

## 7.30.19 LADWP Modular Office Building Ad Hoc Committee

We began the meeting by going around the room and introducing ourselves.

### **General comments from the public**

Craig Mueller: I live on Silver Lake Blvd. Traffic builds up on occidental. Cars are speeding. People who are cutting through don't live here, it's a hazard for safety.

Sarah suggested that Craig speak with Paul Emmons, SLNC Transportation co-chair.

Arianna: I represent the neighborhood nursery school, the co-op school. They are concerned about the DWP building project. Noise and dust during construction. It's an outdoor school, children play outside. Potentially dangerous to their health.

Maryann Kuk: One of the major problems that will exist is 30 cars and as many trucks coming and going. Now this LADWP building is a regional hub.

### **Co-chair elections**

There were three nominations for co-chair positions: Mark Duncan, Nina Sorkin, and Paul Emmons. We began with a straw poll for each position.

Co-chair position #1

Paul Emmons 10 votes

Nina Sorkin 4 votes

Mark Duncan 0 votes

Co-chair position #2

Mark Duncan 7 votes

Nina Sorkin 6 votes

We proceeded to a voice vote to confirm Paul Emmons and Mark Duncan to be co-chairs. Paul Emmons received a unanimous consent with 2 abstentions. Mark Duncan received a unanimous consent with 2 abstentions.

### **Motions and Resolutions**

A. Discussion and possible action to draft the Committee's mission statement.

Paul: DWP has informed us that outside of the Master Plan reservoir they have reserved 1/5th for exclusive use. By the landscaper's cottage. The building that is currently there is the same location as where they are putting the 50x100ft modular building that will be used as a 30 or 40 person office building. DWP workers but they are construction managers. They said it was a done deal. Office + parking.

Maryann Kuk: That property is zoned open space, which is the most restrictive. They won't have an environmental impact review.

Paul: Where did you get that info? Are they doing it as modular to prevent disruption to the neighborhood?

Maryann: I attended a meeting at David Ryu's office with DWP reps a year ago. Prior to that meeting, we were told it was a temporary meeting. At that meeting Susan Rogani (sp?) said it was a regional hub, a permanent building. Recently they said this modular building can stand for 50 years.

Pat: it's not 30-40 percent. It's 11%.

Tricia: What is the square footage that they are trying to build on?

Paul: I don't have that information. That's part of the goal of this committee.

Tricia: We should concentrate and focus on our mission. If they have to build, can they build on the dog park and give us a flat area?

Mike: the 11% represents a percentage of the entire reservoir including the water. We don't know what's possible.

Tricia: they're going to build there, so we can decide where they build. Can we trade the dog park? They haven't done an environmental impact report. They should pay for it.

Sarah: I think the land should be put back into the Master Plan process.

Greg: I look out my window and see this Reservoir. This is a residential neighborhood. DWP had a function to maintain the reservoir. Now that the reservoir is offline. You don't get to build office space in a residential neighborhood. What's the zoning? Who knows where they're coming from, into our neighborhood. What's going on? This is not a commercial space. You can't just take something and do it. Where are the zoning laws? Reservoir business, I understand. I live on Kenilworth, I can't just make an Italian restaurant (commercial space) in a residential zone.

Tricia: DWP is the City of Los Angeles. We need an impact on the traffic report.

Freda: We had this problem talking about the traffic. Councilmember Ryu asked them to do a traffic study, and they did it. They found that there would be very little impact. What DWP was going to have, their construction equipment. Because of concerns, they offered to move their construction equipment. There are 28 parking spaces.

Paul: This comes down to a much more basic issue. Just about everything that happens in this city starts at the neighborhood level. Want to make sure it is approved by the people affected by it. Get grassroots input. It grates against me personally because it is against that concept. DWP says this area is ours, this is what we are going to do. Relative to our mission statement, this seems to be outside that process.

Tom La Bonge: Most important thing for people to do is express themselves. Look up history because when NC came to be, the coalition of reservoirs was the group they were talking to. You have good elected officials in Mitch O'Farrell and David Ryu. They listen to the communities historically. I proposed that there would be a tax for the people of Silver Lake to pay for what we have here. That was rejected. Try to focus on what you want. Try to improve traffic on Alvarado and Glendale. They have done different things. I wish you luck. This is my first community meeting in four years. I want solutions that work for everyone in four years. When I first got elected I took the DWP on a walk around the reservoir, there was no sidewalk. The coalition wanted a sidewalk. They finally agreed. You want to win, but they do have power. I do believe your councilpersons are effective.

Ilanthe: To reiterate what Sarah said. It is important for so many different voices to have input. Put this back in the Master Plan. We are wasting the opportunity of the Master Plan by trying to decide independently about this piece of land. There are a lot of people in Silver Lake who don't understand what's happening at the reservoir at all. There's an inexplicable office building going in. People will care if they know about it.

Paul: Once we're able to gather all the information. We will report back.

