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BEFORE THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS
BILL CHRISTOPHER, PRESIDENT

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In the matter of:)
) Tape No.
CITY OF LOS ANGELES) "April 23, 2002"
BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD)
COMMISSIONERS)
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TRANSCRIPTION OF TAPED PROCEEDINGS
Los Angeles, California

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Reported by:
Lynn E. Valenti,
CSR No. 8061
Job Number:
TP8272

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BEFORE THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS
BILL CHRISTOPHER, PRESIDENT

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In the matter of:)
) Tape No.
CITY OF LOS ANGELES) "April 23, 2002"
BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD)
COMMISSIONERS)
_____)

TRANSCRIPTION OF TAPED PROCEEDINGS,
heard before THE BOARD OF NEIGHBORHOOD
COMMISSIONERS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES,
transcribed by LYNN E. VALENTI, CSR No.
8061, a Certified Shorthand Reporter for
the State of California.

City of Los Angeles
Board of Neighborhood Commissioners
Tape No. "April 23, 2002"

COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- Draper, there has
been a request from the other side that you go
first. Are you comfortable with that?
KEN DRAPER: I'm not sure we're ready at the
moment, having planned on going second.
COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right.
KEN DRAPER: We have to make sure all of our

12 people are here.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm perfectly
14 willing to take five minutes yet and wait so --

15 Michelle, can you come back up here?

16 We're waiting for a couple of people who
17 apparently each have important information from both
18 of the groups applying tonight, so it will take
19 another few minutes before we actually get started.

20 In the meantime we do have handy-dandy
21 little white speaker cards which everybody who
22 wishes to speak this evening needs fill out. And if
23 you can hand one of those to our staff members, then
24 we'll be able to get everybody on the list to
25 speak.

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01 Okay. After a couple of false starts, I
02 would like to welcome everybody to the meeting of
03 the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners for Tuesday,
04 April 23rd.

05 We are at the Hancock Park Elementary
06 School, and I'm joined this evening by Commissioner
07 Tammy Membreno, Commissioner Mary Louise Longoria,
08 Commissioner Pat Herrera-Duran, Commissioner Tony
09 Luchente, Commissioner Jimmie Woods Gray, and
10 Commissioner Ron Stone. And I'm Commissioner Bill
11 Christopher.

12 And with that we will move into our agenda
13 this evening. We have, on the agenda this evening
14 in item number 2, two groups who have applied for
15 certification as neighborhood councils, both
16 representing essentially the same area which,
17 depending on who you're in favor of, either Mid City
18 West or West Wilshire.

19 Our agenda this evening will follow a
20 format by which we'll ask staff to make a
21 presentation first about the West Wilshire community
22 council, then we will ask the applicants to come up
23 and make their presentation. We will follow that by
24 a staff presentation on the Mid City West community
25 -- or neighborhood council, and we will follow that

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01 with the applicant's presentation for that
02 particular application.

03 Once we've completed the applicants'
04 presentations and the staff's presentation, the
05 commission will have a chance to ask questions of
06 both staff and the applicants. We will then open up
07 for public comment or for public testimony.

08 We will take those who are here in favor
09 of the West Wilshire community council first. We
10 will then switch and take people who are in favor of
11 the Mid City West community council. Then when
12 we're done with that, we will take people who are
13 either making general comments about one or the
14 other or are who are making points in opposition to
15 one or the other of the community councils.

16 So once we've all sat through all of that,

17 which will probably take us till somewhere around
18 9:30 or 10 o'clock hopefully, maybe not quite that
19 long, the commission will close the public hearing
20 and attempt to deliberate and make a decision in the
21 case.

22 I want to give you a little bit of
23 background so that you all understand what the
24 commission has done in situations like this before
25 and the way the commission will tend to view the
0006 applications.

01 This is about the fifth time that we've
02 encountered situations where we have competing
03 interests who are looking to be certified as a
04 neighborhood council for the same essential
05 geographic location.

06 The first time was in Westchester. And in
07 Westchester originally two groups -- or one group
08 began neighborhood council activity, split into two
09 groups, filed essentially two separate applications
10 or filed two independent tracts, through the
11 mediation process through the Department came back
12 together, unified and was certified under one
13 unified application.

14 The second time was in Venice. In Venice
15 we had two groups. One was a new group of people
16 who had not been involved in organizing before and
17 were essentially young grassroots organizers, the
18 other group was group of long-time community
19 advocates or community activists.

20 The first group filed an application. The
21 second group filed a letter of intent. The first
22 group came to its public hearing, presented its
23 application with essentially full community support.
24 The second group presented only token opposition at
25 that hearing. And the Board certified the first
0007 application.

01 The fourth time we encountered the
02 situation was in Hollywood -- or actually the third
03 time -- was in Franklin Canyon in Hollywood where we
04 had two groups who were competing essentially again
05 for the same geographic area. And the dispute was
06 primarily rooted in personalities and, to some
07 extent, egos.

08 They went through a mediation process
09 which was relatively unsuccessful and fairly
10 acrimonious, came to the public hearing with
11 essentially the same set of bylaws representing both
12 groups, the same boundaries, and still a certain
13 amount of personality friction and egos that were
14 getting in the way of combining for a single
15 neighborhood council.

16 The board looked at that and found that
17 there was still room to negotiate or room for a
18 certain amount of -- of consideration on both sides,
19 sent them both back and said, "We would like to have
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22 you mediate some more and see if you can unify."
23 They have been successful in doing that
24 after the public hearing and we expect to certify a
25 unified neighborhood council in the next several

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01 months.

02 The last time we encountered the situation
03 was last week in Echo Park where we had two groups
04 come before us, each again claiming essentially the
05 same territory, and the first group -- well, coming
06 out of the staff evaluation, they were essentially
07 viewed as equal by the staff.

08 The first group got up before us and
09 opened their testimony by attacking the process and
10 ultimately attacking their competition and
11 presenting little or no community support.

12 The second group got up, presented a
13 relatively complete neighborhood council with a
14 certain amount of broad-based community support, and
15 the Board's decision was relatively simple at that
16 point, to certify the second group.

17 So I give you that background tonight just
18 to let you know that we've seen a few situations
19 like this. Each one is different, each one is
20 unique, and the board has treated each one
21 individually and separately.

22 And we'd like -- we will continue that
23 this evening and hopefully reach a decision by the
24 end of the evening.

25 So with that I'm going to ask Romero,

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01 who's missing somewhere, to come to the microphone.
02 There she is. And we'll start with the West
03 Wilshire community council.

04 ROMERO: Good evening, Commissioners. Romero
05 Malvo, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.

06 The Department has received an application
07 for certified neighborhood council status from
08 representatives of the proposed West Wilshire
09 community council. The Department has also received
10 an application for certification from the Mid City
11 West community council. And both seek certification
12 for identical boundaries.

13 The Department has reviewed the
14 application for conformance with the requirements as
15 set forth in the plan and we are making the
16 following recommendation: We recommend that the
17 board adopt the findings of the Department and the
18 findings in the evaluation of certification
19 application prepared by the Department field
20 operations division and move to disapprove the
21 application as noted in the staff evaluation.

22 We have the following findings: The plan
23 requires that an applicant describe their
24 boundaries, present a rationale and have within the
25 bounded area a minimum of 20,000 persons,

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01 residents. There are -- there is in the plan
02 provisions for less than 20,000, but that was not
03 needed in this case.

04 The applicant did present boundaries.
05 They presented the areas on the south bounded by San
06 Vicente Boulevard from La Brea to Fairfax and
07 Olympic Boulevard from Fairfax to the city of
08 Beverly Hills, on the east La Brea Avenue, on the
09 west Beverly Hills city limit, and on the north the
10 West Hollywood city limits. Within that area there
11 are approximately 54,000 people, so that requirement
12 was -- was met.

13 The area is abutted by the Pico
14 neighborhood council, which has already been
15 certified, and the Mid Wilshire Greater Hancock Park
16 proposed neighborhood council, and there are no
17 areas that are left orphan -- I don't want to use
18 that word any more, but there are no areas that
19 would not be included in a neighborhood council or a
20 proposed neighborhood council.

21 The rationale given by the group was that
22 the group represent -- that the groups represented
23 by the West Wilshire community council have been
24 representing the residents and the businesses for
25 many years in the existing community groups who

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01 share a common vision for the community. Many of
02 the residents and businesses have been working
03 together for over 30 years.

04 In addition, the Wilshire -- the West
05 Wilshire community council also identified that
06 their area is in the Wilshire community plan and
07 that the area includes three historic preservation
08 zones, the Miracle Mile, Carthay Circle and South
09 Carthay.

10 In looking at the -- the application, the
11 Department finds that they have satisfied most of
12 the requirements for boundaries, but with the
13 exception of the overlap. The plan does provide for
14 overlap in some situations and none of the -- the
15 situations apply in this case. Normally it would be
16 for public use or for landmarks or for a historic
17 facility. So the overlap is not justified in this
18 case.

19 The plan also requires that the
20 neighborhood council describe their -- their
21 outreach effort. The -- and demonstrate an
22 understanding of the community. The applicant did
23 provide in detail of a profile of the neighborhood,
24 of the -- in the area and did satisfy that
25 requirement.

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01 In describing their population, they were
02 agreed with the staff because we're taking
03 statistics from pretty much the same place. It's a
04 population of 54,619. The -- the -- there is
05 approximately 21 percent homeowners and 79 percent

06 renters.

07 In looking at the ethnic breakdown, the
08 predominant group is white. It's 71 percent white,
09 seven percent Latino, six percent African-American,
10 and 11 percent Asian, five percent other.

11 In looking at the age structure,
12 approximately 16 percent are 65 and over,
13 approximately 12 percent are 17 and under, and the
14 dominant age group is age 30 to 49 at 38 percent of
15 the population.

16 In looking at income, there are --
17 approximately 24 percent of the households earn
18 between 15,000 and 34,000. The median household
19 income is 43,256, and that is based on 1999
20 information from United Way. We don't have the
21 current census information on that.

22 It is a community with many businesses.
23 The predominant number of business -- number of
24 businesses, 3,626. About 2,228 are businesses that
25 have one to four employees.

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01 The West Wilshire group did conduct
02 outreach. In terms of identifying their population,
03 they write that the organizers have been involved in
04 community affairs and largely their -- their process
05 for identifying stakeholders really was based upon
06 experience and a history of working in the community
07 for many years.

08 In terms of informing the community
09 stakeholders, they used a series of open meetings to
10 announce to a variety of groups about neighborhood
11 councils. They noticed in commonly used newspapers,
12 fliers, letters, internet, word of mouth.

13 They have identified that they have held
14 24 general meetings between July -- between June 21,
15 1999 and October 30th, 2001. They did organize a
16 large community meeting in order to elect officers,
17 and there were over 125 persons in attendance.

18 The West Wilshire community council has
19 organized itself into geographic areas based upon
20 homeowner association boundaries. Some of the
21 associations involved are the Beverly Wilshire
22 homeowners associations, the Burton Way homeowners
23 association, the Carthay Circle residential
24 association, the Melrose action committee, and the
25 Miracle Mile residents association, and Park La Brea

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01 tenants association.

02 When they had their elections they also
03 had representatives that had candidates, and these
04 were from the Miracle Mile Chamber of Commerce, the
05 Miracle Mile Civic Association, the ministerial
06 congregational unions, business developers, Fairfax
07 BID, or business improvement district, and the arts
08 museums and the cultural institutions.

09 They had submitted 203 signatures. The
10 staff analysis of the signatures show that they were

11 spread throughout the geographic area with a greater
12 concentration of signatures in the western and
13 southern parts of the bounded areas. There were a
14 few signatures west of La Cienega Boulevard and in
15 the northeast area of the boundaries. The
16 demographic information indicates that signatures
17 were collected from areas very high owner
18 occupancy.

19 In describing their continuing outreach,
20 the -- they talked in terms of working with
21 representatives and leaders of a wide variety of
22 residential, business community, and civic and
23 social groups, and they would continue advertising
24 in local newspapers and using organizational fliers
25 and news letters, the internet, and community

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01 calendars.

02 The -- in looking at their -- in looking
03 at their outreach, we find that the -- they have
04 done extensive outreach and they have an extensive
05 knowledge of the community and a strong network of
06 leadership. But in assessing their -- their --
07 their outreach, we did not find that it reached or
08 consisted of the broadest array of stakeholders in
09 the community.

10 In looking at their organizational
11 structure, the governing structure has been
12 developed in a fashion that could exclude
13 stakeholders from becoming board members.
14 Designated homeowners association are proposed to
15 lead the regional elections, and a specific plan for
16 informing and incorporating other stakeholders
17 besides homeowners was not presented in the
18 application.

19 In addition, the selection of board
20 members representing issue-based categories does not
21 include the participation or the involvement of all
22 stakeholders.

23 The Department believes that the governing
24 structure and the election process developed by West
25 Wilshire community council will greatly limit the

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01 participation and inclusion of diverse stakeholder
02 groups in the community.

03 In terms of the financial accountability,
04 the plans requires that there be a plan to assure
05 accountability. The proposed West Wilshire
06 community council provided the Department with a
07 copy of their accounting procedures. The section
08 was reviewed by the Department's staff, and it
09 incorporated the requirements of the plan and so we
10 find that they have complied with this requirement.

11 The plan also requires that there be a log
12 of public notice location, at least five posting
13 locations. In -- the applicant gave two that
14 included physical locations within the boundaries,
15 Farmer's Market and Gardener Street library. The

16 remaining locations were a website for the West
17 Wilshire community council and the Hollywood
18 Independent and the Beverly Free Press newspapers.
19 The Department requested additional
20 physical locations and were -- were given locations
21 as the County Museum of Art, Fairfax High School,
22 Fairfax library, the post office on Wilshire and
23 Detroit and the Bicentennial post office on Beverly
24 Boulevard, so the Department finds that the
25 applicant did meet that requirement.

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01 There is a requirement that there be a
02 treasurer. The group has provided the Department
03 with the description of its organizational
04 structure, and this does include the role of the --
05 does include a position for the treasurer, so we
06 find that they have met that requirement.

07 They did submit a contact roster and they
08 are -- all of the persons on the roster appear to be
09 viable members of the organizing group, so we find
10 that they have met that requirement.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Any questions
12 for staff? Tammy.

13 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Romero, from the
14 signatures that were collected, you mentioned that a
15 great number were from homeowners. Can you -- do
16 you have a rough idea of what percentage was from
17 homeowners out of the 203?

18 ROMERO: I don't have an exact number for
19 that.

20 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Romero, and in line
22 with that, you probably stated it but just for my
23 clarification, what percentage of the neighborhoods
24 are renters?

25 ROMERO: 79 percent are renters.

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01 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: In the outreach, I
02 believe I heard you say that it didn't seem to go
03 far enough. Can you tell me which specific
04 stakeholder group you thought was left out?

05 ROMERO: The representation by -- by renters,
06 the representation by -- one of the -- one of the --
07 the major concerns is the -- the -- the areas that
08 had high density in renter population seemed to have
09 less signatures collected in those areas. The areas
10 that had high percentages of -- of homeowners seem
11 to have a lot of -- of signatures collected there.

12 There were parts in the -- in the
13 community that did not have signatures at all, but
14 there was coverage in the entire community.

15 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Are the renters
16 concentrated in one part of that community? Are
17 they all over?

18 ROMERO: You should have had -- you should
19 have had maps.

20 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I might have but --

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The answer really is
22 no, they're not. The renters are pretty much evenly
23 distributed throughout the district, even where
24 there are areas of higher concentration of home
25 ownership, there's still a fairly substantial renter

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01 base in that same area, primarily because a number
02 of those structures are duplexes and you have an
03 owner occupant in one and a renter occupant in the
04 other unit.

05 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Was there outreach
06 to seniors, since the renters -- to the senior root?
07 Was there any indication of that?

08 ROMERO: To -- in the -- in some of the
09 representation of the groups that they -- they
10 identified as part of their base, yes.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
12 Luchente.

13 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Yes, thank you,
14 Mr. President.

15 Romero, I just wanted to get a
16 clarification. The -- the lack of renters'
17 signatures, that's -- that's been a pattern in other
18 -- in -- in many other applications, has it not, in
19 terms of the difficulty of outreach to that
20 particular stakeholder group?

21 ROMERO: The renter population and outreach to
22 renter is -- has been a problem throughout the areas
23 that we've certified, correct.

24 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Right. And I just
25 wanted to clarify, you said this one didn't

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01 necessarily have the broadcast array of
02 participation. Yet your description indicating
03 Chamber of Commerce, business improvement district,
04 you know, homeowners and such, and a pretty high
05 attendance at that general meeting seems to indicate
06 fairly broad participation.

07 Is your comment kind of one of degrees of
08 participation?

09 ROMERO: I think that besides the -- besides
10 the -- besides the traditional associations that
11 have long histories in the neighborhood, you have
12 other groups in the neighborhood that may not have
13 that -- that strong institutional base. There's a
14 large percentage of the population that's really
15 only lived there five years or less.

16 So in terms of the -- if the core of the
17 outreach is around the historical institutions of
18 the community, there's the danger that some of the
19 newer populations, some of the newer organizations
20 would not have as much participation and outreach,
21 too.

22 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: But -- but the age of
23 an organization doesn't in any way indicate the --
24 the representation in terms of how long somebody
25 would have participated in these organizations.

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01 ROMERO: Except that if you go through the
02 outreach discussion, it talks in terms of largely
03 working with those organizations and that population
04 that has been historically in the community involved
05 with the issue, worked through the issues for the
06 community. And -- and which is a good thing because
07 there -- it says that there's a solid core of
08 leadership in the community.

09 The concern was whether the focus went
10 outside of that traditional institutional base to
11 bring in some of the newer populations that have
12 come into the neighborhood more recently.

13 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Thanks for that
14 explanation.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
16 Membreno.

17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Yes, Romero, on the
18 question that Commissioner Luchente made in terms of
19 the renters, yes, it has been a problem for some
20 groups to get to the renters.

21 Would you say that this group -- that this
22 neighborhood council had less or more opportunities
23 to reach out to the renters in this area, just based
24 on accessibility to their homes, you know, leaving
25 information as opposed to building complexes and

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01 locked, you know, apartment buildings and so on.

02 ROMERO: I'm not sure that I could -- I could
03 go in that direction because the information on the
04 -- in the application just didn't have that level of
05 depth.

06 One of the -- one of the concerns that we
07 had was also in the structuring of the governance
08 where it was -- it was geographic and that the
09 boundaries were based upon existing homeowner
10 associations and that the elections would be run
11 through the homeowner associations.

12 And there was concern on our part as to
13 whether or not that would be renter friendly,
14 whether or not there'd be enough access by renters
15 to participate in those kinds of processes.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Romero, this is an
17 ongoing discussion I've had with stuff all week.
18 You characterizing all of the associations that are
19 making up the West Wilshire group as being
20 homeowners. That's patently untrue and I think
21 distorts to some extent the discussion we're going
22 to have later on this evening.

23 The Park La Brea tenants association
24 obviously is not a homeowner association. The
25 Miracle Mile residential association had a

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01 long-running gun battle with other homeowner
02 associations on the west side years ago over the
03 fact that they talked to the residents in the
04 neighborhood, with not just to the homeowners.

05 The Melrose neighborhood association
06 doesn't discriminate in its -- in its outreach to
07 the community; just the fact that you live there
08 helps.

09 So I would just like to sort of mitigate
10 the issue up front that we're dealing solely with
11 homeowners associations because we have a perception
12 citywide that there -- that our program in general
13 deals directly with homeowners. And that's not
14 necessarily the image that we need to be projecting
15 out beyond the staff and beyond the Department.

16 We -- we're a game that everybody plays
17 and we want it to be a game that everybody plays.
18 So we need to be careful in our characterizations to
19 some of those -- those associations, organizations.

20 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Mr. President.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

22 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Would you say that some
23 of those groups then have a mix of obviously renters
24 and homeowners and other?

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

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01 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Well, whatever that
02 might be. So is it possible that an applicant could
03 have broken down that information into the
04 application?

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: It's possible. I
06 don't know that -- I didn't see that, that breakdown
07 in the application.

08 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Right, I didn't see it
09 either. Okay. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Any other questions
11 for staff? Commissioner Stone.

12 COMMISSIONER STONE: Romero, in the field
13 report, there is mention of a mediation process.
14 Could you elaborate on the process that took place
15 between this group and the other?

16 ROMERO: The staff received the application
17 from -- from the West Wilshire group on November
18 21st and then received the application from Mid City
19 West on December 21st. So it was within the
20 required 20-day period. Both groups were notified
21 in late December that there was an overlap and
22 requested -- the Department requested that there be
23 mediation.

24 There were two mediation meetings held.
25 The first one was not really of a nature of

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01 mediation because at that meeting basically it was
02 just describing the rules of mediation and the
03 groups that came were not really prepared to enter
04 into mediation. So that first meeting was largely a
05 discussion of what mediation is, how long it was
06 going to take, what kind of commitment, and it did
07 allow time for the two groups to lay on the table
08 what they thought the issues were.

09 A second meeting was held February 6th,

10 and at that meeting there was an attempt to -- to go
11 over some of the issues that seemed to be separating
12 the two groups. The issue was largely one of -- was
13 characterized as one of philosophy, that the two
14 groups had different approaches to the formation of
15 neighborhood councils and that they did not feel
16 that mediation could -- could assist them in this
17 instance because they felt that their differences
18 truly were fundamentally different ways of
19 approaching neighborhood councils.

20 Just to -- in terms of -- on the one hand,
21 there was the concern by the Mid City West group
22 that the processes and the structure of the West
23 Wilshire group was not open, did not allow for full
24 stakeholder participation and, as a result, felt
25 that they needed to form their own neighborhood

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01 councils around certain principles which I believe
02 is outlined in the (inaudible) report.

03 The -- the West Wilshire group felt that
04 in organizing neighborhood councils you needed to
05 have a very strong accountability factor, they felt
06 that their structure realized that, and was not
07 really open to making a change in another
08 direction.

09 During the mediation at the second meeting
10 it was suggested that they -- the two groups
11 identify representatives and that the two
12 representatives come forward and try to come up with
13 combined bylaws. The Department had reviewed the
14 bylaws of the West Wilshire group and had our own
15 comments about some changes that needed to be made.

16 The West Wilshire group asked that they
17 postpone the decision about any Future mediation
18 until they met with the Department on their bylaws.
19 Subsequent to that, they did meet with the
20 Department, they -- they took the recommendations on
21 changing the bylaws and also informed the Department
22 that they did not want to wish to continue with
23 mediation.

24 In March of -- mid March we received a
25 proposal from the Mid City West group outlining some

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01 possible ways that the groups could come together.
02 That was forwarded to the Wilshire West community
03 council group for consideration. There was
04 misunderstanding as to what this actually
05 constituted, what it was, and so there was no
06 response to the proposal.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

08 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Romero, you mentioned
09 that the bylaws of the elections of the governing
10 bodies, somehow within there the stakeholders might
11 possibly be excluded, may be room for exclusion.

12 Could you elaborate on that a little bit
13 more, maybe give me examples of how they would be
14 excluded or who would be excluded, who you thought

15 would be excluded?

16 ROMERO: Okay. The -- let me just give a
17 little background on the board. The board consists
18 of 27 members and 12 nonvoting alternative members.
19 15 members are elected from eight geographic areas,
20 three members are elected at large. Nine members
21 are selected from specific categories. That would
22 be the Chamber of Commerce, social service agency or
23 hospital, arts, civic association, business,
24 religious, education, unions, and the BID.

25 The -- one of the things I think that is
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01 occurring for the staff is we had two competing
02 applications for the same area. So in looking at
03 the two applications, it's not just in isolation.
04 It is a comparison between the outreach of one
05 versus the outreach of the other. It is a
06 comparison of the bylaws of one versus the bylaws of
07 the other.

08 And the -- the -- the governing structure
09 for the Mid City West consist of 50 members. 40
10 represent mandatory categories that include
11 homeowners, renters, business, nonprofits,
12 government, civic organizations, media, arts, urban
13 planning, cultural and ethnic groups, seniors,
14 youth, lifestyle groups, disabled, environment,
15 labor, education, religious, five at large members,
16 and they represent that -- five at large members
17 will represent specific geographic areas.

18 So there was a mixture in the -- the
19 competing proposal of area, specific as well as
20 interest areas, as well as in comparison with the --
21 the West Wilshire group, it was -- for the election
22 of the board, there were 15 geographic areas and
23 that members would be elected -- members -- there
24 would be a 15 geographic area board and members
25 would be elected within each of the geographic

0029
01 areas.

02 A special -- a special category member
03 would be selected by their constituency, so a
04 special category would be unions, for instance, the
05 union members would elect the union representative.
06 Members at large would be elected at special
07 interest group meetings.

08 In looking at the -- the Mid Wilshire --
09 the Mid City West group, all boards were to be
10 elected in a public general meeting held in
11 accordance with the Brown Act.

12 In looking at the notification process for
13 elections, the West Wilshire group set an election
14 date upon certification. It would be 90 days after
15 certification. The officers would be elected within
16 30 days of the board election, and the geographic
17 zones would select after doing -- after doing
18 community outreach.

19 In the case of the Mid City West group,

20 the elections -- they would form an election
21 committee 30 days after certification. The
22 membership on the committee would be open to all
23 stakeholders.

24 The election and the call for nominations
25 would be publicized for a 60-day period prior to the
0030 election. There would be public notice, including
01 posting at all the locations that were identified in
02 the application as well as on the web and in the
03 media, and there would be a distribution of no less
04 than 35,000 fliers.

05 In the case of the Wilshire West group,
06 the term would be for two years, not to exceed
07 eight. In the case of West Wilshire -- in Mid City
08 West the term is one year.

09 In trying to ensure the board --
10 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I can see that in
11 some ways all the stakeholders are represented in
12 each groups, but in one group that's less numbers
13 and in other there are more.

14 ROMERO: Well, in -- in trying --

15 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: It sounds to me
16 that's what I hear.

17 ROMERO: In trying to ensure that the board
18 reflects the diversity, in the case of the Wilshire
19 West community council, there are eight geographic
20 areas and nine interest group categories.

21 In the case of the Mid City West community
22 council, there are 26 interest group categories,
23 five geographic representatives, and open
24 elections.
25

0031 In addition, the Mid City West --
01

02 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Can I -- before you
03 go beyond that, is the kind of election that's --
04 that Mid Wilshire is asking for unprecedented in
05 past councils that we've approved?

06 ROMERO: No, I don't think so.

07 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I beg your pardon?

08 ROMERO: I don't think so.

09 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Okay. Thank you.

10 ROMERO: There was one other point I wanted to
11 make, and that was the Mid City West had agreed to
12 have a third-party overseer of the elections if they
13 were certified.

14 And when the question was asked of the
15 Wilshire West group, they -- they really didn't see
16 the need for a third-party oversight.

17 COMMISSIONER STONE: Romero, the field report
18 and your comments make it seem like the staff is
19 concerned -- actually, I'll read from the report.
20 It says, "A strong reliance on existing homeowners
21 associations to conduct the local geographic region
22 elections," I'm looking at the bylaws section 3-A,
23 and I don't see in there or elsewhere in the bylaws
24 a provision where an existing homeowners association

25 would conduct an election.

0032

01 Is that -- am I missing something?

02 ROMERO: I'm going to ask the -- I'm going to
03 ask Michelle to address that issue because there was
04 a lot of dialogue going back and forth on the bylaws
05 and I want to make sure the commission has the
06 context for that.

07 COMMISSIONER STONE: Okay.

08 MICHELLE CUEVAS: Good evening. My name is
09 Michelle Cuevas with the Department.

10 You're right, Commissioner Stone. They do
11 designate geographic zones based on existing
12 boundaries of established community-based
13 organizations.

14 They don't specify in their bylaws that it
15 will be conducted by homeowners associations.
16 However, in conversations with them, with their
17 bylaws, they did focus on the extensive outreach
18 mechanisms in place by the homeowners associations
19 and they would be leading the organizations, so
20 maybe West Wilshire can provide some clarity on
21 that.

22 COMMISSIONER STONE: And then, also, in -- in
23 section 3-A, the elections within each geographic
24 area appear to be open to all neighborhood
25 stakeholders; is that correct?

0033

01 MICHELLE CUEVAS: They are. And -- and they
02 have stated this on several occasions, that although
03 the homeowner association may be the mechanism that
04 conducts the election, it would be open to all
05 stakeholders within that geographic area.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: What I'd like to do
07 at this point is to bring the applicant forward so
08 that we can actually hear from the West Wilshire
09 community council.

10 DIANA PLOTKIN: Hello, Commissioners. My name
11 is Diana Plotkin. I am one of the original
12 organizers of the West Wilshire community council,
13 and I'm pleased to be before you tonight.

14 I want to give you some historical
15 perspective of how the West Wilshire community
16 council came to be.

17 Many of the original organizers attended
18 every single Charter reform commission meeting
19 dealing with neighborhood councils. We attended the
20 committee meetings that the elected Charter reform
21 held dealing with neighborhood councils because we
22 were so interested.

23 We are perfectly aware that neighborhood
24 councils came out of the residents of the city of
25 Los Angeles yelling and screaming to bring

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01 government closer to the people.

02 We -- from the point that the Charter
03 reform commission had passed the Charter, in June of

04 1999 we got together and we brought together the
05 loosely organized community organizations that we
06 had worked with over the past 25 years in our
07 community. We drew our boundaries according to the
08 Wilshire community plan.

09 We are the western portion of the Wilshire
10 community plan. Most of the groups involved in this
11 had worked in revising the Wilshire community plan
12 that dictates what happens in our community as far
13 as land use is concerned.

14 Our boundaries have always been from the
15 West Hollywood city line to Olympic San Vicente,
16 from the Beverly Hills city line to La Brea. We
17 have never divided communities as our competition
18 has, who had to change their boundaries a few months
19 ago.

20 We brought everybody together and we got a
21 set of bylaws. We took the bylaws of the Brentwood
22 community council that was put together by Cindy
23 Miscikowski, approved by the city of Los Angeles,
24 who had will a set of bylaws that actually fit into
25 our community.

0035

01 It had geographical areas, zones -- they
02 called them zones. We -- you call them geographical
03 areas. But they had several zones of
04 representation, a number of zones. Included in that
05 was the business improvement district, large
06 development, chambers, the civic association, the
07 unions. They had the educator, the ministerial
08 people. They also had social services, and they had
09 culturals.

10 We included everything together because it
11 was a set of bylaws that had been looked over by two
12 attorneys and taken to an attorney that specializes
13 in bylaws on behalf of our little group. We pulled
14 everybody together and we started holding meetings
15 to revise whatever we needed to do.

