

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Below is a summary of the Public Comments, in no particular order of ranking. Following that are the complete Public Comments made during the meeting.

Planning Process

It would be great if we could do a CAD presentation so that people could see the visual/rendering of the City Planning proposals.

For city enforcement issues that have an impact or influence on the plans that we're talking about, we definitely need to make sure that the plan has the networks involved so that all of the resources that are important to the effectiveness or the success of whatever plans are being proposed are also included in the discussion.

We should be looking at Venice holistically. It's important to look at the bigger picture, not just look at we're in North Venice or we're in Millwood or we're in East Venice. Look at the whole picture of what's going on. Because even if you don't live on Washington, it's going to impact you. What's going to happen with Venice? What's going to happen with Lincoln? It's going to impact you, even if it's not the change that you're looking at on your particular street.

Residential

Regarding increasing density on S. Venice Blvd between Dell and Abbot Kinney, if the city wants to pursue five stories, I suggest that all auto entrances to the new five story buildings are off South Venice Boulevard and that we no longer have any driveways off Carroll Canal. Carroll Canal currently has 25 lots and we have roughly 48 cars. You can have three cars in a house, but it's basically 2 or 1. If we increase units on S. Venice Blvd who use the alley for their auto entrance, we're looking at something like 250 to 280 cars using a ten-foot-wide street/alley. Also, there's no height designation here, so five stories could be anything from between 60 to 75 feet (roughly 12 feet floor to floor to get a ten-foot clear structure, plus plumbing, etc., or 15 feet). It doesn't make a lot of sense to be building something that could be 60 to 75 feet tall in VEN 14, on S. Venice between Dell and Abbot Kinney. Also, how do you have a 60- or 75-foot building without an elevator? It's going to have an elevator by code and it's going to have fire stairs. It'll be another 10 or 20 feet. That means this area will be much higher than 60 to 75 feet. Grand Boulevard, which is a 100-foot-wide street and has 90-foot lots, or Venice Way, which is 75 feet wide and has 90-foot lots, should be considered as a more realistic location for something like a five-story building.

The buildings around the Canals on all sides should be considered with the Venice Canals plan, so that a building would be considered relative to its neighbor on the Canals, not something that's 300 feet away on the other side of South and North Venice.

We all understand that most of the North Venice subarea started as single story. We've seen a lot of three-story infiltration that is out of character with some of the blocks in North Venice, but five stories is wildly out of proportion with the other units.

For VEN 14 on N. Venice between Alhambra Court and Grand Blvd, there's a new build that's right in the middle of that. And so the idea of that portion being five stories leaves only two homes that would be able to be built to five stories, and those are two single story bungalows. So, it makes no sense to add five stories right there at the corner, which is a scenic corner, right across from what is now a park area. The two lots would likely be combined into a potential five story building that, as you're driving south on any of the original historic canal streets, you would see standing out. That's what we would be looking at as everyone drives towards the beach. There would just be something that doesn't fit in. Also, I would love to see the area in VEN 14 on N. Venice between Dell and Mildred reconsidered. That's a two-story recent build in the last five years that's across from the farmer's market. If rebuilt to five stories, that also would stand out like a sore thumb as you're driving towards the beach.

North Venice is really a touristed and a commercial area that has more traffic than other areas of Venice like East Venice or Oakwood. And so special consideration should be made when we talk about affordable housing in North Venice for the fact that we bear a huge amount of burden in terms of tourist and commercial traffic that other areas don't. So, when we're talking about those additional units on a larger scale, not a unit here or unit there in these five story buildings, I don't feel that North Venice is the place for that.

You're looking at five stories, with affordable housing bonus, along Abbot Kinney (VEN 20). This will have a serious impact on adjacent neighborhoods, including North Venice's Lost Canals neighborhood, as right across the alley on Cabrillo you have one- and two-story craftsman bungalows. So, what I'm suggesting is you can't do this in isolation. You shouldn't be allowing for five story buildings shading and blocking light and air along Cabrillo.

