



WEST LA SAWTELLE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

WWW.WESTLASAWTELLE.ORG // CONTACT@WESTLASAWTELLE.ORG // JAMES ALTUNER // RON BEN-YEHUDA // ALEX CARYOTAKIS // WALTON CHIU // TASCHA FOLSOI // JAY HANDAL // KENT KAISAKI // MONICA MEJIA-LAMBERT // VIC PACHECO // VINCE PEAGLER III // ALEXANDRA POLIN // ADRIANE RANSOM // DAVID SWARTZ // PIERRE TECON // DANILO TORRO //

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, 04.23.2025 7:00 PM

STONER PARK [SMALL GYM]

1835 STONER AVE. CA 90025

OR JOIN ZOOM <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82474769234>

OR DIAL IN VIA TELEPHONE (669) 900-6833 or (833) 548-0282

MEETING ID: 824 7476 9234

Si requiere servicios de traducción, avisar al Concejo Vecinal 3 días de trabajo (72 horas) antes del evento.
Contacte J. Altuner, Secretaria, james@westlasawtelle.org para avisar al Concejo Vecinal.

Persons wishing to address the Board must dial (833) 548-0282, enter 824 7476 9234 and press # to join the meeting. When prompted by the presiding officer, dial *9 or use the Raise Hand option, to address the Board on any agenda item. Comments on agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered.

Comments on matters not 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 a maximum of 90 seconds per speaker.

All agenda items subject to discussion, motion and possible CIS filing.

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL** Establish quorum - who is present and identify any members on ZOOM.
MINUTE TAKER: PLEASE ENSURE YOU KEEP A TALLY OF ALL VOTES.

WEST LA SAWTELLE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL - TALLY SHEET				
Agenda Item:				
	PRESENT	ABSENT		
ADRIANE RANSOM				
ALEX CARYOTAKIS				
ALEXANDRA POLIN				
DANILO TORRO				
DAVID SWARTZ				
JAMES ALTUNER				
JAY HANDAL				
KENT KAISAKI				
MONICA MEJIA-LAMBERT				
PIERRE TECON				
RON BEN-YEHUDA				
TASCHA FOLOI				
VIC PACHECO				
WALTON CHIU				
VINCE PEAGLER				
TOTALS				

3. **MOTION: APPROVE MINUTES** from March Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/4peedry6> Voting Outcome: All present voted YES (YAY's -). —- moved; —- seconded. Reminder to **ANYONE TAKING MINUTES: For compliance, please ensure a vote Tally is provided for all MOTIONS and all votes (individual votes as well as whole numbers)**

WEST LA SAWTELLE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL - TALLY SHEET					
Agenda Item:					
	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	
ADRIANE RANSOM					
ALEX CARYOTAKIS					
ALEXANDRA POLIN					
DANILO TORRO					

DAVID SWARTZ					
JAMES ALTUNER					
JAY HANDAL					
KENT KAISAKI					
MONICA MEJIA-LAMBERT					
PIERRE TECON					
RON BEN-YEHUDA					
TASCHA FOLSOI					
VIC PACHECO					
VINCE PEAGLER					
WALTON CHIU					
TOTAL					

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT [NON-AGENDA ITEMS — 90 SECONDS ALLOTTED PER SPEAKER]

- 1747 Stoner Avenue Project

GOVERNMENT/ AGENCY PARTNER REPORTS (as available and if present)

- LAPD + LAFD (SLO & others if present)
- DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT: John Darnell (if present)
- CD11 Councilwoman Traci Park's Office [Michael Amster] Presented updates
- Mayor's Office MARIAN ENSLEY West Area Rep from Karen Bass' office
- LA COUNTY SUPERVISOR: KATIE
- SAWTELLE JAPANTOWN: NAOMI KAGEYAMA, PRESIDENT OF SJA: CHILDREN'S DAY - May 3rd 2025!
- Possible other speakers, i.e.: LA County (Mandy), Assemblyman Rick Zabur (Sherwin Shamoeil), Senator Ben Allen's Office, Congressman Ted Lieu's Office, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, Department of Sanitation, Department of Mental Health, Stoner Recreation Center (Adria Deliberto)