16 We based our representation on square
17 footage of the area. We had several urban planning
18 students from UCLA go over this map and designate
19 how much square footage, residential square footage,
20 existed and how much commercial square footage. And
21 they came up with a ratio of 65 percent residential
22 to 35 percent commercial.

23 We then had discussions with the business
24 community, who didn't like that, so we based our
25 representation downward and we are now 55 percent

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01 what we consider residential. That includes
02 renters, condominiums, homeowners, property owners,
03 and anyone else who's a resident of the city of
04 Los Angeles.

05 The 35 percent -- the 45 percent includes
06 everybody else. That means the business improvement
07 districts, the Chamber of Commerce, the unions.

08 We believe greatly in accountability and

09 constituency. That is our philosophy. And for an
10 example, I will give you an example. Take the
11 unions. Our union representative is not only a
12 union member but works for the unions and has the
13 written support from AFTRA, SAG, Actors Equity, and
14 one other union who has already written for
15 support. They want this person to represent their
16 best interest.

17 Our educator, for instance, he's not only
18 a teacher at a middle school, he teaches in college,
19 he has child who graduated from this school, he's
20 part of the booster club. He has three Elementary
21 schools have given him written permission to
22 represent their interests on our neighborhood
23 council.

24 When you come to the ministerial aspect of
25 this, this is a very highly populated orthodox
0037

01 area. We have -- our representative has written
02 approval of 16 orthodox congregations, plus one
03 Catholic and one Protestant congregation that want
04 this man to represent him on our neighborhood
05 council.

06 It's accountability and constituency.
07 This is what we have based our entire West Wilshire
08 community council on. And that goes through all the
09 various selective areas.

10 Our social service person, we asked that
11 person to reach out to all social services agencies
12 and see if they would feel comfortable with that
13 person representing them.

14 When it came to the geographic areas, yes,
15 it's true that we had community groups in the
16 various geographic areas, but it didn't include just
17 the boundaries of those community groups. It
18 included an entire geographic area, which meant that
19 we reached out to everyone living in that geographic
20 area.

21 Not just the homeowners and not just the
22 renters, but every resident in that geographic area
23 was noticed of our elections for that particular
24 geographic area. They were noticed by newsletter,
25 they were noticed by flier, they were noticed
0038

01 through the newspaper.

02 And that's true of everyone except the
03 Miracle Mile residents association who chose to have
04 only paid members of the Miracle Mile and their
05 board run for two seats on our community council.
06 That was a decision they made. We had no control
07 over that. Everybody else had an open election,
08 included everyone in the area including the
09 businesses. Fliers went to the businesses as well
10 as the residents in the area.

11 We believe very strongly -- again I will
12 say this -- in -- in accountability and
13 constituency.

14 We then -- once we developed this plan,
15 this network of loosely grouped people that, you
16 know, had been in our community, have worked with us
17 over the past 25 years on various issues -- and I
18 mean, we've worked very hard in our community. I
19 can give you a whole list of things that we've done
20 in this particular community -- then we started
21 having meetings, we started trying to prepare for
22 this process.

23 We then put together our group. We were
24 going to have an election to elect officers but we
25 were told that we were going to have to have another
0039

01 election so we didn't think that it was, you know,
02 advisable for us to continue to have an election of
03 officers.

04 We've had, as she -- as your staff has
05 said, we've had over 24 open meetings that have been
06 advertised in the newsletter, in the newspaper and
07 through newsletters and everything, and people have
08 been aware of our meetings and have attended our
09 meetings.

10 I think that it's real important that --
11 or interesting to me that staff has never attended
12 one of our open meetings. Staff has never attended
13 one of the geographical area elections that we have
14 held, and this -- certainly has not contacted any of
15 us to ride around this community and from our
16 perspective as to why we feel that constituency and
17 accountability are so important in this particular
18 area.

19 I do know that one staff person who had
20 been here like on your staff for a week did attend
21 one of our elections, which was the October 10th
22 election where we confirmed or ratified the
23 geographic area elections. We elected three members
24 at large.

25 We can -- our members at large happen to
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01 be a city employee, a retired L.A. police detective,
02 and also a doctor from Cedars-Sinai. We represent
03 seniors. We have plenty of seniors on our board, so
04 the senior population is very well represented in
05 this area. The gay population is represented in
06 this area.

07 We've reached out to everyone we could
08 possibly think of. We've tried to get people active
09 and to participate. Nothing has been just the
10 homeowners. Most of the groups involved, as
11 Commissioner Christopher has said, are not
12 homeowners groups. They're residential groups.
13 They entail -- they actually have people who are not
14 only homeowners but residents as members of their
15 association. And we've been working on this process
16 since June of 1999.

17 Now I'm going to turn this over to Barbara
18 Martinoff, who's going to explain to you another

19 part of the process.

20 BARBARA MARTINOFF: Hello. My name is Barbara
21 Martinoff, and I'm a member at large and I live on
22 207 South Martel.

23 Well, this is going to be a challenge.

24 Okay. What I'm really here to tell you in
25 a very quick nutshell and a yellow handout that you
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01 received earlier is really what the Power Point
02 presentation is about, and it's really a summation
03 of what our bylaws are, what our application is
04 about and what we really stand for. Okay?

05 So really, the West Wilshire community
06 council -- and I think just as -- as Diane has very
07 eloquently described it, you know, this area, unlike
08 maybe some other areas of the city, has years and
09 has a history of organized activity, activism, I
10 guess. And so you can't just discount a group
11 that's been active for 10, 20, 30 years. So that is
12 what's different in this part of the city maybe to
13 other parts of the city.

14 Okay. The West Wilshire council really
15 represents -- what I'm going to talk about is our --
16 what we stand for, what we're committed for, what we
17 work for, what we believe in, and how our outreach
18 was done.

19 So we really are, you know, an
20 experienced, and we are proud of that experience.
21 We also bring history and we bring accountable
22 representation.

23 What we really stand for is dedicated
24 representatives. We have both people who have had
25 history of experience in activism and then there is
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01 members like myself who have no experience. And so
02 we have both a mentoring experience and as well as a
03 contribution of young and old, new and old ideas.
04 So it's really a mix of kinds of individuals on the
05 board.

06 Our representatives represent the
07 neighborhood alliances, business associations,
08 special interest groups, and stakeholders. We
09 really categorized larger groups and within that we
10 went into looking, as Diane said, trying to elect a
11 fair representation.

12 What we really stand for is really a
13 representation based on a broad-based outreach to
14 all stakeholders in geographic areas. When you have
15 as large of a geographic area as this council has
16 and 54,000 people as a population, you can't just
17 send out one or two little newsletters. You have to
18 have a basis for outreach.

19 And that's what we really have committed
20 to and that's what we -- by bringing together
21 leaders who know how to do extensive outreach within
22 their geographic areas, that was the basis for
23 creating how do you do a much larger broad-based

24 outreach.

25 The experience and knowledge of city

0043

01 processes and services. Some of these individuals
02 who are leaders of the different geographic areas
03 have worked with the city, have fought the city,
04 have challenged the city departments to making
05 changes and working to improve the quality of life
06 within their areas, and that's really kind of an
07 experience that needs to be brought to this process
08 because there are a lot of things in the city that
09 city departments need to hear from this -- from the
10 constituency at large.

11 And somebody who does not have that
12 experience is very -- it's much more difficult to
13 get something across, or get something to approve
14 and get the city departments to participate in.

15 And I have worked on the other side so I
16 know about customer service and how the city doesn't
17 in all cases appear that they are being, you know,
18 responsive to a community.

19 We have a commitment to safeguarding the
20 quality of life because you have (inaudible) such a
21 broad constituents of property owners, residents.
22 You have the -- you know, the 10,000 renters in Park
23 La Brea.

24 I'm a new homeowner in the area myself, so
25 you know, I have a real stake in the community to

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01 make sure that our quality of life makes -- is -- is
02 not only for myself but for my renter but also for
03 my neighborhood.

04 We have a geographic inclusiveness of all
05 stakeholders. When you look at our geographic
06 outreach and the way we did the elections, which
07 I'll talk about in second, we wanted to make sure it
08 wasn't just a handful of people who came to a public
09 meeting and said, "Gee, I want to" -- "I want to be
10 elected" and they are going to represent the whole
11 broad district.

12 So that's the big differences, okay, here
13 is that we do in fact represent all four corners of
14 the area.

15 What we're committed to is having open
16 forums. We are basically open. All of our meetings
17 are open to the public. It isn't just a couple of
18 meetings a year, but every monthly meeting that we
19 decide to -- you know, we're going to be holding, we
20 will be open to the public.

21 We do outreach to all stakeholders who
22 live, work, own property, a business or otherwise
23 have vested interest. So when you're talking about
24 a zone, for instance, it's anybody who fits in that
25 description. It isn't just somebody who owns

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01 property or just somebody who rents or lives there.
02 It's really a business person who can come in,

03 anybody who is in that area, wants to come in can
04 address an area within that area.

05 We have respect for existing geographic
06 boundaries of organized associations. This area, as
07 I mentioned in the beginning, is very unique because
08 there are existing organizations who have worked
09 very diligently for many, many decades, in some
10 cases, that they know what their neighborhoods are,
11 they know what their issues are, and that you can't
12 just ignore them. Because you do have to deal with
13 them. And they are there to support the larger,
14 broader council effort in terms of the objectives.

15 The council is going to work towards
16 coordinating efforts to address quality of life.
17 When you have -- you know, we have actually eight
18 different areas besides the business associations,
19 et cetera. We are going to make sure that we get
20 them to participate.

21 And by us having certain of our members
22 being, you know, nominated, elected from those
23 areas, they are going to be able to take the
24 information that's discussed at the councils, take
25 them back to the resident association or zone areas,
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01 and then disperse that information out, as well as
02 bring up issues that are burning in that community,
03 and the council will then help coordinate those
04 issues, because if you have them in one area you
05 could very likely have them in two or three areas,
06 and the council will be able to discuss and -- and
07 kind of work on those issues together as a
08 broader-based organization.

09 We're also in partnership with the
10 existing neighborhood and business associations
11 because without their support, without their -- you
12 know, being able to feel that they are -- what
13 they've done in the past is going to count also and
14 that we would be listening to them, it's very easy
15 that you can have them work against the council,
16 which would be really detrimental to the whole
17 effort of what the councils are supposed to be
18 created for.

19 What we believe in is accountability.
20 That is the most intrinsic point here. I think
21 that's different from this council from the other
22 council, is because through our elections -- and I
23 just want to define what our elections are because
24 I've heard now some, you know, statements here that
25 weren't quite what we -- we have expressed in both
0047

01 written and in meetings.

02 We have a three-tier election process.
03 Three tiers. Okay? One is the zone areas. That is
04 where we use the neighborhood associations or the
05 resident associations to help with the outreach to
06 -- through their newsletters to help us hold these
07 smaller area elections to nominate, you know, either

08 one or two and the alternates.

09 And in the back of the package with the
10 bylaws you have the listing of how many alternates
11 or how many representatives for each area.

12 Based on that, then we go to the second
13 tier, which is the special interest group like
14 business, business associations, the unions. They
15 can either elect or to select. In the case of the
16 unions, they selected somebody. They're not going
17 to elect somebody. They're going to select because
18 they want to make sure that that person is a
19 spokesperson for what the unions are all about in
20 this council area.

21 Then the third area, for those special
22 interest areas that do not have a body that would
23 automatically elect or select somebody, and
24 including the members at large, those will be
25 elected and caucused at the larger meeting which is

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01 where, at our CBS meeting for instance, I myself
02 with 20, 25 other people got up and said this is who
03 we are as individuals, this is where we're
04 committed, and then there was a voting process.

05 So really, you really have a three-tier
06 process to ensure that the members and the
07 representatives come from all areas of the council
08 district and that they represent from all aspects of
09 it, of the council district.

10 For instance, in the Melrose area there
11 were people who were elected there. It was a
12 business representative. It wasn't a property
13 owner. So you know, you really have a mix. You
14 can't just say just because it's been helped with
15 the outreach that it was -- only one type of
16 individual going to be elected from the zone area.
17 So I just want to make sure that that's clear with
18 everybody.

19 We're involving really both new and old
20 and seasoned and new start leaders, because that's
21 how these councils are going to be effective in the
22 long run. You need to have experience and you need
23 to have a lot of youth and vigor and interest to
24 want to continue the work that was started many
25 years ago.

0049
01 I'll go real quick now.

02 Recognition of the importance and the
03 contribution, autonomy of the existing
04 neighborhoods. We respect what the chamber is
05 trying to do, or the BID, or the business
06 association, or that particular zone, but we really
07 have to work in partnership to achieve what the
08 council's overall objective is going to be. And we
09 will work in concert with those groups to make sure
10 we know that.

11 The council also will strive to coordinate
12 the quality of life issues with the city and other

13 governmental agencies, including the planning and
14 land use, traffic and streets, city surfaces and
15 development issues. Those are very core issues in
16 this council and I'm sure in other councils as
17 well.

18 Our outreach is really ongoing. Not only
19 do we outreach through our own methods which are
20 listed like the newspapers, the website, the fliers,
21 but we also count on the resident associations to
22 help with their newsletters to promote what's
23 happening in the councils. Because even though
24 there has been statements made that the other
25 councils has papered the whole community, in fact in

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01 my community we've never seen any piece of
02 literature on them.

03 So you know, you do have to kind of weigh
04 -- you know, you can't just all have just one source
05 distributing information. You really need multiple
06 sources of information -- vehicles to distribute the
07 information because of the large population here.

08 We are long-standing ties and in both
09 neighborhood associations, business associations,
10 special interest groups of religious, et cetera. So
11 with all of that, you know, our resources and who we
12 represent as stakeholders, they come from libraries,
13 schools, social services, recreation centers,
14 museums, large and small business, home owners,
15 renters, unions, students, seniors, et cetera.

16 But most of all we really as a council, we
17 strongly believe in that we embrace and empower the
18 community and the stakeholders and then, now, and in
19 the future.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

22 (End of tape B, side A)

23 BARBARA MARTINOFF: We have one more speaker.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.

25 Please.

0051

01 HAROLD HAHN: Good evening, Commissioners. My
02 name is Harold.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: You need speak into
04 the mike, Harold. Into the mike?

05 HAROLD HAHN: Into the mike? Okay. I have to
06 raise it a little.

07 My name is Harold Hahn. I live in the
08 area south of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and west
09 of La Cienega Boulevard. I will be addressing both
10 the application from Mid City West and the staff
11 report, briefly.

12 First the Mid City West application. This
13 group is really not an organic organization.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Harold, I'm going to
15 -- I'm going to declare you out of order on that
16 score. This presentation we're in now, if you want
17 to speak later on the public testimony on their

18 written application, yes, but for now we're in the
19 part where you're presenting your application.

20 HAROLD HAHN: Okay. Then I will address the
21 staff report.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: That's fine.

23 HAROLD HAHN: Okay. The Department comparison
24 analysis between West Wilshire and Mid City shows
25 two areas of significant difference. These include
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01 the structure and -- of our governing board and the
02 election process. For example, the Department
03 states that the bylaws of West Wilshire do not
04 clearly specify our procedures.

05 Because this report was received only a
06 few days ago, we could not fully analyze the
07 Department's findings. And I would like to note
08 here that, for instance, we received a letter from
09 the Department stating that our bylaws were
10 acceptable, and yet we read in the staff report that
11 in fact there're major questions about that.

12 Secondly, this evening we learned that --
13 about that there is a question about our
14 boundaries. And yet we received an e-mail from the
15 Department stating that our boundaries are
16 acceptable.

17 And these issues raise questions. I mean,
18 there are somewhat disturbing that we are hearing
19 different things at different times and that we did
20 really not have a -- an appropriate time frame for
21 analyzing the staff report.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Let me stop you for
23 one moment. I'm not aware and I don't believe any
24 of my fellow commissioners are aware of any boundary
25 issues at all. As far as we're concerned --

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01 HAROLD HAHN: We heard this this evening. Your
02 own staff person said there was a staff -- a
03 difficulty with the boundaries.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. We'll --
05 we'll sort that out with staff.

06 HAROLD HAHN: Well, we would like to -- since
07 these issues were raised, we would like to work with
08 the Department to clarify these issues raised in the
09 report.

10 And that's why we would like to request a
11 continuance of at least a month so that we can
12 address the issues for board structure and election.

13 And so thank you for hearing our request
14 and we hope that you grant our request for a
15 continuance of a month.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Questions?
17 Tony.

18 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Thank you,
19 Mr. President.

20 I just had two questions. One is, in the
21 presentation it mentioned that issues -- primary
22 issues, planning and land use, traffic, and streets,

23 city services, and development, I'm just interested
24 in what development is. Normally I put that in a
25 planning and land use category.

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01 DIANA PLOTKIN: Development goes in land use.

02 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Thank you.

03 And the last question is, I notice that
04 there -- in the packet that there were several
05 iterations of the bylaws, including two recent
06 amended additions. Was that in response to --

07 DIANA PLOTKIN: In response to the city's --
08 the city attorney's request for changes in the
09 bylaws that came to us at the very last minute and
10 those that we have addressed, and I understand --
11 I'm not sure, but from the last that I heard, our
12 bylaws have been accepted.

13 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: So you were -- you made
14 modifications --

15 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes. We made all the
16 modifications that the city had requested.

17 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone?

19 MS. POINDEXTER: City Attorney Gwen
20 Poindexter.

21 Could you just state your name for the
22 record again so we know who you are?

23 DIANA PLOTKIN: I'm sorry. My name is Diana
24 Plotkin. Do you want my address?

25 MS. POINDEXTER: No, no. Just your name is

0055

01 fine.

02 DIANA PLOTKIN: Okay.

03 COMMISSIONER STONE: A quick question for the
04 applicants. I have the bylaws and Appendix A is
05 listed that has the geographic zones.

06 Do we have, anywhere in the materials that
07 we've been presented or anything that you have, an
08 actual map of those geographic zones?

09 DIANA PLOTKIN: No, we do not. Unfortunately
10 the map that we had, I left out of town and I didn't
11 bring it with me. I apologize. We have only one
12 map. It's about as big as that. It does detail out
13 the geographic zones. We can present it at a later
14 date if necessary.

15 COMMISSIONER STONE: Does -- the map in front
16 of you there, everything in yellow, the boundaries
17 of the proposed neighborhood council, do the
18 geographic zones cover all of the area?

19 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER STONE: So there's not any
21 orphaned areas?

22 DIANA PLOTKIN: Well, we have tried to make
23 every geographic area by on that of a homeowner
24 association boundary to cover every area. We've
25 asked people to include areas that were not

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01 covered. If we have left anyone out or there isn't

02 anything covered, those people could come and run
03 under the member at large category.

04 But we have tried to include everybody.
05 We might not be a hundred percent successful, but
06 for the most part we've included everyone within
07 those boundaries that you see there.

08 COMMISSIONER STONE: And in drawing those
09 boundaries, are you including businesses as well?

10 DIANA PLOTKIN: Oh, yes.

11 COMMISSIONER STONE: So something like the
12 Beverly Center --

13 DIANA PLOTKIN: Oh, yes.

14 COMMISSIONER STONE: -- would be included in
15 one of those -- which -- which area is that in?

16 DIANA PLOTKIN: His area.

17 COMMISSIONER STONE: Which is?

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: The area that goes from La
19 Cienega to the Beverly Hills city line and from
20 Olympic Boulevard all the way up to the West
21 Hollywood city line. They would be included in that
22 area.

23 COMMISSIONER STONE: Would that be a specific
24 zone?

25 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes, but I don't have the

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01 number on it either. It would be the Burton Way
02 geographic area as we put into our --

03 COMMISSIONER STONE: So that's Zone 2, Burton
04 Way geographic area?

05 DIANA PLOTKIN: Right. Exactly.

06 COMMISSIONER STONE: So businesses in the
07 Beverly Center would be able to participate -- all
08 neighborhood council members could participate in
09 the election, but outreach --

10 DIANA PLOTKIN: In that geographic area, yes.

11 COMMISSIONER STONE: But outreach through the
12 Burton Way geographic -- or through an association
13 that's already set in place will outreach to the
14 Beverly Center --

15 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER STONE: -- businesses --

17 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER STONE: -- to try to attract them
19 for the -- the elections?

20 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes. To all small businesses
21 in the area and including the Beverly Center.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
23 Membreno.

24 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I have a couple
25 questions.

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01 DIANA PLOTKIN: Sure.

02 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: The first question is
03 in terms of the businesses, unless the report is --
04 is wrong here, but the number given as total number
05 of employees, it's almost as equal as the number of
06 residents or the population in this neighborhood

07 council.

08 And from your presentation I believe that
09 you're allocating one seat for businesses in your
10 neighborhood council; is that correct?

11 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay.

13 DIANA PLOTKIN: Not one seat for business. We
14 have different types of businesses. You have the
15 chamber who represents all the small businesses in
16 the area, you have the civic association which is
17 made up of business, you have a business improvement
18 district, and you also have a large developer.

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So if you're a business
20 on, say, the 500 to 999 employees, which is -- in
21 this area apparently there's five of those, where
22 will you be represented?

23 DIANA PLOTKIN: In the geographic area where
24 that business sits, I would say. They have the
25 opportunity to run for a seat in that particular
0059 geographic area.

01 geographic area.

02 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: But that area is also
03 open for other categories?

04 DIANA PLOTKIN: Oh, sure. Anyone can run.
05 That's the idea of having a geographic area, that
06 everyone is entitled to run for a seat on the
07 neighborhood council. That's the outreach done.

08 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I just -- being that
09 the numbers are so close just in -- as employees of
10 a business, your stakeholder in that area, it seems
11 to me like 50,000 folks should have a little more
12 representation on -- on the board if nothing else
13 other than being represented. 'Cause quite frankly,
14 one -- one person can't take the seat away from a
15 business if -- if they're from another interest
16 group.

17 Is that my understanding, for example --

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: No.

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- in the zone -- in
20 the zoned --

21 DIANA PLOTKIN: When --

22 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Let me --

23 DIANA PLOTKIN: Oh, I'm sorry.

24 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. So for example,
25 if in Zone 4 you have -- that might not be a good
0060 example.

01 example.

02 The Zone 3, you have Carthay Circle
03 geographic area, and I don't know what --it's in
04 there?

05 DIANA PLOTKIN: Uh-huh.

06 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And you have two seats.

07 DIANA PLOTKIN: Uh-huh.

08 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And if one of the
09 businesses is in that area, potentially that
10 business -- the businesses in that -- in those areas
11 -- in that area would not -- or may not have a seat

12 for Zone 2?

13 DIANA PLOTKIN: But theoretically they could.
14 They are notified of the election. They can
15 participate in the election. And it's been in the
16 past where there have been businesses who have come
17 in and taken over an entire neighborhood council and
18 gotten all of their employees elected.

19 So theoretically that's not true. They
20 can come in, they can participate in that geographic
21 area election and they can get elected. They take
22 both those seats.

23 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. And the other
24 question that I had --

25 JOAN CURTIN: (Inaudible).

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01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: If you're going to
02 make a -- you have to speak on the microphone.

03 DIANA PLOTKIN: Come up here.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And we need your
05 name.

06 JOAN CURTIN: My name is Joan Curtin. And just
07 to make sure that there's not some misunderstanding,
08 we don't have just one business representative on
09 the board. There's four. There are four.

10 We have the business developer, we have
11 the arts cultural museum representative, civic
12 associations representative, BID representative, and
13 union representative, and the chamber
14 representative.

15 And in addition to those -- and I think
16 maybe that's -- that kind of ties into what you're
17 saying, Commissioner, theoretically some of the
18 delegates from Burton Way geographic area or the
19 Miracle Mile geographic area could also be business
20 people. So it's certainly not just one board member
21 assigned. It's a minimum, a minimum of the four or
22 five I just said.

23 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So potentially you can
24 have four quote/unquote businesses represented on
25 your board; is that correct?

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01 DIANA PLOTKIN: You could have much more than
02 four.

03 JOAN CURTIN: You'll have a -- you'll have a
04 minimum of four board members who are dedicated
05 business people. You could have people representing
06 geographic areas who are also businesses.

07 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: What's the likelihood
08 of a business getting a geographic area seat?

09 JOAN CURTIN: Well, we just mentioned that.
10 Recently we had -- it was -- what's Mark's group?

11 DIANA PLOTKIN: Melrose (inaudible).

12 JOAN CURTIN: Melrose action?

13 DIANA PLOTKIN: No. Melrose (inaudible).

14 JOAN CURTIN: Melrose neighborhood
15 association. He had -- at a recent meeting of their
16 group, when they were looking for representatives

17 who wanted to get involved in the neighborhood
18 council issue, the person who ended up being a
19 representative doesn't even live in the area. He's
20 a business person in the area who learned of the
21 meeting through the group's outreach and, therefore,
22 chose to become involved.

23 So you asked me what the likelihood is. I
24 can't give you statistics. I can only tell you that
25 we know it's happened.

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01 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: And could businesses
02 also (inaudible) in that large group?

03 DIANA PLOTKIN: I beg your pardon?

04 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Could businesses also
05 be represented by the at large groups?

06 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes, of course. Oh, sure.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Other
08 questions?

09 DIANA PLOTKIN: Other questions?

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Pat.

11 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I just had one more.

12 In terms of the bylaws, you talk about there was
13 numerous revisions and -- that you guys did on the
14 bylaws.

15 Why did you feel that these bylaws were
16 the best fit for your -- for the makeup of your
17 community?

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: Initially and in -- in all
19 candor, this is before I got involved with the
20 group, but when the initial bylaws were put together
21 there was apparently very little groundwork at that
22 time being offered by DONE with respect to what
23 bylaws should be. I mean, DONE was just getting off
24 the ground and the whole thing was still kind of
25 like "You come up with what you suggest and we'll

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01 see if we can work with it."

02 And at that time -- there were very few
03 neighborhood councils as well. So the West Wilshire
04 group took what they could do, what they could work
05 with and what they thought was a good solid
06 foundation, and I think reasonably so in taking
07 bylaws of the Brentwood neighborhood council, and
08 then kind of formed -- you know, customizing them to
09 our neighborhood because there were similarities.

10 Now, our bylaws have gone through
11 tremendous metamorphoses since we filed our
12 application. And I think -- with all due respect to
13 DONE, I think that DONE has gone through a lot of
14 revisions in its philosophies in what neighborhood
15 councils bylaws should be in the course of the time
16 that we've been involved in going through this
17 revision process.

18 And one example I can give you is, we sat
19 down with staff at a meeting to discuss our bylaws
20 and they gave us some suggestions of provisions that
21 they wanted included in our bylaws. And we didn't

22 object to that and we included them in our bylaws,
23 and in a subsequent request for revision they asked
24 us why we had put certain of those provisions in.
25 And -- and I'm not saying this in a

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01 critical way. I'm just saying that I think that
02 there's still a lot of thought going into, you know,
03 what the city attorney expects and what DONE expects
04 the bylaws to be.

05 So we've gone through a lot of changes.
06 We have not altered our philosophic beliefs in our
07 bylaws, but we've certainly been willing and, you
08 know, happy to amend the bylaws to encompass things
09 that -- that meet with DONE's requirements.

10 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
12 (inaudible).

13 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: I'd say like to talk
14 to you about your meetings. When was the last
15 general meeting you had of the whole council area?

16 DIANA PLOTKIN: You have the dates?

17 (Inaudible)

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: We had a meeting with
19 Councilman Tom La Bonge open to the public, noticed
20 in the newspaper two weeks ago. That was the last
21 time we had.

22 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: But this was a special
23 meeting for (inaudible)?

24 DIANA PLOTKIN: No, all of our meetings are
25 open to the public and --

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01 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: No, I understand that.
02 But --

03 DIANA PLOTKIN: And we try to notice them in
04 the newspapers.

05 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: But this was a special
06 meeting to meet with the council person?

07 DIANA PLOTKIN: No, we wanted him to come to
08 our neighborhood council to get his ideas on
09 neighborhood councils and talk to us about issues
10 that we were discussing in -- at the -- in the --

11 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: How did you do your
12 outreach for -- and was -- okay. What I'm -- the
13 information that I'm getting is that since October
14 where you had the election, the various geographical
15 areas, you have not had a general meeting in which
16 all of them have -- all of the neighborhood council
17 has been invited, have been participated and the
18 outreach is done.

19 DIANA PLOTKIN: Well, that's not --

20 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: I'm interested in two
21 things: About how long ago and how active the
22 neighborhood council has been throughout the whole
23 boundary area and, secondly -- I think about the
24 other one. Just go ahead with that one. I'm
25 interested in that.

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01 DIANA PLOTKIN: Our last meeting was two weeks
02 ago. It was with Tom La Bonge. It was open to
03 everyone. It was noticed to everyone in the
04 community. And that was a general meeting, if you
05 would like to call it a general meeting.

06 When we do outreach and we notice through
07 the newspapers, we feel that people who are
08 interested will be coming to us. That was the last
09 meeting that we had that was a general meeting.

10 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Okay. And since that
11 general meeting since last October --

12 DIANA PLOTKIN: No.

13 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: (Inaudible).

14 DIANA PLOTKIN: Up until now?

15 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Uh-huh, up until that
16 meeting that you're talking about with Councilman
17 La Bonge.

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: We have monthly meetings.
19 They're all noticed in the newspapers. They're open
20 to the public. They're on whatever issue we're
21 going to be discussing and certification.

22 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Are these monthly
23 meetings a general meeting of the whole neighborhood
24 council --

25 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

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01 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: -- or the geographic
02 ones?

03 DIANA PLOTKIN: No, no, they're --

04 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: And are they held in a
05 public location?

06 DIANA PLOTKIN: They are held at Farmer's
07 Market in their community room there. It's a public
08 location. Anyone can attend and they're always in
09 the newspapers, you know, public service
10 announcements in the newspapers.

11 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: My understanding, I
12 think from a question that was asked before by
13 commissioners, that you've relied on the existing --
14 correct me if I'm wrong, but this is my
15 understanding. You relied on the existing residents
16 or homeowners associations to reach out to the
17 various geographical areas to inform them. And if I
18 remember correctly, you said that there have been
19 maybe some areas that may have not been reached
20 because they lay outside the boundaries that -- of
21 the particular association that was working in that
22 area.

23 DIANA PLOTKIN: No, that's -- no.

24 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Okay.

25
0069

01 the association boundaries. Our geographic
02 boundaries are based on an area where there is a
03 residential or community organization that
04 encompasses a complete boundary.

05 It's not their boundaries. It's a

06 geographic area that was drawn, which does not
07 necessarily mean it's the boundaries of that
08 particular organization.

09 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: How do you -- how have
10 you ensured, if there's geographical outreach, that
11 everybody in that community in that area has been
12 reached and that they do receive the information?

