



Armando Bencomo <armando.bencomo@lacity.org>

Venice NC Board Resolution, Deny Zone Change

1 message

james.murez@venicenc.org <james.murez@venicenc.org>

Mon, Nov 1, 2021 at 12:27 PM

To: mayor@lacity.org, mike.bonin@lacity.org

Cc: Laura.Macpherson@lacity.org, armando.bencomo@lacity.org, Steve.Hudson@coastal.ca.gov, Kinikia.Gardner@lacity.org, Jason.douglas@lacity.org, John.Ainsworth@coastal.ca.gov, Melissa Diner <secretary@venicenc.org>, cpc@lacity.org

Attached is a letter that addresses concerns the Venice Neighborhood Council has with a proposed zone change. The proposed change will reduce public open space in exchange for private commercial development.

Thank you in advance for your time to review this letter and to consider that over 2000 Venice Stakeholders voted in the election of our Board of Officers. We maybe a diverse community but through the Neighborhood Council we speak in a united voice.

Sincerely,
James Murez
Venice Neighborhood Council, President

 **vncRecomendation12-17-2019_denyZoneChange_CPC-2018-7344.pdf**
373K



Venice Neighborhood Council

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294
www.VeniceNC.org Email: info@VeniceNC.org



October 31, 2021

By email: Mayor Eric Garcetti mayor@lacity.org
Mike Bonin mike.bonin@lacity.org
Jack Ainsworth John.Ainsworth@coastal.ca.gov
Steve Hudson Steve.Hudson@coastal.ca.gov
Jason Douglas Jason.douglas@lacity.org
Armando Bencomo armando.bencomo@lacity.org
Kinikia Gardner Kinikia.Gardner@lacity.org
Laura MacPherson Laura.Macpherson@lacity.org

Re: Denial of Zone Change for the Venice Median from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial

Case: CPC-2018-7344-GPAJ-VZCJ-HD-SP-SPP-CDP-MEL-WDI-SPR

To whom it may concern:

Please be advised that at a regular public meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) Board of Officers held on December 17, 2019 the following motion was approved.

MOTION: The Venice Neighborhood Council strongly recommends that the City Council and the Coastal Commission DENY CPC-2018-7344-GPAJ-VZCJ-HD-SP-SPP-CDP-MEL-WDI-SPR requesting amendments to the L.A. General Plan Venice Community Plan, the certified Venice Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan and Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan for a Zone Change for the Venice median from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial.

ACTION: 13 Yea, 6 Nay, 1 Abstained

Sincerely,
James Murez
James Murez
VNC President

Attached: Supporting Documents, 4 pages

Supporting Documents

Venice Neighborhood Council, December 17, 2019, Recommendations Denial of Zone Change

Case: CPC-2018-7344-GPAJ-VZCJ-HD-SP-SPP-CDP-MEL-WDI-SPR

WHEREAS:

1. The Venice median is located on Open Space in the Dual Permit Jurisdiction Coastal Zone, just one block from the beach and the center of the Venice Boardwalk;
2. The Venice community—including the beach, the Boardwalk, the Venice Canals, and the eclectic architectural styles of the neighborhoods is one of the most popular visitor destinations in California with 16 million people visiting annually (Venice Chamber of Commerce website. 2017), and thus the land use and character of the Venice community are matters of statewide significance;
3. Recent government studies have documented that Venice has a significant deficit with respect to parks and other types of Open Space;
4. The L.A. General Plan Venice Community Plan (VCP) has an objective to preserve existing Open Space resources and where possible to develop new Open Space, as the purpose of Open Space is for the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources and wildlife corridors, outdoor recreation, connecting neighborhoods and people, and the protection of life and property due to natural hazards;
5. The VCP states that communities must have sufficient Open Space in order to balance new urban development in the community, in order to serve the recreational, environmental, health and safety needs of the community, and to protect environmental and aesthetic resources;
6. The VCP states that land designated as Open Space represents only 16% of the Venice Community Plan area, and includes the beach, the canals, Ballona Lagoon and the esplanades, the Venice Blvd median, and the parks; and that the City should preserve facilities and park space by designating City recreation and park facilities as Open Space;
7. The VCP directs that Open Space function in one or more of the following ways: recreational and education opportunities, scenic, cultural and historic value, public health and safety, preservation and creation of community identity, rights of way for utilities and transportation facilities, preservation of physical resources or ecologically important areas, and preservation of physical resources...;
8. Coastal Act Section 30213 states: "Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged and where feasible, provided. Development providing public recreational opportunities is preferred;"
9. Coastal Act Section 30220 states: "Coastal areas suited for water-oriented recreational activities that cannot readily be provided at inland water areas shall be protected for such uses;"
10. Coastal Act Section 30224 states: "Increased recreational boating use of coastal waters shall be encouraged, in accordance with this division, by developing dry storage areas,

increasing public launching facilities, providing additional berthing space in existing harbors, limiting non-water dependent land uses that congest access corridors and preclude boating support facilities, providing harbors of refuge, and by providing for new boating facilities in natural harbors, new protected water areas, and in areas dredged from dry land;"

11. The Coastal Act requires and it is to L.A.'s significant economic advantage that Venice Beach be made more attractive to beachgoers, tourists and other visitors, by improving beach access while enhancing Venice Beach as a destination, with some combination of expanded parking, perhaps a transportation terminal, expansion of Open Space, expansion of restrooms, showers and other tourist facilities, and a visitor's center;

