



# Venice Neighborhood Council



## KAREN WOLFE LUPC APPLICATION

### Questions:

*Answer all these questions, please limit your answers to 200 words or less each . Print on a separate sheet of paper and email to [Secretary@VeniceNC.org](mailto:Secretary@VeniceNC.org).*

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

I have useful knowledge and experience acquired through previous work with architects and developers to help the VNC board and community members assess projects and their impact on the community. As a former VNC board member, I understand some of the areas in which the board will need to be informed to make good decisions.

- a. Have you served before on the LUPC or other planning and land use related committee? If so, what committee and when? No
- b. Please state your professional qualifications or related experience relevant to this position.

My first experience with architecture and planning was as Thom Mayne's assistant and office manager at Morphosis. Working with this architect who went on to win the Pritzker Prize gave me an understanding of the collaboration necessary with various constituencies within communities, the government, builders and clients. I went on to work for Frank Gehry in the year building up to the grand opening of Disney Concert Hall. Engaging in the highest level of civic involvement provided invaluable experience. I can also distinguish the aspirations of architects and developers from the needs and desires of the community.

I then opened my own PR business specializing in architecture and design for five years. As a former communications professional, it was my job to write and talk about the projects and the individuals so that the public could understand them. I would be qualified to help the board as well as the community understand the context and impact of proposed projects in Venice. I would like to help prepare clear project summaries at the top of all LUPC staff reports as well as Board agendas so the community and board members can better follow the status of projects and issues they have identified as priorities. I would like to see Board action of LUPC items be summarized into "Community Impact Statements" that would stay with the project file throughout the permit process to ensure Venice's voice is known and heard.

- 2) Please list your previous and/or current neighborhood or community involvement. I served on the VNC Neighborhood Committee, and Ad Comm for a short fill-in term. I organized with our community to keep the Ray Hotel as proposed from being approved, the 65' apartment building at Venice & Lincoln from being approved and I currently work to find appropriate solutions to the problems associated with homelessness in Venice, particularly a safe parking program which the VNC supports. Outside VNC, I was extremely involved in the startup and first 6 years of my children's K-8 public charter school which serves many Venice families.
- 3) Please list the three most pressing planning and land use issues you feel are facing the Venice Community. Parking, affordable housing and density.
- 4) 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? (Findings regarding these entitlements below) Perhaps there would be times when brilliant



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minds would find problems and/or solutions not previously identified in the VCZSP, but would be thoroughly vetted by the community, LUPC and the VNC board. City law specifically prohibits variances that will be detrimental to the public. Neighborhood Councils are the first group to speak with and for the community. I specifically do not support variances whose sole purpose is the financial gain of the developer. Maybe politicians and civic leaders have to entertain the argument that the investment "needs to pencil out" for the developer but that never made sense to me at the community level and my VNC board voting record on LUPC projects reflects that.

- a. What is your opinion of the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan? It's an important guiding document for the community having been created with extensive community input and having been continually validated by the community through the years.
  - b. Have you read the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan? Yes
  - c. Have you read the Venice Land Use Plan which was certified by the California Coastal Commission? Yes
- 5) How do you view your role in private interactions with developers who have projects proposed before the Land Use and Planning Committee? Any ex parte communications need to be declared in public at the LUPC meeting. It seems to me that LUPC members might need to communicate with applicants outside meetings simply because the information might need to be clarified prior to a public meeting. If former LUPC members have prior experience with this being positive or negative, I would make sure that informed my opinion on the matter.

Every community, including Venice, has problems with following up on conditions imposed on a project. How do you think the Venice Neighborhood Council should follow up on our conditioning process to see that conditions are met? It seems that Jim Murez's new case tracking system will make this easier. LUPC could have a monthly follow up file that prompts LUPC to agendize projects a year (or whenever) after their original conditions were set for review of compliance.

1. Define "change," and what, if any, community planning considerations, should govern "change." Include the correlation between built environment change and governance change.  
I don't really understand this question. Things change over time.
2. What is your view and VNC/LUPC action recommendation regarding the ability of a proposed commercial or residential development to receive physically nonexistent entitlements (i.e., parking) which will negatively impact surrounding developments? My understanding is that any negative impact on the existing community is one of the determining criteria and therefore needs to be considered by LUPC and the VNC.

6) What is your Vision for Venice? My vision for Venice is of a thriving community diverse in many ways: socially, racially, economically as well as regarding age and profession. That is what drew me to Venice and has kept me here.