

**DRAFT MINUTES
EASTSIDE WORKING GROUP
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
MARCH 22, 2016
6:30 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 Bianca Siegl.

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
Garen Srpyan led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Bianca Siegl swore in Agassi Topchian as a Group Member
- C. 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.

D. Roll Call

Working Group Members present:

Chad Blouin, Rose Disarno, Carlos Florez, Emily Gable, Tod Hallman, Brian Keith Holt, Steve Martin, Jared Miesler, Dani Shaker, Jesse Slansky, Agassi Topchian

Working Group Members absent:

Marina Berkman, Justine Block, Neal Zaslavsky

Staff present:

Bianca Siegl, Long Range and Mobility Planning Manager
Garen Srpyan, Associate Planner
Danny Casillas, Administrative Specialist III

E. Approval of Minutes

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Motion: Approve minutes, Working Group meeting of February 23, 2016 with the following correction:

Indicate that Dani Shaker was present

Moved: Chad Blouin

Second: Emily Gable,

Aye: Chad Blouin, Rose Disarno, Carlos Florez, Emily Gable, Tod Hallman, Brian Keith Holt, Steve Martin, Jared Miesler, Dani Shaker, Jesse Slansky,

Abstain: Agassi Topchian

Motion passed.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Wojtkielewicz, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about the need for sensible development, affordable housing and figuratively and literally keeping people out.

Stephanie J. Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, welcomed the Group back and spoke about the loss of retail businesses on the eastside.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Economic Development Discussion

RSG presented background information about economic development on the Eastside and asked the EWG to weigh in on various topics through targeted discussion questions. Below is a summary of the discussion and findings:

Issues/Threats

- Poorly designed retail
- Lacking basic services on Eastside like a dry cleaner
- Unappealing architecture in new developments
- Slow turnaround for opening a business
- High rents in new developments
- Not enough mom and pop shops
- Vacant storefronts do not have a “community feel”
- New developments have retail spaces that are too large
- Parking requirements lead to underutilized buildings

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- There is no policy that requires that retail space be filled before housing is opened
- New developments don't fit the neighborhood character
- Not enough cool nightlife
- Need more food options

Strengths/Opportunities

- Overlay zone of parking
- Opportunity to marry the "old" and the "new"
- Adaptive reuse of older buildings
- Design review board might improve design of new buildings
- Create spaces to serve the neighborhood, not the new development
- Dedicate small spaces in buildings for new businesses
- Business/city bus cross-promotion
- Incentivize developers to reuse buildings and fill vacant spaces
- Encourage a good mix of office and retail
- Incentivize property owners to invest in their properties
- Minimize hurdles for small businesses
- Create a list of "bad" buildings and spaces and use code enforcement to try to bring them up to code so businesses can move in
- Shared parking arrangements
- Incentives for desired businesses
- Community benefits with new developments
- Defer startup costs for new businesses
- Desire creative businesses
- Create an urban village feel
- Utilize vacant spaces for pop-up businesses
- More dining in street
- Create a façade improvement program
- Need "cool, funky, neighborhood-serving" uses
- Local chains would be acceptable
- A walking tour may help identify desired uses and architecture

Cathy Blaivas, WEST HOLLYWOOD, agreed with the group's comments and emphasized focusing on incentives for businesses.

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Stephanie Harker, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about getting Public Benefits that are promised.

Dan Harrington Tyrell, WEST HOLLYWOOD, commented that beauracracry becomes too much of a hurdle for smaller businesses.

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about keeping an Urban Village feel.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about appealing to the social good and non-profits.

B. Community Event Update

At the end of the meeting, City staff and Raimi + Associates provided a brief update on the community event. After feedback from the community, the venue was changed to the public parking lot on the corner of Spaulding and Santa Monica Boulevard. Additionally, due to multiple conflicts, the date of the event will be changed from April 24, 2016 to the Fall on a date to be determined. Information on the date and the specific activities will be provided to the EWG as the date approaches.

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about using the event to solicit input from residents about housing zones to be developed.

C. Next Steps

Bianca Siegl informed the group of upcoming discussions.

4. WORKING GROUP MEMBER COMMENTS

No Comments

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Victor Omelczenko, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about an Arbor Day event.

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6. ADJOURNMENT

Action: The Eastside Working Group adjourned at 8:28 p.m. until the next meeting on April 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 APRIL 2016.

Bianca Siegl

ATTEST:

Staff Liaison