**Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council**

**Land Use Committee**

**Minutes**

**March 17, 2016**

Present: Ron Ziff, Chair; Alicia Bartley, Tom Capps, Jackie Diamond, Art Fields, Jeff Kalban, Mikie Maloney, Rick Mayer, Sue Steinberg

1. Call to order at 6:30 pm
2. Roll Call
3. Panel Discussion: *Can the Vision for Sherman Oaks Benefit both Community and Developer?*

**Moderator**: Jeff Kalban, SONC Board, Chair SONC LUC Vision Subcommittee. **Participants**: Fred Gaines, Founding & Managing Partner Gaines & Stacey, LLP, Calabasas councilmember and former mayor; David Rand, Partner, Armbruster, Goldsmith & Delvac, LLP, former chair, SONC Land Use Committee; Ira Handelman, President, Handelman Consulting, Inc.

Panelists addressed questions and concerns from committee and community members. Suggestions to improve the process were made by panelists. **(See Attachment A)**

1. Approval of Minutes:

January 21, 2016, motion by Jeff, seconded by Sue. Approved.

February 18, 2016, motion by Jeff, seconded by Jackie. Approved.

March 5, 2016 Special Meeting. Motion by Jeff, seconded by Mikie. Approved as corrected.

1. Electeds in attendance: Carolyn Casavan, Sodonia Lax, Lisa Petrus, SONC; Kathy Delle Donne, Plan Review Board

Public Comment: Nancy Sogoian asked about Sunskist property and status of mansonization ordinance.

1. Chair’s Report: McGees Closet on Ventura will appear at April meeting to present a mural plan; Metro has released its proposal for a sales tax increase for the November ballot; Paul Krekorian is requesting a Metro Service Center for the Valley; Mobility Plan 2035 will be heard in PlUM on April 21 – SONC opposed arbitrary changes in traffic lanes and received assurance that changes within SONC boundaries will require a public hearing; Metro will open the Expo Line train May 20 and will add stops from the Valley Bus lines to connect; the Rim of the Valley Nation Park has been finalized and will have a long term impact on hillside development, traffic and recreation.

Plan Review Board Report: The Plan Review Board is asking for projects for each community that will be funded by the money currently in the Plan. Discussions are taking place on opening up the Specific Plan, but SONC has opposed this.

1. Returning Business: Verizon Cell Antenna rooftop facility at 13425 Ventura. The applicant presented a revised concept, with the new antenna 16 feet above the 43 foot rooftop. Neighbors Mike Lescie and Jennifer Mercede voiced concerns about noise from the rooftop and the ground-level generator and whether another carrier could add more service equipment at the site. The applicant said that there would not be any on-going noise, only during testing and emergencies; that allowing another carrier to use the site would require enlarging it which would be difficult. The design was unacceptable to the committee. Jeff Kalban will work with them. The matter was deferred until April.

New Business: Application for a 15,000 sq. ft building with 5, 000 Banquet hall and offices at 14241 Ventura Blvd. with exceptions for height of 45 feet in lieu of 30 feet; parking for 30 cars in lieu of 64 cars; a Floor Area Ratio of 1.5:1 in lieu of 1.25:1; lot coverage of 80% in lieu 60%. The first floor would have retail and a banquet hall; the second a dental office and the 3rd a roof top deck. Committee concerns: parking not adequate; too high and causing intrusions on the neighborhood to the north; the exceptions to the Specific Plan did not seem warranted; the entry way did not seem easily accessible; the design was not appealing. Comments from Lisa Petrus noted that the large number of banquet guests arriving at one time would bring too much traffic to that portion of Ventura, and valet parkers would be running across the street; the open rooftop is problematic; the operation could pose a negative impact on adjacent restaurants. The Committee supported the idea of a banquet hall in general, but the project needed refining. Motion to oppose as presented by Jeff Kalban; second by Sue Steinberg; Unanimously approved.

1. Committee Business: Checking on Sunkist, the property at Ventura and Beverly Glen and the status of the postponed development initiative, and council office staffing.
2. No announcements from Committee
3. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.
4. Next Meeting on April 25, 2016

**Attachment A: Panel Discussion**

**Community concerns**: developers approach communities too late in the process; lack of notice to adjacent residents; Los Angeles is too large to alert neighborhoods; neighborhood concerns are overlooked; limited quality office space in Sherman Oaks; too many exception granted; parking is inadequate; why is mixed use not more common; do plans such as the Vision help developers; are amenities such as medians, trolleys, plazas attractive incentives; many fees paid by projects are not shared with the communities where they are sited; how do communities identify funds for their projects?

**Panel Responses**: often developers have already met with the council office, the planning department and then attend hearings – now neighborhood and community meetings double the time on presenting the project; outreach is difficult and not all community members are connected to organized bodies; smaller cities make for better outreach and projects easier to present; neighbors do not represent all the concerns that developers must address (the council office, city, tenants, state and local regulations, environmental issues, financial issues are all part of what must be juggled; Sherman Oaks is constrained in attracting quality office space because of Specific Plan limits; developers need some exceptions to be able to build projects that work; parking is often reduced by city agencies, not developers; mixed use needs a strong anchor tenant to succeed and there is a resistance to underground parking from mixed use commercial users; developers do not have jurisdiction on where fees are applied; finding grant and agency funds and pooling them will make it more feasible to fund community projects.

**Panel Suggestions**:the Specific Plan is not compatible with large development on the boulevard in Sherman Oaks. It should be amended to reflect current times and to provide a location for some desired projects. The Vision Plan is better at identifying community needs and expectations than the Specific Plan. Developers need more defined expectations. Communities need more education on the development process. A community working group on development would be welcome – to get clearer guidelines and reduce duplicative presentations. There is a lack of certainty due to feedback from multiple constituencies. Neighborhood Councils could sponsor workshops on early project concepts to get feedback before projects are too far into the process. Civility, dignity and certainty are appreciated.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mikie Maloney