13 DIANA PLOTKIN: Because our fliers go to
14 everyone door to door. Our newspapers, when we
15 advertise in the newspapers, they go to every
16 resident and every business in that area.

17 We have a website that we reach out to
18 people that people know to look on the website.
19 Those are the ways that we have reached out to
20 everyone, forget about the -- about the boundaries
21 of an organization, but the geographical boundaries
22 that we have drawn from the boundaries that we are
23 representing.

24 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: So you did go door to
25 door in --

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01 DIANA PLOTKIN: Oh, yes. We have walking man
02 and different people who have block captains who
03 walk blocks and distribute. I mean, you know, we
04 have telephone committees for people who -- that we
05 call that have participated in the past to remind
06 them. I mean, we use a combination of everything.

07 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: And you have had those
08 at these monthly general meetings that you say that
09 you've had since October?

10 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: That you have had
12 monthly general meetings in which there's been
13 outreach to the total area of the council so that --

14 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: -- they would basically
16 know?

17 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes.

18 JOAN CURTIN: Council -- Commissioner Duran, I
19 would just add to -- just to correct some
20 phraseology that you used. We don't rely on our
21 neighborhood associations as our outreach. We
22 utilize the benefit of their networks, but we don't
23 reply on them as our sole means of outreach.

24 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Did you also have
25 places where you posted things on a regular basis?

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01 You're supposed to, according to the application,
02 have places where you post it regularly.

03 DIANA PLOTKIN: Well, we have our website
04 certainly and we use the benefit of the Farmer's
05 Market and certainly the library on -- is it
06 Garden?

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Diana, I'm unclear
08 on one point. You said you had 55 percent
09 residential or geographic-based representation
10 versus 45 percent --

11 DIANA PLOTKIN: Uh-huh.
12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- non. In my
13 count, that's about 15 of the -- of the designated
14 representatives of the 27 who are geographically
15 based, and that would leave 12 of them who are --
16 who are not. That doesn't quite get to 55/45.
17 DIANA PLOTKIN: Well, we have three members at
18 large. Did you count those as well?
19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yeah.
20 DIANA PLOTKIN: Okay. Well, I don't know what
21 the calculations are.
22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.
23 DIANA PLOTKIN: That's basically what we have.
24 I mean, it could be 56, but I'm not sure.
25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Commissioner
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01 Membreno.
02 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Can I just -- on those,
03 the records of those meetings that you said that you
04 had between now and October, were they submitted as
05 part of your application or are they on record with
06 the -- with the Department?
07 DIANA PLOTKIN: No. The --
08 JOAN CURTIN: Nothing's been submitted since we
09 filed our application.
10 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And you filed your
11 application, I believe, in December?
12 JOAN CURTIN: I believe that would be November,
13 if I'm not mistaken.
14 DIANA PLOTKIN: Yes, November 21st.
15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.
16 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: One question on the
17 selected individuals. You spoke very clearly about
18 the selection, or the folks who are actually holding
19 those elected positions at this time.
20 Since elections have to happen if you --
21 if your neighborhood council gets certified, how do
22 you see that being affected? Since you have these
23 great people who have been endorsed and who have
24 been -- obviously people wanted to be in those
25 positions, how do you see the elections affecting
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01 those positions, the elected positions?
02 DIANA PLOTKIN: Are you talking about people
03 who like are now on our board --
04 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: For example, that --
05 DIANA PLOTKIN: -- who like represent, say,
06 Carthay Circle or something like that?
07 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Actually there were a
08 couple of folks who were -- who were named as the
09 union appointee and the religious appointee.
10 DIANA PLOTKIN: Sure. And --
11 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So how would -- how
12 would that after -- if your neighborhood council
13 gets --
14 DIANA PLOTKIN: If we get certified --
15 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- certified, and then

16 you've elections?
17 DIANA PLOTKIN: -- then what will happen?
18 Well -- well, certainly we would ask, you know, our
19 representatives to go back and be ratified again by
20 their constituency and we would want some
21 documentation that they were. And that -- that
22 ratification process is documented in our bylaws.
23 Is that what -- I'm not sure if that's
24 what you're asking.
25 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Yeah, that's what I'm
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01 asking.
02 DIANA PLOTKIN: We would certainly -- we would
03 not just go forward without that ratification.
04 We've certainly received a lot of communications
05 from DONE which have sort of stifled us from going
06 forward because, you know, just certain things say
07 don't elect officers, do elect officers, and we have
08 find of been stymieing as to how to go forward.
09 But clearly if -- if we're certified,
10 we're going to, you know, ratify any -- anybody that
11 we've now put in a board position.
12 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Right. But you have a
13 combination of elected and selected --
14 DIANA PLOTKIN: That is correct.
15 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- for your board.
16 DIANA PLOTKIN: Just as Barbara mentioned, we
17 have three tiers --
18 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Right.
19 DIANA PLOTKIN: -- of election/selection
20 process.
21 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Right.
22 DIANA PLOTKIN: We would start from square one
23 and go back through that with respect to filling all
24 our board seats once certified.
25 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So the person who's
0075
01 holding the union seat right now --
02 DIANA PLOTKIN: May not hold it.
03 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- potentially may not
04 hold it again?
05 DIANA PLOTKIN: Potentially. Potentially, yes.
06 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: All right. And the
07 second question that I have is, if you do not rely
08 on the homeowner associations to do the outreach for
09 you, what other sources of -- what other sources do
10 you rely on to get your outreach on the different
11 zones?
12 DIANA PLOTKIN: Well, it's not -- it's not
13 really -- I don't -- I really don't like the word
14 "rely." What we do is we utilize the benefit of
15 existing organizations who have been working in
16 their neighborhoods and communities for years and
17 years who know people who walk the streets, who see
18 people at Starbucks and talk to them about the next
19 coming meeting, you know, people who get together
20 frequently.

21 That's a tremendously valuable network and
22 we utilize that but we don't -- are not limiting
23 ourselves to that. Other than that I would say we
24 use public media, public media such as the internet,
25 newspapers, you know, fliers, you know -- you know,

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01 the typical media processes that you would use if
02 you're reaching out to the general public.

03 There are -- you know, we have the local
04 newspapers, the Beverly Press and Hollywood
05 Independent that we use for our publication notice
06 of all our meetings.

07 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. Thank you.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.
09 Diana, one last question before we go to the other
10 side.

11 There in the -- in looking at the special
12 interest groups that are represented in your
13 neighborhood council, the youth are not named as a
14 separate group nor are the seniors. What provisions
15 are -- are there in your council to reach those two
16 groups of stakeholders and to include them in the
17 council (inaudible)?

18 DIANA PLOTKIN: First of all, senior
19 representation is no problem on our board. Okay?
20 It doesn't matter what geographic area you go to,
21 senior representation is no problem on our board.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

23 DIANA PLOTKIN: That's number one.

24 As far as the youth is concerned, we hope
25 in the geographic area that we will elect people who

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01 are participant with youth organizations. But we
02 don't have a special category for that.

03 JOAN CURTIN: With the exception of the fact
04 that we do have an education representative on our
05 board and the thought very much there was to get him
06 involved, he or she involved in bringing in the
07 youth and students and --

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

09 DIANA PLOTKIN: -- people who are -- you know,
10 he would have -- he or she would have contact with.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.
12 Thank you.

13 Now what we're going to do is switch gears
14 slightly and ask Romero to come back to the
15 microphone and talk about the staff report for the
16 Mid City West neighborhood council.

17 ROMERO: The Department received an application
18 from the Mid City West community council and, at the
19 same time, received a competing application from the
20 West Wilshire community council.

21 The plan requires that there be a
22 definition of boundaries, a rationale, and that
23 there be at least 20,000.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Romero, I'm going to
25 stop you on one -- the question on boundaries which

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01 Mr. Hahn raised earlier, what -- is there a boundary
02 concern on one or the other of the groups we're
03 dealing with?

04 DIANA PLOTKIN: The finding was that both
05 groups had met the requirements of the boundary with
06 the exception of the overlap.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes. Okay.

08 ROMERO: The plan does not allow for two
09 neighborhood councils to claim the same area, and
10 that is what generated the notice to both
11 neighborhood councils to enter into mediation.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

13 ROMERO: Okay? The -- the definition of
14 boundaries for both were the same, so you've -- you
15 -- basically this applicant gave us a map, gave us a
16 rationale, and has included and met the population
17 requirement.

18 In looking at the applicant's outreach,
19 the -- they submitted a profile of the community.
20 That profile showed good knowledge of the -- of the
21 community, and so they met that requirement.

22 The key elements of the demographics was
23 repeated before. We have 54,619. We have
24 predominantly whites, 71 percent. We have within
25 the lower income group 15,000 to 24,000 in income,

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01 24 percent of the population, and the predominant
02 age group is age 30 to 49.

03 The -- there was outreach that was
04 conducted. The outreach program began in August of
05 2000. The council -- the proposed council set out
06 for itself they wanted to outreach, their outreach
07 to be inclusive, and they wanted all their meetings
08 to be public and they wanted to gather their
09 signatures within an eight-month -- 18-month period.

10 in order to inform the community they used
11 -- there were 26 general public meetings. There
12 were 60 one-on-one presentations. There was
13 mailing, regional -- use of regional media as well
14 as door to door, e-mail, phone banks. They have a
15 website. There were 4500 fliers that were
16 distributed.

17 There was public posting of their
18 meetings, and there was central -- there was
19 signature gathering at central locations in the
20 community.

21 They indicate that their meeting
22 attendance varied from 22 to 196. They were able to
23 collect 354 signatures. The signature collection
24 vehicle allowed for them to capture other
25 information.

0080

01 There was 63 percent of the signatures
02 said simply that they were in support of the Mid
03 City West neighborhood council, community council,
04 and 35 percent of those who signed on the signatures

05 indicated that they wished to be kept informed by
06 e-mail or newsletter.

07 The -- the -- we went briefly over the --
08 their efforts to continue to outreach was they would
09 be using pretty much the same techniques. They also
10 indicated that they had engaged a stakeholder from
11 the Korean community who would be helping them with
12 their Korean outreach. They would be using a
13 regular newsletter to continue to inform.

14 They have continued their monthly meetings
15 since submitting their application in December of
16 2001 and they have sent their meeting notices by way
17 of e-mail and by -- through mass mailings. So in
18 terms of meeting the outreach requirement, the
19 applicant did meet the outreach.

20 The staff report indicates that the staff
21 is -- felt that there was a broader, more inclusive
22 outreach associated with this group, and we were
23 recommending approval on that basis.

24 The organizational structure, they have
25 proposed essentially a 50-person board, that 40 of

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01 the members would come from specific categories.
02 And those categories included homeowners, renters,
03 medium- to large-sized business, small business,
04 non-profit organization, government, education,
05 religious, civic association, media, arts, medical,
06 environment, urban planning, cultural and ethnic
07 groups, lifestyle groups, seniors, youth, disabled,
08 and labor.

09 In addition to these special groups there
10 would be five members elected at large and five
11 representatives from geographic regions in the -- in
12 the boundaries. And the governing structure
13 included nine issue -- standing committees focused
14 on issues.

15 In -- in structuring their election
16 procedures, due to the controversy and having two
17 competing organizations for the bounded area, the
18 group did indicate that they would agree to a
19 neutral party conducting their elections.

20 In looking at the bylaws, we found that
21 the applicant had met the requirements of the plan
22 and it was the Department's position that their
23 bylaws represented a more open, inclusive
24 structure.

25 In looking at financial accountability, a
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01 copy of the -- their accounting procedures was
02 submitted and it complied with the requirements.

03 On their public notice log they did submit
04 five posting locations. Each of the locations
05 targeted specific regions within the area, and there
06 were two locations that target the Jewish community
07 and one location target seniors and one youth. All
08 of the locations were in the bounded area. So the
09 Department finds that they met the requirement.

10 In looking at the positions in the bylaws,
11 there is a position for a treasurer, and so they
12 have complied with the requirement. They did
13 provide a contact roster, and that, too, is in
14 compliance with requirements.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Questions for
16 staff? Commissioner Stone.

17 COMMISSIONER STONE: Romero, something that
18 jumps out at me on the staff report and on the
19 structure, and I obviously would like to hear a
20 little bit more from the applicant when they make a
21 presentation, the board would have 50 members. Last
22 week in Echo Park, I forget which one, one of the
23 applicants --

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The Echo Elysian.

25 COMMISSIONER STONE: Echo Elysian proposed a
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01 50-member board, and I don't want to speak for my
02 other fellow commissioners, but I know I had some
03 concerns about a board that large. I believe some
04 of the other ones that were present had concerns as
05 well.

06 Given those concerns -- and I think those
07 concerns stemmed from the fact that if they're
08 having general public meetings with attendance as
09 low as 22, that sometimes it could be difficult, or
10 many times it could be difficult to get a quorum at
11 a meeting like that.

12 Do you have confidence that they would be
13 able to successfully deliver a quorum at each of
14 their meetings, or do you believe that that 50
15 number is too high and should be changed?

16 ROMERO: In the mediation sessions, that was
17 an issue that came up between the two groups because
18 the size of the respective governing bodies are
19 different. The Mid City West presentation was that
20 they felt they could do this.

21 COMMISSIONER STONE: And what does staff
22 believe?

23 ROMERO: Staff supports it.

24 COMMISSIONER STONE: I'm sorry?

25 ROMERO: Staff is in support.

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01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I understand,
02 Romero, that from our analysis of groups that we've
03 dealt with in the past, the largest board we've
04 certified to date is 31 in Westchester.

05 Is that correct?

06 ROMERO: I believe so.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And jumping to 50
08 doesn't cause staff any concern at this point?

09 ROMERO: Not at this point because I believe
10 that the intent of the ordinance and the plan was to
11 allow for experimentation in neighborhood councils
12 and we have a credible application with bylaws and a
13 structure and we have a group that has been meeting
14 monthly for a considerable period of time, and so I

15 believe it can happen.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Any other
17 questions?

18 All right. Then let's have the Mid City
19 West neighborhood council. Mr. Draper.

20 KEN DRAPER: Commissioners, Department of
21 Neighborhood Empowerment, city attorney's office,
22 welcome to our Mid City West neighborhood. I'm Ken
23 Draper. I'm a member of the Mid City West community
24 council board. I'm an original member of the
25 development committee for Mid City West.

0085

01 Two years ago almost to the month, a small
02 group of stakeholders, a Russian immigrant, a
03 working mother of two, an artist, a long-time
04 renter, and myself, met in a small artist's studio
05 just a few blocks from here and discussed the
06 formation of a neighborhood council to represent the
07 Mid City West community.

08 What brought us together was the promise
09 and the potential of the new Charter and mandated
10 neighborhood council system. And what kept us
11 together was the determination to see that the
12 council that represented this community was open and
13 inclusive and empowering to all stakeholders,
14 including the voiceless, the disenfranchised, and
15 the ordinary like us.

16 What made the formation of this council a
17 success was the incredible response from literally
18 hundreds of community leaders, business leaders,
19 homeowners, renters, and caring ordinary folks who
20 make up this community and have a passion for
21 creating a community voice that involved, reflected,
22 and represented all of the people. We believe the
23 Mid City West community council is that voice.

24 STEVEN MAC DONALD: Good evening,
25 Commissioners, city attorney, and members of the

0086

01 audience. My name is Steve Mac Donald. I'm a
02 homeowner. I live a few blocks west of here. I'm
03 also an employee of the city of Los Angeles.

04 Tonight we're going to be talking about
05 several issues. One is our extensive outreach
06 efforts. We're going to be talking about our board
07 structure, our election, and our bylaws that we've
08 established. We're going to be talking about our
09 accomplishments to date. We're going to be talking
10 about the diversity that exists in our council, and
11 we're going to talk about the choices between the
12 two groups here before you tonight.

13 Our outreach efforts began in August
14 2000. It's been more than a year and a half now
15 that we've been undertaking an extensive outreach
16 campaign. We started with a study of the census and
17 demographics of the area. We met with community
18 leaders. We developed -- we formed a development
19 committee. We gathered over 350 signatures and we

20 held over 25 public meetings. All of this occurred
21 before we held our first election.

22 We held our election on October 2001 at
23 CBS studios. Since that time we've had seven public
24 board meetings, all of which have held a quorum.
25 And in fact, each meeting has had an increased

0087
01 attendance since our first one.

02 The 50 number on our board has not been a
03 problem. In fact, we find it is a strength of our
04 board.

05 We have printed and distributed over
06 40,000 fliers. I think there was a mention of
07 4500. We have printed and distributed over 45,000
08 fliers. We have created, printed, and distributed
09 two newsletters each with a circulation of 12,000.

10 We have created a phone, fax, and e-mail
11 communication network which we are constantly
12 updating and adding names to and improving. We have
13 contacted a local print media and we have created a
14 website which is under constant improvement as
15 well.

16 Our future outreach plans play off what
17 we've done to date and add new Elements. We're
18 looking forward to creating a multilingual
19 newsletter, both English -- all three: Korean,
20 Spanish, and English.

21 We are going to be continuing to expand
22 and improve our website with links to city agencies
23 and links to other important information that people
24 in the community need to be aware of. We're going
25 to be initiating a phone hotline where people can

0088
01 leave messages if they don't have internet access.

02 We're going to be creating an office with
03 office hours for people to come in and talk with one
04 of our folks who will be there during certain office
05 hours, and we're going to be continuing to expand
06 our communication network which I mentioned.

07 Our board structure was created to reflect
08 the community diversity. We have 50 board members,
09 five of which are officers, 26 categories of
10 interest, things like homeowners, renters, small
11 business, non-profit agencies.

12 We looked at this community to see what
13 was here first before we created our bylaws and our
14 board structure so that we could reflect the
15 community. We have five geographic regions. And
16 our structure fosters new, fresh community
17 participation.

18 Our bylaws ensure against domination by
19 any single group or individual. Our bylaws ensure
20 that stakeholders have direct access. Our bylaws
21 ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to
22 participate.

23 Our postcertification election will be
24 held with third-party oversight. We will hold the

25 election within 90 days of certification. It will

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01 be 100 percent open to all stakeholders, and we will
02 publicize the nominations and the election
03 extensively.

04 Our accomplishments to date: We have
05 engaged new, fresh participation. We've heard it
06 time and time again for the people that are coming
07 increasingly to our meetings that they've been in
08 the area for a while, they've never been involved in
09 the community, and now they are because we're
10 reaching out to people. Many of these people have
11 tried to get involved in the past and haven't felt
12 welcome.

13 We have held seven public board meetings,
14 all with quorums. We have had many guest speakers,
15 including all the council people that represent our
16 area. We've had Councilman La Bonge, Councilman
17 Holden, Councilman Weiss. We've had the city
18 attorneys, neighborhood protection plan, DOT,
19 Building and Safety's code enforcement unit, and a
20 number of other speakers have been to our meetings.

21 We've had our newsletters, our website,
22 our fliers, our phone, fax, and e-mail communication
23 network, and we are now underway in organizing a
24 major traffic symposium which we'll be having in
25 June of this year.

0090

01 We've talked about the extensive outreach
02 we've done. Our board structure was thoughtful and
03 fair. Our bylaws and election are thoughtful and
04 fair and represent the area. We have been a proven
05 success to date. Everything we have done so far is
06 consistent with the neighborhood council's intent as
07 mandated by the City Charter.

08 SABRINA SIMMONS: Hi. My name is Sabrina
09 Simmons. I'm a theater and television director, not
10 a politician.

11 As you have seen and heard, the Mid City
12 West community council --

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Please speak into
14 the microphone. Thank you.

15 SABRINA SIMMONS: As you have seen -- do you
16 need me to start from the beginning?

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: It's okay.

18 SABRINA SIMMONS: Okay. As you have seen and
19 heard, the Mid City West community council is
20 comprised of a widely diverse group of individuals.
21 I am a Mid City West stakeholder and serve on the
22 provisional board as an at large representative. I
23 do not have a history of belonging to homeowners
24 associations or community interest groups. But I am
25 extremely interested in maintaining and improving

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01 the quality of life in the Mid City area.

02 This group reached out to include me in
03 the process and showed that city government does

04 work. I originally came to this group with an issue
05 regarding nuisance air traffic over my home. While
06 this issue has yet to be fully resolved, I must
07 commend the members of the Mid City West community
08 council for their exemplary work to Have councilman
09 Tom La Bonge, Deputy Chief David Kalish, and
10 Councilman Nate Holden, to name a few, attend our
11 monthly meetings so that we could address our
12 concerns to them directly.

13 Please note that these were not closed
14 board-only meetings but open meetings. Any Mid City
15 West stakeholder was welcome to attend and present
16 their concern.

17 The Mid City West community council is the
18 best avenue for learning to work with city
19 government and having a forum in which to air
20 important quality of life issues.

21 Thank you.

22 SIGMOND WAYS: Mr. President, Commissioners, my
23 name is Sigmond Ways. I am an immigrant from the
24 former Soviet Union. As a former refugee from a
25 totalitarian state, I have developed a profound

0092
01 appreciation for democracy in any of its
02 manifestations. I can emphatically testify that the
03 creation of the Mid City West council was a truly
04 democratic undertaking.

05 From the very beginning the founders of
06 the council made every effort to be inclusive, to
07 reach out to different interest groups in the area,
08 including the Russian immigrant community which has
09 a large percentage of seniors and low income
10 (inaudible) immigrants.

11 As an immigrant, I was glad to make
12 acquaintance with the members of the council who
13 also are immigrants from such diverse countries as
14 Ethiopia, Mexico, and Korea. All of us are actively
15 participating in the council and our contributing to
16 its success.

17 As a manifestation of a true democratic
18 approach, the council founders rejected the model
19 which was based upon the dominance of the existing
20 groups. Instead, they fully implemented the intent
21 of the Los Angeles voters and the city council by
22 giving a voice to all segments of the community.

23 Now we have a system of true community
24 involvement in place, and the system works. As
25 somebody who lives and works in the area, I feel

0093
01 privileged to serve as a member of the Mid City West
02 council and I strongly urge the commission to
03 approve its application.

04 Thank you.

05 NICHOLE BURNSON: Good evening, Commissioners,
06 city attorney, DONE staffers, and neighbors. My
07 name is Nichole Burnson and I am a 11-year resident
08 of the Mid City West community, a renter and a small

09 business owner. I am one of six people in this
10 community that serves on the provisional boards of
11 both competing councils. And, therefore, I'm
12 uniquely qualified to provide the following
13 contrast:

14 I was elected to the Mid City board as
15 renters representative in a public election by the
16 community to serve and be accountable to the entire
17 community. By way of contrast, my residential
18 association chose me to be one of their two
19 representatives on the West Wilshire council, voted
20 on by 13 nonelected and dues-paying board members.

21 My appointment was ratified at a public meeting,
22 though no one was given the opportunity --

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: No. Harold, sit --

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

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01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: No, Harold, sit
02 down.

03 NICHOLE BURNSON: Though no one --

04 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You stopped me from
05 making (inaudible).

06 NICHOLE BURNSON: Though no one was given --

07 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. I
09 understand. All right.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I agree.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible).

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Harold, please.

14 Nichole --

15 NICHOLE BURNSON: Though no one was given the
16 opportunity --

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Nichole, because I
18 did restrict Harold from making the same type of
19 remarks relative to the other group, I'd like you --

20 NICHOLE BURNSON: I ask for a bit of license
21 because I serve on both boards and was witness to
22 both (inaudible).

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I understand, but
24 you are participating now in their presentation. So
25 I'd like you to focus your remarks on the Mid City

0095

01 West neighborhood council.

02 NICHOLE BURNSON: Okay. I'll reserve my
03 comments for the public comment period then.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

05 JIM O'SULLIVAN: Good evening, Commissioners.
06 My name is Jim O'Sullivan. I'm a member of the
07 board in Mid City West community council. I'm also
08 the president of the Miracle Mile residential
09 association, which is how I got involved in this
10 process.

11 No one that I know of wanted this process
12 to end up in a right-and-wrong issue. One group got
13 it right, the other -- whatever. No one wanted

14 that. Staff did not want that. They tried their
15 best to work it out. I know the negotiator didn't
16 want that.

17 But we have tried on several occasions to
18 reach out to the other group and we will continue to
19 after we are certified. We've tried to -- to bring
20 this together, this group together.

21 What we're asking you to do is to make a
22 definitive decision tonight because, as you can see,
23 we have a divided community here. This community
24 must be allowed to go forward, to heal. I went to
25 the -- I only have one question, and -- and -- and
0096

01 -- and it has nothing to do with the rights or the
02 wrongs.

03 But I had a question of the -- because I'm
04 the president of the association, I asked some
05 questions. My question to the other group was, what
06 do I do with my neighbor down the street who wants
07 nothing to do with the Miracle Mile residential
08 association? And there's a lot of neighbors like
09 that, I hate to say. They're angry, they've been
10 upset. Whether it's a personality issue, zoning
11 issues, it doesn't matter. The fact is, you can
12 build the neighborhood councils and they won't come
13 not as long as the Miracle Mile or any other group
14 is a gatekeeper.

15 So what do we do with them? Do we -- you
16 know, I mean, every group has its supporters and it
17 has its detractors. What do we do with the
18 detractors? Do we say to them, "Tough luck. Go
19 away"? Do we say to them, "We know you're being
20 disenfranchised, but we know better. We've been at
21 this for a long, long, long time and we know how to
22 do this." I don't think so. I don't think that's
23 what the Charter set out to do.

24 I'm getting a little emotional. I'm
25 sorry.

0097

01 So I think what we have to do, what I'm
02 asking you to do tonight is to find a way for this
03 community to go forward. This -- I think the
04 neighborhood councils, what they're trying to do,
05 demands the best of us. I think the people of the
06 city of Los Angeles expect our best. And I think
07 that we're all trying to give it. And I think that
08 if we do, that we can go a long way in helping heal
09 a lot of the wounds of this city and a lot of
10 perceptions that government doesn't work.

11 I'm asking to you accept staff's
12 recommendation and to ratify the Mid City West
13 community council.

14 Thank you.

15 KEN DRAPER: We're prepared, we're qualified,
16 we believe we have the -- we've proven our
17 leadership, that we understand the spirit of the
18 Charter and that the system works. We have a plan

19 for the future and we are this community's council.
20 We're here tonight asking you to approve
21 our application and to certify the Mid City West
22 community council.

23 Any questions, I'd be happy to answer
24 them.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
0098

01 Questioning for the applicant?

02 Commissioner Luchente.

03 All right. Again, I'd like to ask you to
04 hold the applause.

05 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Yes. It was stated
06 that -- it was stated that there's been no
07 difficulty reaching the 50 member quorum at these
08 meetings, but is that quorum as outlined in the
09 bylaws --

10 KEN DRAPER: Yes, it is.

11 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: -- in terms of all
12 those representative groups?

13 KEN DRAPER: That's right.

14 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Okay. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Ken, (inaudible).

16 KEN DRAPER: In addition to the -- in addition
17 to meeting a quorum at each of those meetings, those
18 meeting also -- you'll also find from 15 to 30, 35
19 members of the public in attendance. So we've had
20 -- first of all, those meeting are public, they're
21 -- they're -- they're not only not (inaudible).

22 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: So that's a simple
23 majority? Is that how you define a quorum?

24 KEN DRAPER: That's right, yes.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The question I was
0099

01 going to ask you is of the -- of the members of
02 board -- of your provisional board, how many
03 typically have been attending your board meetings
04 since the October election?

05 KEN DRAPER: 33, 35.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

07 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: How many are here
08 today?

09 KEN DRAPER: I'm sorry?

10 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And how many are here
11 today?

12 KEN DRAPER: How many members of the board are
13 here in this room?

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

15 Commissioner --

16 KEN DRAPER: I might add one other. I know
17 that's a question for you, but we didn't start out
18 on a bigger is better principle to build a board.
19 We really started out wanting to make sure that we
20 could guarantee that the interests of this community
21 were reflected on the board.

22 And if you -- if you consider the cat --
23 mandatory categories on our board and if you also

24 presume the constituencies of each those categories
25 is not equal, for example, in education versus

0100

01 homeowners or versus business, so if you start with
02 the smallest group possible, you do your outreach
03 and you figure out what the interests of the
04 community are, and then you proportion the number of
05 representatives that ought to be on that board to
06 represent the size of constituency, we arrived at
07 50.

08 So we didn't start the other way, saying
09 how big can we make this and then fit a lot of
10 things into it. We started the other way. What are
11 the -- what are the interests and needs of the
12 community, how can we guarantee and not leave it up
13 to chance that -- that the minorities are
14 (inaudible).

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm going to
16 restrict the speech making and go back to the
17 questions we're trying to ask.

18 So Commissioner Membreno.

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Yes. We talked about
20 last week's Echo Park experience in terms of the
21 number of board members, and one of the things that
22 we discussed was the -- not so much the number but
23 the structure as to how they were put together.

24 And I think that maybe in this case it's
25 -- and if you guys have a clearer picture of how the
0101

01 board on the Echo Park -- Echo Elysian was, I don't
02 think it was as structured as this. We can't really
03 compare the two in terms of the 50 members -- for
04 those of us who were there, the 50 members who were
05 being allocated, if you will, into different places
06 than is here.

07 And by ordinance -- and the city attorney
08 will be really proud of me that I can cite a section
09 of the ordinance, which is the section 2-BC-1 which,
10 you know, obviously it reads and it doesn't say
11 anything about the number -- there's no limit as to
12 board members that can happen in any one of the
13 board -- governing boards.

14 So with that in mind, I think we need to
15 look at the structure. And in talking about the
16 structure of your board, one of the questions that I
17 had is the -- by the numbers that the Department has
18 given us, 79 percent of residents in this area are
19 renters and 21 percent are owners. I believe that's
20 -- those are the numbers. Or 27 percent, 21 or so.
21 But yet on your allocation of slots, you have the
22 same number for both homeowners and renters.

23 Can you talk a little bit about why that
24 was -- decision made in such a way?

25 KEN DRAPER: Yes. It's because when -- at the
0102

01 time we were -- at the time we created the
02 categories, we really had estimated renters at

03 somewhere around 60 percent and -- and was -- it
04 continued outreach and the -- and the final
05 statistics from DONE that had the figure even
06 higher.

07 So (a), it's conceivable that that needs
08 to be adjusted in the future and (b), because of the
09 at large categories and the geographical
10 representation, renters in addition to the renter
11 category will be represented on the board as well.

12 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. And in terms of
13 the businesses, you have small businesses as being
14 specific seats, four of them for small businesses.
15 And these are from the bylaws given to us as dated
16 received was 4/15.

17 KEN DRAPER: Yes, that's right.

18 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So I think they are the
19 most recent. But yet you have other groups such as
20 media and medical and environmental. Are those more
21 advocacy groups or are those also business groups
22 that you're giving a seat to?