Pat: The purpose committee should be "to help develop a strategy to ensure the Silver Lake Reservoirs remain a treasure, maintain the ecological and environmental quality of the area, and establish a dialogue with the DWP to this end."

Tricia: What do we want to do now that we know what they want? This is a public health issue. We should stick together and have a community coalition.

Tome: If you're going to be part of the Master Plan, how do we publicize what's happening before it starts?

Paul: Acknowledge that there is a good deal of information but that we can do more.

Mike: Can we vote on Sarah's mission statement? If we work to get the land back there

Paul: Didn't DWP say they need this land for their operations. That's where their facilities currently are.

Maryann: Amendment to Sarah's mission statement: request that the DWP justify that there is no other place in the city for these workers.

Paul: A moratorium on this building. Find out what's possible, put a moratorium on this building.

Maryann: Our prime objective is to have them not build a building there at all. We don't have support of David or Mitch or the mayor.

Paul: Let's do a straw poll.

Is everyone here in favor of a moratorium on a building?

In favor: 14

Abstentions: Pat, Earl, Freda

Pat: They can't see how massive the reservoir is. There are people who go by everyday, the building is not that big. They aren't even seeing what's there.

Freda: Can we have a vote to have a dialogue with the DWP? We want the mission statement to be more flexible.

Paul: No. Right now the DWP has told us they are going to do it.

Freda: If you present it to them as a dialogue it has a chance.

Paul: Let's start with talking to them about what they consider possible. Need to justify why they are there.

Sarah: There are multiple strategies happening at once. Joanna and I, as Reservoir Committee co-chairs, are in dialogue with the DWP.

## **B. Suggestions about organizing and communications for the committee**

Maryann: Most people don't know about the office building. We should do a photoshop rendering of what it looks like. Until it's in your face, you don't respond. If we could get DWP to mark out on the reservoir property ahead of the Aug 24th meeting exactly where that building will be, that will be descriptive. That's the way we could build support. First position is not on the Reservoir property. Reservoir committee can do dialogue.

Woman in back: Wondering about what an alternative could be? What about the Hoover yards?

Sarah: the DWP says it's not available.

Maryann: SLRC gave the DWP a list of buildings that were vacant, etc.

Paul: What was the response?

Maryann: No response.

Tome: It's a double affront, the idea that they're bringing people in who don't have to do w the Reservoir. The modular building has no aesthetic integrity in a community that values architecture.

Paul: I made a point at the meeting that we had one DWP rep there. We asked them to justify why are you at the reservoir and they didn't have any answers. Need to give the community some more information. It was about showing us how pretty it's going to be. I thought you guys don't get it. It's not about what the building is, it's about the existence at all. It's a yard for them to get their trucks and do maintenance. Not really for reservoir maintenance.

Sarah: DWP Commissioners meetings are a lever that could be pushed. No one goes to the meetings and the Commissioners are in the dark about this project. A small group could make a big difference.

Maryann: They are responsive and typically they know nothing. It's up to us to educate them.

Paul: I don't necessarily make a formal thing as Outreach from this Committee but encourage people to attend.

Sarah: Submit E-comments on the website.

Freda: I want to speak up for DWP. Do consider another location at the Reservoir. The reason it's modular is because they wanted to spare the community construction. Rec & Parks is impoverished agency. DWP has deep pockets. One thing that they have is 24/7 security on their property. If anything happens, you can go to that guard house. That is a big factor. The nursery school entrance has always been dangerous. They moved the entrance. That's something Rec & Parks can't do. For the wildlife, when we have problems with the herons, they stop the work. They responded immediately over the weekend over the herons nests. When you dialogue with them, that's what I would suggest.

Paul: That shows that they are responsive to the community. The fact that we have seen them move and the way they are presenting this. If we push back hard enough, the community does hold sway here. To accept what they have decided is wrong.

Arianna: Where did you hear it's going to take 1 day to put the modular building in?

Freda: At the SLNC presentation.

Paul: They were referring to the actual placement of the building itself. That happened because we pushed back.

Freda: If we push for the greenest possible construction — permeable pavement. There are a lot of things we can do to mitigate.

Arianna: The parents didn't know about this meeting. I bet all the parents will gather and do a revolution because I don't think we want our kids next to a construction site. Even though the modular, they will raise dust and particles.

Mike: Personally, I don't want that building there. I don't want to be the one who decides what happens for the community. I just want the community to have a say.

Paul: We will meet in mid to late August. Meet with DWP and formalize plans.

Tricia: The vision statement that we have is only negative. We need to have something else in mind. We need restrooms. That house has bathrooms. That would make a nice area. Silver Lake Reservoir belongs to the community but legally belongs to DWP. Anything they do is in their interest. We have QUIMBY funds. Those are for parks. We don't have enough space for parks. We have a whole reservoir that could be used and funded by Quimby. Develop the northern section of the park.

Paul: If we're successful we would be able to bring the land back into the Master Planning process.

Ethan: Should it become modular, there are incredible green modular buildings. Why don't you put a state of the art green showpiece. It might be an asset compared to a box.

Meeting adjourned.