I would ask you to include trees, also on public property, and actually have an element in the community plan for provision of more trees on site. Show how that element can be incorporated, because we only have a 15% canopy in the city.

There are solar axis shading issues. There's a famous study by USC that is called solar zoning, which allows higher on one side of the street and required lower on the other, because when you are facing north you're not giving a shadow to your neighbors. But when you're facing south you are shadowing the neighbor behind it. So, zoning can help these kinds of situations.

Commercial

Market is a weird little industrial zone street, but it is historic single-story brick industrial buildings. Visually, it's one of the few preserved, industrial, original Venice streets. So, to build that up to five stories, that seems to me to be taking away one of the last areas that was about Venice being a mixed use, in character community. And it's beautiful there.

We have very unique issues in the Coastal Zone. Up to five stories on Market Street? I can't see that happening, because I don't think they're going to allow added density right by the ocean. There's something going on called sea level rise and the Coastal Commission has historically not allowed increases in density in areas nearby the ocean and in our case also the canals. I've seen determination after determination that denies increases in numbers of units in those areas. I've been through a tsunami evacuation. I used to live in Hawaii. It's scary, and the gridlock happens so fast. And so, it's just another reason why we have to be very sensitive about adding density here at the terminus of Washington or Venice. There are areas that will work for increased density. We need to pinpoint those where we can find them.

Affordable Housing

I don't see how we can do anything until we clear our streets of people that are living in cars and RVs. Almost 100,000 people in this city are homeless. We need to build affordable housing, and I wouldn't restrict it to two stories or three stories.

We have had incrementally very few new units added over the last 10, 20 years. In fact, I think we've seen some disappear. And so unfortunately, all of our kids live 15 plus miles away because they're out of college, they're starting their first jobs, and they can't afford to live in a place that they grew up. And I think that's really a shame.

There are locations that people could live, but they're not inhabited by people that live here. They are empty or they are used for temporary people coming in like Airbnb. There's a huge proliferation of that. And in East Venice, what's very common is they'll purchase a property that was in an area that was more affordable, where there were multiple people living there, and they turn it into a gigantic compound that people don't live in, and they rent it out for business things like filming, parties, events, things like that, and it's not a residence anymore. This is happening a lot, and there's no enforcement of the laws to protect our neighborhoods from this happening. And that takes away a ton of affordable housing. What about enforcement of that? That's something that I think the city should look at, because we bleed out a lot of potential housing for people that could be living here.

There is a disparity between the description of affordable housing and actual affordable housing, which is not really called out on this plan yet, it's not really specified. And that is a concern.

What makes Venice Venice? It's always been sort of a melting pot with economic and racial diversity. And we've lost that. How do we claw a little back? That is through truly affordable housing. That's what we really need. I want to see as much affordable housing in Venice as we can get. We're losing diversity. We're losing economic and racial diversity.

As a result of Project Action, we began to build this community and we proposed to the federal government low-income housing. And that low-income housing produced 15 low-income apartment buildings. We didn't want it to look like "the projects" that you have read about in New York or in Saint Louis. That's why you see those 15 buildings spread throughout the Venice community. When you disperse low-income housing throughout the community and when you allow the diversity in those apartment buildings in reference to income and affordability or very low income, and it's managed in that way, then you can keep the diversity in the community that we're looking for that is that eclectic part of the Venice community.

Parking and Traffic

The one dominant problem that we have with the Canal District is most of this was built before there were cars. You got here by rail; you got here by ox cart or a horse cart or horse, so that much of it was built with no on-site parking.

I don't see any provisions here on how we get people in and how we get people out. The city seems to have this notion that if we get rid of parking then people won't use cars. But we're not there yet. These are really limited streets; they were put in place before the car. If you go up Pacific, you can't even really ride a bike and drive in two lanes of traffic. It's really dangerous. And they're not paved well and they're narrow. So, I don't understand how we're supposed to get people in and out, irrespective of how many units we have on site, if we don't address traffic corridors. I don't see us getting rail or mass transit. It's not going to fit. We have a dense area with streets that are narrower than most.