23 KEN DRAPER: No, we didn't think of them as
24 business groups. We thought of medical in terms of
25 service element of medical.

0103

01 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay.

02 KEN DRAPER: And also in terms of the -- of the
03 issues related to medical and not -- as with seniors
04 -- in fact, all of those categories were
05 interest-related categories and weren't designed to
06 -- as a matter of fact, when we think of business we
07 think of it as interest-related and not how many
08 businesses can we get on the -- on the board.

09 There are 3,000-some businesses in this
10 community and 50,000 employees, and so 79 -- 79
11 percent of the people are renters, those people have
12 a right to be represented and need to be represented
13 directly on the council.

14 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. The last
15 question that I have is, in your bylaws you talk
16 about the initial postcertification election and you
17 speak about within 30 days of the formation, the
18 election committee should prepare information
19 materials.

20 What type of materials were -- were you
21 envisioning, the -- is that like a slate or --

22 KEN DRAPER: No. I envision preparing
23 nomination announcements, opening the nominations,
24 explaining how the process works, explaining how
25 people can participate in the process. And that --

0104

01 that's what I'm talking about.

02 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. Thank you.

03 KEN DRAPER: Sure.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

05 COMMISSIONER STONE: First, just in response to
06 Commissioner Membreno, I agree that there does
07 appear to be some difference between -- when I

08 mentioned the 50 board members from Echo Park, Echo
09 Elysian, it was before seeing the -- both hearing
10 Mr. Mac Donald's comments and seeing the support out
11 here tonight.

12 So also remember in Echo Elysian the -- I
13 think there were about three or four board --

14 (End of tape B, side B)

15 COMMISSIONER STONE: My question to the
16 applicant, the staff reported and I believe your
17 presentation mentioned more inclusive outreach for
18 your group versus the other group.

19 Could you lay out some examples of --
20 specific examples of outreach that you believe were
21 more inclusive?

22 KEN DRAPER: I'm really not sure -- I'm going
23 to answer your question. I'm not sure where we said
24 it was more -- that our outreach more inclusive, but
25 in any case --

0105

01 COMMISSIONER STONE: I think that was more in
02 the DONE staff presentation.

03 KEN DRAPER: They -- yes. The -- I believe --
04 a great deal of the development of Mid City West
05 came out of public meetings, and those meetings were
06 fliered and announced and continue to grow.

07 The people who were ultimately were
08 nominated and -- and elected in public election grew
09 out of those public meetings. And those meetings --
10 the size of those meetings range from 25 to 75.
11 Election time was 180-some. And that's how that
12 process grew.

13 And as you sat around that table you saw
14 all ages and all colors and all ethnicities and all
15 religions responding to those fliers and attending
16 those public meetings and becoming assimilated in
17 the process.

18 COMMISSIONER STONE: And then kind of a
19 follow-up question, could you describe for us your
20 group's outreach to the residential associations
21 that make up the other group?

22 KEN DRAPER: Sure. In the first place, there
23 are -- we -- we also went to -- to all kinds of
24 members of the establishment, including homeowners
25 and residential associations. As you just heard,

0106

01 the president of the Miracle Mile resident
02 association is on the board. And so is the
03 president of the Rancho La Brea homeowners
04 association.

05 We have -- as a matter of fact, we have
06 representatives from the Beverly Wilshire homeowners
07 association on our board. If -- if you -- if you
08 look at the packets that I left for you and you look
09 at the -- the outreach, the responses to the
10 newsletter, for example, that you see in those
11 packets, you see people coming from other
12 associations, responding to that newsletter with

13 those coupons from other associations and other
14 areas in the city.

15 So we went to established organizations
16 and associations also, including homeowners
17 associations and renters associations. The Miracle
18 Mile action committee is a renters organization, for
19 example. They -- a member of that group is a part
20 of the -- of the board. So we reached out to those
21 establishments.

22 Well, we don't -- we're not contending
23 that -- that people with experience or the people
24 who have served this community over years don't
25 belong in a neighborhood council. We're simply

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01 arguing that the establishment doesn't have a right
02 to dominate the council or that to simply transfer
03 the establishment onto a neighborhood council that
04 belongs to all of us. I should have a direct line
05 to my neighborhood council. I shouldn't have to go
06 through anybody.

07 If I were a business and I had just -- I
08 just finished a hearing with a homeowners
09 association contending some issue, I might not feel
10 very comfortable about going through that homeowners
11 association to have to vote or run.

12 So we reached out to those -- to
13 associations that are in existence today.

14 COMMISSIONER STONE: And then in your
15 presentation, you express, if certified, that
16 outreach would continue.

17 KEN DRAPER: It is -- not only will it continue
18 but -- but it has continued since the election in
19 October. The -- the coupons that you see and
20 e-mails that you see in those packets that you have
21 in front of you all examples of outreach and
22 response that's occurred since the election.

23 And -- and, also, you'll see in there
24 mentions of issues that the -- that this provisional
25 council has dealt with, the plan at the moment for

0108

01 the traffic summit, those -- those -- this has been
02 an operating council.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
04 Longoria.

05 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: I specifically like the
06 fact that you're going to have a hotline that allows
07 people to communicate with you, and that's -- I
08 think that's unique to your group. I don't think
09 we've had that input from any of the other councils,
10 I don't remember. But I congratulate you on that --

11 KEN DRAPER: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: -- issue and on your
13 outreach.

14 KEN DRAPER: Thank you. We're going to try
15 one other thing that I think is -- is helpful, too.
16 The -- and we're calling them communications
17 coupons, but I'm not talking about coupons where you

18 fill out your name and return it. I'm talking about
19 a coupon where, you know, for the working mom with
20 the two kids and who doesn't have time to get to
21 meetings, there's an opportunity through what -- the
22 coupon will be released in media and in the
23 newsletters, and you'll have a opportunity to simply
24 fill out that coupon and express your concerns and
25 your needs.

0109

01 Also, there will be open office hours
02 where people can actually come in person and
03 communicate with this -- with this council.

04 So we believe very much -- in fact, it
05 says somewhere in our application that we don't
06 believe there's anything more important than success
07 of a council than communication, two-way
08 communication.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
10 Membreno.

11 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I have one final
12 question on the -- or a question on the signatures.

13 Of the 354 signatures, do you have any
14 idea how many were businesses that turned in
15 information -- or signed the signature, I guess,
16 petition or information poll?

17 KEN DRAPER: No, I don't know the answer to
18 that. But I can tell you how we got them.

19 And the petitions were signed at locations
20 like the Farmer's Market and Beverly Center and --
21 and so on, CBS and so on. And we went into the
22 neighborhood and did one-on-one signature
23 gathering.

24 So I'm not suggesting that there weren't
25 some people directly from business who signed those,
0110

01 but if you're asking me in relation to businesses, I
02 don't know the answer to that.

03 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. Thank you.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
05 Luchente.

06 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: On -- on that note, is
07 -- on your signature, the map that plots where the
08 signatures, there's a large area where there are
09 only three or four signatures, so it seems like the
10 -- while you -- you had those signatures gathered at
11 those public places, it seems to be centered into
12 specific -- heavily centered into specific areas of
13 the community.

14 KEN DRAPER: Now, I'm aware of that. And the
15 -- and I can't -- I can't tell you exactly why
16 that's the case.

17 If -- if you're -- if Beverly Center, for
18 example, is adjacent to the area you're talking
19 about, and -- and so why those signatures wouldn't
20 have -- from the things that we've submitted so far,
21 wouldn't have included more in that area, I'm not
22 sure.

23 But I -- but I believe, again, if you look
24 at those signatures that are coming in from the
25 coupons that you have in front of you, you'll see

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01 that we're -- we're -- we're getting into the area
02 that you're talking about.

03 I mean, we recognized going in that with
04 an area with an estimated population of 65,000, that
05 it was going to take a while to get to everybody.
06 And funding and other things do limit you in the
07 ability to reach everybody.

08 We also know that one -- one effort at
09 outreach doesn't -- I mean, you folks have been
10 working for two years now to get people -- make
11 people aware of neighborhood councils. We know from
12 our own experience there are people who not only
13 haven't heard of any council yet but they haven't
14 heard of neighborhood councils. That takes a
15 while. So we have --

16 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Well, the reason I
17 mention is that you're make -- you're basically, you
18 know, resting your application on outreach.

19 KEN DRAPER: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: But it doesn't seem to
21 be outreach to the entire community.

22 KEN DRAPER: Well, again, I think if you'll
23 look at the coupons, you'll find some -- that those
24 signatures are beginning to fill in that -- that
25 area, the ones that you have in your packet.

0112

01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Mr. Draper, I
02 have one follow-up question. The -- one of my
03 concerns is the -- the design of the board in that
04 you have eight slots which are designated for
05 homeowners or renters. You have then 32 slots which
06 are what I would term individual interest or special
07 interest groups, and then you have 10 at large
08 positions as far as I understand the breakdown.

09 Of the 32 special interest groups, do you
10 have any idea as to how many of those slots are
11 filled by nonresidents?

12 KEN DRAPER: No, but I can hazard a guess for
13 you and it would be pretty close. Of the
14 nonresident categories there, my guess is that maybe
15 three, four, five of those would be people who are
16 -- actually, I'm thinking of the whole board because
17 there are -- there are -- it's conceivable that one
18 of the business representatives doesn't live here
19 but he's represented (inaudible).

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: That's what I'm --
21 what I'm asking is that of the 32 positions which
22 are either not at large or not homeowner renter
23 based, which include your business groups, your
24 non-profits, education, everyone else, how many of
25 those are filled by nonresident?

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01 KEN DRAPER: I don't know the answer to that.

02 But my -- my belief is that it does not -- it
03 wouldn't be half, it wouldn't be 75 percent; it
04 would be less than that. I don't know the -- I
05 don't know specifically.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Given the fact that
07 -- I should ask again, the -- the break on the board
08 between resident, either homeowner or tenant and
09 other interests seems to weight the board in favor
10 of those other interests, so people would be
11 represented on the board for the purpose of voicing
12 the concerns of their -- their interest as opposed
13 to general resident concerns of the neighborhood.

14 And can you give me some additional
15 rationales to why that -- or why -- why that is this
16 way and --

17 KEN DRAPER: You think, for example -- just so
18 I understand the question -- that disabled or
19 seniors has to do with -- does not have to do with
20 the --

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm not -- I'm not
22 posturing it that way. I'm asking how the board,
23 from your perspective, will function that way, and
24 how you arrived at the split to say that there would
25 be eight essentially resident positions, eight

0114

01 business positions, large and small, and then
02 another 24 interest positions, I'll call them.

03 KEN DRAPER: Because we wanted to make sure
04 that the -- that the interests in this community,
05 that the disabled and the seniors and the people who
06 are listed there, got guaranteed representation,
07 that it wasn't left up to chance and that -- and we
08 did not do it because we thought these were issue
09 groups. We did it because we thought they were
10 groups of interest.

11 And if you go out and do research here you
12 come up with something like the group that you see
13 represented in those bylaws.

14 And so this is not -- this is not
15 committee work, you know, things of interest that
16 belong in committees. We're talking about -- about
17 interests and needs in this community that need to
18 be represented.

19 And we didn't want to leave it up to
20 chance that that happened. We don't want to make
21 sure that minorities are represented by chance on
22 the board. We wanted to mandate that it had to be
23 -- they had to be represented.

24 And -- and that's the reason of -- if you
25 -- if you sit down and say what are the interests

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01 and needs in this community and if it turned out to
02 be six, then there would be have six categories. As
03 it turned out, it was the number that we came up
04 with as a result of outreach.

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Any other
06 questions? Seeing none at the moment, then let's

07 move to the next phase of our -- of our evening.
08 The next part is public testimony, and
09 we're -- we will allow public comment, based on the
10 speaker cards that I have in front of me, on a
11 two-minute basis per speaker. And we'll begin with
12 the people who are in -- marked their cards in favor
13 of the West Wilshire community council. Once we're
14 finished with those cards we'll move to the people
15 who are in favor of the Mid City West community
16 council, neighborhood council.

17 So I'm going to call three names, and I'd
18 like each of you to come to the -- to the
19 microphone. And we'll begin with Harry Sasson,
20 Kathleen Winslow and Philip Freidman.

21 Now, I will give my usual admonition.
22 Anyone this evening who is either throwing insults
23 or furniture will be sent to the principal's office
24 for detention. But we would please ask you to
25 maintain the decorum, and we'll try to move through
0116

01 the evening as quickly as we can.

02 So let's start with -- again, with
03 Kathleen Wins -- wait. And Harry Sasson and Philip
04 Freidman.

05 Okay. Harry Sasson. Okay. We have
06 Harry.

07 HARRY SASSON: Hello. My name is Harry Sasson,
08 and I'm on the board of the West Wilshire community
09 council. I've listened to most of the testimony and
10 I find there's a little -- a few discrepancies.
11 They said that there was 25 meetings, Mid City West
12 had 25 meetings. I was only aware of the last two
13 monthly meetings and the election.

14 We -- our area is comprised of
15 approximately 65 percent of residential homeowners,
16 residents, renters, and Park La Brea tenants, and
17 that's how we came up with our -- our board of 55
18 and 45 percent, 55 percent of residential and 45
19 percent businesses and other social, hospitals,
20 schools, businesses, et cetera.

21 I think that in democratic things, like
22 congress has its committees, well, our neighborhood
23 is the residential associations where they'll come
24 up with issues and bring it with -- and the
25 representatives, bring it to the West Wilshire

0117
01 community council to vote on or act on.

02 So we've got actually a two-pronged
03 situation. Our neighborhood associations work for
04 their individual communities and will bring their
05 problems to the West Wilshire community council.

06 So we're -- we're working for the
07 betterment -- the benefit of the community and --
08 and that's our philosophy.

09 Thank you very much.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

11 Kathleen Winslow, Philip Freidman, and

12 Susan Stetson, or Sasson.

13 KATHLEEN WINSLOW: Good evening. My name is
14 Kathleen Winslow. I'm director of community service
15 for AFTRA, and I'm representing the union section.

16 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Could you speak up a
17 little?

18 KATHLEEN WINSLOW: Yes. I would like to
19 support Diana Plotkin's concern that we postpone a
20 decision tonight. I've heard wonderful things on
21 both sides, but I think that the group needs to
22 consider more things rather than accept the staff's
23 recommendation tonight. I think there are
24 discrepancies on one side. I would like to hear
25 more and have a more mediated response.

0118

01 Thank you very much.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

03 Philip Freidman, Susan Sasson, and Laurel
04 Sevanas.

05 PHILIP FREIDMAN: Committee members and my
06 neighbors, my name is Philip Freidman. I am a
07 resident of the area, a homeowner. I work in the
08 area. I'm a member of the religious community in
09 the area. So I belong to several of the special
10 interest groups as well as being an at large member
11 to the West Wilshire community council.

12 Our philosophy is consistent with the
13 government of the United States. It's a
14 representative philosophy. Rather than trying to
15 hold a general election on every issue, we have
16 asked the community to select a workable number of
17 representatives that they trust to come together to
18 discuss the issues and to represent them.

19 We -- we have public meetings that are
20 open to the public to bring their concerns to us.
21 They can bring them to us through any other number
22 of other means including though a website.

23 We feel that 27 members is -- considering
24 that this is a volunteer organization and
25 considering the difficulties in getting people

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01 together evenings or weekends or whenever --
02 whenever you can, we felt that that was a workable
03 size group.

04 We also chose not to vulcanize the
05 community into every single special -- possible
06 special interest group. We wanted to bring the
07 community together, not pull it apart. Most of us
08 belong to more than one special interest group and,
09 therefore, I have no trouble in seeing us
10 representing a variety of special interests equally
11 and with the same fervor.

12 However, I also want to say that I am
13 deeply gratified to see that there are so many
14 people who want to represent my community and I feel
15 comfortable in knowing that whatever the committee
16 decides, we will be well represented.

17 Thank you.
18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
19 Susan Sasson, Laurel Sevanas, and Arturo
20 Martinez.

21 SUSAN SASSON: My name is Susan Sasson. I
22 am a homeowner in this area. I work in this area.
23 I shop in this area. I do everything within a
24 five-mile radius in this area.
25 In case I run out of time, I think what
0120

01 you should do as the board is have both of these
02 groups go back, put their heads together -- they
03 both have good points and they both have
04 misrepresentations from what I've heard -- and
05 mandate that they both come up a bylaw, a governing
06 process, an election process that satisfies you as a
07 board, put them together, put the good and the bad
08 from both, put them together and come up with one
09 neighborhood council.

10 I also want to state that I have only
11 received one -- and I'm not saying it was not sent
12 out -- one notification from the Mid City group. I
13 haven't seen seven. And I've only known of them for
14 about a year. So I'm a bit -- I'm a bit ambiguous
15 about who they really are and who they really
16 represent.

17 And as I said, I think what you should do
18 as a board is have them go back, put their heads
19 together, come up with a good council that will
20 represent all of us.

21 Thank you.
22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
23 Laurel Sevanas, Arturo Martinez, and Hilda
24 Goldsmith.

25 ARTURO MARTINEZ: Good evening. Thank you very
0121

01 much. Buenos noches.
02 I'm also an immigrant. My roots go back
03 it Cuba. I also left a totalitarian regime. I
04 embrace American system of life, of democracy and
05 its freedom. Maybe the greatest sin that I
06 committed for what I overhear is having given up of
07 my time, volunteering, carrying for a community and
08 fighting for it and fighting for that freedom.

09 I stand here before you as a person of the
10 Miracle neighborhood association and as the
11 president of the Miracle association mentioned, we
12 have sometime have difficulties in getting people
13 involved. I think it's more due to apathy than
14 personality. A lot of people lack the interest
15 because they have never missed the freedom that we
16 enjoy and, not having that taken away from you, they
17 don't really have that necessity to get involved.

18 I believe that the (inaudible) a
19 stakeholder of a community is those who live in it.
20 And I believe that the format of the West Wilshire
21 community council represents that and on a strong

22 basis without taking away from the transient
23 stakeholders representation.
24 If you look at the bylaws, if you look at
25 everything that has been worked for during these two

0122

01 years of formation, jointly with the staff of DONE,
02 we have done everything that is possible to try to
03 accommodate the mandates and the designs of the
04 staff and the Department of Empowerment.

05 We feel that by empowering us, the members
06 of the West Wilshire community council, we will be
07 able to represent this community in a very effective
08 way.

09 The (inaudible) neighborhood association
10 represents the corridor between Melrose and Willowby
11 and Fairfax to La Brea. There was no outreach from
12 the Mid City council to our area, and if there was
13 any, it was nil. We distribute 3,000 newsletters
14 all the time around that area. We communicate with
15 some of our neighborhood as well as with the
16 businesses.

17 And Mr. Ken Draper, who used to write the
18 newsletter for us, knows me personally. He never
19 tried to contact me or in any way tried to get me
20 involved in any of the mediation or negotiation with
21 his association or with his council.

22 I hereby would like to have all of you,
23 the commissioners, to take all of these comments
24 into consideration when you make your final decision
25 and make sure that you weigh, in fairness,

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01 everything that happens (inaudible).

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Hilda
03 Goldsmith, Sam Frank, and Carol Villa Senior.

04 HILDA GOLDSMITH: I'm Hilda Goldsmith, and I
05 live at 852 North Detroit Street, which is at the
06 very far northeast part of this neighborhood council
07 -- proposed neighborhood council. I have never
08 gotten any information from the Mid -- whatever that
09 is, the other -- the rival organization.

10 I just want to tell -- say one thing. You
11 guys over there on the board, you're going to go
12 through this whole -- this, this, and then you're
13 going to be gone. But we're going to have to live
14 with whatever your decision is.

15 We have had a long experience with all the
16 problems and all the good things about our
17 neighborhood. We believe in the neighborhood
18 council because we know that if we get -- all get
19 together and we do things and we ask our government
20 to do things for us, we're going to get something
21 done.

22 We find that it's very difficult to be
23 single and alone, and we feel that this particular
24 kind of an organization where we get a number of
25 neighborhood organizations together to represent the

0124

01 whole area is going to be effective.

02 Thank you.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

04 Sam Frank, Carol Villa Senior, and Joel
05 Post.

06 SAM FRANK: My -- my name is Sam Frank. I've
07 been a resident of this area since 1960. I'm a
08 World War II infantry combat veteran. And so I know
09 something about being involved both politically,
10 actively, and in many other areas in life.

11 I've been involved in the synagogue in the
12 area, the largest, I've been involved in the day
13 school establishment in 1960, I've been involved in
14 veterans affairs.

15 I say to you the West Wilshire community
16 council has the following: It has experience, it
17 has history, and it has accountable representation.
18 I would not like to see people who don't live in the
19 area, whether they be residents or whether they be
20 homeowners, have an opportunity to represent me. I
21 can't vote in another councilmatic district.

22 There's no reason why people who work in
23 this area should vote for me, because their jobs
24 change. People leave; they don't have the same
25 vested interest that I have or my neighbors have.

0125

01 I would strongly urge you to take into
02 consideration those points that I just made. It is
03 very important for people to feel they are being
04 represented by people who are their neighbors, not
05 visitors.

06 Thank you very much for your
07 consideration.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

09 Again, I'd ask you all to please contain
10 the applause.

11 Carol Villa Senior, Joel Post.

12 CAROL VILLA SENIOR: I move my (inaudible).

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. We're going
14 to allow Mr. Hahn to speak anyway so, Carol, if you
15 want to speak.

16 CAROL VILLA SENIOR: (Inaudible).

17 I'm a bit new to this process, but I found
18 in listening to both these sides a bit of a conflict
19 if -- first of all, I've never received anything
20 from -- from Mid -- Mid -- Mid West? I'm sorry.
21 Mid -- Mid City. Never received -- I've lived in
22 the same house for 25 years. So I've never received
23 any.

24 But what I found sitting here tonight was
25 a conflict for the regular resident here of even

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01 knowing that these two were in conflict, so that if
02 you did get a flier and you went to a meeting, you
03 may have very well thought that that was the only
04 association or the only council that was going to be
05 available, so you would listen and maybe get

06 involved and not even aware that there was this
07 conflict going on.

08 So I don't even know if that came up at
09 these council meetings, but I feel it was an issue
10 that needed to be addressed.

11 ROMERO: And state your name again.

12 CAROL VILLA SENIOR: Carol Villa Senior.

13 ROMERO: Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Joel Post,
15 Louise Wexler, and Doris Gilly.

16 JOEL POST: Hi. Good evening. My name is Joel
17 Post, and I'm a renter. But I've lived in this
18 community for 30 years and I think I have a -- a
19 good sense of what's going on.

20 I'm concerned because I received not a
21 single notice from Mid Wilshire about any meetings
22 or activities. The only time I heard anything was
23 from friends who happened to mention it, that they
24 heard something.

25 I heard about all this massive outreach,
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01 but I don't see it. And if it does exist, I'm
02 wondering who's paid for it. Because after all,
03 nobody has a budget. I know that they said they
04 sent out 12,000 newsletters. Well, I know that -- I
05 know that West Wilshire sent out 25,000 and paid for
06 it by the neighborhood associations, from their own
07 pockets.

08 Another point is, I'm an educator.
09 Because I was asked to represent educational
10 interests on the board of West Wilshire, I contacted
11 principals at the schools in the community and I
12 talked to them on an ongoing and regular basis to
13 make sure that they started to know me and that I
14 could get a feeling for their school and their --
15 and their particular needs.

16 Only one of the principals over the course
17 of the last nearly year that I have been in contact
18 with them has indicated that they were at all
19 knowledgeable or informed about what was going on
20 from Mid City West. Only one of them had received
21 any information.

22 And I think it's -- I think it's just
23 really, really important for neighborhoods to have a
24 sense of neighborhood.

25 I've been involved with a lot of boards.
0128

01 I've never seen a board of 50 function, not without
02 creating layers and layers of bureaucracy within
03 itself. It just doesn't happen. A few people end
04 up dominating by virtue of the fact that they are
05 loud speakers.

06 And I'll stop now.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

08 Louise Wexler, Doris Lee, and Tonya
09 Shaffer.

10 LOUISE WEXLER: I'm one of the elected members

11 of the West Wilshire community council. I have
12 lived in Carthay Circle for more than 50 years so I
13 sort of know this area. And I'm unable to
14 understand why we have to have one neighborhood
15 council. What -- where is it written that we can't
16 have two? I don't understand it.

17 And also, the Mid Wilshire say they reach
18 out to everyone. I can tell you that my president
19 of my homeowners association spoke to me because I'm
20 a past president and he said he'd seen something
21 about it in one of the papers and he wondered what
22 it was all about.

23 Also, in the beginning they had cut
24 Carthay Circle in half. They didn't even know our
25 area. They had it go from Wilshire to San Vicente.
0129

01 Well, we go all the way to Olympic. So you know
02 they don't even know what they are doing. Now, on
03 the new map, I see they have included the whole
04 circle.

05 So I have no confidence in this group.
06 And I feel that we should -- both sides have their
07 own group. I have attended many Charter, before,
08 meetings and I went to many, many, many DONE
09 meetings. I recognize some of the members of the
10 commission, spoken to many of them, and I don't feel
11 that you are doing the right thing at this time.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Tonya
13 Shaffer.

14 I'm sorry. Doris Lee first.

15 DORIS LEE: Hi. I'm Doris Lee. At the time
16 I'm retired, but I've been a resident and homeowner
17 here for 50 years and active in the community. I
18 worked for 26 years at a local bank and, after I
19 retired, I got another job at another local business
20 for another 10 years. At the present I am just very
21 active with community groups.

22 I'm also a co-block captain of our
23 association and very well knowledgeable of all of
24 the people in our association and the neighborhood.
25 We are a good -- a good, cohesive group.

0130
01 I have never received a notice, flier, or
02 any type of communication from Mid Cities. I attend
03 the Farmer's Market for shopping and lunch weekly.
04 I've never seen anything posted there. So I'm not
05 even aware that there's another agency like that.

06 Now, this may have been gone over before,
07 but of the 50 board members, I'd like to know -- the
08 gentleman didn't have the exact figure on businesses
09 -- what participants are resident owners or
10 transient owners or businessmen.

11 As a resident, I believe residents have
12 more at stake in this neighborhood, encompassing
13 neighborhood, because we are permanent and we're not
14 transient residents -- renters rather, and we're not
15 just businesses. So I see the group of the West --

16 the Wilshire -- Wilshire -- Wilshire -- the Wilshire
17 group that spoke first as really and truly
18 representative of all the neighborhoods and the
19 desire to make it a better neighborhood and the need
20 for working with the city as we -- you know, as
21 we're proposing.

22 Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

24 Tanya Shaffer.

25 Mr. Curtin, it's -- let's just stipulate

0131

01 we don't need to play parliamentary games of that
02 nature tonight. We're -- if you want to speak,
03 we'll let you speak.

04 DAN CURTIN: I'm sorry I didn't preregister.
05 My name is Dan Curtin. I live at 166 South Hayward,
06 which is about two blocks from here, and I'm also
07 the president of one of the condo associations in
08 the area. I'm also president of one of the condo
09 associations, representing my building. There's
10 about 12 residents.

11 The only thing I wanted to say is I've
12 been involved in community activities but just
13 starting to get involved in Los Angeles. But I was
14 previously involved in the Chicago area for many
15 areas and especially in the concept of regional
16 health planning. Some of you may have been exposed
17 to that.

18 It had large matrix boards similar to the
19 -- to the Mid City group. And we never had
20 quorums. Half the time they couldn't even fill a
21 lot of the various special interest seats because it
22 was just so difficult to find people that were
23 willing to put the time in. That's my biggest
24 concern about the Mid City application as opposed to
25 West Wilshire application.

0132

01 I also am on that board so I'm -- I want
02 to make it clear I am (inaudible) a member of that
03 board.

04 But that's -- was the main thing I wanted
05 to get across. Thank you.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

07 Is there anyone else who would like to
08 speak in favor of the West Wilshire -- Ms. Hupa.
09 Harold, if you'd like to speak at this point.

10 SHIRLEY FUQUA: Thank you very much for hearing
11 me because I didn't put in a speaker's card. My
12 name Shirley Fuqua, and I worked with the League of
13 Women Voters on this Charter education project and
14 went from one end of the city to the other talking
15 about and educating people on what neighborhood
16 councils were about.

17 I felt -- I heard a lot, I saw the
18 existing neighborhood councils, and read many models
19 of neighborhood councils throughout the United
20 States. It's my belief that a council built on

21 transient people is not going to work totally when
22 the majority is transient.

23 We have to be inclusive of everybody. We
24 have to be cognizant of our neighbors that may or
25 may not even be in our neighborhood council area,

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01 but we absolutely have to include everyone.

02 If you're going to be in and out of an
03 area because your business fails or changes
04 locations or whatever, you're not going to be a good
05 representative.

06 We've been -- all of us, all of the people
07 in the West Wilshire community council have been
08 fighting issues and standing up for issues and for
09 our neighbors and for businesses as well as -- as
10 residents in the areas. And I think that it's
11 incumbent upon you to take into consideration that
12 we're going to be there for the duration, not just a
13 short-term kind of thing.

14 Thank you very much.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

16 Mr. Hahn.

17 HAROLD HAHN: Mr. President, members of the
18 commission, thank you for letting me speak as the
19 last speaker.

20 First of all, I would like to congratulate
21 the -- the Mid City group for a very professional,
22 very well presented, and very slick presentation,
23 which is precisely the point I want to make.

24 Because looking at the application for
25 this group, for the Mid Wilshire -- Mid City group,

0134

01 we find that about approximately 70 percent of the
02 signatures are from business owners. Approximately
03 30 percent are an "other" category. And of that
04 "other" category, about one-quarter live along the
05 Wilshire corridor.

06 When we look at the map as to where these
07 signatures were gathered, they were gathered along
08 the Wilshire corridor and the Miracle Mile area. In
09 other words, this is a very narrowly defined group,
10 whereas the West Wilshire has an outreach over the
11 entire general area. There was no outreach, even
12 with the 45,000 fliers that were mentioned, into an
13 area which went north and further south of Wilshire
14 Boulevard.

15 And that brings me to another question.
16 We are not funded. 45,000 fliers, we're going to
17 have an office that's going to be staffed. No money
18 is coming from the city. Where is this money coming
19 from? Who is financing this? This further
20 underlines that here are groups that have a special
21 interest that are elitist, if you will, as far as
22 funding is concerned.

23 We cannot do this. We are basically
24 residents. We grow organically out of the
25 community. We are volunteers. We are there because

0135

01 we are interested in this issue or that issue. And
02 we come together really on a voluntary basis.

03 When we go -- when we do outreach, our
04 outreach is foot power. We walk the streets. We
05 ring doorbells. We go to our neighbors. I think
06 that that needs to be taken into consideration.

