

SCNC BOARD

Jeffrey Carter
Ben Di Benedetto
Remy Kessler
Ben Neumann
Richard Niederberg
Lisa Sarkin
Lana Shackelford
Gail Steinberg
Ron Taylor
Pasha Vafae
Rita C. Villa
John T. Walker
Denise Welvang



BOARD MEETING APPROVED MINUTES

Wednesday,
August 15, 2012
Light Buffet 6:30pm
Meeting 7:00pm

at

**CBS Studio Center, Building 8, MPR-3,
4024 Radford, Studio City CA, 91604**

PRESIDENT

John T. Walker

VICE PRESIDENT

Lisa Sarkin

TREASURER

Remy Kessler

SECRETARY

Rita C. Villa

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Lana Shackelford

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1. Call to Order & Roll Call. Jeffrey Carter – present, Ben Di Benedetto – present; Pasha Vafae – present, Remy Kessler - excused, Ben Neumann – excused, Richard Niederberg - present, Lisa Sarkin - present, Lana Shackelford – present, Gail Steinberg – present, Ron Taylor – present, Rita Villa –present, John Walker – present, Denise Welvang – present. 10 voting members; 6 to pass a motion; 47 stakeholders present.
2. Approval of July 18, 2012 Board Minutes. **Approved in the absence of objection.**
3. Comments by the President. **John Walker** If you have questions about the Universal Project fill out of 3x5 card and the Councilman will take them with him. He attended the public comment meeting on something we had not seen. Scope of the meeting was telescopic. Richard Adams and I were both there. Our Councilman is recommending that a specific ERI be prepared on the Commercial Development. We were told by City that more traffic results from commercial than residential properties. The proposed development will increase transportation issues. Alan Dymond was there as well and he will speak to that tonight. We don't have enough information on this. There is a new alternative, Alternative 10. John Walker and Geoffrey Yazzetta got lawn signs for our NC. Please take them and put them out in your front yard. NC Elections are 9/20/12. The deadline for filing is 8/21 at midnight. **John Walker** said everyone has an opportunity to run for a seat as all seats are open. Please get involved. He thanked everyone for being here.
4. Public Comments on non-agenda items within the Board's jurisdiction. **Gayle McKenna** said she is here to speak about the Walk/run on 9/9 closing down streets from Ventura to Tujunga. They need volunteers. Funds raised will stay in California and benefit ovarian cancer. **Mike Szymanski** stated that The Studio City Patch is open to any candidate for NC to blog or write

about the election on the site. The Councilman has a column on [The Studio City Patch](#) where he gets feedback from the community. It is easy to take down negative comments. He encouraged everyone to take advantage of that. **Richard Adams** said at the meeting Universal representatives said we should be pleased to have this development in our urban area. He reminded them that this is a suburban area. Comments will be closed very quickly. They are talking about widening the Cahuenga Pass. All work will be done by union workers. **Richard Adams** reported that mitigations will be phased in over time. The LA Rio and the Bike Path representatives said they think this is illegal. **Alan Dymond** thanked us for the motion on the LA River National Park. Fran Pavley has a resolution before the State Senate related to this and she thanks everyone for working toward getting that piece of park. This is the first step in getting Federal funds to help buy the property. **Alan Dymond** thanked John Walker for being at the hearing yesterday. He objected to item number 1 and 5 on the notice. He also objected to the lack of mitigation of the effect of the project as proposed. This is unacceptable. If you can't mitigate the impact then it is a bad project. Everyone in the immediate vicinity who will be impacted by the development should be involved. He objected to taking the corner of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. The billboard in that area should also come down.