ADMINISTRATIVE

4. **MOTION:** MONTHLY EXPENDITURE REPORT March 2025
5. **UPDATE:** REQUEST COPY MACHINE

OFFICER's REPORT

6. **CHAIR:**
 - 6.1. We will need Board members to step up and help us table two events that will take place both on Saturday 05.03.2025. KURUVUNGA AND SAWTELLE JAPANTOWN SATURDAY MAY 3.
 - 6.2. BOARD SEAT OPENING. COMMITTEES 2025–26. <https://tinyurl.com/422kb85z>
 - 6.3. STONER PARK EGG HUNT + STREET CLEANING W/COSMOS GAKUIN JAPANESE LANGUAGE ACADEMY
7. **VICE CHAIR**

8. **SECRETARY: WILL PROVIDE EMAILS/PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED VIA EMAIL**
- 8.1. PYTHON Conference September at WLA Municipal Building
 - 8.2. Opportunity Green Hydrogen-Ready Modernization Project (Cottrell)
 - 8.3. Invitation join volunteers from across the City for Service Day LA: Together, LA Shines – a citywide day of service to clean and green our community in honor of Earth Day. Saturday, April 26, from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM, Angelenos from all over the city will come together to make Los Angeles shine - a chance to connect with our neighbors and build community. Occurring in: Hollywood, South LA, Boyle Heights, Echo Park, West LA, San Fernando Valley, LA Harbor Region Register to join: <https://app.impactive.io/campaigns/mayor-s-office-of-community-engagement-moce/activities/cqezyhl1>
 - 8.4. Olympic Trash Collection Updates Renee Porter and/or Sawtelle Judo Club's Jerry Hashimoto if present or general updates to be provided by any present in the community.
 - 8.5. Jeanine PESAS Presentation (if present)
 - 8.6. From James Altuner: Requests for city sidewalk improvement can take years to fulfill Ohio Ave LA CA 90025 front of his property.
 - 8.7. **UPDATE:** UNI High Time Capsule (Altuner)
 - 8.8. **UPDATE:** on UNI HIGH Nomination for National Register [Folsoi or Alejandro]

TREASURER

9. **MOTION:** Motion to approve 2025-2026 administrative budget <https://tinyurl.com/35wpzj5n>

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATIONS+OUTREACH

- 10. **UPDATE:** LOGO UPDATE WALT
- 11. **UPDATE:** ANIME SERIES NPG PACKAGE
- 12. **UPDATE:** UCLA JAPANESE PAPER FILMS

MOBILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL [MEC] COMMITTEE

HOMELESSNESS & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

- 13. **UPDATE:** Regarding LAHSA, L.A. County and L.A. City changes
- 14.

PLUM COMMITTEE

- 15. **MOTION:** PLUM voted 6-0-0 to recommend that the Board of Directors support the Single-Stairwell Design for apartment buildings, per the following parameters that increase protection from fires. This would eliminate the requirement for 2 stairwells, which provide 2 paths of escape, in case 1 stairwell is blocked or inaccessible during a fire) (S.Kiazyk, D.Swartz):
 - 15.1. Maximum height of 4-6 stories.
 - 2. Maximum number of 4-6 units per floor
 - 3. Maximum distance from unit door to stairwell of 20 ft, maximum distance of 125 ft to farthest corner of unit.
 - 4. 2-hour stairwells (current code).
 - 5. Fire sprinklers in units (current code).
 - 6. Windows should face street, which provides better ladder truck access.
 - 7. Stairwells shall be pressurized.
 - 8. Buildings shall be located in high density areas (not suburbs), such as the LA urban core and corridors within 1 mile of fire station (not in high fire zones or hillsides, or served by substandard roads).

