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STUDIO CITY
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL



Sustainability Committee
MEETING AGENDA
Monday, January 9, 2022
7:00 PM

Zoom Meeting Online or By Telephone

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98507165481>

Meeting ID: 985 0716 5481 and Press #

Or dial 669-900-6833 to Join the Meeting
Then Enter This Webinar ID: 985 0716 5481
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studiocitync.org



Committee Members: Adele Slaughter (Boardmember Resident/Business Owner, Chair), Alexander Black, (Resident), Chris Trent (Resident), Susan Schalbe (Stakeholder), Jesse Sandford (Resident), Chip Meehan (Boardmember, Business Owner/Resident), Melanie Winter, (Business Owner/Resident), Tony Knight (Resident), Andrew Epstein, (Business Owner/Resident), Scott Mandell (Board Member & President, ex-officio)

1) Call to Order & Roll Call (1 min)

2) Announcements by Government Representatives or guests (5 min.)

3) Public comment within the committee's jurisdiction on items not on agenda

4) Discussion of a rewrite of our passed Motion on the Zoo Alternative 1.5. Currently the only option available for comment is Alternative 1.5. In earlier discussions Alternative 1 was and remains superior to any other proposed alternatives, however, 1.5 is what the city is asking the community to comment on at this time.

The motion will be submitted as a CIS to City [Council File: 21-0828](#)

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=21-0828>

Link to [Audubon CIS](#):

https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2021/21-0828_PC_PM_10-18-2022.pdf

Link to [Los Feliz CIS](#):

https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2021/21-0828_CIS_09282022105249_09-28-2022.pdf

Link to [Atwater Village CIS](#):

https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2021/21-0828_CIS_09242022073545_09-24-2022.pdf

5) Discussion and Possible Motion of [Council File 22-1566](#) - Climate Action and Adaptation Plan / City General Plan <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=22-1566>

Here is the Council File motion https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2022/22-1566_misc_12-13-22.pdf

The Studio City Neighborhood Council is in Support or Opposition of LA [Council File: 22-1566](#) - Climate Action and Adaptation Plan / City General Plan

Supporting information

The Vanishing Wild 60 Minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TqhcZsxrPA>

The Citizens Guide to Reducing Climate Change: https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2010_04_Citizen%E2%80%99s-Guide-to-Taking-Action-on-Climate-Change.pdf

6) Discussion of how to conserve and preserve the Oak and Walnut Woodland, a sensitive natural habitat along the South side of the LA River between Colfax and Tujunga in Studio City.

Triggered by a proposed development at [11601 Ventura Blvd.](#)

Report from Diana Nicole: First, the vegetation type at 11601 Ventura Blvd is Coast Live Oak–California Walnut woodland and a rare species (Southern California black walnut aka California walnut) is present according to the applicant’s arborist tree report. Coast Live Oak–California Walnut woodland has a global conservation status rank of G3 (“Vulnerable - At moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, often 80 or fewer, recent and widespread declines, or other factors”), and is recognized as a sensitive natural community by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) expressly for the purpose of consideration in CEQA analysis. The vegetation is Coast Live Oak–California Walnut woodland because it has Coast Live Oak as the dominant species with California Walnut as the subdominant species. This vegetation community is contiguous with adjacent Coast live oak – California walnut woodlands found along the river. The applicant’s arborist identified the trees as “indigenous” but may not have identified this vegetation community because arborists are not ecological scientists and are not qualified to address the question of vegetation communities and CEQA.

Second, impacts to a rare species and a sensitive natural community are generally considered to be significant impacts under CEQA. The Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (p. C-6) recognizes loss of a sensitive natural community as a significant impact.

Third, a requirement for replacement trees under the City’s protected tree ordinance ([Ordinance 186873](#)) does not qualify as a mitigation for impacts to a sensitive natural community under CEQA. Impacts to sensitive natural communities are measured in terms of the area affected, not the number of trees. *Under the City’s protected tree*