07 I would like to further renew my request
08 from the West Wilshire organization that you do not
09 reach a decision this evening but allow for some
10 further discussion with staff to maybe come to some
11 sort of conclusion as to the bylaws that were in
12 question and give us a further opportunity to
13 perhaps compromise some of the potential conflicts
14 that staff sees.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

17 All right. Now we're going to switch over
18 to people who have marked in support of the Mid City
19 West neighborhood council, starting with Allen
20 Burcutt and Rosalee Wayne and Ronnie Goodkin.

21 RANDI O'SULLIVAN: Good evening. My name is
22 Randi O'Sullivan. I am representing Mr. Allen S.
23 Burcutt. He's not able to be with us this evening.
24 So if I may, I'd just like to read from a prepared
25 statement of his little letter to Whom It May

0136

01 Concern.

02 "Due to circumstances, I am
03 unable to attend personally. I would,
04 however, appreciate your consideration. I
05 have been a part of the neighborhood since
06 1946. I attended Hancock Park Elementary
07 School, John Burrows Junior High School,
08 and Fairfax High School. I live in the
09 neighborhood currently and my office is
10 here. Simply put, my life is in this
11 area.

12 "I have been working with the
13 Mid City West community council and
14 believe that they, as a group, will be the
15 most appropriate of the two groups which
16 have applied. The basic philosophy that
17 they support is most in keeping with my
18 own.

19 "Mid City West appears to be
20 more open in attitude and structure, which
21 would allow for all segments of the
22 community to be represented to whatever
23 extent they would want to be involved."

24 I thank you very much for your time.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Rosalee

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01 Wayne, Ronnie Goodkin, and Mindy Lake.

02 ROSALEE WAYNE: My name is Rosalee Wayne. I
03 have lived on Orange Street near Sweetzer and
04 La Jolla for approximately 17 years and in other

05 locations within this neighborhood my whole life.
06 I'm a graduate of this elementary school.
07 I'm here tonight to ask you to certify the
08 Mid City West community council to represent this
09 neighborhood for the following reasons: In 1989 I
10 became a community activist. I did this because
11 there was a booming economy that had caused all
12 kinds of quality of life issues for this
13 neighborhood.

14 Along with Mindy Lake, I got support from
15 neighbors by collecting 650 signatures and formed a
16 residents group comprised of renters and owners
17 known as the Orange La Jolla Sixth Street residents
18 coalition.

19 For the next few years we attempted to
20 deal with issues that impacted our area such as
21 traffic, crime, homelessness, and overzealous real
22 estate development on Fairfax and Wilshire
23 Boulevards. We tried to get the city to enforce
24 various conditions that had been placed on
25 businesses that abutted these residences.

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01 We worked with the Beverly Wilshire
02 homeowners association which claimed us within their
03 boundary but found that they were not interested in
04 addressing problems in our part of the
05 neighborhood. We ceased working with them when
06 their president stated to us, "To hell with Orange
07 Street," which is the street where I and many, many
08 other renters, mostly renters, live.

09 We were issued the ultimatum that we could
10 continue with work with them or work with our
11 councilman, Xavier Zevlowski. We were already aware
12 that the Beverly Wilshire homeowners association had
13 a very hostile and adversarial relationship with our
14 councilman, who we believed was willing and in a
15 position to help us. And I think you know that the
16 council office, until now, is the way to resolve
17 these community problems and that's why we now have
18 community councils, because we're trying to empower
19 areas to not just rely on the council office.

20 For the next few years our coalition
21 worked on solving neighborhood problems. We worked
22 with Councilman Feuer's office in an attempt to
23 solve problems related to two 99 Cent Only stores,
24 okay, and basically found that the Beverly Wilshire
25 homeowners association had written a letter

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01 supporting the store against the local -- the
02 neighbors.

03 Anyway, so I don't -- I don't mean to
04 rehash these past grievances. I'm here to ask you
05 to support -- to endorse the Mid City West group
06 because they are inclusive, they will invite -- they
07 will represent everyone, they will include the other
08 group in the organization but no one will be left
09 out. And we really all need to be represented at

10 this time to move forward in solving our problems.

11 Thank you very much.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Ronnie
13 Goodkin, Mindy Lake, and Don Batches.

14 RONNIE GOODKIN: Yes, my name is Ronnie
15 Goodkin, and I'm president of the Rancho La Brea
16 neighborhood association.

17 I'd first like to say it's very
18 serendipitous that we are meeting at a school that
19 the Los Angeles Times characterized as the most
20 diverse grammar school in the city of Los Angeles.
21 Over 50 nationalities are represented at this
22 school.

23 And I think that the Mid City group that
24 I'm a board member of really reflects that. And I
25 think your choice tonight is really very clear. It
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01 really doesn't matter who's sitting on their board
02 and what their certifications are or our people
03 because we're going to have another election. They
04 can run for our board; we can run for their board.

05 I think what you need to look at is, what
06 do you want this council to be made up of? Do you
07 want it to be run by neighborhood associations, of
08 which I'm the president of one, or do you want it to
09 reflect the entire community and the entire
10 diversity of this entire community?

11 Now, I have to say that I've worked with a
12 lot of people on the other side of the aisle and I
13 have a lot of respect for them. They work very hard
14 for their community, very selflessly.

15 But I also recognize the same thing from
16 our group. And I don't think there's a problem with
17 50 board members. I mean, I've been to all but one
18 of the meetings and there's always a large member --
19 large percentage of the members at those meetings,
20 and I think that those people are just as selfless
21 and just as giving as the people on the other side
22 of the aisle.

23 The only difference is, is that when I'm
24 at our meeting, I really see a lot of views
25 represented. And I'm under the opinion right now,
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01 or at least I thought, that these councils are
02 supposed to be made up of not just people who live
03 but people who work and people who have a real stake
04 in this neighborhood, and Mid City really has that.
05 And I hope you vote our way.

06 Thank you very much.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Mindy Lake,
08 Don Batches, and Laurel Querry.

09 MINDY LAKE: Good evening. My name is Mindy
10 Lake, and I am a vested community stakeholder. We
11 lived on Blackburn Avenue when I was born. My
12 parents owned and operated the first children's shoe
13 store on Fairfax Avenue directly across the street
14 from in school and then later relocated to Third

15 Street.

16 I attended this elementary school, Hancock
17 Park, and graduated from Fairfax High School in
18 1972. After buying my duplex on Sixth Street in
19 1985, I started the first neighborhood watch program
20 for Sixth Street, served for five years on the
21 Wilshire CPAB as a charter member, two of which I
22 served as the civilian co-chair under Captain Mutz,
23 co-founded the Orange La Jolla Sixth Street
24 residents coalition with Rosalee, who spoke earlier,
25 to deal with major development issue on Wilshire

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01 Boulevard, and I also co-founded the Wilshire to
02 Third Cop residents association created to develop
03 relationships within the community and work with
04 city officials and surrounding businesses to truly
05 enhance the sense of community on our streets.

06 I also acted as the executive director of
07 the Beverly Fairfax community patrol west for seven
08 years, which was a volunteer community patrol who
09 served as the eyes and ears for the LAPD.

10 In other words, my heart and energies have
11 been devoted to this neighborhood for nearly my
12 entire life. I even got my first car loan from
13 Gilmore Bank when I was 17 years old.

14 I love it here, I raised my children here,
15 and I've seen the community change, diversify and
16 grow. Not all the changes have been for the
17 better. But we live in the middle of a thriving
18 city and would be foolish to think that change would
19 not happen here.

20 That is why I chose to work toward
21 certification of the Mid City West community
22 council. I believe that our philosophy embodies the
23 true spirit of a neighborhood that is accepting of
24 others and willing to work through the issues that
25 impact us.

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01 Thank you.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

03 Don Batches, Laurel Querry, and Rochelle
04 Ventura.

05 DONALD BATCHES: Good evening. My name is
06 Donald Batches. I am chief of operations at the Los
07 Angeles County Museum of Art, and we have a stake in
08 this community council district. We've been there
09 for 35 years and, as many of you know, we're
10 planning to build another museum and we don't plan
11 to move.

12 I'm here tonight to ask your support of
13 the Mid City West Wilshire council, the ratification
14 of this, because we have found that for two reasons
15 they have, in our opinion, exemplified a sense of
16 inclusion based on the diversity of their board and
17 the -- the complexity of the way -- the
18 organizational structure and, secondly, because of
19 the professional system in which the group has been

20 organized and managed.

21 We've had the pleasure of hosting several
22 of the last council meetings at our museum. It's
23 our pleasure to do so and we will hope to continue
24 to do that in future. I might add every week -- or
25 every month, excuse me, as we provide the space for

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01 these meetings, the attendance grows; we have to add
02 10 or 15 more seats every week. So there's a clear
03 strength in numbers, and it continues to make us
04 proud to be a host to this group.

05 Thank you.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

07 Laurel Querry, Rochelle Ventura, and David
08 Gershen -- Gershwin.

09 LAUREL QUERRY: Good evening, I'm Laurel
10 Querry. I'm the general manager at Beverly Center
11 and a member of the Mid City West community council
12 board.

13 Is that better?

14 I am very impressed with the people that I
15 have met through this community council. I -- every
16 time I attend one of our board meetings and I sit
17 there and see not only the members of the board but
18 the people from the community that come in and join
19 these meetings and speak freely at them, but I am so
20 impressed with the positive attitude in the room,
21 the way people react to one another, they listen to
22 each other, they seem to embrace the differences
23 within the community and truly welcome the fact that
24 there are differences and those differences are also
25 our strengths.

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01 I feel very strongly about supporting and
02 moving forward with the certification of Mid City
03 West community council.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

05 Rochelle Ventura, David Gershwin, and Tony
06 Callan.

07 ROCHELLE VENTURA: Good evening. I'm Rochelle
08 Ventura, and my family -- I think I'm the oldest
09 resident in the room -- moved into this area one
10 block from here in 1944, 58 years ago. I, too,
11 attended Hancock Park School, Fairfax High School,
12 and so did my kids, my son and my daughter, 25 years
13 later.

14 I've also spent the majority of my life
15 working in public service. I worked for the County
16 of Los Angeles for 25 years providing services to
17 disabled adults, children in foster homes, people
18 with alcohol and drug program, and I've lobbied the
19 state and federal government for millions of dollars
20 for services for this area.

21 I worked for Councilman Mike Feuer as his
22 chief field deputy during his entire six years in
23 office, and he represented this area, the majority
24 of this area.

25 In our office we handled about 50 calls a
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01 day on all kinds of issues: Trash, barking dogs,
02 special events, new developments, paramedic
03 services, and I worked with Susan Berst to set up
04 the South Robertson neighborhood council and visited
05 the neighborhood council director in Portland,
06 Oregon.

07 Based on my long-term residency in this
08 area and my experience with the constituent groups,
09 I'm here this evening to strongly recommend that you
10 certify the Mid City West neighborhood council.

11 I've reviewed carefully the applications
12 submitted by both groups, and I believe the Mid City
13 West neighborhood council is the most dedicated and
14 best qualified to address the wide range of issues
15 facing my community. It's also a very, very
16 exciting group, and I'm thrilled that they're in the
17 neighborhood.

18 I've had lots of personal contacts with
19 their board members while I was working for the
20 city. They would come to the council office not
21 just with a problem but with some suggested
22 solutions. With their help we changed the parking
23 restrictions on Sixth Street, added a crosswalk at
24 Fairfax High School, new stop signs were installed,
25 cleanup days were held. It was a constructive

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01 relationship.

02 As commissioners, you're going to have
03 extensive contacts with your neighborhood councils.
04 The members of the Mid City West neighborhood
05 council are committed to working with you in a
06 respectful and productive partnership, and I request
07 that you certify them tonight.

08 Thank you.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
10 David Gershwin, Tony Callan, and Jeffrey
11 Fisk.

12 DAVID GERSHWIN: Good evening, Mr. President,
13 commissioners, city staff and members of the
14 public. My name is David Gershwin, a resident of
15 the Miracle Mile, a Los Angeles City employee, and a
16 elected member of the Mid City West community
17 council board.

18 My father graduated from Fairfax High
19 School and my grandmother once worked for the old
20 May Company at Wilshire and Fairfax. This
21 neighborhood is my home. And this neighborhood has
22 plenty of landmarks that we can be proud of. We
23 have Farmer's Market, art deco apartment buildings,
24 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, historic
25 preservation overlay zones, Spanish Colonial homes,
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01 numerous synagogues, coffee houses, El Coyote, and
02 on the La Brea boarder, Pink's Hot Dogs. And I
03 think Pink's will even be open after this meeting is

04 adjourned, later this evening.

05 I have extensive experience on various
06 non-profit governing boards, and these boards often
07 have varying degrees of conflict and difficulty in
08 their operation. The Mid City West board, on the
09 other hand, as a synergy and spirit of
10 cooperativeness that I believe bodes incredibly well
11 for the future of area businesses, residents, and
12 community organizations.

13 Based on the Mid City West community
14 council's diversity and its cross-section of
15 community stakeholders, we have a collective pride
16 in our neighborhood that is truly second to none.

17 I urge you commissioners this evening to
18 adopt the DONE staff recommendation and certify the
19 Mid City West community council.

20 Thank you very much.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

22 Tony Callan, Jeffrey Fisk, and Sasha
23 Swartzcoff.

24 TONY CALLAN: Hello. Excuse me. I'm not a
25 public speaker, but my name is Tony Callan. I've

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01 lived in the neighborhood since 19 -- well, 1948 I
02 moved to Los Angeles. I've been in the Miracle Mile
03 for 34 years now. I'm member of the Miracle Mile
04 residential association. But I'm also on the board
05 of the Mid City West neighborhood association.

06 Now, I don't see a conflict between
07 neighborhood associations and this council concept.
08 The council covers the whole area. Neighborhood
09 associations cover small areas. After all this is
10 over, neighborhood associations will still be
11 together and they will still be able to work out
12 local issues.

13 Now, somebody mentioned a slick
14 presentation of this group over here. Slick,
15 professional, competent. I'm not a professional. I
16 haven't been professional since I retired after 32
17 years at Hughes Aircraft Company. I don't even have
18 a suit that fits me now, and I appreciate you guys
19 being here because I'd rather be watching the
20 Stanley Cup right now. I'd like to know if the
21 Kings won tonight.

22 I think this concept, this council, this
23 group here, is diverse. And when you mentioned 32
24 distinct groups or distinct categories, I hold one
25 of those positions as a senior representative over

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01 here. I'm also a homeowner. And I think many of
02 those other 32 also live in the area but they wear
03 more than one hat. And I think that's very
04 important.

05 I think it's important that we as a group
06 get together and solve the area's problems. And
07 there are quite a few. I've attended every meeting
08 of this group, and the attendance has grown every

09 time, and neighborhood problems are being brought to
10 the group. And instead of just one neighborhood
11 group being concerned about a small section of
12 street, other people concerned with the next section
13 and the next section, the council can work
14 together.

15 Anyway, I think the Mid City West is a
16 great group. I'm proud to be a member. And after
17 the elections I may not be, but I'm willing to take
18 that risk. I suggest and I wish you'd vote for our
19 group, the Mid City West.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
22 Jeffrey Fisk, Sasha Swartzcoff, and James
23 O'Sullivan.

24 JEFFREY FISK: Good evening. My name is
25 Jeffrey Fisk. I live in Carthay Circle. I teach at
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01 Fairfax High School, and I'm on -- a member of the
02 Mid City West council.

03 I urge you to vote for us. I believe we
04 are all inclusive. And I believe that we hold the
05 community's interest at our best heart.

06 Thank you.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
08 Sasha Swartzcoff, James O'Sullivan, and
09 Debbie Epstein.

10 SASHA SWARTZCOFF: Good evening. My name is
11 Sasha Swartzcoff. I'm a renter in this community as
12 well as a 10-year resident. I'm also a co-chair
13 with the urban design committee of the Los Angeles
14 Chapter of American Institute of Architects. This
15 is through this by which I was introduced to the --
16 to DONE as well as the idea of the neighborhood
17 empowerment.

18 In the very beginning I had participated
19 in both sides and I had gone to both their meetings
20 and I had to make a decision to myself which side
21 would I continue with. I had chosen Mid City West
22 because for me it had presented a stronger as well
23 as healthier platform for what I think community
24 involvement and representation.

25 And by this, I think so far my involvement
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01 with them and the way it's been growing has been a
02 very positive thing and I see a lot of great things
03 coming out of that.

04 So with that, I pledge my support to Mid
05 City West. Thank you.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
07 James O'Sullivan, Debbie Epstein, and Judy
08 Machato.

09 JAMES O'SULLIVAN: James O'Sullivan. I put in
10 my card first because I wasn't sure if we were going
11 to get cut off on our presentation because --

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: You don't have to
13 speak a second time.

14 JAMES O'SULLIVAN: I know. I just want to
15 say --

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: It's not required.

17 JAMES O'SULLIVAN: I am begging you, do not put
18 this off. And I've heard people say let us go back
19 again. We've met, we've sent letters, we've tried.
20 We need to have healing in this community. We need
21 move forward.

22 I guarantee you that we -- if you
23 certified us tonight, we will not stop. We will
24 continue to reach out to the other group. Quite
25 frankly, in the mediation session I met some people

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01 that I really want to work with, got some nice
02 people. We have to make a choice here.

03 I look forward if -- you know, if you do
04 certify us, at our election running against Kathleen
05 -- with Kathleen. I mean, if she's a union member
06 and she's a member of AFTRA, there's no reason why I
07 as a member of Screen Actors Guild, AFTRA, and
08 Equity, and a long member of steam fitters union 602
09 can't run as the -- as the union rep.

10 I think we look forward to a time, quite
11 frankly, when there may be five people running for
12 union rep. I think we'll be successful if we get to
13 that point where we -- where I could be voted out.

14 I think that's pretty much all I have to
15 say but, please, please, we've all done our work
16 here. I beg of you, do yours, make a decision.
17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Debbie Epstein, Judy
19 Machato, and Hank Hilty. Okay. Judy Machato.

20 JUDY MACHATO: Good evening. My name is Judy
21 Machato. I am originally from Curacas, Venezuela.
22 I am a renter and a small business owner. For the
23 past 16 years I have lived in the Miracle Mile
24 area.

25 When one of the community member

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01 approached me to become a part of the Mid City West,
02 I decided that it will be a good opportunity that
03 will allow me to use my interest to better the
04 neighborhood and community I live in.

05 I remember before I joined this group I
06 did not know where to go or who to ask for help and
07 support with different ideas I had. Since joining,
08 I have come to believe that our community group is a
09 strong representative of the community itself.
10 Members are from all walks of life and position,
11 from renters to homeowners to business owners.

12 Based on what I have experienced over the
13 past few months since joining, together I feel we
14 can provide our neighborhood with the support and a
15 system that's needed to foster a positive sense of
16 community. I hope you give us the opportunity.

17 Thank you very much for your time.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

19 (End of tape A, side A)

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- president of the
21 (inaudible) Filmore Company, long-time property
22 owners in the district. I've had the pleasure of
23 serving on both of the -- the councils, the forming
24 councils, and I'm here to speak in support of the
25 Mid City West application.

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01 I draw two clear distinctions between the
02 -- the applications that you have before you. One
03 is on the diversity and the inclusiveness that I
04 believe that the Mid City West application brings to
05 you in their broad representation of the community
06 and that it speaks to the -- not only the diversity
07 but also to the broad stakeholders throughout the
08 community which are not just residents, not just
09 homeowners, but a broad, broad range of folks that
10 need to have a voice and need to be able to be heard
11 in this community.

12 The other distinction that I would like to
13 bring to your attention is the bylaws themselves. I
14 think you really need to look deep into the bylaws.
15 Though both of these groups and the folks that are
16 representing them at this day are all fine folks in
17 the community and have the best interests of the
18 community in their heart, the bylaws are going to be
19 the long-term guiding light for both of these
20 groups.

21 And I think that the bylaws that are
22 represented in the Mid City Wilshire speak to a
23 broader diversification, clear lines of
24 representation, and a much smoother well thought out
25 election process of representation.

0156

01 Thank you.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

03 Debra Hobson, Irving Levovicks, and
04 Michelle Rose.

05 DEBRA HOBSON: Hello. My name is Debra Hobson,
06 and I didn't really plan a talk so I'll just say a
07 few things.

08 First of all, somehow every time I heard
09 that word "boundary" I start itching. That's been a
10 long talk for us, I think for both groups. Anyway,
11 it really isn't about boundary. And from what I
12 hear from the West Wilshire group, sounds like you
13 guys have done a lot of detailed work, just as Mid
14 City West.

15 And it really isn't really about throwing
16 darts at each other and saying who has done and who
17 hasn't, but it's for the community. And my thinking
18 is that if your group wins, I'm going to come over
19 and work with you. It doesn't matter. Because
20 we're for the community. We all live there.

21 I've been in the area for 30 years. I'm a
22 member of the Bahi faith for about 30 years, so it's
23 right in my line of work anyway. I'm obligated to

24 -- to work with the community.

25 So it all looks good. I'm really happy

0157

01 that this has come to the city of Los Angeles. The
02 community is changing and it does need a council and
03 it needs positive minds. It needs all of our
04 assistance and our work in the community, and it
05 doesn't matter which group.

06 Thank you very much.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Irving
08 Levovicks, Michelle Rose, and Hyam Fossman.

09 MICHELLE ROSE: Okay. Hello. Good evening.
10 And I'm going to make this short because I was
11 taking notes throughout the whole -- you don't want
12 to hear that. But I do want to hit on a couple of a
13 few points.

14 One of them is, Commissioner Stone, I
15 would have said the same thing you said: How can 50
16 people come together and even have a conversation?
17 But it -- it happens because I -- I go to the
18 community meeting.

19 I'm a resident in the area for over 30
20 years. I went to Fairfax school. I live here, I
21 shop here, I drop here. This is it. And so for me
22 it's really important to have civic representation.

23 And I only knew about the Mid City West
24 group because I got a -- a flier in my mailbox and,
25 hey, I'm interested in what's going on so I went

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01 down there and I -- I saw that -- that group
02 functioning.

03 But I'm jumping ahead of myself. I went
04 to the first group's -- the West Wilshire group's
05 election at the CBS studios. And I actually took
06 Barbara Martinoff, who was the lady who got up and
07 spoke on their behalf.

08 And I don't think that I have ever seen a
09 such a zoo of an election in my life. And you'd
10 have to be an immigrant who had lived under fascism
11 to really appreciate how badly that was run. I
12 mean, to me, they think it was great but I thought
13 that the elections were scary.

14 And I -- I'm not a part of any of these
15 groups. I'm not a board member of any of these
16 group. I'm just a resident and a concerned citizen.
17 And I talked to a lot of the people on my block, all
18 the seniors because a lot of them have language
19 barriers and things and I help them figure out how
20 to vote, where to vote, and all of the civic stuff.

21 So I started to attend the Mid -- the Mid
22 City group's meetings. They actually had meetings,
23 and I went and I took some of my community -- my
24 neighbors with me.

25 So they're an up-and-running group.

0159

01 They're happening. They are functioning. They are
02 producing results. They're addressing problems that

03 actually are for everybody.

04 I don't see how we can have a bunch of
05 bickering. I think that one thing that is important
06 that I need to say is that this is a group of 50
07 people of peacemakers. I have never seen such a
08 cooperative effort in my life of people working
09 together with respect to differences of opinion, and
10 I would feel very safe and very good if Mid City
11 West represented me and my community; I could really
12 rest with that.

13 So thank you very much, and I hope that
14 you have the courage that it takes to vote for a
15 council tonight so we can go forward in this
16 community, and I hope it's Mid -- Mid City
17 Wilshire.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

19 MICHELLE ROSE: Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think we missed
21 Irving Levovicks, then Hyam Fossman and Rodney
22 Nardi.

23 IRVING LEVOVICKS: Thank you very much and
24 thank you for the opportunity to address your
25 group. My name Irving Levovicks, and I have worked

0160

01 as an advocate on behalf of the orthodox Jewish
02 community in the Los Angeles area and the state of
03 California for well over 20 years.

04 We have a very vibrant orthodox community
05 within the boundaries of this community council. We
06 have well over a thousand families, well over 30
07 institutions -- buildings of institutions within
08 these borders.

09 We have been leery of the whole concept of
10 neighborhood councils because in the past, in the
11 old structures of homeowners associations, we have
12 not done well. We haven't been represented as a
13 community and often we have been at odds with the
14 homeowners associations. We even looked into
15 starting our own at one point.

16 The issues that we have as a community, we
17 are stakeholders here; we're not going anywhere.
18 We're invested in this community. We're a walking
19 community. We're a community that's on the street.

20 It is important that we as stakeholders be
21 recognized as stakeholders, and I think that the Mid
22 Wilshire group has recognized us as such. They've
23 welcomed us, we're been a part of their group, we
24 get along well, we speak well with them, and it's
25 been a wonderful experience.

0161

01 At one point I was offered to be a part of
02 the other group. I don't know from who exactly, but
03 I had gotten some communication. And frankly, for
04 our community to be represented as a religious seat
05 together with all the other religions in the
06 community is almost laughable.

07 All these groups need to be represented.

08 We all need to have a seat. We all need to have a
09 say in what goes on in this community. We are all
10 invested here. We are all stakeholders here.

11 And I would urge that you approve our
12 community council. I'm a board member there. I've
13 been really enjoying the sessions that I've
14 attended. And I would urge that you would approve
15 it as well.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Hyam Fossman,
17 Rodney Nardi, and Nichole Burnson.

18 HYAM FOSSMAN: My name is Hyam Fossman. I'm
19 administrator of a graduate Talmudic institute which
20 has an extensive program of study groups and classes
21 for members of the community. I've been here 27
22 years living on Formosa and Third.

23 I want to make three points that I would
24 like to stress. The first is I've always been
25 tremendously impressed by the mover of the Mid West

0162
01 council, Mr. Ken Draper. His sincerity, his
02 dedication, his honesty, his fairness, his
03 impartiality, and his dedication to make this truly
04 -- all-inclusive isn't the only word -- to really
05 make a genuine democratic organization in a
06 different way. It's really a grassroots kind of a
07 thing.

08 Let me create -- let me try to change a
09 perception that I sort of sensed here as if all of
10 the members of the council represent various vested
11 interests. I don't think that a doctor on the board
12 represents the medical association. He represents
13 himself but he reflects the view of a doctor.

14 If there's a blue collar worker, he
15 doesn't represent the unions; he's representing
16 himself but he reflects the perspective of a blue
17 collar worker. And if I'm there, I don't consider
18 myself as a representative officially in any sense
19 of the orthodox Jewish community; again, I represent
20 myself but I give the perspective of many orthodox
21 Jews in the community. That's point number one.

22 Point number 2 is I want to say is that
23 what I sort of stressed is, it's the grassroots
24 nature of all of this is what makes it so special.

25 And finally I want to say, as already has

0163
01 been stressed, I've attended most of the board
02 meetings, and the spirit of cooperation is very,
03 very noticeable. There's a wonderful spirit among
04 the people that are there and that's what makes it
05 so encouraging.

06 Thank you.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
08 Rodney Nardi, Nichole Burnson, and Jo
09 Prabu. Okay.

10 NICHOLE BURNSON: Good evening again,
11 commissioners and DONE staffers, city attorney. My
12 name again is Nichole Burnson. As I said before,

13 I'm an 11-year resident of the Mid City West
14 community and a renter who takes issue with the
15 characterization of renter as a transient
16 resident. Many of us have been here for many, many
17 years as renters.

18 I'm also a small business owner and, as I
19 mentioned, one of six people in the community that
20 serves on the provisional boards of both competing
21 councils. I was elected to the Mid City West board
22 as a renter's representative in a public election by
23 the community to serve and be accountable to the
24 entire community.

25 By way of contrast, my residential
0164

01 association chose me to be one of their two
02 representatives on the West Wilshire council, voted
03 on by 13 nonelected and dues-paying members.

04 My appointment was ratified at a public
05 meeting, though no one was given the opportunity to
06 nominate themselves for my position nor offer public
07 comment for or against my election.

08 West Wilshire further indicates in their
09 application that our neighborhood association will
10 be responsible for doing the outreach to select a
11 zone representative in our area because, presumably,
12 we have the mechanisms in place. My question is,
13 what is our incentive to reach out beyond our own
14 dues-paying membership?

15 Mid City West has four dedicated renters
16 positions on their board in addition to four
17 homeowners positions and geographical zone
18 representation. Since renters make up 79 percent of
19 the stakeholderhip, this is only appropriate.

20 There are no dedicated renters position on
21 the West Wilshire board and yet there is a dedicated
22 condo associated position in addition to the
23 existing zone representation, making condo owners
24 arguably the most prominently represented faction on
25 their board.

0165

01 Additionally, Mid City West has had seven
02 public board meetings not only open to the public
03 but publicized and well attended, all with the full
04 quorum. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of
05 every month on the fifth floor of Blackma West.
06 Parking is free and meetings are handicapped
07 accessible. There is always a guest speaker and
08 ample time for public comment.

09 West Wilshire has had no public meetings
10 since their election in October, only sporadic board
11 meetings at various times dealing with
12 certification, not community issues.

13 Based on my experience with both groups,
14 it is clear there is only one real choice. Mid City
15 West community council, open to all, reflective of
16 the community it represents, and accountable to the
17 entire stakeholderhip.

18 Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

20 Jo Prabu and Ricki Evrutin.

21 JO PRABU: Hi. I'm Jo Prabu, and prior to 1989

22 I was one of those foreigners, and I settled in L.A.

23 in 1989. And I've been here ever since. I live

24 north of Melrose and south of Willowby.

25 And one of the reasons that I'm here as

0166

01 part of this group is because of an article that I

02 saw in the Beverly Press with -- where Ken Draper

03 was appealing for members of the community to come

04 out and reach out to others. And that's why I'm

05 here.

06 I represent a very dedicated group of

07 professionals, namely notably Steve, Mindy Lake,

08 Nichole Burnson, Jim O'Sullivan, and Ken Draper,

09 Steve Mac Donald most notably.

10 One of the reasons I'm here is because I

11 want to mention that part of this group is -- we

12 have a larger and wider array of officers and

13 representations, and the election selection process

14 is more democratic. It's -- none of the members are

15 appointed; they're all selected. They're more

16 elected.

17 I'm very proud to be part of this group

18 and I wish after this meeting that this group will

19 be elected and I'll be a proud member of it.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Ricki

22 Evrutin.

23 RICKI EVRUTIN: My name is Ricki Evrutin. I'm

24 a member of the Mid City West regional council. I

25 was born and raised and schooled in this area,

0167

01 Carthay Center Elementary School, John Burroughs

02 Junior High, Fairfax High School, and now I find

03 myself living in the very house I grew up in on the

04 southern end of our boundaries of our area.