5. Responses to comments from the Board (2 minutes each). **Richard Niederberg** said he has volunteered for the Ovarian Cancer Walk/Run for several years. It is fun and there is lots of swag. **Ben DiBenedetto** asked for clarification about the billboard. **Alan Dymond** explained that it is an illegal. That is why they want to take that out of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. **Lisa Sarkin** said it is part of one of the sign districts in the proposed EIR. **Lana Shackelford** said she will ask who owns it if she is given a reminder. **Richard Niederberg** said all billboards should have a number. This replaced a sign which was grandfathered in. There was an article on the billboard inventory in the Times. **John Walker** expressed concern about negative statements that may be put up on [The Studio City Patch](#) he said no board member gets paid and he wants our board members protected. **Jeff Carter** asked for clarification on [The Studio City Patch](#) blog posting. **Richard Niederberg** asked about photo posting he said he requested restraint.
6. Update from Council District 2 by **Geoffrey Yazzetta**. Tabled and moved on to item 7.
7. Special Guest – City Councilman **Paul Krekorian**. Our Councilman said this is the first time he is here as a resident of Studio City. He appreciates the service of the NC and the interest and input of the stakeholders. He fought to protect the NC movement as a member of the Neighborhood Committee and now as a member of Budget Committee. He said it is not easy when you are targeted so he thanked us again. He gave a statement about the Universal Project because he has not had a presentation in any detail. He requested a presentation and got it but he does not have enough detail to weigh in effectively. He will insist on a robust opportunity for comment. It is a considerably different project than originally proposed with no residential component. He thinks we need to have our voices heard. It is not in his district it is in Councilman LaBonge's district but CD2 is significantly impacted and he will insist on having a significant role in how the project is shaped. He stated that the status of the medical marijuana issue is felt passionately by people on both sides. Council approved an ordinance prohibiting store front dispensaries through-out the city. There is an exception for dispensaries with 3 or fewer patients, a home health care agency, and for a hospice. The ordinance preserves accessibility in a health care setting but eliminates store front facilities. Enforcement is a process. The City Attorney sent out over 1,000 letters to landlords and dispensaries advising them of the 9/6/12 effective date. They were advised to discontinue operations or face enforcement actions. It remains to be seen how many of the over 1,000 dispensaries will respond. He asked for patience as this problem has emerged over years and it will not disappear in a month. He feels like there are more dispensaries than Starbucks coffee shops. Koretz offered a measure that would allow pre-interim control ordinance dispensaries to continue to function. About 120 dispensaries are in that category. That motion did not pass. Council instructed staff to consider whether the city could move forward on that motion as well. **Paul Krekorian** said he supports availability of medical marijuana but some of the dispensaries produce problems. There have been conflicting court