ordinance, a protected tree is merely a tree that can't be cut down without a permit. According to the tree report, there are 8 “*indigenous*” (Coast live oak and California walnut) trees that qualify under the City’s protected tree ordinance and an unspecified number of young indigenous oak and walnut trees that are not protected under the ordinance. The protected trees have been given a condition rating of “Good” to “Fair” by the arborist who authored the report. The report also identifies 3 oak trees and 1 walnut tree located off-site that will be adversely impacted by the proposed project. The project proposes to remove 7 protected trees, including 3 significant (20” to 40” DBH) protected trees. The project also proposes to reduce the canopy of two of the off-site oak trees to provide clearance for the new building but does not specify the percentage of canopy it wants to remove. Removing more than 12% live tree canopy on a healthy mature tree is bad for the health of the tree. Pursuant to the protected tree ordinance, twenty-eight oak and walnut trees must be planted back on-site after construction in return for permitting 7 protected oaks and walnuts to be cut down as proposed by the project. Normally, the tree report includes a replacement tree planting plan but the planting plan is missing from the report. Instead, the applicant’s arborist states that “*the Division of Urban Forestry will decide the number and size of the mitigation trees*” because there is “*not much space*” to plant all the required replacement trees. The applicant’s arborist is correct to recognize the limits of the site. It is horticulturally unsound to plant trees too close together and it is biologically unsound for a site to maintain an additional 21 even aged replacement trees, especially after hardscape and a 13,890 square foot structure has been added to the site.

Because the site supports a rare species and a sensitive natural community, the project should not be categorically exempt under CEQA and therefore the Land Use Committee should deny the project until further environmental review has been conducted and an MND, at minimum, has been conducted for adequate environmental review and circulated for public comment.

Additional issues re: the proposed development at 11601 Ventura Blvd.

- a. One of the main issues with this site is the potential 25 foot ROW dedication which takes up approx. 2,500 square feet and pushes the building back into the sensitive natural habitat. There is a city planning motion to waive all dedications for 100% affordable developments.

b. The other issue is they are asking for an exception from the RIO transitional height and specific plan FAR. They are blaming their hardship on the dedication requirement but this is self-imposed because they are trying to build too much into a small site.

Thoughts on possible actions:

1. Request that developers doing a more extensive environmental review.

2. Have the NC Sustainability Alliance to inform developers of the consequences of taking out a natural habitat. [https://www.ncsa.la/protected tree ordinance](https://www.ncsa.la/protected_tree_ordinance)

3. Get appropriate trees declared HISTORIC Landmarks.

Note: #1126 an amazing tree (on the subject property of 11601 Ventura) There are many others along this strip of land.

4. Get a County Ecologist/biologist/arborist to come and look at the trees to give an evaluation.

5. other ideas?

7) Final comments by Committee members—on Projects that effect sustainability issues in Studio City

8) Adjournment (1 min)

Studio City Neighborhood Council Committee Meeting Agendas are posted for public review on the SCNC website at studiocitync.org and at the Radford Studio Center gate on Colfax Avenue, as well as, at the gate on Radford Avenue.

VIRTUAL MEETING TELECONFERENCING NUMBER FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In conformity with the September 16, 2021 enactment of California Assembly Bill 361 (Rivas) and due to the concerns over Covid-19, the Studio City Neighborhood Council meeting will be conducted entirely with a call-in option or internet-based service option.

Every person wishing to address the Neighborhood Council must dial 669-900-6833, and enter the meeting ID, followed by pressing # to join the meeting. Instructions on how to sign up for public comment will be given to listeners at the start of the meeting

AB 361 UPDATES – Public comment cannot be required to be submitted in advance of the meeting, only real-time public comment is required. If there are any broadcasting interruptions that prevent the public from observing or hearing the meeting, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned. If members of the public are unable to provide public comment or be heard due to issues within the Neighborhood Council's control, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned.

PUBLIC INPUT AT NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETINGS – The public is requested to dial *6, when prompted by the presiding officer, to address the Board on any agenda item before the Board takes an action on an item. Comments from the public on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the agenda that are within the Board's jurisdiction will be heard during the General Public Comment period. Please note that under the Brown Act, the Board is prevented from acting on a matter that you bring to its attention during the General Public Comment period; however, the issue raised by a member of the public may become the subject of a future Board meeting. Public comment is limited to 2 minutes per speaker, unless adjusted by the presiding officer of the Board.

THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT – As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, and other auxiliary aids and/or services, may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request at least 3 business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting you wish to attend by contacting the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment by email: NCsupport@lacity.org or phone: (213) 978-1551.

NOTICE TO PAID REPRESENTATIVES – If you are compensated to monitor, attend or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 48.01 et seq. More information is available at ethics.lacity.org/lobbying. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

PUBLIC ACCESS OF RECORDS – In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting, currently, cannot be viewed at 4024 Radford Ave. Editorial Bldg. 2, Room 6. Studio City, CA 91604; but can be viewed at our website: www.studiocitync.org or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact Scott Mandell at : smandell@studiocitync.org

PUBLIC POSTING OF AGENDAS – Neighborhood Council agendas are posted for public review as follows:

1. Radford Studio Center outside the Radford and Colfax gates.
2. <http://www.studiocitync.org>
3. You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to L.A. City's Early Notification System at <http://www.lacity.org/subscriptions>