

VENICE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
Preserving Public Places Committee

November 2022
Committee Vote: 3 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain

RESTORATION OF THE VENICE LIFEGUARD STATION TOWER

Whereas the iconic, architecturally and culturally significant Venice Lifeguard Station Tower located at 2300 Ocean Front Walk was built together with the single story building surrounding it in 1968 is owned by the City of Los Angeles, within Council District 11 and maintained by the County of Los Angeles Department of Beaches and Harbors for use by the Los Angeles Lifeguards;

Whereas, with no public notice nor outreach, including to adjacent neighbors nor the Venice Neighborhood Council, The Department of Beaches and Harbors requested and was awarded July 2022 a de minimus waiver from the CA Coastal Commission a Coastal Development Permit CDP to demolish the tower, only, while retaining the nondescript single story base building. No documentation nor feasibility study was presented as to why this unique, iconic tower would be destroyed, nor that any effort has been made to repurpose it, if it is no longer needed by lifeguards;

Whereas the Tower provides an excellent, and unmatched, expansive view of Santa Monica Bay;

Whereas Venice has very few publicly owned buildings and the demand for such exceeds the availability;

Whereas if the Tower were demolished, it would leave a nondescript eyesore single story building with no visual merit on our public beach and the Tower would likely never be rebuilt;

Whereas, if made accessible to the public, funds for restoration might be available from the LA Olympics, not-for-profit organizations, private donors, tourism entities or the public, in addition to government sources; and

Whereas repurposing the Lifeguard Tower as a community asset would create an exceptional cultural enrichment, environmental and educational venue for the entire community, residents and visitors;

Whereas Venice community members, lifeguards, ocean ecologists, not-for-profit organizations and adjacent neighbors want the tower saved from demolition;

Now Therefore, The Venice Neighborhood Council requests that the California Coastal Commission, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, and the City of Los Angeles refrain from demolishing the Venice Lifeguard Station Tower until the feasibility of its repairs and restoration for use by lifeguards OR other purpose such as a public observation tower or lifeguard, ocean ecology or other museum can be fully evaluated in conjunction with representatives of the Preserving Public Places Venice Neighborhood Council Committee, public and private (not-for-profit) organizations identified herein.

Supporters include:

Retired Lifeguard Section Chief, LA County Fire Department: Mickey Gallagher
Venice Oceanarium Founding Director: Tim Rudnick
Adjacent Property Owner: Diana Lorber
Educator & Chair VNC & Venice Chamber Education Committees: Joelle Dumas
Venice Black Forefather: Estate of Arthur L. Reese

Supporting Documents:

Photograph of Venice Lifeguard Station Tower: <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/meeting63755db436816.jpg>
1968 Dedication: <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/meeting636ee6723b371.jpg>
Historic Places LA: <http://historicplacesla.org/reports/bf27d24d-24d1-4f4e-b4a5-6ecb0a9c7e94>
ZIMAS: <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/committee63729768158db.png>
Beaches & Harbors Lifeguard Tower Demolition Rendering: <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/meeting636ee6e18ca69.pdf>
CCC July 2022 CDP Waiver <https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/meeting636ee6e18ae62.pdf>

Distribution List:

California Coastal Commission
Mayor of the City of Los Angeles
Los Angeles County Department of Beaches & Harbors
Los Angeles County Supervisors
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Councilmember District 11
Commissioners of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks
Los Angeles Olympics Organizing Committee: Casey Wasserman Chair, Kathy Carter CEO
10960 Wilshire Blvd, Ste 1050, LA 90024
Los Angeles Office of Historic Preservation
Los Angeles Department of Public Works