decisions on this matter. All of this will have to be resolved by the California Supreme Court. There was a unanimous feeling on the Council that they should move forward on what they can do. Mobile billboards have significantly decreased. That was the result of a concerted effort by several councilmembers to get that done. They have gotten the state law amended and LAPD traffic has taken up very effective enforcement. Laurel and Moorpark has been a source of billboard problems. He gave the backstory on the owner of those billboards. That owner is angry with our council person. Ultimately it is a police function. There are misdemeanor charges already pending. He is aware that it is a problem and they are trying to get the blight off the street. They are taking all complaints seriously. The DWP trunk line is entering next phase. The current phase ends in August. The next phase will take 5 months. It is an inconvenience. They are replacing a main water line which is almost 100 years old so this must be done. From January and February of next year three work zones will be consolidated. It will be very difficult. Plan for alternate routes. The project will be done in about 2 or 3 years. **Paul Krekorian** indicated that the steps his staff has taken to increase accessibility through the use of technology include: smart phone applications, Facebook, a website, and an email newsletter. CD2 even has a Tumbler page which is a social media and micro blogging site. It is like Facebook but you don't have to join to access it. It is Cd2news.tumblr.com. He stated that he has been appointed as chair of the budget finance committee. This is a tough time to have that job. The First budget cycle went well and the process was inclusive. Reduction of services was limited through increased efficiencies and some new sources of revenue. The City is not producing the services we have had in the past. There is a 30% smaller workforce than we had at its peak. Delivery of City services has slowed down. Economists he met with say the recovery is real and sustainable but very slow. He is focusing on increasing economic activity and vitality. It is a dark time right now. To bridge the gap, each council office has discretionary funds. His are being devoted to restoring City services for quality of life things, like pothole repair, stump removal, and street resurfacing. If you have priorities, please let his office know. **Arlen Semek** asked what is happening about sidewalks. Some are treacherous. He gave some historical background on this. The homeowner used to have responsibility for them. In 1973 the City made a policy decision because Federal funds were available and the City took on that responsibility. Federal funds ran out and the City tried to maintain that responsibility. Wendy Gruel tired the 50/50 approach. The City then could not afford to keep up with that. It will cost billions of dollars to fix it all. People worried about the liability issue. Liability remains with the City unless the homeowner plants the tree. Millions of dollars a year are paid by the City due to trip and falls. It is a public safety problem. He is working to develop some alternative solutions. We need outside of the box solutions. One approach is to stop insisting on 4 in thick sidewalks for every neighborhood. Let communities decide. Allow homeowners to repair their sidewalks but waive the fees for this. These are all being evaluated. **Lisa Sarkin** asked about collections efforts. Are collections being done? What about those debts which were existing and identified by Wendy. **Paul Krekorian** responded that those are uncollectible or they would have been collected already. The city is in the process of trying to fix that. There is now an inspector general for revenue collections. A collections sheriff. Next Tuesday is revenue day in budget and finance which will include a discussion of this matter. A question was raised about the uncollected parking taxes. **Paul Krekorian** responded that the parking tax is paid to the parking lot operator. The City is not getting the tax from the operator. Starting to insist on changing the process for collection of those taxes. **Alex Izbicki** asked about doubling of the tax on real estate sales. Why not more austerity in council offices. City workers are being paid well. He thinks the City should cut staff and don't increase fees. **Paul Krekorian** said they will consider that real estate tax but it is not yet proposed. He explained what a documentary transfer tax is. Presently the tax is about \$4 per thousand. His office only has 1 car. He got used furniture from the police warehouse. Lack of austerity is not true in CD2. He does not want to cut public safety but he can't say that and not have a place for the revenue to be raised. They have been working with labor to try to reduce labor costs. Vested rights can't be erased legally. They have secured additional contributions to health and welfare costs. We have to reduce costs more. **John Walker** asked if the City Council has the ability to enforce collections. **Paul Krekorian** said there is no uniform collection process. **John Walker** asked if City Council can create a position for someone who will

do collections. **Paul Krekorian** responded that would be the collections sheriff. **Richard Niederberg** said a number of communities want to make their streets private and take responsibility for repair of the streets themselves. He asked if a community wants to do that, wouldn't that save the city money? **Paul Krekorian** responded that you can't do that when these are public streets and sidewalks. He does not know of a model that would allow a community to do that.. **Richard Adams** said there is no painless answer. He has had problems with getting city services. He asked the councilman to ask the city employees not to complain but to do the work. Why not just declare bankruptcy and ask employees to have more motivation. There is a 30,000 person workforce. He believes the reduction in size has meant that more people are working harder. We need to think creatively about how to do the same services with fewer resources. **Paul Krekorian** said that bankruptcy would be a terrible idea. He stated that we don't want a Federal judge making the decisions of the City. When a City is this size, the cost for a generation to come will be enormous as it destroys the credit rating of the City and makes future borrowing costs extraordinary. City employees are not part of CALPers. **Barry Johnson** asked how Paul Krekorian will deal with the Planning Department and Mayor who are allowing increased density without regard for the quality of life of those around the areas of increased density. **Paul Krekorian** said the west side is the best example of that. There are three boulevards that are there. If we could wind back the clock we should have focused on transportation and infrastructure. This area is at the maximum of infrastructure capacity, the NC's need to ride herd on this to prevent that in our neighborhood. He is trying to work closely with his community groups. **Lana Shackelford** asked what prevents a land lord or owner of a large commercial building from renting out their building to marijuana collectives. **Paul Krekorian** said the difficulty is that the collective must be doing the cultivation. This will all be tested in court. **Mort Allen** said the City Attorney's office is working hard on the pot laws. Jan Usher is brilliant on this. He also stated that Studio City has a problem with the parking meters – how do we make the enforcement in Studio City more human. 6 bike officers ticket the minute the meter ticks off. **Paul Krekorian** said he has no good answer. Smart meters have helped. Also we have a city parking lot with no meter. **John Walker** said on a personal and professional level his is grateful for Paul Krekorian. He is the most accessible council man we have had. **Paul Krekorian** said he appreciates the kind comment. He also wanted to draw attention that a member of his staff, Geoffrey Yazzetta, is here and he does not get paid overtime.

