

GOVERNMENT

Neighborhood Council for Northridge Rejected by City Lawmakers

(CNS)—The Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously yesterday to uphold the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners' decision to deny certification of the proposed Northridge Neighborhood Council.

That makes the Northridge group the first of 74 neighborhood councils to be rejected in its bid for official status.

Criticizing it as unrepresentative of the area, neighborhood commissioners voted July 1 against certifying the Northridge council.

Greg Nelson, general manager of the city's Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, told the City Council the leaders of the proposed neighborhood group did not reach out to representatives from Cal State Northridge or businesses and non-profits in the area.

"The most important flaw that is here is their inability—and in some cases, I think, a lack of desire—to involve the community, to make sure they are representing the diversity of the area," Nelson said.

Critics also have called the leaders of the Northridge group intimidating and hard to work with.

Jane Lowenthal, president of the proposed Northridge council, told City Council members the rules governing neighborhood councils limit the city's role in certifying the groups. She asked the Council to reverse the neighborhood commissioners' decision.

"The enabling legislation that you, the City Council, called for says our city neighborhoods form their own neighborhood councils, select their own leaders, determine their own priorities and adopt their own bylaws and procedures for selecting its own members," Lowenthal said.

Councilman Greg Smith, who represents the area, said he would like to see a new proposed Northridge council created.

"I think this council fell short of our expectation," he said.