



## WEST HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

### JOINT HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE/BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 1, 2021

Telephonic and Web Meeting

Approved February 9, 2021 rev. 2

Attendance: Aida Abkarians (arrived 6:36 PM), Thomas Booth, Kian Gholibeik, Olivia Naturman, Marie Javdani, Saif Mogri, Daniel Ostreicher, Steve Randall, Bill Rose, Myrl Schreiber, and Brad Vanderhoof

Committee Co-chair Thomas Booth called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. A quorum was established.

Chair Comments: Thomas announced committee member Marge Brown passed away suddenly. He said she was an asset to the committee describing her passing as “a great loss” and thanked her for her service. Olivia also said we will all miss Marge.

The December meeting minutes were approved as amended.

Numbers refer to agenda items.

5. Report from Homeless Liaison Marie Javdani: Registering unhoused stakeholders, as candidates and voters, for the NC elections is the current focus of the liaisons. The strategy is to work with local groups who interact with individuals experiencing homelessness. The West Valley Food Pantry and Fish of the Valley have been identified as serving West Hills. They have agreed to allow distribution of election materials, but as 5013c charitable organizations they cannot directly participate in elections. Marie will work with the WHNC Ad Hoc Election Committee.

6. Public Comment: Irene M. supports items 8 and 10 and is opposed to City Council Member Blumenfield providing CIS language to NCs. Damon made inappropriate comments which were off topic.

7. Homelessness Committee Previous and Future Budget Allocations for Current Fiscal Year: Marie suggested financing election materials for distribution by local organizations. Ran Vandoff made inappropriate comments. Daniel Ostreicher suggested using the opportunity for outreach to the homeless and collecting feedback on issues. Saif Mogri suggested trying to get Covid19 vaccinations for individuals experiencing homelessness. Thomas said the County Health Department has a plan to administer vaccines to the unhoused. Olivia suggested this could be an opportunity to introduce people to organizations providing rent assistance.

8. Community Impact Statement to OPPOSE CF 20-1376: Nigel supports the CIS in opposition. Zach Volet supports the CIS in opposition. Brenda Smith supports the CIS in opposition and said the motion is litigation based. Caleb supports the CIS in opposition and said Council Member Blumenfield is providing CIS language to NCs. Taylor Christsen supports the CIS in opposition and complained there was no rent protection before the pandemic. Anelia Kortkamp supports items 8 and 10 and the CIS in opposition. Neil, a resident of CD15 supports the CIS in opposition. Elizabeth 1 supports the CIS in opposition and said it does not actually address ADA issues with sidewalks and streets. Edgar Guzman called the motion a “poverty pimp kind of scheme” and asked why there is not more medical and mental health treatment available.

Committee and WHNC member Marie Javdani thanked attendees, said she attended both City Council meeting where this item was discussed, and has two issues. The first is health professionals strongly discourage moving individuals experiencing homelessness during the pandemic crisis and the second is there are already six lawsuits pending against the City for targeting homeless encampments. She also expressed support for the substitute motion submitted by City Council Member Bonin. Marie also would like LASHA to explain why there is no comprehensive list of available shelter beds and housing options available. Committee Co-chair Thomas Booth said at least thirteen other NCs have passed a CIS in opposition.

Thomas moved to recommend a CIS in opposition to the WHNC Board. Marie seconded.

Yes – 6, No – 0, Abstain – 0, Absent – 2, Ineligible – 0, Recusal – 0

The motion carries.

9. West Hills NC Task Force to Assist Unhoused West Hills Stakeholders with Shelter, Housing or Safe Parking Options: Item tabled to February.

Aida Abkarians arrived during the following discussion.

10. West Hills Land Parcel Identified for Housing / Services, 23133 Sherman Place: Thomas explained this is part of an overall effort to answer a request from CD12 to identify potential sites. He said he believes all council districts and neighborhoods should participate in providing housing and do their “fair share.” Olivia reminded everyone that NCs do not approve sites and only provide suggestions for potential sites. This is a “first step” and there would be public hearings before any project was approved. Daniel Ostreicher presented a map of the site, said it is currently zoned C-1 commercial, private property, and “empty.” Zach Volet supports the location, said CD12 is lagging behind the rest of the city, and described it as an ideal location due to being right next door to a medical center. Nigel supports the location. Taylor Christensen supports the location and said other development finds space and projects are approved, so it should not be difficult to build needed housing. Chase supports the location and said there should be real housing and services instead of criminalization for those experiencing homelessness. Breand Smith said she is concerned CD12 is tied with CD3 for last place in providing supportive housing. She also stated it is easier to help the transitional homeless than the chronic homeless. Sarah V. lives just to the east of West Hills Hospital and said her neighborhood has a severe problem with drug addicted patients being discharged from the hospital and committing crimes in the neighborhood. She said the problem is bad enough it is causing insurance rates to go up. Edgar Guzman said he worked in recovery and everyone experiencing homelessness does not want help. He is concerned about the parcel being in a residential neighborhood. Kevin V. supports the location. Jessica Fuentes said she lives close to the hospital and has seen an increase in the homeless population. She read a statistic that there has been a 56% increase in property crime and fears for public safety. Jamie Ishcomer-Aazami supports the location. Teo lives close to the hospital and said there are security issues with people leaving the hospital. He is opposed to the location. Isabel naturmen supports the location.

Julie Himot is concerned about what type of services would be provided and how it would affect the neighborhood. Abbey Buron does not feel safe in the neighborhood and is opposed to the location. Sherman Aazami is opposed to more encampment sweeps and incarceration. He supports expansion of services.

Myrl Schreiber said this was discussed at a WHNC Zoning and Planning Committee meeting. He added the property is privately owned and there are traffic and parking problems in the area. Saif Mogri said there needs to be consideration of people who live around the property. Marie Javdani said she understands the concerns and proposed a recuperative care site. Daniel Osreicher asked anyone with a site suggestion to send him the location. He said the site is perfect for an “unconventional use.” Thomas Booth said every emergency hospital takes psychiatric emergency cases and sometimes more care is required after discharge.

Marie moved to amend the action to recommend the site for recuperative care. There was no second.

Thomas moved to recommend 23133 as a potential site for housing and / or services. Olivia seconded.

Yes – 6, No – 0, Abstain – 1, Absent – 1, Ineligible – 0, Recusal – 0

The motion carries.

11. Supportive Housing, Bridge Housing and Alternative Housing Options: Item tabled to February.

12. WVNAH Outreach Committee Provider of the Month: Item tabled to February.

13. Call for Future Agenda Items: Thomas announced there will be a West Valley Neighborhood Council Alliance on Homelessness forum to discuss state initiatives concerning homelessness on January 18 at 6:00 PM. Details are available on the WHNC website.

Committee Co-chair Thomas adjourned the meeting at 7:23 PM.

The next meeting of this committee is on Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:00 PM. Webinar and telephonic.