05 To say that this is a tough act to follow

06 is an understatement. I don't think I can add

07 anything to the eloquence of the speakers who have

08 come before me except to say that having heard them,

09 I am all the more proud to be in a position to

10 participate with -- with such devoted and idealistic

11 and hardworking individuals.

12 What has been said about these board

13 meetings seems a bit hard to believe. I, like many

14 of you and many of the people here tonight, have

15 participated in various non-profit or other

16 association -- associations. This group is the most

17 professionally run. And I don't mean business, I

18 mean intelligently run, civilized, respectful.

19 There are many opportunities for dissent, but

20 everyone is heard and heard in a very respectful

21 manner.

22 Even though we were not -- we have not

23 been certified, this board, this group, governing
24 group, made a concerted commitment and has honored
25 that commitment to behave as though we are already

0168

01 certified so that things are not dropped through the
02 cracks, so that we treat ourselves as -- as -- as
03 professionally and already -- and in business. And
04 it's just tremendous honor to work with these
05 individuals who come from all walks of life.

06 And that's all I have to say. Thank you
07 very much.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

09 Okay. Is there anyone else who wishes to
10 speak in favor of -- okay.

11 DANIEL DEGNAN: (Inaudible).

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Well, we have cards
13 for people who either have general comments yet, and
14 we haven't gotten to those.

15 DANIEL DEGNAN: (Inaudible) for general
16 comments, but anyway I'm here for the Mid City West
17 community council.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And your name?

19 DANIEL DEGNAN: My name is Daniel Degnan. I'm
20 here for Denise Monroe Robb, who was not able to
21 attend.

22 I met Denise through -- through fliers
23 that she put out and tacked on doors around my
24 neighborhood to help drum up support for keeping the
25 "Q" condition in place, which a year ago somebody

0169

01 brought a proposal to try to knock it off. "Q"
02 condition is basically is maintaining the beauty and
03 integrity of our neighborhood and historic quality
04 rather than allowing rampant overdevelopment.

05 And I'm here to read a speech that Denise
06 composed.

07 "Gentlepersons: As a renter who
08 has lived in the Miracle Mile since 1989
09 and as president of the Miracle Mile
10 action committee, a non-profit dedicated
11 to renters rights and the preservation of
12 architecturally and historically
13 significant area that Borders La Brea,
14 Houser, Wilshire and Third, I urge you to
15 certify the Mid City West community
16 council.

17 "I've been a activist working
18 for renters rights in this community for
19 13 years. During that time there has
20 generally been a chasm between homeowners
21 and renters interests. It's not that
22 homeowners are not interested in renters
23 rights or vice versa. However, the issues
24 affecting renters are often quite
25 different than homeowners, as you're

0170

01 likely aware.

02 "We're concerned about many
03 issues facing this community including
04 rent control and the preservation of the
05 existing and affordable and historical
06 housing that defines the character of
07 Miracle Mile.

08 "We are also faced with parking
09 shortage, crime, traffic, overdevelopment,
10 and lack of parks and open space. Many
11 senior citizens have lost their homes
12 because landlords will renovate their
13 units and then charge triple the rent.

14 "Renters are politically
15 disenfranchised \for a myriad reasons,
16 including lack of resources and time,
17 unavailability of child care, and city
18 council meetings which are only held
19 during weekdays. The Mid City West
20 community council is an opportunity to
21 change all that.

22 "I first became interested in
23 this council because its main goals was
24 and still is inclusiveness. The competing
25 council, the West Wilshire community

0171

01 council, did not make any attempt to meet
02 with my organization nor did it outreach
03 to other renters organizations. Unlike
04 the Mid City West community council, the
05 other council did not even reserve a place
06 on their board for renters.

07 "The majority of the residents
08 in the area purportedly represented by
09 Beverly Wilshire homes are renters, and
10 yet this organization is a homeowner
11 group. The exclusive nature of that
12 organization is evident from its name.
13 The alternative council has a seat for a
14 condominium residence but no seat for
15 apartment renters.

16 "The Mid City West community
17 council is extremely diverse and has
18 delineated categories for renters, senior
19 citizens, youth, non-profits, businesses,
20 alternative lifestyles, the stable
21 community, homeowners, religious groups,
22 and many other categories that have
23 traditionally been underrepresented in
24 Los Angeles.

25 "I ask that you endorse the Mid

0172

01 City West community council because we
02 speak for the majority of the Miracle
03 Mile. It is for this reason that I
04 sincerely request that you certify the Mid
05 City West community council. The
06 neighborhood council is the only way to

07 ensure renters and many others will
08 finally have a voice.
09 "Sincerely, Denise Monroe Robb,
10 president of the Miracle Mile action
11 committee, renters representative of the
12 Mid City West community council."

13 And speaking for myself, I'd like to say
14 that I'm a renter living in that area for five
15 years. My neighbors have lived in my building from
16 anywhere from one to dozens of years. And whether
17 we come through as students and only stay for a year
18 or two or stay on for as long as we can, the issues
19 that affect the people that have just arrived or
20 people that have been there for years are
21 practically one in the same, and I believe that this
22 group is acting in their best interest.

23 Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

25 CHARLES CAPPLEMAN: My name is a Charles
0173

01 Cappleman, and I'm a business representative and
02 member of the administrative council. I'm an
03 executive vice president of CBS operations and
04 engineering for the West Coast and I've worked at
05 Television City for over 48 years. About 1600
06 people work at Television City and we host over
07 200,000 people a year who are audience members who
08 come to our shows.

09 CBS has a vested interest in this
10 community. We want to see that the neighborhood is
11 clean, safe 24 hours a day, well lighted,
12 attractive, and accessible. And CBS is proud to be
13 a part of this community. And over the years we've
14 made our facilities available to civic and community
15 meeting groups.

16 CBS is celebrating 50 years at Beverly and
17 Fairfax and we're broadcasting a two-hour
18 anniversary special this Saturday night hosted by
19 Carol Brunette. I feel -- that's not a plug. We
20 are proud to be here.

21 I feel that the Mid City West community
22 council is diverse, experienced, competent,
23 involved, enthusiastic, and quite capable of best
24 representing all of the diverse constituencies of
25 this community.

0174

01 Thank you.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.
03 Those are all the cards that are in favor of either
04 of the two councils. We still have a few cards that
05 are in opposition to one or the other, and we had
06 some general comments.

07 However, we've been at this for a little
08 over three hours now, and I think it would be
09 appropriate to take about a five-minute break, and
10 then we'll come back and start over again.

11 (Pause in the proceedings)

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Let's come back
13 now. I'm going to start with John Osborne, Don
14 Mitchell, and Rita Ruben, any one of which may
15 approach the microphone. Okay, we're assuming
16 they're all not here.

17 Jeanne Miller, Jack Cash. Jeanne Miller
18 or Jack Cash. This is going much better than
19 anybody expected.

20 Carol Carvel, Olga Carvel.
21 Don't everybody rush to the microphone at
22 once.

23 Okay. Mr. O'Sullivan, you've had two
24 bites at the apple so far. Okay. Thank you.

25 Mr. Cornwell. Mike, please join us.

0175

01 MICHAEL CORNWELL: You caught me with a candy
02 bar.

03 Michael Cornwell. I'm with the Mid
04 Wilshire neighborhood council. We have a lot of
05 tongue twisters here on neighborhood councils. And
06 we are the noncertified forming neighborhood council
07 to the east of the groups we're discussing tonight.

08 The L.A. Business Journal arrived at my
09 office today. The headline under the (inaudible)
10 column is "Westside Homeowners Believe Councils Will
11 Dilute Their Clout."

12 "As the rest of the city rushes
13 to form neighborhood councils, two large
14 Westside communities, Westwood and Pacific
15 Palisades, have decided not to join the
16 bandwagon and another community,
17 Brentwood, is on the fence."

18 I think this -- this trend -- and I think
19 the trend is continuing here tonight -- should be of
20 concern to those who are concerned about what
21 neighborhood councils are all about.

22 I found tonight very troubling. And
23 frankly, if I were a commissioner on this
24 commission, I would have trouble voting tonight.

25 In the Mid City neighborhood council --

0176

01 and I've been active there for many years -- we're a
02 grassroots organization and I -- I don't, frankly,
03 know many of the people tonight who were speaking
04 and are part of this West Wilshire group, but I do
05 know the -- the West Wilshire community council
06 people. And they've been there for us on issues
07 that go back 15 years and longer.

08 I think if it weren't for that group we'd
09 probably have a subway going up Fairfax right now.
10 We may have an elevated train running down Wilshire
11 Boulevard. We could have a very large, large, large
12 Farmer's Market development, and God knows what we'd
13 have at the Beverly Center. But because of those
14 people I think we've got possibly some control.

15 But I do know where I'm going to be at
16 Tuesday night at Blackma when I have issues with the

17 Beverly Center and CBS and the Grove, and I'm not
18 sure I'm comfortable that this emerging council will
19 look at those issues objectively, but I certainly
20 hope they will.

21 But I think the grassroots nature of the
22 intent of neighborhood councils has been lost here
23 tonight, and I'm just troubled by -- by what
24 happened here. And I would urge you to look at it
25 the very closely. And I'm not sure tonight is the

0177

01 time to rush into this.

02 I think we should have one council here.
03 And I was troubled when I heard the representative
04 from the West Wilshire say that no staff member had
05 attended their meetings. I blame the Department and
06 the staff for not getting -- having the mediation
07 work, frankly. I don't think you had the proper
08 horses there to work the mediation.

09 And I urge you to go back to the drawing
10 board with professionals that can work this thing
11 out and bring these two groups together. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. Steve
13 Corbin and Joan Lux.

14 STEVEN CORBIN: Thank you for the opportunity
15 to speak. My name is Steve Corbin. I've lived in
16 the area for six years now, three years as a renter
17 and about the same as a homeowner. And I want to
18 echo the sentiment of the gentleman who just spoke a
19 moment ago.

20 Now, I didn't read the legislative history
21 behind it, but I can only imagine that the folks who
22 conceived of the Department of Neighborhood
23 Empowerment had in their minds the intention of
24 empowering neighborhoods.

25
0178

And I can't think of anybody who has a
01 more vested interest in the quality of life and the
02 conditions in their neighborhoods than people who
03 live there. I certainly don't feel the same way
04 about the neighborhood where I go to work as I do
05 where I live.

06 Now -- I'm sorry. I lost my train of
07 thought.

08 I -- I don't believe that the intention
09 behind the creation of these neighborhood councils
10 was to advance any particular special interest. I
11 think the only special interest here that counts is
12 those of the neighborhood. And what does your
13 neighborhood consist of? It consists of your
14 neighbors; the people who live to the left of you,
15 the people who live to the right of you, the people
16 who live above you or below that. That is your
17 neighborhood.

18 This is the one opportunity for the
19 special interest group known as a neighborhood to
20 speak collectively. I think any proposal or any
21 structure that could conceivably weigh the votes of

22 people who do not live in the neighborhood more
23 heavily than those who do is inherently
24 undemocratic, unrepresentative, and very
25 unempowering and very disenfranchising.

0179

01 And I urge you to -- to consider the
02 rationale behind the very notion of the creation of
03 these neighborhood councils and the people who they
04 are intended to benefit.

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.
06 Joan Lux, Teresa Feldman, and Robert
07 Churno.

08 JOAN LUX: Good evening. I'm speaking as an
09 individual tonight. I lived in this neighborhood, I
10 bought a home for eight years and have done business
11 here since 1982 before I moved to another
12 neighborhood which you all may identify me with.
13 And I feel that I am also a stakeholder here, maybe
14 not to the same degree as I am in the Hollywood
15 Hills area.

16 But I would like to raise an issue that
17 the complex -- the actual constitution of the two
18 areas, this area which has more businesses than the
19 Hollywood Hills area, which is more residential in
20 nature.

21 The same thing, as an outside observer, I
22 believe is happening here that is happening in the
23 Hollywood Hills area. Businesses here, there are
24 many more businesses here than there are residents.
25 The Mid Wilshire group is sitting here allowing

0180

01 basically four-to-one ratio of representation, and I
02 don't feel that that's fair.

03 I also don't feel like the literature that
04 I've asked Taneda to hand out to you for -- that
05 she's about to hand out now, which gives you the
06 proof that the Hollywood Hills West neighborhood
07 council is 90 percent homeowners and residents
08 group.

09 You're doing the same thing in reverse, or
10 the Department is doing the same thing in reverse
11 that they did with Hollywood Hills West. Basically
12 the potential here is allowing businesses to have
13 more of a say in an area that should permit
14 homeowners and residents to have equal parity
15 because of the quality of life issues.

16 Where do you think the mitigations came
17 from for the -- the new complex that just opened?
18 And I'm drawing a blank on the -- at Farmer's
19 Market.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The Grove.

21 JOAN LUX: The Grove. Thank you. And I was
22 there opening night and I can't even remember the
23 name of it.

24 Where do you think the mitigations came
25 from? They came from the people that have got 25

0181

01 years of background and -- and working experience
02 with the city of Los Angeles. Those mitigations
03 enable the quality of life issues to remain. That
04 doesn't mean that they're not business oriented.

05 This issue that's happening here between
06 two groups with the same boundaries is a
07 business/resident fight. And I am saying that the
08 Mid Wilshire area group, as hard and professional
09 presentation that they gave you, will give an unfair
10 parody, unfair pudding, and I say that the
11 literature that they've passed around is very
12 flowery, but I don't feel that they can operate in
13 the best interest of the community without the
14 experience of the other group.

15 And I ask that you reconsider their
16 constitution the way that they've got it structured
17 because I don't feel that it is in the best interest
18 of the community and I think it's long on promise
19 and short on substance.

20 Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

22 Teresa Feldman, Robert Churno, Brad
23 Hickman. Teresa Feldman, Robert Churno, Brad
24 Hickman.

25 BRAD HICKMAN: Good evening. I'm Brad
0182

01 Hickman. I came to this meeting not knowing really
02 very much about either one of these groups. But the
03 thing that I, in a short sentence, want to make a
04 statement about is that I am a resident. I live on
05 Detroit Street. And I have a lot of issues with
06 parking, lighting, businesses in the neighborhood.

07 But when I look at the West Wilshire group
08 -- is it the West Wilshire? -- the first group that
09 spoke, I don't have a voice because I'm a renter.
10 And I take offense to the fact that I'm considered a
11 transient when I've been here four years and have no
12 intentions to move out of the neighborhood, yet I
13 don't have a voice.

14 And I look at the Mid Wilshire group
15 where, as a renter, I do have a voice and I see more
16 diversity. If I were inclined to favor one over the
17 other -- one over the other, I would favor the Mid
18 Wilshire group.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

21 Jonathan Bennett. Jonathan Bennett.

22 And last word this evening, John Grishom.

23 JOHN GRISHOM: Good evening. I've spoken to
24 you before. My name is John Grishom, and I live at
25 696 South Bronson, which is the Boulevard Heights
0183

01 tract just south of Crenshaw and east of Wilshire.

02 I'm a board member of the Wilshire Park
03 neighborhood association, which was borne out of a
04 long-standing grassroots effort to involve all
05 stakeholders in our community of interest in our

06 neighborhood to strive, sometimes fighting, to
07 maintain our quality of life in the middle of the
08 city.

09 Our neighborhood discovered a long time
10 ago that other nearby neighborhoods face similar
11 issues? And again, as part of a similar grassroots
12 effort, we endeavored to work together. Since then
13 we put together the Park Mile Specific Plan 20 years
14 ago to form an alliance of neighborhoods to work
15 together on issues that are common to all of our --
16 all of our communities. And as time's gone by, it's
17 happened more and more frequently that we've had to
18 work together.

19 The idea of a neighborhood council came
20 rather naturally to us because we had -- our
21 neighborhoods were formed in a grassroots effort.
22 And in the spring of 1999 we got together and
23 realized that what we had to do was to be more
24 inclusive in order to make this work.

25 I was elected president of our first board
0184 meeting last January in 2001, and it's in that
01 capacity that I'm speaking to you on behalf of
02 neighborhoods in this city.

03 I have become more and more troubled by
04 what I've been reading and hearing that dismisses
05 neighborhoods as part of the neighborhood council
06 process. In our neighborhood we're striving to
07 reach consensus over differences that we have with
08 competing groups with overlapping areas, but we're
09 working at it. We're working hard to make sure that
10 everybody is included.

11 So reading the two reports, I note that
12 you as the board are in an interesting position
13 again this time. You're considering grassroots
14 efforts from the relative past and grassroots
15 efforts from the relative present. And I only ask
16 that you avoid throwing the babies out with the
17 bathwater.

18 Clearly, the intent of the Charter is not
19 to disempower those who have been active for such a
20 long time but to include them in this new effort.
21 So therefore, in whatever decision you make tonight
22 and in whatever follows from everybody involved
23 here, I implore all, everybody to include the
24 communities of interest that not only reflect the
25

0185 history of empowerment in this city but are in fact
01 the namesake of the neighborhood councils you are
02 certifying.

03 Thank you.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you. Okay.
05 Is there anyone else in the audience tonight who
06 would like to address the commission on these two
07 completing applications? That was probably not
08 intended to be an open invitation, but go ahead
09 anyway.
10

11 RICHARD USTER: My name is Richard Uster. I've
12 lived in a mile of this school all my life. I'm a
13 homeowner, dues payer to West Wilshire. I resent
14 the fact by being a board member of Mid Cities that
15 they're trying to place us as an image as business
16 against residents.

17 Looking still at a great number of our
18 board here, I would venture to guess there's two
19 people on our board of 50 people that do not live in
20 this area. They might represent unions, they might
21 represent a business, they might represent whatever,
22 but they are still homeowners, home renters that
23 live in this area.

24 And you should keep that in mind also.
25 Thank you.

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01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. With that I'm
02 going to close the public hearing and invite the
03 applicants to come back and rebut for a very brief
04 period of time.

05 Who would like to speak on behalf of West
06 Wilshire?

07 BARBARA MARTINOFF: Good evening. My name is
08 Barbara Martinoff. And good evening,
09 Commissioners, again.

10 On behalf of the West Wilshire council, we
11 recognize that both groups have a lot to contribute
12 and you have a very tough decision in front of you.
13 You have -- in our half, you know, you have people
14 who have experience and you have new leaders, you
15 have grassroot organizations, you have
16 representation through different tiers of elections,
17 and bottom line is we're all committed to trying to
18 make a difference and work on the quality of life
19 issues. Okay? Those are really the differences
20 here.

21 And we feel that whatever the Board
22 decides -- you know, I know some of our members have
23 asked for a continuance. If you decide tonight to
24 move on, you've heard from different speakers
25 tonight to make a decision, you know, this is really

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01 your time.

02 And I know that members of our board have
03 worked very hard to do the outreach, to have various
04 levels of participation and election, and we feel we
05 are ready to work and to support whatever the
06 decision is.

07 Thank you.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

09 STEVE MAC DONALD: Steve Mac Donald. And I
10 will be brief. I have a couple of points. One very
11 quick. I hope this is the last point on the issue
12 regarding the number of people on our board.

13 Of all the points that is raised tonight,
14 that is the point that is probably the least
15 important and is a nonissue. We've had seven public

16 meetings and we've had a quorum in every one. What
17 we're doing works. What's point number one.
18 Point number two, the decision here in
19 front of the commission today, to me, is very
20 clear. The people in this city voted in the Charter
21 because they felt that things were working. They
22 weren't working right and they wanted to have a new
23 way to have the community contact with government
24 and get involved.

25 That being said, what we're faced here
0188
01 with is, for the most part, a -- a homeowner based
02 group that's melded and changed some and -- and
03 brings together a number of homeowners groups and,
04 on our end, you've got something that's been built
05 from scratch, from the ground up, with the intent of
06 what the voters voted in in the Charter, the intent
07 of what this Department was established for, the
08 intent I believe of what you're here to do, which is
09 to bring new leadership, bring new ideas, and bring
10 new ways of doing things; not the old way of doing
11 it, this new way.

12 And that is -- that is what the decision
13 that's in front of you. It's stick with the old
14 concept of homeowners groups or come in with what
15 the intent of the Charter is.

16 KEN DRAPER: This is the finish of our rebuttal
17 and it is brief.

18 ROMERO: Excuse me. Can you state your name
19 again on the record?

20 KEN DRAPER: Yes, this is Ken Draper.

21 ROMERO: Thank you.

22 KEN DRAPER: I think it's -- it's important
23 that you just take a look at what worked. Take a
24 look at what's happened already. This provisional
25 council has been existence now since October. It

0189
01 has performed. You can see the results of it.

02 You can see the results of the -- of the
03 bylaws system and -- and of the outreach and of the
04 continued communications effort. I think it speaks
05 for itself. If you have a question about does this
06 work or will it work, it's already working. You can
07 see it working.

08 Appreciate your time, look for your
09 consideration.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.
11 Romero?

12 ROMERO: Just by way of summary, the staff
13 report made findings on boundaries, on outreach, on
14 organizational structure in the case of both of the
15 -- the applicants.

16 In the case of the West Wilshire community
17 group, on the boundaries we found that they were in
18 compliance. However, there was the overlap. A
19 decision one way or the other to approve one or the
20 other would, of course, eliminate the overlap.

21 In terms of the outreach, the staff found
22 that the competing application more fully
23 incorporated the broadest array of stakeholders.
24 And in the case the organizational
25 structure, it found that the Wilshire -- West
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01 Wilshire community group didn't Incorporate the
02 fullest array of stakeholders and that the voting
03 structure limited participation.
04 Now, the board can accept the staff
05 reports and -- and approve the recommendation to
06 certify the Mid -- the Wilshire -- the Mid City
07 West, or it could disapprove the staff report or it
08 could disapprove individual findings in the staff
09 report.
10 There was, of course, the suggestion to --
11 to not approve at all and to go back to the drawing
12 board on -- on mediation. Well, those are some of
13 the options before the board.
14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. And
15 basically, Romero, we have -- there are five choices
16 so that we can make. We can accept the staff's
17 recommendation to certify Mid City West. We can
18 request a continuance, basically, from both groups
19 such that they go back and continue to mediate or
20 look for another solution to the situation.
21 We can reject outright both applications
22 and allow them to appeal to the city council should
23 they choose. We can attempt to split the territory
24 if we so chose. There is a -- since there are
25 50,000-plus residents in the area, there are
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01 effectively enough for two neighborhood councils if
02 we were to -- to look for a way to physically
03 separate the two councils.
04 We could also reject the staff's
05 recommendation and certify the Wilshire West
06 community council. So there are a range of options
07 before the commission at this particular juncture.
08 Any other questions for staff at the
09 moment?
10 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Yes. (Inaudible)
11 want to address the statement by -- could you
12 redress the statement by someone tonight that they
13 had not had staff assistance from the Department.
14 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Wilshire West.
15 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I think it was
16 Wilshire West.
17 ROMERO: I don't know the context of that
18 because staff has had involvement with both groups,
19 have responded to their -- their inquiries, arranged
20 for the mediation.
21 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I think it was
22 attending meetings.
23 ROMERO: Okay. We had -- there's a discrepancy
24 here and if the -- if the group wishes to clarify
25 it, it can.

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01 Our understanding of the meeting of the
02 Wilshire West group was that they had not had a
03 meeting since their election. And so, no, staff did
04 not attend a meeting because we were unaware
05 meetings were being held. This is general
06 membership meeting.

07 Now, at the -- and the statement was made
08 that two weeks ago there was a meeting with the
09 Councilman La Bonge. That would have been prior to
10 when we finalized our report. But our understanding
11 was that there were no general meetings since the
12 election was held.

13 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I thought I
14 understood them to say that they had monthly board
15 meetings.

16 ROMERO: Mid City West had monthly meetings.

17 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I understood that --
18 I heard the other group say they had regular -- had
19 monthly meetings also.

20 ROMERO: That was not something that was --

21 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Is there anybody here
22 who can say -- maybe someone from that group could
23 clarify it.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Mr. Curtin, if
25 you're going to speak you have to come to the

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01 microphone.

02 DAN CURTIN: We had -- we have had monthly
03 meetings and they've been -- we've had -- all of
04 them have been published in all of the general media
05 in the area.

06 So I don't know exactly who would have
07 contacted staff regarding those meetings, but the
08 general outreach was done on those meetings. So I
09 don't know what else to say about that.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner --

11 ROMERO: Please identify yourself for the
12 record, state your name.

13 DAN CURTIN: I'm sorry. Dan Curtin.

14 ROMERO: Thanks.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner.

16 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Do you have
17 sign-in sheets for those meetings?

18 DAN CURTIN: Yeah, we do. Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Were they
20 (inaudible) can you (inaudible)?

21 DAN CURTIN: I don't have them here but --

22 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: And were they --
23 these were board meetings or they were neighborhood
24 council --

25 DAN CURTIN: They were open meetings for

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01 anybody that wanted to come to them. (Inaudible)
02 predominantly board members did come, but we had
03 other people from outside come as well.

04 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I was the one who

05 asked the questions about community meetings and the
06 group. Both groups have claimed the meeting with
07 Councilman La Bonge, and it seems to me that that
08 was a general community meeting.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: There were two
10 separate meetings.

11 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yeah. Were
12 there?

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

14 DAN CURTIN: We had one meeting with Council --
15 Councilman La Bonge, and that was called by our --

16 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: That was a
17 neighborhood council meeting announced as a
18 neighborhood council meeting?

19 DAN CURTIN: Yes. Yeah. But he was our guest
20 at that meeting to talk about local issues. And --
21 and in the neighborhood council itself context. And
22 it was announced to the whole public.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Commissioner
24 Luchente has a question.

25 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Yes. A representative
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01 of West Wilshire neighborhood council has said that,
02 you know, some members may request a -- or may
03 desire a continuance. I wondered what the purpose
04 of that continuance was. Is it for negotiation or
05 to respond to staff report?

06 DAN CURTIN: Be both. It could be both. We --
07 we -- we want to work together with the staff to
08 identify the issues that were -- they brought up in
09 that report and resolve those issues. And mediation
10 could be one of those possible solutions,
11 absolutely.

12 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Okay. Thank

13
14 You.

15 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Mr. President.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes, Tammy.

17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: If you don't mind, sir,
18 it just strikes me that your question regarding
19 going back to the table and -- and having a
20 discussion, it's a little-- it's a concern to me
21 because I heard clearly from the presentation that
22 -- or from the report, at least, that the mediation
23 did not work for you guys before.

24 So if you guys come back to the table
25 because you want to mediate at this point, how would
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01 that be different than the last time?

02 DAN CURTIN: Well, considering that you have a
03 staff that's recommended against their application,
04 I think it would be incumbent upon us to be -- work
05 with the staff to try to address those issues.

06 And since we just found about -- you know,
07 we got the staff report on this past Thursday, we
08 haven't had a chance to fully explore that.

09 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: But I believe the

10 meetings through -- of mediation lasted through
11 February, I believe, or --
12 DAN CURTIN: Well, we thought we had answered
13 all of DONE's objections to our application and that
14 was what -- our impression all along, so we were
15 kind of surprised, frankly, that we were not
16 recommended for certification.
17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And the other --
18 question --
19 DAN CURTIN: -- irregardless of what the other
20 group did.
21 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And the other question
22 that I have is, your group stated that staff was not
23 present at general -- my understanding is general
24 meetings of the neighborhood council group.
25 Correct?

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01 DAN CURTIN: At our meetings, yes. At our
02 public meetings, they were -- there were not staff
03 there, that's correct.
04 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And the last -- the
05 last time that staff was present was in October; is
06 that correct?
07 DAN CURTIN: That's -- that's my understanding,
08 yes.
09 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. Was there any --
10 any different ways of informing the Department of
11 the meetings --
12 DAN CURTIN: Yeah.
13 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- before, why did they
14 go before, not after?
15 DAN CURTIN: I wasn't part of that process so I
16 really can't answer the question.
17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Is there anyone here
18 who can answer that question?
19 DAN CURTIN: Not right now. Not right now,
20 no. No, I don't think so.
21 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Thank you.
22 DAN CURTIN: Okay.
23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner?
24 NICHOLE BURNSON: I'd like to clarify --
25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Nichole, we're --

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01 this is our time, so we get to ask the questions and
02 we'll call on you if you want to respond.
03 NICHOLE BURNSON: I'm sorry. I was at same
04 meeting, though, and I would like to --
05 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: No. Please.
06 Please, ma'am. I would like a clarification of
07 the --
08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.
09 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: -- meeting that
10 was supposed to be a community meeting or
11 neighborhood council meeting. I'm still not clear
12 on that. If there's somebody who can clarify that
13 and speak to it.
14 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: She's from that

15 group.

16 NICHOLE BURNSON: Yes, I'm -- I sit on the
17 councils of both groups, and I was at the meeting
18 with Councilman La Bonge. I can tell you it was a
19 board meeting. There was no public present or
20 invited. And I challenge West Wilshire to produce
21 their sign-in sheet from that meeting because there
22 was one there.

23 ROMERO: State your name again on the
24 record.

25 NICHOLE BURNSON: My name is Nichole Burnson.
0199

01 ROMERO: Thank you.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Would you care to
03 respond?

04 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I remember hearing
05 the other side say that they publicized those
06 meetings. And they were all open to the public.

07 DAN CURTIN: That is correct. They were open
08 to the public. It was publicized to the public that
09 the councilman would be there and it was a -- it was
10 sponsored by our group. And we can -- we will
11 produce that, that sheet, if we need to.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Well, not at
13 the moment, but don't leave -- don't wonder too far
14 from the microphone.

15 All right. Now comes the fun part. This
16 is when we as Commissioners actually get to weigh in
17 on the question. And clearly, we are not paid
18 enough to do any of this. And in this particular
19 situation we are clearly not paid enough to -- to
20 try to weigh the questions that we're being asked
21 this evening.

22 This one is particularly challenging in
23 that we have two groups of people who represent
24 somewhat differing views of the neighborhood,
25 somewhat differing views of neighborhood
0200
01 councils.

02 The idea, as a number of people have
03 articulated this evening, behind neighborhood
04 councils is to bring the government closer to the
05 community and to form a group of people who can
06 represent the community throughout the city
07 bureaucracy and be effective advocates for their
08 neighborhood.

09 We have a situation here where we still
10 have a split in the community. And there was
11 someone earlier who asked that -- that the community
12 heal and go forward on the basis of an action
13 tonight. I'm not sure how that's possible given
14 what I've heard and seen here tonight. I don't know
15 how choosing one side over the other works to heal
16 the community.

17 That's a problem from the -- from the
18 perspective of the Board. We have a group, the West
19 Wilshire group, who is deeply rooted in the activism

20 of this community for many, many years. We have the
21 group, the Mid City group, who are activists who
22 have come to the neighborhood council program
23 looking to make a change and looking to make a
24 difference in their community. And somehow we've
25 managed to not work together. And that's deeply

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01 troubling.