8. Treasurer's report by **Remy Kessler**. No report – motion not voted upon.

Motion: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council has reviewed the July Bank Statements and the August Financial Statements and hereby accepts and approves them.

9. Budget Committee report by **Remy Kessler**. **Denise Welvang** gave a report on budget requests received. **John Walker** read the motion.

Motion A: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council approves \$2,500 to be used for the community holiday event called "The Winter Family Festival." The event is scheduled at the Studio City Recreation Center (aka "Beeman Park") on Sunday, December 9, 2012. The funding is conditioned on the SCNC being a "presenting sponsor" and acknowledged in all event promotion materials, including any flyers, banners, event programs, articles and similar publications and postings. The SCNC's funding shall be used towards funding the children's snow activity at the holiday event with signage of the SCNC's sponsorship posted at the snow activity.

Patty Kirby said she is on the events committee. About 3,000 families are served by this event. **Barry Johnson** asked that the board please vote yes and get all items ironed out before the event. **Denise Welvang** said we were assured there would not be a problem this year. **VOTE: Yes 7; Opposed 1; Abstain 1.** (Gail Steinberg was out of the room at the time of the vote) **Motion Carries**

John Walker read the motion.

Motion B: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council approves a funding request of \$250 for the VANC City Wide Neighborhood Council Congress on September 22, 2012 for the purpose of helping to cover the costs of the training and workshops.

Richard Adams said he was confused by the title. This was for all the neighborhood councils so he thought this is money well spent. **Arlene Semek** said the SCNC will be in sponsorship column. **Lisa Sarkin** asked if DONE was sponsoring this. **John Walker** read the motion. **Vote: Yes: 9; NO: 0; Abstain:0. Motion Carries**

John Walker read the motion.

Motion C: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council approves a funding request of up to \$1,500 to sponsor the SCNC Cultural Affairs Committee's community event "The Luminaria Festival" to be held Sunday, December 2, 2012 at the Campo de Cahuenga. The SCNC is the sole sponsor of this event and will be acknowledged in all event promotion materials.

Richard Niederberg said this is our event and he urged everyone to vote in favor. **Richard Adams** said we learned a lot last year. This is a good idea. (Gail Steinberg returned to the meeting.) **Vote: Yes: 9; No: 0; Abstain: 1. Motion Carries**

10. **VANC Report by Denise Welvang. Denise Welvang** reported that elections were discussed. She reported that as a matter of outreach some NC's held barbeques and more people turned out to vote. People were happy they did not have to deal with the city in the last NC elections. They were happy with the volunteer workforce. **Jan Perry** is trying to consolidate street and sidewalk assessment districts into one. People were not pleased. There was a discussion of DWP tier levels. Infrastructure levels – single family dwellings are put in higher tier and multi-family dwellings were moved to a lower tier. VANC is discussing how to proceed.

Transportation Report by **Ben Di Benedetto. Ben Di Benedetto** reported on the last meeting of the transportation committee. They discussed the alley barrier. **John Walker** read the motion.