I grew up in Venice when there were two-way streets, not one-way streets. So, you had to figure out who was going to pull over or back up and let the other person by, and that still happens on some of the streets.

Below is the complete version of the Public Comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

(Times are from recorder used by committee)

Russ: [00:24:35] Venice resident of Rialto, 30 plus years. I do have a question on one of your slides. It's like third or fourth. There was a verbiage description which I found confusing. It described a specific area bound by Grand and Rialto and it was just confusing. Oh, it's the residential one. I see the yellow at the bottom. Those are the Canals. It says the block surrounded by Rialto, Grand and Alhambra. This is Rialto. It's always been a street. This is Grand. Rialto turns up here, so that description is really confusing to me, it's just that verbiage is very confusing.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:26:17] Okay. We'll make a note.

Gavin Langley: [00:27:03] This this is a map of the area here in the orange and the yellow of the Venice Canals. I'm Gavin Langley. I own a house on Venice Canals. I was here last week discussing the five-story building that's being proposed along this section here, between these two pieces. You can see here there is a three lot in existence, there is a two lot in existence. So, what I'd like to do is put it on the table and show you... My house here is in blue for total disclosure. These are basically three buildings that've been zoned that way for some time. And what you need to see is a visual of actually what this looks like if this was to be done. I work in architecture, so I just quickly took some old blocks of mine and showed you essentially what you already have here. And what you're going to realize is that the existing houses here, I'm going to make in this color here, and the brown for you. And this is my house here for total disclosure. And then across the street from me, basically at the moment is a series of large buildings, right now 35 feet in height at this point, some are single story. As you can see, the scale of the buildings is very similar to what is shown. And here is a building owned by Mr. Murphy, who at the beginning of the meeting talked about living in the neighborhood. He doesn't live in this building, but he does own this building. So now what I'd like to show you is a comparison of what will be, essentially, if you take a three-lot building which already exists here, and you put it on this lot here, what you would take if you took a two story over parking and you put it together on this lot.

[00:28:57] Five stories. Now, there's no height designation here, so five stories could be anything from between roughly 12 feet floor to floor to get a ten-foot clear structure, plus plumbing, etc., or 15 feet, such as in this building at the end of the Canal, at the end of our street here, which is more like a loft style, what you call an artist studio. This is Carroll Canal. This is a ten-foot street. Between my house is the Canal. So, with my time available, I'd like to propose and tell you a couple of concerns. If the city wants to pursue five stories, I suggest that all auto entrances to the new five story buildings are off South Venice Boulevard. That we no longer have any driveways off Carroll Canal. Carroll Canal currently has 25 lots. We have 120 cars coming into the north side here. And this is 25 houses and we have roughly 48 cars. You can have three cars in a house, but it's basically 2 or 1. We've got 48. We currently have about 160 cars. If we increase this, we're looking at basically something like 250 to 280 cars using a ten-foot-

wide street. We are still trying to get this street widened to 15 feet. Recent change from apartments to condos, we managed to get one. Building across from me five feet, but basically along the street we only have 3 or 4 that have the five-foot setback. We're trying to get the 15 feet because as I explained the other day, all the others are 20 feet. I would also propose that the people in Venice can see that Grand Boulevard, which is 100-foot-wide street and has 90-foot lots, or Venice Way, which has 75 feet and has a street that has 90-foot lots, should be considered as a more realistic location for something like a five-story building. The other thing you should notice is this does not continue down to Grand Canal. It doesn't make a lot of sense to be basically building something called "the monster" in the middle of a parking lot, between buildings that are 2 or 3 stories with a 35-foot height limit, and then proposing to jump up to something that could be 60 to 75 feet in this zone here to Abbot Kinney. And then essentially, it's 300 feet to the opposite side of the street where you see the other Venice pieces. What I proposed the other day is that the buildings around the Canal on all sides be joined in with the Venice Canals plan, so that this building would be considered relative to its neighbor, not something that's 300 feet away and has nothing to do with that. And I guess my last point is, if that's the monster, this is Godzilla.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:31:53] Well done, well done. I have a question. Are you in communication with the planning department on what you are...?

