



Venice Neighborhood Council



Questions:

Please limit your answers to the 9 questions below to 200 words or less each.

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

As a resident of Venice I am optimistic and excited about the future of Venice, and the opportunity at hand for the community to grow in a constructive, sustainable way. The LUPC is an integral tool and an important voice for the Venice community. As a unique, small portion of a large city, it is imperative that community decisions and voices are united in order to implement effective changes at the City-wide level, and bring project-specific decisions (and the benefits of those decisions) back to the community. It is our responsibility, as a community, to influence decisions at the City level to serve our best interests. I believe that land use planning is the most integral type of planning – without land use regulations and guidelines no other strategies can take hold. Particularly in an established community, with high density, character, traffic, and changing demographics, land use planning in Venice is both restricted and extremely effective.

- 2) Have you served before on the LUPC or other planning and land use related committee? If so, what committee and when?

I have not yet served on any planning committee.



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- 5) Please list the three most pressing planning issues you feel are facing the Venice Community:

Traffic/Parking
Density
Affordable Housing

As traffic increases and available parking decreases, as density continues to increase and the population grows, and as Venice continues to be a desirable community in which to live, I believe forward-thinking planning and proactive development is the best way to ensure that the established character is able to prevail. The community will never stop changing, nor will population growth subside. I think an emphasis on adequate provision of parking should be integral for future developments, particularly multi-family residential and commercial establishments. Medium and high density should continue to be encouraged throughout the community, where adequate infrastructure exists. The high-density nature of the Venice community provides for increased pedestrian traffic, community-oriented development, and a reduced demand for parking; this type of community is also more sustainable than single-family developments in areas as population-intensive as southern California. Affordable housing should be provided within the community, and should not be displaced to other areas. The community prides itself on socioeconomic diversity, which is at risk in the face of gentrification and the rise in property values and the ever-increasing demand for high-end housing in the immediate area. The community currently existing in Venice is threatened without the active protection of affordable housing.

- 6) Under what kinds of situations do you feel it to be appropriate to grant exceptions or variances to the Venice Specific Plan or other LA City Planning codes?

Exceptions and variances to the Venice Specific Plan, or any other governing plan, should only be granted when the exception or variance furthers the long-term planning goals in the area. Too often, projects are treated individually, without understanding how each individual project combines for a cumulative effect. When this happens, it is easy to grant a parking variance or a height district exception that should not be granted under the umbrella of the larger picture. The granting of variances or exceptions weakens the planning laws in place and makes them useless. When planning regulations and policies are outdated and do not serve their purpose for long-term planning, variations are reasonable. There are certainly times when variances and exceptions are more forward-planning than the plans currently in place. For example, it may not serve any purpose to enforce a set-back provision on a single-family home when the surrounding properties are not equally set back. But, in general, I believe there needs to be more oversight from committees like the LUPC to prevent unlimited ad hoc exceptions and variances to the planning tools in place.



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7) What is your opinion of the Venice Specific Plan?

As a planning document, the Venice Specific Plan is highly design-oriented. The SP deals primarily with property-level guidelines for design features such as set-backs, fences, yards, landscaping, and lighting. While I agree that design standards are key to maintaining character in a community, the eclectic character in Venice is difficult to regulate. I believe more value should be given to regulations such as FAR, height restrictions, parking, and density, and that livable, mixed-use developments promoting the existing culture of Venice should be encouraged. It is the responsibility of the LUPC and such advisory committees to envision the future of Venice and make recommendations and decisions based on these long-term planning goals.

8) How do you view your role in private interactions with developers who have projects proposed before the Land Use and Planning Committee?

Being professionally employed as a third-party consultant, I am well-aware of the dynamic that exists within the planning and development process. I believe it is possible for decision-makers to make responsible choices while also maintaining relationships with stakeholders. Each day, I balance the demands of public agencies and private developers, while ultimately being responsible to the law. I believe respectful relationships between stakeholders foster more compromise and understanding than polarized opposition, and I understand that in a City like Los Angeles development will never stop; it must be each community's goal to ensure that development is suitable and of the highest standard possible, by reaching out to, and working with, developers.



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9) What is your Vision for Venice?

My vision for Venice is that of a diverse community catering to a population over a wide demographic range. I would like the community to grow in a proactive way; setting examples for neighboring communities, the state and the nation with an urban environment that is safe, clean, affordable, sustainable, interesting, and economically viable. I look forward to being a long-term resident in a community that fosters my ideals and continues to develop in a progressive way.

Thank You for Volunteering to Help Our Community!