



Venice Neighborhood Council



LUPC APPLICATION

Contact Information:

Qualifying Stakeholder Address (*Dirección*):

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|---|---------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Print Name/Nombre el letra de Molde : John Reed | | | |
| _____ | Venice | CA | 90291 |
| Street address / Dirección | City / Ciudad | State / Estado | Zip/ Código Postal |

Mailing Address (if different):

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|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Street address / Dirección | City / Ciudad | State / Estado | Zip/ Código Postal |

Contact Numbers:

| | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Phone (Day) / Teléfono (día) john.reed@venicenc.org | Phone (Evening) / Teléfono (tardé) | Fax Number |
| Email / Correo Electrónico (very important) | | |

I hereby certify, that I wish to serve on the Land Use and Planning Committee of the Venice Neighborhood Council and I am a Stakeholder within the boundaries of the VNC area.

12-3-2012

Stakeholder Signature/ *Firma* _____ Date _____



Venice Neighborhood Council



*Note: Stakeholders that did not register as a VNC Stakeholder in one of the last two elections should register with the Secretary of the VNC at the **December 18, 2012** Board of Officers Meeting. Please bring proof of stakeholder status with you to register.*

Please answer all these questions and limit your answers to 200 words or less each. Email to rules@VeniceNC.org and Chair-LUPC@VeniceNC.org.

Questions:

- 1) Please explain why you wish to serve on the LUPC.

As a current member of the LUPC since 2008, I believe the LUPC has made a difference in the planning entitlement process by informing the VNC of case specific issues relating to project compliance with the VCZSP. As an architect who is very familiar with the VCZSP, I believe technical input during these hearings has provided valuable analysis and understanding of which projects are in compliance. In several instances the LUPC has educated applicants, "stakeholders", by providing constructive feedback so that their projects can comply with the specific plan.

In November of 2007 my family and I made a decision to move to Venice for numerous reasons including, a) the urban environment and our interest in being able to live in a walkable community. The beach, restaurants, Lincoln, Main AK and OFW streets, are all within walking distance of our live-work space on Rose. b) Venice is one of the few areas in Los Angeles that has an identifiable community with a tremendous appreciation for art and architecture, both historic and modern. Recognizing this appreciation is paramount when reviewing proposed development projects c) As a local Venice architect and resident of Venice I am very interested in contributing to the neighborhood planning process. I believe this process will help determine how Venice both maintains its character and changes over the next several decades. d) One of my professional areas of expertise is processing and understanding the entitlement phase within the California Coastal Zone. I am very knowledgeable of the Zoning Code and the current committee's code specialist.

- a) Have you served before on the LUPC or other planning and land use related committees? If so, please provide some detail.

I have been a LUPC committee member since 2008. I have participated in numerous planning meetings in various municipalities over the last 29 years. During these meetings I have participated as a community member, applicant's representative, and architect. The LUPC is a committee which recommends conditions of approval or denial to the VNC Board, our task it to clearly articulate



Venice Neighborhood Council



the issues so the board can make an informed decision. The LUPC can also be a valuable committee in addressing larger planning issues in Venice.

b) Please state any qualifications or related experiences relevant to this position.

I am a licensed architect in the State of California (since 1983) and a USC graduate. I am the principal of Reed Architectural Group, a Venice architectural firm located on Rose Avenue. The firm has won numerous awards (including several for our Rose Ave building) and is currently working on multiple Leed certified projects. Over the years I have worked on a variety of building types including, housing projects, mixed use projects, commercial projects, senior citizen projects, duplexes, and single family dwellings. I have worked with homeowners, non profit clients, individuals, and corporate clients. By designing these different building types I have a clear understanding of how specific plans, the zoning code, and the building code impact each building type and their relationship to site constraints. I believe that my technical expertise and thorough knowledge of the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan will be an asset for the Planning and Land Use Committee

2) Please list the (2) most pressing planning and land use issues you feel are facing the Venice Community today. What would you like to see done in order to solve, manage, or improve these issues?