12. The Coastal Commission, Certified Venice Local Coastal Program, Land Use Plan (LUP), Recreational Opportunities Policy III.A.1. General states: "New recreational opportunities should be provided, and existing recreational areas shall be protected, maintained and enhanced for a variety of recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors, including passive recreational and educational activities, as well as active recreational uses....acquisition, expansion and improvement of parks and facilities throughout the Venice Coastal Zone shall be encouraged and accelerated.....where feasible and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, recreational uses shall be located in conjunction with other new public facilities, such as public parking lots, and recreation facilities shall be refurbished and constructed to maximize recreational opportunities;"

13. The LUP Policy Recreational Opportunities Implementation Strategies states: "...The City shall maintain an inventory of vacant land suitable for potential acquisition as public Open Space, and shall encourage continuing efforts by County, State and Federal agencies to acquire such land and work with the Quimby funds, the Tide-Lands Oil Trust Funds, and the Venice Surplus Real Property Fund. Unutilized or underutilized public land (including rights-of-way), particularly publicly-owned lands having potential for multiple uses, such as school playgrounds, should be made available for park and recreational uses;"

14. The LUP Policy Coastal Waterways Policy III.D.2. Boating Use of Canals states: "...A public boat launch facility was built as part of the Venice Canals Rehabilitation Project at the Grand Canal and North Venice Blvd. The City shall protect the public's ability to access the canals by boat by maintaining public access to the Grand Canal public boat launch. The facility shall provide adequate on-site public parking consistent with the sizes and types of boats to be launched and frequency of launching pursuant to the County Department of Small Craft Harbors standards;"

15. The LUP Coastal Waterways Policy III.D.6. Venice Canals Parks states: "New parks, with parking to the rear, shall be considered on some of the City-owned lots on the canals, provided that such facilities are compatible with the existing residential use of the area;"

16. The LUP Parking Policy II.A.1. General states: "It is the policy of the City to provide increased parking opportunities for both visitors and residents of Venice, and improve summer weekend conditions with respect to Venice Beach parking and traffic control;"

17. The LUP Policy II.A.2. Expansion of Public Beach Parking Supply states: "The construction of new public parking facilities should be implemented, as well as maximizing the use of existing ones by restriping existing parking lots or converting them to multi-level structures where consistent with other Coastal Act policies...the established Venice Coastal Parking Impact Trust Fund, into which in-lieu parking fees shall be paid, will continue to be utilized for expenditure on improvement and development of public parking facilities that improve public access to the Venice Coastal Zone as specified in the LUP;"

18. Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan (VSP) Ordinance: Section 14. Venice Coastal Parking Impact Trust Fund ("Fund") states: "The Fund shall be used for the purpose of accepting and retaining funds collected by the Department of Transportation pursuant to this Specific Plan for any expenditure only for parking mitigation measures in, adjacent to or serving the Beach Impact Zone. Those improvements shall include but not be limited to: Venice Blvd median public parking facility improvement, including land acquisition and construction.....;"

Sea Level Rising, Dewatering, Tsunami, Flooding and other Hazards:

19. There is a high water table at the Venice median site that will present challenges for construction;

20. The dewatering of the Venice median site will have significant adverse impacts to the adjacent Venice Canals ecosystem, habitats and wildlife, in addition to producing significant noise during the initial dewatering construction phase as well as ongoing noise associated with any dewatering operations that may be required on a periodic basis after construction;

21. The Venice median sits squarely in a designated tsunami zone, and designated flood hazard areas have been significantly increased in recent years in light of climate change and sea level rise;

22. The Venice Canals are experiencing leakage;

23. The City of Los Angeles, the California Coastal Commission and other authorities, including government engineers, predict that sea level rise and tsunami hazards pose significant threats to the Venice median and surrounding area, and the Venice median, along with other lower-lying areas of Venice, is projected to be underwater in less than 50 years;

24. The Venice Local Coastal Program currently under review is focusing its response to sea level rise primarily on "managed retreat" (surrendering as opposed to protecting imperiled properties);

25. The Venice Blvd corridor is Venice's primary rescue and emergency escape artery, especially in case of tsunami;

26. Elimination of Open Space and construction of a large development on the Venice median could amplify the impact of a tsunami and other flooding events on surrounding structures, including the historic Venice Canals, by impeding, deflecting or otherwise redirecting flood waters, while significantly impeding escape and evacuation;

Other:

27. The Venice Canals area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as The Venice Canals Historic District, and the Federal designation for the area is for Community/Recreational Planning;

28. The City of L.A. has already destroyed the vast majority of the Venice Canals system (and attendant features) for which Venice is named and first gained its worldwide reputation, and what little remains today must be assiduously protected;

29. Councilmember Bonin campaigned on express promises that he would preserve Open Space, put an end to spot zoning and require that new developments be consistent with the surrounding community;

30. There are no substitutes for the Venice median for purposes of addressing the significant and growing parking deficit in Venice;

31. As per at least the last two Councilmembers for the area, the In Lieu Parking fees that have historically been paid into the Venice Coastal Parking Impact Trust Fund were to go towards expansion of parking, specifically on the Venice median, in order to mitigate the impact on public parking of the additional residential and commercial parking requirements for which the fees were paid;

32. Additional restrooms are sorely needed near the Boardwalk, and the Venice median location is the best and only available location for this visitor-serving, recreation-related use;

33. There does not appear to be a shortage of commercial uses in the area and there is no demonstrated demand that would support a conversion from Open Space to commercial use, while there clearly IS a shortage of Open Space and parking in the area;

34. Once our precious and limited Open Space is converted to another zoning classification, it's gone forever;

#####