Reasons/background:

1. Buildings with only 1 stairwell are cheaper (instead of 2 stairwells, which is the current requirement).
 2. No expensive land assemblage is required for smaller buildings.
 3. Multiple, smaller buildings like rowhouses can be built (instead of single large massive building that spans an entire block).
 4. ADA access is maintained (all buildings taller than 3 stories must have elevators)
16. **MOTION:** The PLUM Committee voted 3-1-1 to recommend that the Board support the larger goals and efforts in the Landscape and Site Design Ordinance created by the Department of Planning. We request further that the City adopt more key recommendations from the Los Angeles Community Forest Advisory Committee and other professionals.
- 16.1. Status: Mobility and Environmental Committee to consider:
 - 16.2. By revising Section 3.5 Biodiversity and Habitat, the recently updated Landscape and Site Design Ordinance will be improved to create a greener, lush, healthier environment for residents and wildlife.
 - 16.3. Palms NC passed a similar resolution in Jan. 2025: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P-MFE1CM_BCLWMF_Y_Z2Whu2M_LcpLP/view
 - 16.4. **MANDATORY TREES IN OPEN SPACE AREAS**
 - 16.4.1. 1 This effort to incentivize tree canopy is a good start. However, by requiring applicants to install trees that come in nursery stock sizes of 24-inch-box and up, the City unintentionally incentivizes the planting of non-native species that do not support biodiversity in the local ecosystem because most native species currently are only available in the slightly smaller 15-gallon standard nursery size. Generally, within five years, there is no difference in the canopy size of trees planted from a 24-inch-box or a 15-gallon container, because the smaller trees will acclimate to the site more quickly and grow faster. This section should be revised to allow for 15-gallon container trees to qualify, especially if the species are native to the California Floristic Province.
 - 16.5. **NATIVE PLANTS**
 - 16.5.1. The ordinance requests 75% native plants for landscaping, but the current biodiversity crisis has pollinator and habitat loss at critical levels. Applicants should not be allowed to plant 25% non-native plants during this crisis. Plants that are not planted to create food for human consumption or a recreational playing field should be 100% native to the California Floristic Province.
 - 16.6. **GREENING IN THE PUBLIC REALM**
 - 16.6.1. In the vines section, there is inconsistency between the order of the scientific and common names of several species on the list.
 - 16.6.2. The list should read: Island Morning Glory (*Calystegia macrostegia*), Virgin's Bower (*Clematis ligusticifolia*), Chaparral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera interrupta*), Pink Honeysuckle (*Lonicera hispidula*), California Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), Chaparral Clematis (*Clematis lasiantha*)
 - 16.6.3. The list then continues with four non-native species we object to incentivizing that should be removed from the list. If the City needs additional native vining options to offer, we suggest: Dutchman's Pipe, California Grape (*Vitis californica*), Desert Wild Grape (*Vitis girdiana*), Chaparral False Bindweed (*Calystegia occidentalis*)
17. PLUM voted 6-0-0 (D.Swartz, V.Pacheco) to recommend that the Board supplement its previous approval to support CF24-1128 (Dec. 20 2024 LA City Council motion to study the issue) by adding the following specific solutions for undeveloped properties and vacant buildings . These solutions will prevent properties from languishing as public nuisances, and improve appearance and create uses while in limbo prior to construction or redevelopment.
- 17.1. **CONTEXT:** West Los Angeles Sawtelle has faced increasing problems with the

premature demolition of buildings without immediate redevelopment plans. The resulting vacant lots remain unmaintained, pose safety hazards, and harm the neighborhood's character and livability. We request an amendment to the current demolition permit requirements to ensure that buildings remain in use until redevelopment is imminent, with financial and construction commitments in place.

- 17.2. **PROBLEM STATEMENT:** In recent years, our neighborhood has seen a significant number of demolitions where buildings are removed, but new development is delayed due to economic downturns, financing issues, or changes in ownership. The impact of these vacant lots includes:

17.2.1. **BLIGHT AND NEIGHBORHOOD DECLINE:**

- 17.2.1.1. Empty lots become overgrown with weeds and are often used for illegal dumping, leading to unsightly conditions and a decrease in property values.
- 17.2.1.2. The presence of long-term vacant lots gives an impression of stagnation and neglect, discouraging community engagement and investment.

17.2.2. **PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH HAZARDS:**

- 17.2.2.1. Unmaintained lots attract pests, including rodents and mosquitoes, increasing health risks to residents.
- 17.2.2.2. Coyotes and other wildlife have been reported taking shelter in vacant lots, posing a risk to residents and pets.
- 17.2.2.3. Some lots become gathering places for illicit activities, further diminishing the safety and security of the community.