02 The points made by Mr. Cornwell late in
03 the evening relative to the perception of what we're
04 doing in the larger context of the city are also
05 deeply troubling. The message that we send by our
06 actions here tonight to some of the other activist
07 organizations in other parts of the city is of
08 concern to me.

09 It's somehow troubling that we would
10 define a program of neighborhood councils which
11 would manage to supplant or ignore or marginalize
12 the work and the efforts of community groups who
13 have been involved in this city for -- for many
14 years.

15 What I see from Mid City West is a group
16 that's come together that's been frustrated at times
17 individually with some of the things that have been
18 done by a number of neighborhood leaders over the
19 years and have defined a system or a structure that
20 defines 32-odd interest groups in the city -- or in
21 the neighborhood but doesn't define a category for
22 neighborhood associations and doesn't define a way
23 for -- for those neighborhood people to be involved
24 in the system in some manner.

25 And Ronnie, I understand. Don't worry.

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01 And I see on the Wilshire West community
02 council side a desire to -- to build on what -- what
03 has always been and the status quo and to use some
04 of the neighborhood groups to develop a neighborhood
05 council.

06 And there are clearly arguments on both
07 sides to the way neighborhood councils should work
08 in this neighborhood. But there ought to be a way
09 that the neighborhood can work to serve all of those
10 interests.

11 If we were to certify Mid City West in
12 this situation we would be leaving out the West
13 Wilshire groups and we would leave that schism in
14 the community and thereby to some extent hampering
15 or -- or hurting the chances of the Mid City West
16 neighborhood council from being the true voice in
17 the community.

18 To the extent that the neighborhood
19 council -- and it's the neighborhood council, not
20 this one or that one -- can speak for all of the
21 people who live and work and own property in this
22 neighborhood, ultimately that's our goal. And I'm
23 not sure we have a clear path to -- to get there
24 tonight.

25 I have a lot of respect for all of the
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01 people who have spoken here tonight. Many of them
02 are friends and colleagues and -- and sometimes
03 adversaries for -- for 25 years.

04 But I'm troubled by a couple of things. I
05 was troubled by the fact that both Don Batchess and
06 Hank Hilty got up and spoke in favor of Mid City
07 West and not in favor of the Wilshire West council.
08 That concerned me with regard to -- to the Wilshire
09 West application and their ability to -- to work
10 with and talk to some of the major stakeholders in
11 the community.

12 I'm troubled by the fact that Park La Brea
13 isn't here tonight on either side, that that's
14 somewhere missing in all of this. No one came
15 tonight to the microphone and said, "I represent the
16 Park La Brea tenants association," or -- or "The
17 Park La Brea property owners," because that's a
18 major piece -- a major missing piece in the
19 community.

20 So it's a question of trying to strike the
21 balance between people who want to -- to join in and
22 make a difference and change and people who have a
23 vested interest over time in their neighborhood and
24 melding the two into something that becomes the
25 neighborhood council.

0204
01 One group, the Mid City West group, is
02 essentially people centric. It identifies 50
03 stakeholders and makes them their board of directors
04 and challenges those 50 people to go out and
05 represent and speak for and communicate with all
06 50,000 homeowners, or residents and tenants and
07 business owners in the community.

08 The other group is essentially
09 organizational centric where it tends to build on
10 existing organizations and contacts and -- and
11 infrastructure that's been in the community for
12 years and doesn't necessarily face the same
13 challenge to have to go out and reinvent the wheel
14 or reinvent the basis for communication.

15 Ken, for all of your fliers and things
16 that have gone out, the only information that I've
17 received as a resident of the neighborhood has been
18 from the Melrose neighborhood association and
19 through the outreach efforts that have come from
20 West Wilshire.

21 Be that as it may, I'm one mailbox in --
22 in 50,000, so it's not necessarily indicative of
23 coverage on one side or the other.

24 (End of tape A, side B)

25

0205
01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- about the -- the
02 spread of the signatures in -- on the different
03 lists of groups, where Mid City West signatures tend

04 to concentrate in certain areas and West Wilshire's
05 tend to cover the neighborhood in general.

06 During the course of the Charter debate
07 and the subsequent debate over the plan for
08 neighborhood councils, many groups argued vehemently
09 that signatures shouldn't be required, that it was
10 demeaning to have to go out into the streets and get
11 people to sign petitions and do things like that
12 when groups have been around for years.

13 Yet we, as commissioners who view these
14 applications week in and week out, the signatures
15 and their plotting become one of the key factors in
16 how we look at the neighborhood council applications
17 in our test as to whether we think the outreach
18 actually reaches the places it's supposed to reach.

19 So it's become a key tool to us to
20 evaluate neighborhood council applications. And in
21 this case, it tends to tell a little bit of a
22 different story between the two different groups --
23 now, recognizing that it's a very small sample on
24 both sides and it's not a lot of people.

25 And that's part of the other question of
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01 balance in the neighborhood. While can you get 50
02 to a hundred people to a meeting and you may get a
03 quorum of your board to every meeting, that still a
04 hundred people out of 50,000 -- 50,000 residents
05 plus 50,000 employees -- so it's still a large task
06 to go from representing -- being a representative
07 body of 50 to communicating with the mass of 100,000
08 people in this area.

09 Where do we go from here? I'm not sure.
10 And it's 11 o'clock and we've been at this for four
11 and a half hours, and I'm not sure that I'm any
12 closer to a conclusion than I was when I walked in
13 here this evening.

14 So I'd like to hear from my fellow
15 commissioners as to what their take on this
16 evening's events have been.

17 Commissioner Luchente.

18 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Thank you,
19 Mr. President. As someone who like many, many of my
20 fellow commissioners and those of you in the
21 audience tonight and someone's who's been involved
22 in a grassroots community participation and
23 organizations for many years, I'm very aware of the
24 need to continue -- for existing organizations to
25 continue to grow and bring in new people, new

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01 leadership.

02 And that's how I -- I've found in my own
03 personal experience that that is how an organization
04 remains representative of the community which --
05 which people, you know, claim to represent.

06 And it's interesting tonight, though, that
07 we have two applications that seem to be a reaction
08 really to the other -- the competing application.

09 And unlike one of the speakers, I strongly
10 disagree that this is a choice between the old and
11 the new. Rather, I think it should be something
12 that is -- that pulls from all the elements of the
13 community, both old and new. And certainly this
14 whole process provides for increased inclusiveness
15 and linkage with city government.

16 But I -- I think that the forms of
17 representation that are outlined in the bylaws are
18 not necessarily -- that neither one of them is
19 necessarily bad. There is a representative form of
20 government and there is another form that provides
21 for general inclusion of everybody in elections by
22 all the stakeholders present. But neither one is
23 necessarily better than the other.

24 I was certainly impressed by the diversity
25 of the interests here tonight, but I was struck by
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01 one of the comments that I wonder how many people at
02 the different meetings were necessarily aware of the
03 other group's existence and whether it was really
04 placed to the community as a choice; rather, one was
05 just kind of presented as this is the only choice
06 that is before you.

07 And I think that the staff's findings were
08 relative to the competing application, not the
09 threshold that's been established in other
10 applications reviewed by staff and approved by this
11 commission.

12 The staff -- you know, our general manager
13 Greg Nelson has mentioned on many times, you know,
14 this isn't a process to commit to try to create
15 winners and losers, but I think that it seems that
16 both groups were kind of strung along here and that
17 that indeed is what is the possibility before us.

18 Two more comments. For all the outreach
19 that was done, the flaw is that the outreach for
20 either groups is not substantiated based on the
21 distribution of signatures. As President
22 Christopher mentioned, they seem to be isolated into
23 certain areas.

24 But most disappointing is, for all the
25 vision and dedication that I witnessed tonight,
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01 neither group has been able to transcend the special
02 interests that are in both groups. And so I think
03 that the community at large would suffer by
04 certification of either group in its current form.

05 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Well, I thank both
06 groups for being here tonight. I thank you for your
07 enthusiasm and the way that you've worked and the
08 way in which you've come here and presented your --
09 your issues.

10 I have a serious problem, though, with the
11 outreach in terms of the group who indicates that
12 they did have open meetings for six months yet the
13 Department didn't know about it. Some way, if there

14 -- if those meeting are announced, if they're
15 wherever, the Department should find out somehow. I
16 just don't understand why the Department wasn't at
17 those meetings if they were properly announced, if
18 there was outreach, if there was -- and the meetings
19 were open and public. And I -- I find that very
20 difficult.

21 However, I did find that the Mid City
22 people did tell what they had done during that
23 time. They did talk about their meetings and about
24 their outreach.

25 And I find even though -- and we know how
0210 difficult it is to reach out into a community where
01 it is diverse, where people are volunteering their
02 time, where it is costly and it's not reimbursed. I
03 do know and all of us know, I think, how difficult
04 it is to reach out and to not have some kind of
05 problems in terms of the reach-out and it always,
06 always, always needs to be improved and outreaching
07 into the community is something which is an ongoing
08 process and will always be there. We can't -- we
09 can never stop that.

11 I -- I'm concerned that people will get
12 the idea that if we certify one neighborhood
13 council, the other one can't participate or won't
14 participate or shouldn't participate or we're
15 leaving out somebody. We're not leaving out
16 anyone.

17 Everyone has and has the obligation and
18 has the opportunity to participate in the
19 neighborhood council if one is selected here. There
20 will be a public and open election, and everyone can
21 be nominated and can participate in that election
22 and be part of the governing board.

23 I personally do not feel that negotiation
24 at this time will make a difference. It was offered
25 in the past by professionals, not by -- I think

0211 there was a statement here that it was done by
01 nonprofessionals. That's not true. From what I
02 read it was done by professionals. Yet nothing came
03 of that.

04 I don't see the reason for continuing to
05 do that if nothing came out at a time when -- when
06 it was important that a unified council come to
07 present it's application here to the Department. I
08 personally don't -- don't rely a lot on that.

09 I appreciate the fact that the Mid City is
10 diverse. I appreciate the fact that there have been
11 people who have been working in the community for a
12 long time who say they are experienced. But that's
13 doesn't mean their experience can't be on another --
14 on a neighborhood council that is in the
15 neighborhood anyway and not just their own.

16 I appreciate more the diversity of the Mid
17 City and I think that although I had a problem last
18

19 week with the 50 on the -- on the board, I think
20 that Commissioner Membreno did bring out the fact
21 that this particular -- these particular articles
22 are structured differently and it seems to be
23 working, and they certainly had a decent
24 representation here whereas the group last week did
25 not. And I think I had to take a look at that in

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01 terms of -- of the 50 for the governing board.

02 I personally feel that we should decide
03 tonight on one group so that they can move ahead,
04 and I would invite those -- whichever group it is, I
05 would invite those who -- who say that they are
06 really interested in the neighborhood to
07 participate, to come together, 'cause that's the
08 important issue.

09 This is not a win-win. It is not a
10 win-lose. I mean this is a win-win. It is not a
11 win-lose situation in the neighborhood. And it
12 shouldn't be a win-lose.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Woods
14 Gray.

15 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Yes. I'd like to
16 thank both groups for all of the work that you've
17 done. Ultimately our goal is to have organized
18 neighborhood councils that will help to empower
19 neighborhoods, and that means all the people in the
20 neighborhood whether it be homeowners or renters,
21 homeless, and all of the various other groups that
22 exist within your neighborhood. They all need to be
23 a part of the neighborhood council.

24 I believe that in organizing a
25 neighborhood council you begin to look at what's

0213
01 first in your neighborhood and what strengths you
02 have to build upon. And for that reason I saw no
03 problem with the West Wilshire group going through
04 their homeowners groups or residential groups -- as
05 I've learned tonight, they're not just homeowners
06 but residential groups -- to begin laying a
07 foundation for a neighborhood council because you
08 have to start organizing someplace, and that's what
09 you're most familiar with probably.

10 I am concerned about the 50 member board
11 because I realize that from community to community
12 we've heard people talk -- they have many smaller
13 boards, and I believe that it's very difficult
14 sometimes to get people out. That would be a
15 concern of mine. However, I know it's not a concern
16 of the Mid City West group.

17 I believe that somehow all the various
18 viewpoints in this community must come together and
19 there must be cooperation. I think that what I hear
20 is that there are various political ideologies and
21 there's the -- I hate calling it the old versus the
22 new -- experience versus the new leaders maybe or
23 something to that degree. However, some may not be

24 as new.

25 And I could understand why some groups may
0214

01 not be as concerned about having a special category
02 for certain people, because some of us who belong in
03 certain groups don't think that we -- we are there
04 already so we didn't think of adding that as a
05 special group.

06 I realize that this community has been
07 together, this is a community of interest, it's
08 historical. It has a history of working on
09 different projects. And many of those projects
10 we're grateful for because they would have had an
11 impact on the rest of the city.

12 And I just believe there's value in
13 working together with experienced and new leaders
14 coming together. So somehow that -- that has to
15 happen.

16 I found that the presentations were
17 different. The Mid City group had a very polished
18 presentation, but while I sit -- sat carefully and
19 listened and heard both sides, I realize that I
20 think I heard both to be saying basically about the
21 same thing. Things were larger in some areas and
22 smaller in some areas, but you were all striving
23 toward the same goal of empowering neighborhoods,
24 the same neighborhood.

25 And it's my belief that -- that I could --
0215

01 tonight would have the courage to say I think you
02 need to go back and work together to come together
03 for the sake of an united community, because it --
04 it it's not -- it shouldn't be on me to bring you
05 together. You should bring yourself together. And
06 I shouldn't be there to divide you either.

07 So I want to -- I believe that you need to
08 go back. I would certainly think that things are
09 different after tonight and that mediation might
10 work in a way this it has not worked before and that
11 people need to come together. It should not fall on
12 me to divide you, but I offer the opportunity for to
13 you united yourselves.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Anyone else?

15 Commissioner Membreno.

16 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Well, one of the
17 toughest choices is always to decide for one group
18 or the other. But one of the toughest choices is to
19 also come to a community, and someone earlier
20 mentioned that we as commissioners will be gone in a
21 few years, and some of us sooner than few years, and
22 you will all stay to work your communities.

23 And that is a very -- that is key to
24 understanding why a community needs to come together
25 for the betterment of your communities.

0216

01 And I think one of the toughest part that
02 I see here is how one group talks about residents as

03 being the only key factor of a community while the
04 other talks about the diversity that exists, and
05 that needs to be put together to the test of how
06 things will work for the benefit of the neighborhood
07 council.

08 It's a tough decision overall for all of
09 us who sit here because some of us come from these
10 communities and -- and to see neighbors and to see
11 folks who we know, who we've worked with, not get
12 along on an issue of such -- such importance, I
13 think it's always very hard to -- to see.

14 And as Commissioner Woods Gray says, we
15 are here to really support what the neighborhood
16 councils are doing, not divide them or not to -- not
17 to bring them -- not to bring you guys together
18 either.

19 So it's a tough choice and -- but we need
20 to have the courage to make a decision tonight
21 whether it is to unify this neighborhood council and
22 how we will do that as a group and as a community
23 and -- or to see what are the better ways of
24 bringing together the groups to -- to define who --
25 who will better represent this neighborhood
0217 council.

01 So that's where I want to stop.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

03 COMMISSIONER STONE: Thank you, Mr. President.

04 I think -- well, I want to thank both
05 groups, just like my fellow commissioners did, for
06 putting on a great presentations and clearly making
07 the case. Each group cares deeply about this
08 neighborhood.

09 I think tonight is the -- at least in my
10 mind is the toughest -- toughest decision that we
11 have faced. The Hollywood situation ranks right up
12 there, too.

13 And actually the Hollywood situation has a
14 little bit of precedential impact for us to
15 consider, which was two -- two groups that
16 represented the -- the same area that did not want
17 to mediate. We urged both groups to go back to the
18 drawing board, and they are in the process of coming
19 forward with a unified application. So that was --
20 that was a success story or in -- hopefully,
21 probably after midnight tonight we're going to hear
22 a little bit more about it. But --

23 I think, following up on what Commissioner
24 Membreno said about the concept of bringing the
0218 community together, I think in making a tough
01 decision tonight we need to do everything in our
02 power to bring this community together. And that
03 could go a couple of different directions. That
04 could go requesting that both go back to the drawing
05 board.

06 It could be to certify one group. And to
07

08 do that -- at least if I were to do that, I would
09 have to feel confident in my mind that the group
10 that we certify will reach out to the other group
11 and do what's best for the neighborhood. And I
12 can't say with certainty either way right now.

13 I guess I'll lay a couple of things out on
14 the table because we've discussed it a little bit.
15 The issue of Mid City West's 50 board members, I
16 raised it as a concern when we questioned staff.

17 I feel comfortable based on what I've
18 heard tonight that that is not necessarily a
19 problem. It maybe -- it may make for burdensome
20 meetings, but that's up to a neighborhood council to
21 decide. I think they've -- they've shown that
22 through past meetings they've met quorums, and I'm
23 just taking that one off the table, at least as a
24 concern of mine that we can't move forward with
25 that.

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01 I guess the other thing that I looked to
02 tonight with a favorable eye toward Mid City West
03 was testimony that we heard. And I thought we heard
04 that between the two groups, if we had to pick one
05 of the two groups, that the Mid City West was the
06 more inclusive, that it wasn't just an old versus
07 new, or isn't just an old versus new, in my mind,
08 because we heard from a couple of neighborhood
09 association presidents that spoke on behalf of the
10 Mid City West group.

11 I also think that the idea of -- the idea
12 of who's a resident, that's kind of a red herring
13 because I feel pretty comfortable based on what I've
14 seen tonight that a substantial majority of the
15 board members, or the future board members of a Mid
16 City West neighborhood council, would indeed be
17 residents of this neighborhood and even if they
18 happen to represent the medical community, the media
19 community.

20 So those are my thoughts. And as I said,
21 I think I'm -- I'm open to -- to more discussion. I
22 -- if we were to -- we on our own could not force
23 both groups back to mediation. One group has --
24 has said that they would voluntarily withdraw their
25 application. I think we would need to hear from the

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01 other group whether they were prepared to do so.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Uh-huh.

03 Commissioner Longoria?

04 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Yes. I appreciate the
05 presentations that both groups made. They're
06 certainly very different than what we've had
07 throughout the city of Los Angeles. Both groups are
08 very educated, very committed, very eloquent in
09 their presentation.

10 But what I found very troubling is the
11 fact that there was an underlying discontent with
12 each other as people. And neighborhood councils are

13 about people. And if we can't communicate at this
14 point, at this level when -- when -- when you're
15 forming these neighborhood councils, what is it
16 going to be when you have your own neighborhood
17 council and want to share ideas, information,
18 businesses, friends across -- and I don't even want
19 to say boundaries because this wasn't a boundary
20 issue. In other places that we went to there's been
21 a boundary issue. This time it was a matter of
22 communication and outreach.

23 So in looking at what I would do tonight,
24 I'm still thinking about two areas. And I'm
25 thinking about approving and accepting the -- the
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01 staff's recommendation to approve the Mid City West
02 and let them proceed, but I'm troubled about the
03 fact that Wilshire West has an outreach concern.

04 I didn't -- I heard about the renter who
05 had not been notified, but of course it's
06 unreasonable to assume that everyone in the whole
07 area is going to be reached. I mean, it's
08 practically impossible to do.

09 I would consider the Mid City -- let's
10 see. I'm making sure because this is kind of
11 complicated here -- the West Wilshire to look again
12 to see how they can manage to outreach to the
13 community and be inclusive, because I noticed and
14 felt that it was not as inclusive as it could be in
15 such a powerful community where so much can be done
16 and I felt was not being done.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Pat.

18 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Just as a sidebar,
19 when we get later in the evening, all of us, we
20 start -- stop calling each other Commissioner. We
21 call each other by our first name. We do that.
22 That happens when we get tired.

23 Based on the information that -- and the
24 input from the commissioners and of course from the
25 public, and from both applicants, I personally feel
0222

01 that the outreach that was done by the Mid West
02 application is more inclusive. I feel that -- and
03 from the reports that I've heard, that they were
04 willing to mediate and were open really to open
05 their meetings to include the rest and the people
06 from the West Wilshire area.

07 And based on the information that the
08 staff has presented to us, I would move to approve
09 the Mid City application and all the findings that
10 are prepared by the Department in the field
11 operations division.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm not so sure that
13 I would be in favor of the rush to judgment
14 tonight.

15 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Did we ask for a
16 second? (Inaudible) your opinion. I'd like to --

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: If that's a formal

18 motion, do we have a second?

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I -- that was a
20 motion. I would like it to either fail or pass as a
21 motion.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: A second?

23 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: I'll second the motion.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. The motion
25 and a second. Discussion of the motion.

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01 COMMISSIONER STONE: I think that one only has
02 to look at the distribution of those signatures that
03 are provided in the maps that the staff -- that were
04 provided in the maps that the staff provided us to
05 see a confirmation of the deep divisions that I felt
06 very strongly here.

07 I mean, you have one -- you have bylaws
08 that don't -- that -- that in my view perhaps
09 intentionally exclude groups that are -- that are
10 represented by the West Wilshire group. And if
11 we're really here to bring, you know, a more
12 community-based system of government to the city of
13 Los Angeles, I think we have to ensure -- it's
14 incumbent on us to ensure that the groups that we
15 certify are truly representative.

16 And while they demonstrated significant
17 outreach, I think it was isolated to a certain -- to
18 a certain segment of the community, perhaps
19 geographically and otherwise.

20 But you've got an existing group -- series
21 of groups that are -- were represented by the West
22 -- West Wilshire community council application that
23 have a long-standing history of opposition to many
24 of the projects and proposals that have been, you
25 know, represented by the -- some of the stakeholders

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01 who testified tonight in the Mid City's
02 applications.

03 So I -- I just -- I sensed in the
04 testimony -- as Commissioner Longoria said, I sensed
05 the exact same thing: Long-standing and deep
06 divisions in this testimony. And I can't in good
07 conscience certify an application that I think will
08 make those divisions even deeper.

09 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: And I heard people
10 from both sides say that they had not been
11 outreached to who lived in both neighborhood, who
12 were members of both councils or who spoke for both
13 councils. And we realize that it is difficult
14 sometimes to outreach to every person, but that was
15 a fact that was stated here tonight.

16 I'm really concerned because of the -- the
17 breakdown in communications of both sides. You
18 cannot have a functioning neighborhood council if
19 people are not able to communicate and work together
20 on projects that are of interest to them.

21 I really believe that the best thing for
22 us to do is to send staff back to try to really work

23 with this group because it seems as if perhaps there
24 was a breakdown in that communication also on both
25 sides so that we could go back and try to assist

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01 these people in coming together and being able to
02 communicate and function as one group.

03 And I would find it difficult to actually
04 certify a group when I don't believe that they would
05 be as inclusive of all of the whole neighborhood
06 who clearly had two divided groups here.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
08 Membreno.

09 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Well, one of the
10 things that I see here is -- I mean, I agree that
11 there's a lot of division, whether it's a personal
12 discontent with one another or just the entire idea
13 of how two groups are going to run something.

14 But at the same time I did not hear from
15 the -- the West Wilshire group their intent or
16 strong opinion about coming back to the table and
17 discussing and making that happen. I mean, it was
18 -- it was at the very end, if I may -- if I may
19 finish my sentence, it was at the very end where
20 that was a solution, not really a -- I did not hear
21 that at the beginning of the -- of the presentation.
22 I did not hear that as part of the presentation.

23 It was after all of the comments and all
24 of the presentations that were made on the rebuttal
25 that it came out as being an option. I -- I did not

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01 hear that before.

02 So that -- that's troubling to me because
03 if the -- the people who came and spoke on behalf of
04 the -- the Wilshire -- the -- not the Mid City but
05 the West Wilshire group, it was very evident that it
06 was more of a "I don't like that group" kind of
07 attitude as opposed to "What are we going to do to
08 make this neighborhood council inclusive of the
09 other group if we get certified?" I did not hear
10 that.

11 So that's troubling to me. It was more of
12 a personality and a challenge that they were giving
13 to each other as to how to come together and making
14 a neighborhood council work.

15 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: I -- I heard the -- I
16 heard at least four people in their testimony from
17 West Wilshire mention that they thought that the
18 whole community should be represented.

19 And I would say even further that it's
20 very easy for -- if you have a staff report that
21 recommends the approval of your group, it's very
22 easy to stand up and say, "Hey, we want everybody to
23 be inclusive."

24 And I would say that the West Wilshire,
25 while they're -- you know, it may not appear that

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01 they're -- that their intentions in mediation were

02 sincere, I think there's a compelling reason for
03 them to take it a little more seriously by virtue of
04 the fact that the staff has recommended disapproval
05 of that application.

06 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: But I also think that
07 this could have happened in the mediation piece
08 before these applications came before us, so I'm
09 still struggling and, you know, by no means am I
10 going to sit here and say one application, it's
11 moving along than the other.

12 I'm just struggling with the fact that
13 these two groups are from the same area that the
14 interest groups -- and based on the -- on the --
15 just on the signatures, again, this is a point that
16 -- that is made as to the interest of a neighborhood
17 council to -- to -- or members to participate in a
18 neighborhood council. It doesn't really mean
19 anything other than people collected signatures for
20 one way or the other.

21 So there's probably blocks and blocks of
22 this area that neither group has talked to and
23 people are not represented so we can't -- you know,
24 if we're going to advocate on behalf of those who
25 are not plotted on these two maps, then it's going

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01 to take us another six hours here, you know. So --
02 thank you.

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Well, I have a
04 concern that -- that we move more quickly than we
05 need to move to define one group or the other group
06 in this situation.

07 The process that we began started about
08 almost two and a half years ago now to develop
09 neighborhood councils throughout the city. And each
10 of these groups has been organizing for probably 15
11 to 18 months in different ways and in different
12 forms.

13 Whether we reach a judgment tonight or
14 whether we reach a judgment next week or the
15 following week or the week after, this is a decision
16 that we're making that will affect the community for
17 a long time to come. And I would hate to -- to take
18 that step without knowing that we've tried
19 everything that we can to, as someone said, heal the
20 community or to bring the community together.

21 And I'd be very much interested to hear
22 from the West Wilshire group if they're at all
23 interested or willing to spend a little more time to
24 try to -- to work some things out that may be
25 possible now that weren't on the table prior to this

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01 hearing or prior to the staff issuing their findings
02 in this situation.

03 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Are you (inaudible)?

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: No, that's my
05 comment at the moment. The motion is still on the
06 table and we still have to deal with the question.

07 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Mr. President.

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

09 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I was also concerned
10 about the fact that Mid -- the Wilshire group,
11 whichever, I know it's Mid City and Wilshire
12 something -- didn't receive their -- the
13 Department's report until a few days ago.

14 So -- in neighborhood councils, we think
15 that we need to call meetings and talk to people
16 and, you know, it takes a few days. And so that to
17 me also indicates that there wasn't enough time put
18 into this to allow people to really make rational
19 decisions about what to do and which way to move and
20 how to organize.

21 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: On the other hand,
22 they knew.

23 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: That's not just a
24 feature of the neighborhood councils not receiving
25 the reports on time. You know, I mean, we can speak
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01 for this board as well that we don't get them with
02 plenty of time to review them, but that doesn't mean
03 that maybe they weren't talking or dialoguing with
04 the -- with the neighborhood councils about where
05 the Department was going with their
06 recommendations.

07 And I would have, you know, Romero come up
08 and, you know, answer that question. Because if the
09 issue is whether that -- the writing, you know, the
10 document did not get to them, it's one thing that
11 the recommendation, either orally or in another
12 form, got to them before with plenty of time to this
13 hearing, that -- that's what I would like to find
14 out.

15 ROMERO: It's my understanding that the report
16 was sent out on Thursday just like the
17 commissioners'. Our practice is as soon as we send
18 them out to the commissioners, we send them out to
19 the leadership that's been identified in the
20 application.

21 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: But prior to that did
22 they have any indication that they -- their
23 application would be disapproved?

24 ROMERO: Prior to that we did not have all of
25 the information to make a determination.

0231

01 Part of -- everything that was in the
02 report was taken in consideration. The mapping of
03 the signatures, the -- the evaluation of the final
04 version of the bylaws, all of those are very key
05 components in how we reach a decision.

06 So I would have to say that a final
07 decision really wasn't known until Wednesday of last
08 week because we were weighing the signatures, the
09 plotting, and also the final versions of the bylaws.

10 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: And both groups by --
11 by the fact that we have multiple versions of bylaws

12 including up to April 16th, I think, or 18th for
13 some indicates that there was some -- some
14 discussion going back and forth between staff and
15 these groups, because they were modifying their
16 bylaws in response to staff recommendations perhaps.

17 ROMERO: That is correct. And I think the
18 other thing is consider is that they're -- as both
19 groups express, they are very different approaches
20 to neighborhood councils.

21 So it's not like these bylaws are wrong.
22 The bylaws express how the neighborhood council wish
23 to approach the whole question of being a
24 neighborhood council. So it's not like this is
25 wrong.

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01 And to the extent there was dialogue, the
02 dialogue in relation to the bylaws were expressing
03 your governance in a way that was consistent with
04 the plan. When you put the two together you start
05 to make comparisons.

06 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: And I just want to make
07 sure that it -- it's slid out on the table that it's
08 -- that one group was not informed of a decision
09 before the other because I -- I mean, I don't want
10 it to be understood that, you know, one group didn't
11 know until last Thursday that one -- one decision
12 was made over the other.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Both groups found
14 out the staff's recommendation at the same time.

15 All right. We have a motion, we have a
16 second. I'll call the question.

17 All those in favor? Commissioner
18 Membreno.

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: No.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
21 Longoria.

22 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Whoa.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The motion is to
24 certify the neighborhood Mid City West neighborhood
25 council per the staff report.

0233

01 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Yes.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
03 Herrera-Duran.

04 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yes.

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.

06 COMMISSIONER STONE: Yes.

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Woods
08 Gray.

09 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: No.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
11 Luchente.

12 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: No.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And I, no. So the
14 motion fails. So now we're back to further
15 discussion.

16 COMMISSIONER STONE: Mr. President, could you

17 request Mid Cities to see if they're willing to --
18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes. I'd like to --
19 COMMISSIONER STONE: (Inaudible).
20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- to bring a
21 representative from the Mid City West council back
22 to the microphone and ask that question.
23 KEN DRAPER: Yes, sir.
24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Mr. Draper and
25 Mr. Mac Donald, given the discussion that we've had

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01 here tonight, the concern on part of several of the
02 board members as to whether or not there would be a
03 willingness or interest on the part of your board to
04 take one last shot at talking through the questions
05 of -- that you're at odds with over the West
06 Wilshire council, in an either independent session
07 between the two of you or a mediated session that
08 the Department would bring together --

09 KEN DRAPER: As you're aware, we've -- we've
10 been willing to participate in that mediation
11 process all along.

12 We've been willing to participate in the
13 mediation process all along. We weren't -- we
14 weren't the group who decided not to. There's a
15 proposal there which is one of three efforts on our
16 part to bring the group together. So it's apparent
17 that our attitude is that the group should come
18 together.

