Application for Land Use and Planning Committee
Ava Arndt

1. For the past 2 decades I have been heavily involved at the theoretical level in how cities work – what affects them, how they evolve, how people work within or against them, how the nature of cities has changed over historical time. I would like to bring this expertise into the real world and apply practically what I know about cities to the planning process for the city of Venice. I think Venice is at a turning point in its growth and I see serving on LUPC as a chance to apply myself locally to a process that matters to me. I became involved recently in the debate surrounding Hotel Ray and wrote a policy paper on development in Venice as a result of that debate. The experience made clear to me that planning and land use issues are currently both crucial and contested and that people within the community, including myself, need to get involved to try to figure things out. I would like to be part of that process.

2. No.

3. I am a professor of humanities, a researcher and freelance policy analyst.

4. I have volunteered in the community previously at the Ballona Wetlands (as docent, tour guide and educator) and at Santa Monica Yoga organizing fundraisers to aid Tsunami victims and various other causes. In my youth I was also an active participant in gay rights issues in San Francisco and HIV/AIDS work.

5. The most pressing planning issue facing the Venice Community is whether Venice defines/redefines itself or Venice gets defined/redefined by other, stronger and more proactive, forces. Within this, the most important issues in planning as I see them are :
   • Venice needs a transportation plan, which could include planning for bike paths, congestion management, parking, and public transportation. I think there are a lot of creative and successful models for solutions out there that ought to be considered.
   • The nature of development – how, when, where, why. Not if. For example, the issue of chain stores on Abbot Kinney has come up recently. This needs to be formally addressed.
   • Affordable housing. This is a huge issue for all of LA, Venice is no exception.

6. There may of course be instances when granting exceptions to the VSP or other codes may make sense. However, I believe this question goes to a broader issue of proactive planning (see #7). Rather than reactively putting out fires, or deciding everything on an ad hoc basis there needs to be a governing vision or goal that guides such questions which is explicit and clear to VNC and the Venice community.

7. As recent events in the Ray Hotel debate have made clear, there are divided opinions on the viability and usefulness or not of the VSP. I think this means that the VSP needs to be looked at again and a dialogue needs to be opened in the community about what a specific plan can or should do and what kind of document that needs to be to see us through the next decade or two. We need to decide if the current VSP is a document that can take us into the future with probable development and population growth (again, issues all of Los Angeles is facing). The spirit or essence of the plan needs to be articulated clearly. This to my mind will be some of the major work of LUPC .

8. Whatever role I may or may not have with developers with projects in the Venice area (i.e. friend, cousin, neighbor) should not and will not have any bearing on my decisions, behavior or participation in the Land Use and Planning Committee. Any relationship that had the potential to be a conflict of

interest would, obviously, be disclosed.

9. Venice is one of the last developable communities near the ocean. As such it is bound to be extremely popular with developers and investors. My vision for Venice is that it is able to articulate and express its identity and work to maintain that even as growth, development and change happen within its bounds. I do not think this is impossible. Many much older neighborhoods have done this (some better than others and to varying degrees) and I would like to see the same happen here.