Gavin Langley: [00:32:09] I'm a homeowner. I've been a homeowner here on the Canals for about eight years. I've fought every issue which doesn't comply with the standards the Planning Commission does. I thought the house that burned down was too big. So now I'll have to basically, along with your committee, I'll have to basically send my own separate comments on whatever their planning is. I thought, this being changed from apartments to condos because we weren't getting the street widened, some other uses in the building. My concern here is, how do you have a 60- or 75-foot building without an elevator? It's going to have an elevator by code, and it's going to have fire stairs. That means this won't be 60 to 75 feet. It'll be another 10 or 20, depending on what happens on these things, any building of this size, you're going to need 3 or 4 exits to go down through the building.

Gavin Langley: [00:32:53] This is a how do you build a five-story single lot building on a 30-foot lot and get services to it? I mean, most of it's going to be stairs and elevator. It's not realistic, but as soon as you join it, it becomes a much larger build. So, I'm going to have to fight this.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:33:08] So my question is, you're proposing that as a part of this meeting. But when you say we're getting...

Gavin Langley: [00:33:15] I'm showing my fellow homeowners and fellow commercial owners here what the impact of this is just from a very diagrammatic, this is a 32nd scale, which means every foot is 32 feet on here. Or what is 3/8 of an inch equals a foot, in other people's terms, it's the same thing. I've got to run to a Venice Canal Association meeting because it's scheduled at the same time.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:33:39] Has this been presented in any way to the City Planning, or is this part of your presentation here now?

Gavin Langley: [00:33:44] I'm not doing a presentation. I will be presenting it to you. I will then take this and I'll document it to Planning separately, because that's the only way I can make sure that's what I want. I've been in touch for previous things with the chief planner. I see two other properties with his name, so I've basically done the same thing. What's his name again? [Ira Brown?] Yes. I've spoken to him on the phone about the projects across the street. Again, I'm not anti-development, I just don't believe that this is a reasonable solution.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:34:17] We love this. Before you leave though, sir, she has a quick question.

?: [00:34:22] You refer to the monster. I'd like to really define that.

Gavin Langley: [00:34:25] There's a project currently under review by Coastal Commission and Planning on the parking lot just off the picture one more block there. It's to consolidate all the lots around what's called the Grand Canal West or portion across from Venice Canal. It's been going on since I moved here. It's affordable. To your point, ma'am, it's affordable housing being considered. There's been complete objection to it. I can't see any developer or property owner building something of five stories and putting affordable housing in it when they can sell it for market rate, like condos, which are already being approved in this table. So, I'm all for affordable housing. I'm all for homeless people being housed. I just don't see how this would end up being affordable housing in this location. It's just market rate. It's too expensive, it's too valuable.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:35:15] Thank you, Gavin. As far as that comment is concerned about it being too expensive for affordable housing, that's all of Venice. And so, then the question becomes, how does CD-11, with its mandate for affordable housing, provide affordable housing in an area where land is extremely expensive? That's the question. I mean, that's something to be resolved or to be presented because at this point, there has not been any recession or any exclusion of any particular area or district in terms of affordable, quote unquote, low-income housing.

