consciousness providing communities with a platform where together we can experience, develop and improve sustainability for business and home use. We are committed to spread "The Green Ripple Effect" by promoting and helping others to obtain a more sustainable lifestyle. Let's make America green again."



She also discussed the height of the project and single family zone ordinances vs. multifamily ordinances. The maximum allowable height for this project is 36 ft plus a dog house. We're at 30 ft plus an 8 ft doghouse. This is nine separate buildings, 9 single family homes. We are 30 ft from alley line to roof line in height.

She said that the project has proposed green screens on all sides, a living wall. There is a river walk wall here. We will save that wall. We took to heart what was around us. There is modern Spanish design. We wanted the project to functionally look like the surrounding buildings. That's more in keeping with what is seen in the neighborhood.

In regards to a question about grass tree design, she said that the tree will be saved. Regarding concerns about the durability of the tiles, she said that custom.tiles.com is the company providing the tiles.

Eli Malkin, who owns a neighboring building, asked given the rising grade, what will one see from across the street? A Male Project Representative said that you would see some progression.

Malkin asked about trees. The Male Representative said there will be trees.

Terry Colitis, who resides at 646 Parkman, said that he's walked by that place daily for 40 years. The place has been terrible. I welcome this to the neighborhood. I am not opposed.

Christian Nova, who lives nearby, notes an omission on the project presentation media. Not shown is a single unit structure. There are 3 story structures next to one story structures.

A Woman named Christine, who lives on Occidental, asked does the height obstruct the views of some neighbors across the alley? Lonner replied yes.

A Man, who lives nearby, said the view now is very protected. What good will this bring to our community? Last week we saw that the Botanica restaurant and market project will take away a liquor store. Here I don't see any benefit for this project. It takes away land for endangered species. It doesn't provide affordable housing. It benefits the 1 percent. What do you say?

Lonner replied that the reality is that when we provide housing across a spectrum, we make housing more affordable for everyone. Providing more housing is a goal for the City. An increase in the housing supply is critically important.

Density guidelines allow us to build 10 units, we're only building 9. We could build up to 13 units with greater height. The goal is to provide more housing. We've worked hard to match design of the community. We've tried to be responsible. Regarding his concerns about biolife, Lonner said we'll take a look at it.

Christine asked about whether there would be any impact on taxes in neighborhood from the project. Another stakeholder replied that your properties are 1% of the purchase price you paid for your home so there would be no impact for you.

Barbara Ringuette, who spoke as a stakeholder, asked how many parking spaces will be lost? Also, if the City decides that the driveway can't be cut through the wall, what is plan b?

A Project Representative said the driveway is 20 ft. We're looking at the wall. Rosa Max asked have any of the adjustments changed? The Project Representative said we're adding greenery. That helps with value.

Bob Lisauskas said this is perhaps one of the most sensitive multi-family projects that we've seen at this Committee in years. He offered congratulations. To the assembly he said you guys should be so happy that a developer is coming in and listening to you and accommodating you. Any crappy developer could come in and build a crappy project. You should really consider that.

Nobody likes to lose their views. These developers have moved balconies and allowed light. That's a job well done. There are romantic views within the courtyard. Great job, said Lisauskas.

Rusty Millar said I'm going to echo that. He said that this is the best looking project that he's seen in 10 years. People aren't complaining about the architecture itself. Clearly you've addressed many of the neighbor's concerns. You're not guaranteed views in this town, he stressed.

Plante added that you're not entitled to your view under California law. This has been a consistent law for over 100 years. Los Angeles has no view protection ordinance. A Man noted the irony of the views provided by the rooftop decks. Millar responded that the City called that "open space".

Carol Cetrone referred to a letter written about the project. Can you discuss the last paragraph about separation? Lonner said that's the back-up isle, which is required.

Cliff Towne said that he want to echo Lisauskas' sentiments. We really appreciate the changes you made for the neighbors. I feel your pain for loss of views for the neighbors. However, you guys have done much of what we asked for.

Anne-Marie Johnson said this is too large for the neighborhood. The loss of views doesn't impact my opinion. However, she said that she is troubled by the loss of views. She said that she is concerned that the financial plan drives design decisions. She said that she cannot support a small lot subdivision that's really a community plan. It's lovely but her first responsibility is to tenants and homeowners. Her priority is the uniqueness and quality of housing in Silver Lake. This doesn't do it.