Motion A: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council requests that the City of Los Angeles allow the existing vehicle barrier to remain in place in the alleyway between Colfax Avenue and Simpson Avenue, running South from Sarah Street to Landale Street.

Barry Johnson encouraged the board to vote yes. **Richard Adams** said this is not causing crime so he supports this. **Lisa Sarkin** asked if anyone wanted it open. **Ben Di Benedetto** responded that there was no one on other side of the issue. **Vote: Yes: 10; No: 0; Abstain: 0. Motion Carries**

John Walker read the motion.

Motion B: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council requests that the LADOT and NBC Universal, reopen discussions to allow for community input regarding the proposed Bridge over Lankershim Blvd between the Metro Red Line Station in Studio City and Universal Studios to better consider it's impact on the historic Campo de Cahuenga site and the promise by the City of Los Angeles and NBC Universal that any construction on or near that site would be in concert with the design elements of Campo de Cahuenga.

Move to amend the motion by Lisa Sarkin. **Second** by Rita Villa. **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**.

Rita Villa read the amended motion. Discussion ensued. **Move** to amend motion again by Ben Di Benedetto. **Second** by Lisa Sarkin. **VOTE:** Yes: **9**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**. (Ron Taylor out of room)

Rita Villa read the final amended motion.

Final Amended Motion B: The Board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council requests that the Metro and NBC Universal, reopen discussions to allow for community input regarding the proposed Bridge over Lankershim Blvd between the Metro Red Line Station in Studio City and Universal Studios. The February 20, 2002 MTA Construction Committee letter/memorandum obligated the MTA to construct a subterranean pedestrian tunnel under Lankershim Blvd. We further request more consideration of the impact on the historic Campo de Cahuenga site and the obligation by the City of Los Angeles and NBC Universal that any construction on or near that site would be in concert with the design elements of Campo de Cahuenga as provided for in our Sherman Oakes/Studio City/Toluca Lake/Cahuenga Past Community Plan.

Barry Johnson said the MTA has design elements for this site. The bridge shadows the Campo and is not consistent with the Campo design and neither is the design of the bridge. **Lana Shackelford** asked for clarification. Barry said that the MTA also has a design for the station and it reflects the Campo and the bridge does not reflect the Campo. **Richard Adams** expressed concern about the safety of a tunnel. But he trusts that it will be properly monitored. **Richard Niederberg** said they needed extra land under eminent domain to be sure there was right to build this. **Ron Taylor** asked why we need this in the first place. At the Hollywood Bowl there are thousands of people crossing at the same time. The same volume of people will not be here at the same time. **Lisa Sarkin** said it is the anticipation that people using the red line will need to use this crossing. **Denise Welvang** said an issue is that people run across Lankershim. **Richard Adams** said he has supports the final amended motion. **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**. **Motion Carries**

Presentation, discussion and possible Motion related to the Los Angeles Mobility Ground Study. Motion C – Moved: Ben Di Benedetto; **Seconded:** Richard Niederberg. **John Walker** read the motion.

Motion C:

The board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council request that the changes put forth by the Transportation Committee and the Land Use Committee be incorporated into the newly proposed Ground Mobility Plan and that all proposed changes to the Ground Mobility Plan adhere to and comply with the Ventura – Cahuenga Blvd Corridor Specific Plan.

Discussion ensued. **Move** to amend motion again by Lisa Sarkin. **Second:** Lana Shackelford. **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**. **Motion Carries**

Amended Motion C:

The board of the Studio City Neighborhood Council request that the changes put forth by the Transportation Committee and the Land Use Committee be incorporated into the newly proposed Ground Mobility Plan and that all proposed changes to the Ground Mobility Plan be adhere to and comply with the Ventura – Cahuenga Blvd Corridor Specific Plan and the Sherman Oakes/Studio City/Toluca Lake/Cahuenga Past Community plan.