19 What I -- my question to you is, if we --
20 if we do that again, if we talk to the group here
21 for a moment and agree that that's a good idea, and
22 there still is no -- we still don't get together,
23 tell us what happens then.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: This is not intended
25 to be an open-ended process, if that's what you're

0235

01 concerned about. We're asking that a -- that an
02 additional step be taken so that we're comfortable
03 in our own -- in reviewing the situation that we've
04 made every effort possible to bring the neighborhood
05 together in -- in the views expressed here tonight.

06 KEN DRAPER: I think it would be helpful for us
07 in making our decision about this if we heard from
08 the other group. And I mention it only because in
09 all of that mediation and in the proposals that we
10 extended, not once was there ever any return
11 effort. No one ever said, "Well, here's an idea.
12 Here's a possibility for making change. Some of
13 your ideas aren't quite right, but could you do this
14 instead?" And so there wasn't any effort there.

15 I think we -- it would help us to know
16 that they're ready and prepared to try to do that
17 with us. We would like to do that. We would like
18 to get it together. But we'd like to know that the
19 other group is interested really in doing it, too.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Mr. Curtin.

21 DAN CURTIN: I'll speak for myself because I

22 certainly think that we should get the community
23 together in this whole process. And I can't speak
24 for our whole board because we don't --
25 unfortunately I don't have a quorum here.

0236

01 But I certainly am willing to put forth
02 the effort to see if there's some common ground that
03 we can work with. And yes, previously there was --
04 mediation did not seem like a good -- because of the
05 philosophical differences, we didn't see the wisdom
06 in it.

07 But this is a different situation now.
08 And we want to -- we want to be a participant in the
09 process, so I think we -- I think I could convince
10 the rest of the group to participate in that
11 process.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

13 DAN CURTIN: So --

14 MS. POINDEXTER: Excuse me. Just for clarity,
15 though -- this is Gwen Poindexter, city attorney.

16 As an applicant, he's -- he can consent to
17 the continuance.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

19 MS. POINDEXTER: It's not necessary for him to
20 speak on behalf of the board, just so we understand
21 for the purposes of the plan, the ordinance, and to
22 continue the case.

23 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Mr. President.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Okay. Mr. President,

0237

01 is a motion required then on our behalf?

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Well, first we would
03 have to have a -- a formal response from both
04 applicants to consent to a continuance. And so,
05 Mr. Curtin, I'm going to --

06 COMMISSIONER STONE: Mr. President, a point of
07 order. And I'm all in favor of making this work,
08 but we have just disapproved the applicant. So is
09 it even right --

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The motion formally
11 was to approve and we -- the motion failed.

12 COMMISSIONER STONE: Okay. Thanks.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. So

14 Mr. Curtin, I will -- I will acknowledge your
15 acceptance of the -- or willingness to a
16 continuance.

17 Mr. Draper?

18 KEN DRAPER: Could I ask one other question?

19 Could I ask one other question?

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

21 KEN DRAPER: In terms of time, how -- how much
22 time are we talking about here? I mean, is this --
23 is this a thing that could -- we could be another
24 six months, or if we make a honest effort here to
25 get this together can -- will it be -- will be it be

0238

01 heard again?

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I would assume that
03 it would take no more than say 30 days to conclude
04 your process and that you would -- that staff would
05 report back to us with the result of that and then
06 we would reschedule the case for further
07 consideration.

08 KEN DRAPER: So it could be like 60 days before
09 we're back?

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Something in that --
11 in that range at most.

12 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Mr. President.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: In the past I believe
15 that we have requested 45 days turnaround in terms
16 of mediation, and I believe that's the time that
17 we've requested before. 45, correct? So -- Romero?

18 ROMERO: Commissioner, we need to verify. The
19 application identified several contact persons --

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

21 ROMERO: -- that could speak for the group.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

23 ROMERO: We just need to verify whether this
24 gentleman is one of the contact persons.

25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I believe he is.

0239

01 Okay.

02 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: So --

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Assuming that we
04 have a 45-day time frame within which staff will
05 report back to us as to the outcome of your attempt
06 at mediation, is that acceptable?

07 KEN DRAPER: All right. I'm not -- please
08 accept, I'm not trying to be difficult about this
09 and I'm not trying to make it personal.

10 We went through this before where people
11 weren't -- somehow they're never available to meet.
12 And yes, an honest effort we're -- we're willing to
13 do that. We've been willing all along and want --
14 and want to get together. But --

15 DAN CURTIN: So your answer is yes.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The assumption, Ken,
17 is that --

18 COMMISSIONER STONE: I mean, it's pretty
19 simple.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We're -- we're -- we
21 will hold to the time frame. If --

22 KEN DRAPER: All right.

23 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: If you cannot meet,
24 if for whatever reason the sides decide not to
25 meet --

0240

01 COMMISSIONER STONE: Mr. President.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- during that
03 period --

04 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Then do they come back
05 with their applications that they have submitted --

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.
07 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: -- we do that all over
08 again?
09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Without the hearing.
10 KEN DRAPER: The answer is yes.
11 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Point of order, please.
12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.
13 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Commissioner Stone had
14 a question.
15 COMMISSIONER STONE: Yeah, I have -- I just
16 want to clarify what the 45-day period would be.
17 Because I certainly -- I think Mr. Cornwell, in
18 quoting the business journal article, made some very
19 valid points.
20 But I think it's -- what could happen is
21 if we don't have a neighborhood council in this area
22 and we -- the west side part of the city of
23 Los Angeles and Los Angeles as a whole could be a
24 much worse place, and I would not be happy about
25 that being the commissioner that has the regional
0241 representation from the west side.
02 Now, what I'd like to clarify is what the
03 45-day period would be. Is that just for staff to
04 report back for us?
05 I would be -- further on the point of
06 order, be interested in seeing if the commission
07 feels comfortable enough to schedule a date certain
08 or a time certain where this application will be
09 back before us.
10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I'm happy to set a
11 date certain that would be no more than 60 days out
12 to recalendar the -- well, assuming the 45-day
13 period and that there will be a time frame that the
14 staff would have to prepare a report and formally
15 circulate it to both -- both sides and the
16 commission in order to be able to get back here.
17 Ms. Poindexter.
18 MS. POINDEXTER: Yeah, thank you. Gwen
19 Poindexter, city attorney.
20 Just a point for your information, that
21 when you continue to a date certain, it alleviates
22 the need to have to repost the hearing. So that is
23 an advantage, so to speak. Otherwise we would have
24 -- if it's an unknown date, you have to repost and
25 renote and provide the written notice.
0242
01 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Well, if we pick a
02 date that's eight weeks from today, which would be
03 somewhere around the 20th of June -- yes?
04 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I believe that we're
05 scheduled through May 27th or thereabouts.
06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We're actually
07 scheduled through June 11th, last time I looked.
08 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: May 28th. So if we're
09 going to begin to -- and I agree with Commissioner
10 Stone, we need to give a date so that the applicants

11 are comfortable coming back after working with the
12 Department and after working among themselves.

13 I want to make sure that we're being
14 equally -- or that we equally give the time to all
15 of the other neighborhood councils as we move on.
16 Because as an example, when we did Glassell Park we
17 gave a 45 day when we -- I believe Franklin and
18 Hollywood, I don't know where we're at. I don't
19 think we gave a number of days.

20 So we need to standardize at least here
21 some way of asking the applicants to work through
22 this and, you know, come back to the Department with
23 an answer.

24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: As I said, I think
25 the setting a time that would be eight weeks from
0243

01 today, which would be about the 20th of June on a
02 Tuesday, which -- pardon? June 25th? Okay. So it
03 would be June 25th would be the date that we would
04 come back.

05 DAN CURTIN: I'm sorry. The date again?

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: June 25th would be
07 the date that we reconvene.

08 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do we go through this
09 whole process (inaudible)?

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: No, we do not. It
11 would not involve a public hearing at that point.
12 So --

13 KEN DRAPER: You would make your decision based
14 on the staff reports?

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We would take -- we
16 would have a presentation from the applicants if we
17 -- if we so chose at that point. But we do not
18 necessarily have to reopen the public hearing.

19 MS. POINDEXTER: Well, I beg to differ. City
20 Attorney Gwen Poindexter.

21 Since it is going to be a unified
22 application, we would have to take some testimony,
23 limited public comment. You're right, not a
24 full-blown hearing, but we could limit the time and
25 limit it to two -- just the issues related to the
0244

01 unified application. But we would have to have some
02 sort of hearing process, or testimony.

03 KEN DRAPER: Excuse me. What --

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We'll work through
05 that.

06 ROMERO: This is if they become back with the
07 unified application. If they come back --

08 MS. POINDEXTER: That's if they came back with
09 a unified application, correct.

10 KEN DRAPER: What happens if we come back and
11 it's not a unified? Do we have to go through this
12 or will you -- will you make a decision? That's
13 what we want to know. Will the council make a
14 decision? If we come back in 60 days and it's not
15 unified, we've gone through this all over again --

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We will make a
17 decision.

18 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Mr. President, I would
19 like to make a motion to, in 60 days, on June 25th
20 at the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners, make a
21 decision on which neighborhood council will exist in
22 this area, whether it's one group or the other or a
23 unified application.

24 MS. POINDEXTER: Point of order. That
25 wouldn't be -- that motion would be predetermining
0245

01 the commission's action. What you can do is make a
02 motion to continue both matters to the date certain,
03 assuming the consent of the applicants.

04 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay. We'll do that.
05 To continue it and to make a decision at that time?
06 Or just to continue it to that time?

07 ROMERO: Just to continue it. The matter's --

08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: It will be continued
09 in agenda as it is at this point for action.

10 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Okay.

11 ROMERO: Excuse me. I --

12 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: I'll second that
13 motion.

14 RICKI EVRUTIN: I'd like to get a little bit of
15 clarification. I'm a little clear -- my -- my
16 understanding is that within 60 days of the date
17 that you mentioned a decision will be made.

18 Is that correct?

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We will have every
20 intention of making a decision.

21 RICKI EVRUTIN: All right.

22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: However, we can't
23 prejudge our actions at that point.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Will -- are we given
25 maybe -- it may be something worth considering -- a
0246

01 cut-off date, a mandatory final date by which we are
02 to resolve, to complete our mediation process?

03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I would suggest that
04 45 days from now that that process be complete in
05 the manner in such the staff can report to us.

06 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm wondering if it
07 might be -- it might be more productive if we have a
08 firm date, final date set by you to urge -- so that
09 to induce both sides to -- to come to some
10 resolution so that it's not dragged out and dragged
11 out and dragged out.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: As I said, I would
13 expect that within 45 days you will have completed
14 the process such that staff will have time to
15 transcribe the actions and report back to the
16 commission before the June 25th date. So six weeks
17 from now the process will be complete.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Six weeks from now we
19 will -- we can be mediating up until that -- end of
20 that sixth week?

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Up until, yes, the
22 process --
23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The staff has to have
24 the report.
25 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We have to have
0247
01 two weeks roughly to prepare the report and
02 communicate --
03 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you give us a date
04 by which we will finish? I know it sounds picky --
05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Subtract 14 from 25.
06 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But I realize --
07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: So it would be the
08 11th of June.
09 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The 11th of June our
10 mediation shall have been completed. Is that
11 correct?
12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.
13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
14 COMMISSIONER STONE: But Mr. President,
15 realistically it's on the agenda for June 25th. If
16 they are at a crucial point on June 11th, you know,
17 it could go on. The key date is June 25th.
18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.
19 COMMISSIONER STONE: For -- it will be placed
20 on this agenda for action.
21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: For our instructions
22 to the group such that they're comfortable, we would
23 expect staff to have -- begin preparing the report
24 on June 11th for presentation on the 25th.
25 JIM O'SULLIVAN: Could we ask for some input?
0248
01 Will we get any input because -- I do value what I'm
02 hearing here, I mean, and I'm -- you know, and we
03 know the differences. We know what separates us.
04 And it's a big gulf.
05 So my concern is that we don't get locked
06 into the community room at the Farmer's Market again
07 with the mediator and, boy, that wasn't fun, you
08 know, and nothing really came out of it. So I think
09 we really, really would appreciate some input.
10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think we've given
11 you a certain amount of input in the last 45 minutes
12 or so. And you have the option at this point which
13 we asked Mr. Draper a few minutes ago to say whether
14 or not you would be willing to go into that extended
15 process.
16 And those are the rules at this point, if
17 you choose to say yes or you choose to say no.
18 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Excuse me. Can you
19 both who are at your podium, just identify
20 yourselves for the record again? We just have to
21 make sure that we can identify the speakers. Thank
22 you.
23 JIM O'SULLIVAN: Jim O'Sullivan.
24 ROMERO: Thank you. And yourself, madam?
25 RICKI EVRUTIN: Ricki Evrutin. I'm on the

0249

01 provisional board.
02 ROMERO: Great. Thank you.
03 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. We
04 understand that both applicants at this point --
05 Mr. Draper, will you confirm that the applicants
06 will consent to a continuance?
07 KEN DRAPER: Yes, we will.
08 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. With that, we
09 have a motion and a second before the commission to
10 continue the -- these two applications to a date
11 certain of June 25th, and is there any discussion of
12 that motion?
13 No discussion. Poll the commission.
14 Commissioner Membreno.
15 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Yes.
16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
17 Longoria.
18 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Yes.
19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
20 Herrera-Duran.
21 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Yes.
22 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Stone.
23 COMMISSIONER STONE: No.
24 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Woods
25 Gray.

0250

01 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Yes.
02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
03 Luchente.
04 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Yes.
05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And my, yes. Okay.
06 I wish you luck. I understand that the
07 hurdles are considerable, but please take the extra
08 step and we'll come back on the 25th. Thank you.
09 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Mr. President, is it
10 possible that the Department can give us updates on
11 the -- on the mediation schedules, the meetings that
12 are scheduled to go ahead --
13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We can --
14 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: -- so that we have
15 some idea as to how they're moving along.
16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We can talk about
17 that in commissioner comment --
18 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Okay.
19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: -- later on.
20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Commissioner.
21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: All right. Thank
22 you all.
23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: May I be recognized?
24 You mentioned five alternatives. I didn't see any
25 discussion on the -- one of the five, the three that

0251

01 you -- about the third one of maybe having two
02 councils. You said the population was over 50,000.
03 We could have two --
04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: We -- the public

05 hearing has been closed. The commission has taken
06 an action for tonight. Okay.

07 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, why didn't this
08 come up?

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: There is a mediation
10 that will be scheduled to go forward. That's one of
11 the ideas that could be discussed in that session.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Where -- where can we
13 attend this and how?

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Staff will get --
15 will let you know.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Believe it or
18 not, there are still other items on the agenda for
19 this evening, so we're still here for a while. All
20 I have to do is find an agenda.

21 Let's see if there's anything here that we
22 have to deal with. The items number 3 and 4,
23 continued discussions of adoption of general
24 manager's recommendation regarding encouraging
25 neighborhood councils to organize around smaller

0252

01 population groups and discussion of possible
02 recommendation to amend the ordinance regarding
03 moving neighborhood council areas from one sector to
04 another or one neighborhood council to another.

05 And we've talked about scheduling a
06 special session to discuss board policy in a
07 separate meeting other than certification hearings.

08 The two discussion items at the discretion
09 of my fellow board members can be continued.

10 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Mr. President, I move
11 that we table those two items.

12 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: The rest of the
14 agenda.

15 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think we have a
16 motion and a second.

17 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I second.

18 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes. All those in
19 favor, yes.

20 (Ayes)

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: The discussion
22 regarding a special meeting to discuss board policy,
23 there was a poll by Taneda regarding a separate day
24 versus starting a meeting early, and I don't -- is
25 she here?

0253

01 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Taneda?

02 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I didn't -- I suggested
03 a third thing, that we have a meeting in lieu of
04 hearings.

05 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

06 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Can I --

07 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner
08 Membreno.

09 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: First of all, I want to

10 thank all the commissioners for being here tonight
11 because this is an important issue that came up at
12 the last time, and it's the issue on taking some of
13 the policies and procedures on a separate meeting.
14 It has been a little difficult to get -- let me try
15 to speak over the --

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Can I ask everybody
17 to take the conversations outside so we can actually
18 continue our agenda.

19 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: It has been a little
20 difficult to work on policies and procedures, so I
21 brought this item up at the last meeting so maybe we
22 can take a look at different days or a combination
23 of things to be able to do that.

24 I think it's -- it's crucial for us to
25 move along in those veins and making -- now, after
0254

01 23 neighborhood councils, to make some path of
02 trying to give it a try to make some policies and
03 some standardization of procedures.

04 So I believe, Taneda, you took a vote on
05 -- or not a vote. A poll. Sorry.

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: And what was the
07 result?

08 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What was the poll?
09 (Inaudible)

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I didn't answer.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Did anybody respond?

12 TANEDA: Yes, I had two responses, or three.

13 Ron said either one was fine with him. That's
14 either one, four o'clock -- meet at four o'clock and
15 -- for our 6:30 meeting or the other one. And for
16 give me because I don't remember.

17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: It's a different day?

18 TANEDA: Oh, a different day. Exactly. Pat
19 wanted further discussion and --

20 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: No, I didn't. I
21 wanted a day in which we don't have a hearing,
22 application hearing, can we use those days instead
23 of adding an additional time.

24 TANEDA: Okay. And then -- forgive me, I don't
25 have a note. And that's all I think I got a
0255

01 response from.

02 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I actually answered
03 you. I said four o'clock.

04 TANEDA: Four o'clock. Okay.

05 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Can I respond to that?

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Yes.

07 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: I don't really believe
08 we have enough time from 4:00 till meeting starts to
09 discuss all the policy that we need to discuss. I
10 mean, we haven't had any policy discussion at all.
11 And --

12 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: We'll take one policy
13 at a time.

14 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: Huh? Take one policy

15 at a time?

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I would prefer to
17 probably set a separate session to talk about the
18 policy issues on a separate day just to be able to
19 get in enough time and to -- to get in enough
20 discussion.

21 I also think that while we have seven
22 commissioners here tonight, that in order to make up
23 for some the off time that we all spend trying to do
24 all this, the fact that we may not need to have all
25 commissioners present for all meetings and we can --
0256

01 we can help each other by sort of covering it at
02 various times and try all to make the policy meeting
03 that -- that we can set up if we can try to canvas
04 for a particular day, that would help us out.

05 If there were -- if there are any
06 preferences for days of the week --

07 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: I would like to
08 ask if there's any days in which we could, instead
09 of having the application hearing, that we could
10 schedule it in the very near future.

11 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Our problem is that
12 we're calendared out through almost the middle of
13 June at this point with -- with regard to our
14 pending applications.

15 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Is that
16 (inaudible).

17 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: I would -- I would
18 agree with having a different day just because the
19 issues are -- you know, we still haven't answered
20 Romero's question on boundary overlaps and we -- I
21 mean, it came to the table and it died there. So I
22 mean, I really --

23 (End of tape C, side A)

24 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: -- comfortably with --
25 to the next hearing and have some -- some idea where
0257

01 we're going.

02 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Any days of
03 the week preferable to the commissioners?

04 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: I think perhaps we can
05 e-mail some dates and do it that way. I don't have
06 my schedule here.

07 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: Yeah, 'cause I don't
08 have my schedule with me.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.
10 Well, let's ask Taneda, and I'll work with Taneda to
11 try to pick a date. We can -- we can schedule a
12 separate session on policy questions. Okay?

13 And Jim, we've already tabled 3 and 4,
14 so --

15 JIM: I wrote you a note.

16 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Oh. Okay.

17 All right. General manager's report?

18 Thank you, Greg. That was good. You really --

19 GREG NELSON: If you want me to.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Briefly.

21 COMMISSIONER MEMBRENO: Come on, we've been
22 here already six hours.

23 GREG NELSON: Greg Nelson, general manager. On
24 a couple of handouts that I gave you that we felt
25 were kind of important, number one, we got a chance
0258

01 to finally -- to look at the brand new proposed
02 budget on Monday and we provided you with some
03 material showing you the features of that, which may
04 end up making us one the most disliked departments
05 in the city.

06 I don't know if we are the only ones that
07 got an increase in our budget, but certainly no one
08 got an increase the size that we did. But of
09 course, being a growing and evolving department and
10 somebody who's on the upswing, I really honestly
11 don't think anyone's going to complain about that
12 because it's all quite understandable what we're
13 doing and where we're going and the increased
14 workload.

15 So the important dates to remember is that
16 the city council's budget and finance committee will
17 begin having its hearings starting Monday. The City
18 Attorney's office will be on Monday. Our Department
19 will be on Tuesday afternoon between 2:00 and 5:00
20 p.m.

21 And that's -- the reason I mention the
22 City Attorney's hearing, 'cause that's of special
23 importance to us perhaps even more so than our own
24 budget because the City Attorney's budget did not
25 include additional funds to support the City

0259
01 Attorney's neighborhood council advice division,
02 which consists of Gwen Poindexter. And that is a
03 separate issue that is going to be tackled between
04 now and then as to how to get additional support for
05 her that we are going to need and that the
06 neighborhood councils are going to need.

07 The second part of the report that I have
08 in writing for you was a report on the first seminar
09 that we had on elections that was actually attended
10 by a couple of additional groups other than the ones
11 that I mentioned, so it looks like there's probably
12 a dozen different neighborhood councils came and got
13 some direct training and questions answered by the
14 City Attorney's office and the League of Women's
15 Voters and the City Clerk's office.

16 So they -- that was very helpful and we're
17 going to be continuing that for the other
18 neighborhood councils.

19 And then the third part was we're going to
20 be having a more in-depth analysis of what happened
21 at the first very official election that was held in
22 Central San Pedro. And there was some interesting
23 developments there.

24 But staff is going to be getting together

25 very shortly discussing all of that, looking at the
0260

01 lessons learned and then being able to use that to
02 guide us through the subsequent elections so
03 hopefully they will go more smoothly.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Thank you.

05 Commissioner comment? Commissioner
06 Membreno? Commissioner Longoria? Commissioner
07 Herrera-Duran? Commissioner Stone?

08 COMMISSIONER STONE: Thank you. Just Jim Mc
09 Quistin passing notes, I have this feeling that your
10 house -- that little notepad by the telephone is the
11 city comment card. And that's what you write notes
12 on all the time. Just -- just to -- I don't know
13 why I'm speaking because we're past midnight. But
14 with Greg, you know, after midnight I go nuts.

15 The meeting that Greg mentioned,
16 Commissioner Membreno, Commissioner Longoria and I
17 attended that budget -- that budget briefing. It
18 was impressive to me in that not just that we
19 received such a strong increase but that the Mayor's
20 office was there, the CAO, the CLA 's office,
21 Department staff, and some members of our
22 commission.

23 So clearly this -- even though I'm new to
24 the commission, this appears to be quite different
25 than what's happened in the past. So I was very

0261
01 happy to hear that.

02 Then the other comment I wanted to make on
03 what transpired tonight would be my hope that the
04 Department staff, since they are -- since things are
05 fresh in everyone's mind, that outreach to the two
06 groups can happen as soon as possible. And in my
07 mind we're already into the next day, so today if at
08 all possible to start laying the parameters for the
09 mediation and how we move this process forward.

10 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Commissioner Woods
11 Gray.

12 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: I would like to know
13 if it's possible, Greg, that we could get just a
14 little update to know when mediations are scheduled
15 and so we can see the time line of how you're moving
16 ahead.

17 I think we have some others from the past
18 that you're working on. Perhaps if we just had an
19 idea as to how you're moving ahead.

20 GREG NELSON: Okay. We will get you that.

21 COMMISSIONER WOODS GRAY: And the other thing
22 is that I -- I'm not sure because I'm not that
23 familiar with the mediation, but there seems to be
24 some concern in the community about the mediation
25 process, or the people that come to do it or

0262
01 something. There's -- I just brought the -- I'm
02 just bringing that to your attention so maybe you
03 could look into it, too.

04 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

05 COMMISSIONER LUCHENTE: Yes, it always seems
06 that we get to the general manager's report late in
07 the evening, so I know we've recommended for a
08 written report, but I had questions about like the
09 outreach contracts and a number of the previous
10 items. Even if we could get some kind of bullet --
11 you know, a summary even in bullet form would be
12 really helpful, Greg.

13 Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER LONGORIA: One last one. I want
16 to thank all the staff for all the hard work. Thank
17 you very much.

18 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: Thanks for
19 dinner.

20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Clearly our
21 staff does not get the recognition that they deserve
22 for putting up with all of us and all of the people
23 out there and hopefully making this program work in
24 the long term. So thank you all again for -- for
25 your efforts.

0263

01 The last part of the evening we always
02 come down to are the accepting of public
03 complements, and we have three or four people who
04 have waited it out to talk to us.

05 George, you're first, followed by Russ
06 Brown, Doris Lee, and Joan Lux.

07 GEORGE ABRAHAMS: George Abrahams, Franklin
08 Hollywood Hills community council.

09 At last night's bylaws mediation meeting
10 between Franklin Hollywood Hills community council
11 and the Hollywood Alliance, Andrew Glazer, speaking
12 for the Hollywood Alliance said, quote, "If I hear
13 that anyone from the merged neighborhood council is
14 speaking against Yucca Corridor being included in
15 the merged neighborhood council I will walk and no
16 one will get certified." End quote.

17 Three points: First, there is a
18 misunderstanding that our neighborhood councils have
19 merged. We are still two independent organizing
20 efforts who have designated negotiating teams to,
21 (a), establish a protocol for Yucca
22 self-determination, (b), resolve the boundary
23 differences other than Yucca, and (c), to draft a
24 common bylaws. Until that is completed we are not
25 one merged neighborhood council organization.

0264

01 Second, this is an attempt by the
02 Hollywood Alliance to use duress to squelch free
03 speech. Very unAmerican.

04 And third, there is the belief that the
05 Hollywood Alliance has the power to endlessly thwart
06 certification. Franklin Hollywood Hills has been in
07 mediation with the Hollywood Alliance for six
08 months. We've served our time in hell.

09 Furthermore, Andrew Glazer is a former
10 DONE insider, having participated in the drafting of
11 neighborhood council ordinance, and the swagger that
12 he exhibits is upsetting to me.

13 I ask the BONC to affirm the right of
14 Franklin Hollywood Hills community council
15 supporters to express their opinions to Yucca
16 stakeholders to confirm that the Hollywood Alliance
17 cannot tie up certification by such an action and,
18 if the Hollywood Alliance does make good on their
19 threat, to approve the Franklin Hollywood Hills
20 community council application.

21 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you.

22 Russ Brown.

23 RUSS BROWN: I'm with Franklin Hollywood Hills
24 Hollywood Alliance, too. Welcome to Wednesday
25 morning.

0265

01 George is correct that it's been
02 difficult. I'm willing to give it a very different
03 take than where he is, at least at this point.
04 We've had some really, really good meetings. We've
05 reached agreement on almost a hundred percent --

06 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: You were in the same
07 meetings that George were in?

08 RUSS BROWN: Yes.

09 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. Just
10 checking.

11 RUSS BROWN: We've reached agreement on a
12 hundred percent of the bylaws. We did have a really
13 difficult meeting last night.

14 I had a lengthy conversation with Michelle
15 today. One of our last points of disagreement,
16 which I think is part of the emotions of what we're
17 going through because people realize that once we
18 resolve this issue we truly have to work together
19 through all of this and I think we're well on our
20 way, we're presented with sort of a unique position
21 that we're doing Yucca stakeholders meetings as a
22 unified group. It will be ourselves, Franklin
23 Hollywood Hills, Hollywood Alliance, and Hollywood
24 Hills West doing presentations to the Yucca
25 community.

0266

01 And what I request is we really need to
02 work with the DONE staff -- and Michelle has said
03 she's willing to do this -- to really get some
04 mandates or some guidelines or some --some help here
05 to help us format these meetings in a way that we're
06 not having to make decisions as individuals that are
07 both trying to work together but we both have very
08 divergent opinions of where Yucca needs to be.

09 So if we can somehow work with your staff
10 in the next week or so to work through some of those
11 issues, I think we're well on our way to having the
12 last issue finally resolved.

13 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What do we need -- do we
15 need to take a step to ask the staff to work with
16 them, Greg, or -- no?
17 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think they'll --
18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're going to do that?
19 Okay. Thank you.
20 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Okay. All right.
21 Doris Lee. Okay. Then Joan Lux.
22 JOAN LUX: Good evening. Joan Lux. Thank you.
23 I'm so sorry it's late. I'll try to be very quick.
24 In response to what Russell was just
25 speaking about in the -- this unique situation where
0267
01 over Yucca that Franklin Hollywood and Hollywood
02 Alliance and Hollywood Hills West neighborhood
03 council, I am a stakeholder clearly in Hollywood
04 Hills West and, again, I have been excluded from the
05 process. I have not been included in these
06 meetings. I have not been notified. I have
07 requested over and over again.
08 I mean, I beg upon you to understand that
09 Hollywood Hills West is not meeting the benchmark of
10 the certification process. I am not allowed to go
11 to these meetings. I have not been notified of
12 these meetings.
13 And I am in the process, Hami Nasser from
14 the City Attorney's office is in the process of
15 arranging mediation between our group and Hollywood
16 Hills West, and I was just told this evening that
17 the Department is going to agendaize them for May
18 7th. And I'm requesting that you postpone that
19 because we are in mediation.
20 And I know it's unusual because I am not
21 -- our group is only an association and it's not a
22 neighborhood council, but Hollywood Hills West is
23 agreeing to mediation and they're in the process of
24 working out the final details and we've given them
25 dates. And I think that the issues can be resolved
0268
01 in two meetings.
02 So I don't know how you can do May 7th
03 when you seem to be booked already. If you look at
04 your calendar, I see through here May 21st, May
05 28th. So I'm asking if you would consider making
06 that request to -- you know, to postpone this until
07 we can get -- there's no sense in having us
08 mediating if they are already certified.
09 And they're clearly in breach of the
10 inclusive policy, which is our issue. I haven't
11 even been told about these meetings.
12 I appreciate your help with this. Thank
13 you.
14 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: Thank you. Okay.
15 That concludes public comment for the evening.
16 I will entertain a motion to get out of
17 here.
18 COMMISSIONER HERRERA-DURAN: So moved.

19 COMMISSIONER CHRISTOPHER: I think we have a
20 motion and about seven seconds. And all those in
21 favor, let's leave.
22 (Ayes)
23 (End of tape C, side B)
24 ///
25 ///