Jerome Courshon said that he wanted to echo what Lisauskas and Towne have said. You've done a lot to accommodate the neighbors. The project is beautiful stylistically. It's a nice looking project. The issue is rooftop decks. That is the trend.

He said he lives across the street from rooftop decks. There was a party 200 ft. from him recently. He heard everything. That's the problem with rooftop decks in Silver Lake. The more units that have these in Silver Lake, the more problems about that

come to our Board all the time. He suggests losing the rooftop decks. Perhaps lose use of them after a certain hour.

Joe Ferrell asked the project representatives to discuss the rooftop decks. Lonner said there is a 10 ft setback for them now. This has cut the size of the decks in half. They are required open space. She said that she lives in a hillside community as well. However, she noted that loud parties can happen in back yards or homes too.

Plante asked would you consider having a rule prohibiting AirBnB type short rentals, which impacts housing costs? Lonner replied that we're not a condo. Ferrell asked can you put something in the plan about structures on the roof? People add things like canopies.

Christina noted that there is 3-story apartment building next door to her. People have parties till 2am. The sound echos out. What if there are 3-4 parties going on at all times, she wondered.

Another Representative for the Project said there is a noise ordinance. If you call the neighborhood prosecutor and the LAPD Senior Lead Officer they will address the issue over time. Christina replied we're trying to prevent it from happening. We don't need the rooftop decks. You're creating the problem.

The Man who questioned the value of the project for the community noted that since last week, the balcony setback hasn't gotten smaller. The dog houses are unchanged. Why is this praise happening? We can do better. This is mediocrity. We shouldn't settle for it.

Plante told Lonner and the other project representatives that you guys have done a good job.

Barbara Ringuette spoke about letters received in packet. This is a big change for this community. There will be many changes for people who aren't even here. The primary goal of the community plan is to preserve single and multi family neighborhoods, that's 1-2 story buildings, nothing higher: no dog houses or roof decks.

This kind of project sets a giant precedent for the neighborhood. There is nothing like this nearby. It's pretty but there is loss of 2 parking spaces. We can't be sure that everyone will park onsite. There is an error in the drawing. The setbacks aren't properly shown. You're proposing 20 ft setbacks. Other units have 29 ft and 32 ft setbacks. That's very different. This is inaccurate. The setback is actually 9 ft. closer. The view from the street will be more massive.

Regarding affordable housing, Ringuette said that she met with planning and others as a Budget Advocate. There are units that aren't occupied that will be sold or rented downtown to the same types of people who'd like to buy here. Trickle down is a false concept.

She said that she is concerned for the entire neighborhood. This will set a precedent. I'd like to see downsizing. She has her own drawings that show the

building is more massive than what has been described. Plante said that's not accurate.

Lonner said there is a 20 ft building line from the property line, from the sidewalk backwards. We can't build there. We are compliant. Responding to the Ringuette's density concern, Lonner said we are two lots, not one, so this is different. Directly behind us is an 8 unit project on one lot. It's 3-stories with dog houses directly behind us.

A Man said this looks right into his backyard. He said he's not happy. This will create the effect of a huge looming building next to someone's view.

Plante asked for a vote on the project, noting that nobody is ever going to be happy.

*Plante made the motion. Millar seconded.*

Straw Poll:

2 people in favor of the project

6 opposed to the project

*Ringuette said that she wants a parking amendment. Plante said we can't entertain that at this point and not from Ringuette.*

**VOTE**

**7-3-1**

**PASSED**

Yes Votes:

Joe Ferrell

Scott Plante

Robert Lisauskas

Rusty Millar

Cliff Towne

Kevin Santiago

Rosa Max

No Votes:

Carol Cetrone

Anne-Marie Johnson

Jerome Courshon

Abstentions:

Georgene Smith Goodin

Recusals:

Barbara Ringuette

Plante said that he will now forward this project to the full Board for consideration at its September meeting.

**4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

- A. Review and Adoption of Minutes
- B. Committee Business

Millar made a motion to approve the minutes. Ringuette said that she has corrections that she hasn't gotten to so she wants to postpone approval of the minutes.

Georgene Smith-Goodin said this meeting space is great but it's hard to find the room. The directions on the agenda say to enter from the parking lot. The probability that people can't find room is really high.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

Jerome Courshon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting ended at 7:33pm.