Rita Villa read the amended motion. **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**. **Motion Carries**

11. Public Safety Committee Report by **Richard Adams**. **Richard Adams** sent an email about the police academy to the board and committee chairs. He recommends we try to attend. He got emails about people posing as solicitors trying to get into homes to vandalize. He stated that a safety rule for things in your car is: "Lock it, hide it, keep it." Do not leave your cell phones and GPS visible. There are more homeless people in the neighborhood. He requested help with planning the neighborhood night out next year. **Barry Johnson** suggested the public safety committee look into the safety on Ventura Blvd between Vineland and Whitsett between 6 and 9 pm. There are a number of illegally cordoned off parking spots by valets.
12. Outreach Committee Report by **Lisa Cahan Davis**. **None**.
13. Cultural Affairs Committee Report by **Richard Niederberg**. **Richard Niederberg** thanked the SCNC and everyone for their support of the Luminaria event and asked for volunteers to help with the set up for this event. It is our event. **Lana Shackelford** thanked those who worked last year. She asked for everyone to return and help this event. **Richard Adams** asked if we have a contingency plan in case it rains. **Barry Johnson** asked if we can use water proof bags. He suggested that every chair should contact Pasha to use youth for community service hours to support our events.
14. Land Use Committee Report by **Lisa Sarkin**. **Lisa Sarkin** said Paul Krekorian had addressed the items she would have addressed. **Richard Adams** thanked Lisa Sarkin for help in dealing with the Kings Head Pub problems. He said that the LAPD has been working with him as well. He is trying to get the Department of Building and Safety people to come back out. There is ongoing filming abuse in his neighborhood as well. **Barry Johnson** said Studio City is used and abused by the filming community. There were three shoots in less than three blocks from his house. **Lisa Sarkin** said there were 4 shoots at the same time but Film LA is looking into limiting this.
15. Bylaws Committee Report by **Ron Taylor**. **Ron Taylor** said there are only six days left to get in your application in for the election. As far as manning our poles, we want to use youth volunteers. An eblast went out requesting volunteers to work the poles. He asked for volunteers and said there would be an hour of training before the election. Our workers need to be there at 1:30 and stay until 8:30. There will be one supervisor from DONE and one from DONE who is a revolving supervisor. He asked if we need to vote on the "how to vote handout." Answer by John Walker - no.

Presentation and proposed motion on service organization list by Ron Taylor. Moved: Ron Taylor; **Second:** Rita Villa

Motion:

The Board of the SCNC certifies the attached list of Studio City service organizations that qualify as stakeholders in the Studio City neighborhood council area.

Richard Adams questioned the inclusion of education and faith based institutions as service organization. **Barry Johnson** said he questioned the inclusion of anybody that participates in the SCNC as a qualification for the at large seat. He suggested the creation of another at-large seat. **Ron Taylor** disagreed. **Jeff Carter** asked if you are the parent of a student at Campbell Hall can you vote for the service organization representative and the at-large seat? **Question called:** John Walker. **Second:** Rita Villa. **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**. **Motion Carries**

16. Government Affairs Committee Report by **Rita Villa**. **Rita Villa** gave a report on the last Government Affairs Committee meeting. **Barry Johnson** reported that Studio City will get its name on the Universal Station.

17. Comments from Board Members on subject matters within the Board’s jurisdiction. **Lana Shackelford** said that she has spoken to stakeholders about the missing sidewalk. She also asked about the sign by Pick Up Sticks that says no parking for the post office. **Richard Adams** said when Carpenter was out of session there was more parking at the post office because parents were not parking there. **Richard Adams** said they will look at the food truck issue in the public safety committee. **John Walker** addressed the issue of trash behind Jerry’s Deli. **Rita Villa** asked that the Traffic Committee consider requesting a two hour parking restriction on Laurel Canyon by the park at the corner or of Laurel Canyon and Moorpark.
18. Adjournment. **Moved:** Ron Taylor; **Second:** Jeff Carter; **VOTE:** Yes: **10**; No: **0**; Abstain: **0**.
Motion Carries