- 1) Parking Impact - Transportation impacts on current infrastructure including traffic, overnight parking and lack of public parking. Issues dealing with residents and commercial business competing for the same street parking spaces.
- 2) Promote Walkability, and bicycle transportation. Encourage sustainable design and projects that promote pedestrian activity which in turn will make neighborhoods safer and commercial streets more diverse.

Support balanced development between redevelopment and new development which respects both the historic character of Venice and the inevitable change which occurs over time in all communities.

3) Under what kinds of situations do you feel it to be appropriate to grant exceptions or variances to the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan or other LA City Planning codes? *(Note the findings regarding these entitlements are listed below)*

4) _____
Designing a project that complies with the Venice Specific Plan and Zoning code does not automatically mean you have a good project, a good design or that it will fit into the neighborhood. I believe each project should be considered based on the merits of the project and the constraints of the site. It is extremely difficult to

make the necessary mandatory findings for variances and exceptions. Therefore, only if the “variance or exception” create an overall better project and the applicants justification is compelling then I believe the variance or exception should be considered. There will be instances when variances and exceptions should be granted and situations where they should be denied. I believe each variance or exception should be carefully evaluated and considered on a case by case basis.

- 5) Please review the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan and the Venice Land Use Plan (which was certified by the California Coastal Commission) and comment briefly on both your knowledge of and your opinion of each.

In general the VCZSP is one of the better specific plans adopted by the City of Los Angeles. The guidelines create design constraints and building envelope limits without forcing an architectural style or box of parts allowing the design professional to comply with the Specific Plan in a distinctly creative way. I have designed several buildings in Venice which were within the Coastal jurisdiction and were designed in compliance with of the VCZSP so I not only have a theoretical understanding of the plan but a practical understanding of how the plan impacts a building design. Unfortunately the VCZSP is not perfect nor is every term and condition without interpretation. The specific plan also contains subjective language which does not clearly define certain terms like “Character, Scale and Mass”. This ambiguity can create conflicts so it is our role as LUPC members to be fair minded when making recommendations to the VNC.

The Venice Land Use Plan has been adopted by the California Coastal Commission but to date a Certified Venice Local Coastal Program is still pending. The California Coastal Commission 40th anniversary was on November 4, 2012. The Coastal Act was adopted in 1976. The City of Los Angeles and stakeholders in Venice spent over 20 years working on the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan which became effective in January 2004. It’s time to finish this work and eliminate as much ambiguity as possible for all those who live, work and own property in Venice. I am very interested in being a part of this process.

Access VCZSP at <http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/specplan/pdf/VenCoastal.pdf>.

Access Venice Land Use Plan at <http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/othrplan/OPAREA/VENLUP.HTM>

VARIANCES AND SPECIFIC PLAN EXCEPTIONS

Sec. 562, Los Angeles City Charter

The Area Planning Commission may permit an exception from a specific plan if it makes all the following findings:

- (a) That the strict application of the regulations of the specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of the specific plan;



Venice Neighborhood Council



- (b) That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area;
 - (c) That an exception from the specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the specific plan area in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question;
 - (d) That the granting of an exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the vicinity of the subject property; and
 - (e) That the granting of an exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the specific plan and any applicable element of the general plan.
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Los Angeles Municipal Code, (LAMC)
Chapter 1, General Provisions & Zoning.
Article 2, Sec. 12.27, Variances

D. Findings for Approval. The decision of the Zoning Administrator shall be supported by written findings of fact based upon evidence taken, written or oral statements and documents presented, which may include photographs, maps and plans, together with the results of any staff investigations.

Consistent with Charter Section 562, no variance may be granted unless the Zoning Administrator finds all of the following:

1. That the strict application of the provisions of the zoning ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the zoning regulations
2. That there are special circumstances applicable to the subject property such as size, shape, topography, location or surroundings that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity;
3. That the variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of the special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, is denied to the property in question
4. That the granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare, or injurious to the property or improvements in the same zone or vicinity in which the property is located; and
5. That the granting of the exception is consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the Specific Plan.