17.2.3. **LOSS OF AFFORDABLE AND USABLE SPACE:**

- 17.2.3.1. Many of the demolished buildings were rental properties, small businesses, or community-serving spaces that contributed to the neighborhood's economy and culture.
 - 17.2.3.1.1. By allowing demolition before financing and construction plans are finalized, we accelerate the displacement of residents and businesses without assurance of timely replacements.

- 17.3. **PROPOSED SOLUTION:** To address these issues, we propose the following amendments to the current demolition policies:

17.3.1. **REQUIRED PROOF OF FINANCING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMITMENT**

- 17.3.1.1. Developers and property owners must demonstrate secured funding and a detailed construction timeline before a demolition permit is granted.
- 17.3.1.2. The project must have received all necessary entitlements, permits, and approvals to proceed with construction immediately after demolition.

17.3.2. **MANDATORY TEMPORARY OCCUPANCY**

- 17.3.2.1. If a building is structurally sound, property owners should be required to keep it occupied until demolition is necessary for construction to begin.
- 17.3.2.2. Short-term leasing for residential, commercial, or community use should be incentivized to maintain active, productive use of the property.

17.3.3. **STRICT MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR VACANT LOTS**

- 17.3.3.1. If demolition does occur without immediate construction, property owners must implement strict maintenance measures, including fencing, landscaping, and regular upkeep to prevent hazards and blight.
- 17.3.3.2. Violations should be subject to fines and potential liens on the property to enforce compliance.

- 17.4. **PRECEDENTS AND BENEFITS:**

17.4.1. Similar policies have been successfully implemented in other urban areas to prevent long-term land vacancy. Cities like San Francisco and Chicago have strengthened demolition regulations to ensure continued use of properties, leading to more sustainable growth and fewer negative community impacts. Adopting such measures in West Los Angeles Sawtelle would:

17.4.1.1. Preserve neighborhood character and vibrancy by preventing unnecessary displacement.

17.4.1.2. Ensure responsible and timely redevelopment, reducing speculative demolitions.

17.4.1.3. Protect public safety and environmental conditions by eliminating hazards associated with vacant lots.

17.4.1.4. Property tax shall be based on and continued to be paid on the value of the finished property/building, prior to demolition, instead of the lower value of the vacated or demolished property.

18. **MOTION:** PLUM recommends the Board supplement its prior support of CF 24-1128 (Dec. 20, 2024 City Council motion to study this issue) by endorsing the following solutions for undeveloped properties and vacant buildings. Vote: 6-0-0 (D. Swartz, V. Pacheco)

These measures aim to prevent blight, improve neighborhood appearance, and promote interim uses prior to redevelopment.

Background:

West Los Angeles Sawtelle is experiencing increased demolition of buildings without immediate redevelopment plans, resulting in long-term vacant lots that harm safety, livability, and neighborhood character.

Problems Identified:

1. **Blight and Decline**

- Vacant lots attract dumping and weeds, lowering property values and discouraging investment.

2. **Public Safety and Health Hazards**

- Attracts pests and wildlife, increasing health and safety risks.
- Becomes a site for illicit activity.

3. **Loss of Affordable, Usable Space**

- Demolished structures often included rental housing, small businesses, and community uses.
- Premature demolition displaces people and services without guaranteed redevelopment.

Proposed Solutions:

4. **Proof of Financing and Construction Commitment**

- Require verified funding and approved construction timeline before issuing demolition permits.
- All entitlements and permits must be secured in advance.

5. **Mandatory Temporary Occupancy**

- Structurally sound buildings must remain in use until construction begins.
- Encourage short-term leases for residential, commercial, or community purposes.

6. **Strict Vacant Lot Maintenance**

- Demolished sites must be fenced, landscaped, and regularly maintained.

- Noncompliance subject to fines or liens.
- 7. Property Tax Incentive**
- Maintain property tax based on the pre-demolition building value to discourage speculative demolitions.

