

Michael Stenger

### NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE APPLICATION

1. I would like to serve on the Neighborhood Committee because it is a natural extension of what I have been doing over the last several years. I am particularly interested in helping our public schools. I believe there are lots of opportunities to improve our community through outreach, planning, and networking. Often, I have found that a relatively small nucleus can overcome institutional inertia and accomplish tangible results.
2. I have been volunteering in one capacity or another for the last 20 years, sort of a natural born volunteer. My focus now and for the last 6 or 7 years has been education. Specifically, I have volunteered at Walgrove Elementary as a reading tutor, community representative, recruiter of other reading partners, fund raiser, organizer, treasurer of the booster club, et.al. The current project is getting a vegetable garden put in. I also have volunteered at the Venice Family Clinic, Venice Community Housing Corp., the Neighborhood Youth Association, and Venice Garden Tour.
3. Most pressing is managing development. Growth is fine, but should occur within existing framework, i.e., the Venice Specific Plan. I want to see the character of Venice retained as much as possible. Secondly, we obviously live in a very desirable, expensive place. Given that, I believe we must try to preserve as much affordable housing as we can. Finally, I think our public education needs help, particularly Mark Twain Middle School. We must apply more resources, both human and financial, to improve the students' opportunities.
4. I believe I have been doing this sort of outreach for the past several years. I think I have a working knowledge of many of our social, educational, and governmental organizations. For example, I have served as project manager for a Community Beautification grant and solicited letters of support from private as well as public entities, including Venice Neighborhood Association, LAUSD, the Methodist Church, etc. I'm an active member of the Venice Chamber of Commerce. Last year I received a Certificate of Appreciation from Councilman Rosendahl for my volunteer efforts.
5. I moved to Venice in 1971 and lived the decade of the 70's on Speedway and Venice Bl..I bought my house in east Venice in 1980. I have always been impressed and attracted by the spirit and diversity of the community. All kinds of different citizens living together. I want to maintain this sense. I believe there is a deep reservoir of talented and civic-minded people in Venice. We can be a leader and model for other neighborhood committees.

SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL STENGER 11-5-07