

Venice Neighborhood  
Council  
Post Office Box 550  
Venice, CALIFORNIA 90294  
310-606-2015.

**Land Use and  
Planning Committee**  
Staff Report to Board of Officers  
July 17, 2007  
**ERUV REPORT**



**California Coastal  
Commission Permit No: 5-06-042**

**Address of Project:** Venice Beach; including but not limited to area from Santa Monica city line southerly to Marina del Rey channel and east to Marina del Rey boundary within the City of Los Angeles, California.

**Proponent:** Pacific Jewish Center

**Opponents:** Marina Peninsula Neighborhood Association, Coastal Law Enforcement Action Network (CLEAN),

**Supporters of the  
Opposition:** Los Angeles Audubon Society  
Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter

**California Coastal  
Commission Hearing:** July 9, 2007, San Luis Obispo  
CCC denied request to revoke this permit

**LUPC Motion to Present this report to the Venice Neighborhood Council's Board of Officers without prejudice and without recommendation for their action made by Maury Ruano and seconded by Sylviane Dugnan.**

**Vote: 7-0-2 Motion passed**

# REPORT

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The creation of a symbolic religious enclosure by stringing 200-pound fishing line along Ocean Front Walk and throughout Venice, which is part of the City of Los Angeles, between proposed and existing manmade (lamp posts, poles, etc.) and natural landmarks to create an unbroken enclosure for the benefit of the 70 plus families that are members of the Pacific Jewish Center on Ocean Front Walk.

## SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS ISSUE:

The installation of an Eruv has been a matter of contention in many neighborhoods around the world.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROVERSY:

California law calls for the protection of public views along the coast and the habitats of nesting shore birds. There is fear that the endangered California Least Terns that nest nearby will fly into the fishing line and get killed. There is concern that the galvanized steel poles that will be erected to hold up the fishing line along the beach will be an eyesore.

A controversy erupted in Malibu, California in 2006 over the proposed expansion of a local Eruv. "This is really nuts," Mark Massara, director of the Sierra Club's California Coastal Program said of the Eruv proposal. "To the extent that we're allowing public property to be used for religious purposes it is very troublesome."

## RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY:

In the United States, the issue is often framed legally as whether the stringing of the Eruv on public property violates the First Amendment's prohibition of a governmental establishment of religion, and popularly as whether it violates a "separation of church and state".

Some rabbis do disagree about the use of an Eruv and note that the point seems to be to "get around" Sabbath restrictions.

## **SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS FOR THIS ISSUE:**

Orthodox Jews cannot do work or certain physical tasks outside the home on their day of rest and prayer, which begins at sundown Friday and ends at nightfall Saturday. The way around these restrictions for some Orthodox Jews is an “ERUV” – a Hebrew word for the symbolic extension of an area considered private into the public domain.

An “ERUV” enables Orthodox Jews to move about in an area outside the usual restrictions on a Sabbath.

**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments heard at the June 27, 2007 LUPC meeting.

**Report submitted by LUPC Eruv Task Force**  
**Date: June 27, 2007**