Precedents & Benefits: Cities like San Francisco and Chicago have adopted similar policies with success. Applying these in West LA Sawtelle will:

- Preserve community character and reduce displacement.
- Discourage speculative demolitions.
- Enhance safety and environmental conditions

WESTSIDE REGIONAL ALLIANCE OF COUNCILS

19. MOTION: “

The WLASNC, a member of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC), opposes the allocation of revenues from the Bus Lane Violation Enforcement Pilot Program to items that are not specifically related to public transit. We therefore oppose using these funds for “Transportation improvements and temporary staffing related to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic games.” A \$200 million federal grant is already in the works to help with the proposed use of public buses at the 2028 Games. Council Files: 24-1151 and 21-1224

ADJOURNMENT - Adjourn and record Meeting adjournment time: _____ PM

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, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, make your request at least 3 business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by contacting the Dept of Neighborhood Empowerment at (213) 978-1551 or NCsupport@lacity.org. Si requiere servicios de traducción, avisar al Concejo Vecinal 3 días de trabajo (72 horas) antes del evento. Contacte contact@westlasawtelle.org para avisar al Concejo Vecinal.

PUBLIC POSTING OF AGENDA: Neighborhood Council agendas are posted for public review at Stoner Park 1835 Stoner Ave, www.westlasawtelle.org. You can also receive our agendas via email by subscribing to LA City’s Early Notification System <https://www.lacity.org/subscriptions>.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Comments on matters not 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 a maximum of 90 seconds per speaker.

PUBLIC ACCESS OF RECORDS: In compliance with Government Code 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at Stoner Park 1835 Stoner Ave, via appt, at website: www.westlasawtelle.org, online at <https://tinyurl.com/WLASNC-Board>, or at the meeting. If you want a copy of any record on the agenda, contact James Altuner at: james@westlasawtelle.org.

PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUEST: Requests shall be forwarded to DONE and the City Attorney for guidance in determining compliance with the request. The Board will respond to the person or agency requesting the records in writing, within 10 days of receipt of the request, informing them that their request has been received and forwarded to DONE and the City Attorney to determine compliance. Link <https://recordsrequest.lacity.org/> DONE link <https://empowerla.org/public-records-requests/>

RECONSIDERATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCESS: For information on the NC’s process for board action

reconsideration, stakeholder grievance policy, or any other procedural matters related to this Council, please consult the NC Bylaws. The Bylaws are available at our Board meetings and our website www.westlasawtelle.org.

TELECONFERENCING: In conformity with the October 6, 2023 enactment of California Senate Bill 411 (Portantino) an LA City Council approval on November 1, 2023, The Sawtelle Neighborhood Council will be conducted virtually.

SB 411 UPDATES: If a Neighborhood Council has a quorum of board members in a physical location, board members who wish to join the meeting via teleconferencing must adhere to AB 2449 rules and regulations. If a Neighborhood Council does not have a quorum of board members in a physical location, they must adhere to SB 411 rules and regulations.

In the event of a disruption that prevents the eligible legislative body from broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or in the event of a disruption within the eligible legislative body's control that prevents members of the public from offering public comments using the call-in option or internet-based service option, the eligible legislative body shall take no further action on items appearing on the meeting agenda until public access to the meeting via the call-in option or internet-based service option is restored. Actions taken on agenda items during a disruption that prevents the eligible legislative body from broadcasting the meeting may be challenged pursuant to Section 54960.1.

The eligible legislative body shall not require public comments to be submitted in advance of the meeting and shall provide an opportunity for the public to address the legislative body and offer comments in real time.

Notwithstanding Section 54953.3, an individual desiring to provide public comment through the use of an internet website, or other online platform, not under the control of the eligible legislative body, that requires registration to log in to a teleconference may be required to register as required by the third-party internet website or online platform to participate.

(i) An eligible legislative body that provides a timed public comment period for each agenda item shall not close the public comment period for the agenda item, or the opportunity to register, pursuant to subparagraph, to provide public comment until that timed public comment period has elapsed.

(ii) An eligible legislative body that does not provide a timed public comment period, but takes public comment separately on each agenda item, shall allow a reasonable amount of time per agenda item to allow public members the opportunity to provide public comment, including time for members of the public to register pursuant to subparagraph (D), or otherwise be recognized for the purpose of providing public comment.

(iii) An eligible legislative body that provides a timed general public comment period that does not correspond to a specific agenda item shall not close the public comment period or the opportunity to register, pursuant to subparagraph (D), until the timed general public comment period has elapsed.

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