Leslie: [00:36:23] Hi. My name is Leslie. I live on Cabrillo between Navarre and Andalusia. So, I'm right in the middle of this. I don't see how we can do anything until we clear our streets of people that are living in cars and RVs. Affordable housing should be built. If you don't add a unit...not when almost 100,000 people in this city are homeless. Okay, so we need to take land. We need to build affordable housing, and I wouldn't restrict it to two stories or three stories. I don't want to make that kind of decision. And I've been living here for 20 years. I live in a two-story place. I own it, but we have so many problems here that it seems to me that if there's city property or there's county property here, there needs to be a lot of units. They need to be everywhere, and the city needs to take action. That's the only way. I cannot see how building an ADU on the back of somebody's lot is ever going to work, ever. They won't

rent it to a working person and they're not going to reduce rent. It just isn't happening. Anyway, that's my thing. I would like to have more parking because across the street from me, every single car has somebody in it, and we've been trying to clear it. And until that is dealt with, I don't even understand what we're talking about here. I don't want to mandate whether a building is four stories or three stories. We need certain things. And the beauty of the neighborhood is that it's eclectic. So, I don't understand why there have to be rules on rules on rules. There are building codes. Anyway, that's what I had to say.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:38:23] I don't know where we are in the status of the project on Dell and North Venice Boulevard. Does anyone have a status on that project?

Robin Rudisill: [00:38:32] Waiting for the coastal application to be filed.

Mark Ryavec: [00:38:34] And two lawsuits.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:38:38] So that was proposed for affordable housing, 100% affordable.

?: [00:38:50] Half of it is for housing with services for permanently [formerly?] homeless people. The other half is for, well, one quarter of it is for low-income artists. That's the artists. And then the other quarter is for low-income families. There are facilities in there as well, there's an exhibition space, performance space, things in the area. But that's basically the housing.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:39:35] And services involved for support and counseling and so forth involved in the project. So that's put on hold for right now. I was only addressing the issue about what affordable housing is or where it is proposed currently, in reference to the statement about city owned property and that is city owned property.

Lauren: [00:40:09] Hi, I am Lauren. So, you had asked a question about housing and my perspective, we all have our own perspective, my perspective is I have five kids and they've all graduated college and none of them can afford to live here. We have had incrementally very few new units added over the last 10, 20 years. In fact, I think we've seen some disappear. And so unfortunately, all of our kids live 15 plus miles away because they're out of college, they're starting their first jobs, and they can't afford to live in a place that they grew up. And I think that's really a shame. And so, the survey was asking the questions about how many units, how big properties should be. But to me, we have to add units to be able to allow a full spectrum of people to live here. And that's the part that we love about Venice so much. So, whether it's smaller units, bigger units, I don't care. But I want my kids to be able to live here and they don't need big places. They just need units on my block where I live in Oakwood. It's lovely because right next door to me are four units and they're all young, and across the street is like six and eight units. And it's so nice to have young people around. We have a mixture of everybody, and I hate to hear that we're not incrementally adding units because we need to provide for everybody. So, that's my thought.

Jill: [00:41:55] I am Jill, I live on Cabrillo. I'll just address a number of the issues. The first issue with the trying to have this be accessible to most people to understand this, this idea of the five with bonus distinction between max three stories, which is also being proposed. There are two. So, it seems like those are two different issues that people need to be educated on. And I don't think anyone who has seen anything that has been proposed understands what the five with bonus means. And in terms of what you've said tonight for affordable housing, like what percentage of the unit, what percentage of the square footage, what is the height issue on that? Would those two extra floors be for affordable housing only, or is it just like if you put a couple of affordable housing units in you get to put another couple of stories on? That can be both put on the website and then be communicated to the community at large. I think that's really the issue because how can we actually give informed opinions on this without knowing what that distinction is? And max three stores, we all understand that most of North Venice started as single story. We've seen a lot of three-story infiltration that is out of character with some of the blocks in North Venice, but five stories is wildly out of proportion with the other units.

Jill: [00:43:35] So, that's my first question, is how can that be made more specific? How can we understand what that is so that we can have a dialogue about it? And if the question is, if people are trying to make this decision based on whether or not they think we need a certain number of affordable housing units, then that's important, because if there's two affordable housing units and there's six units that are at market rate, that's really just an excuse to get developers in here to bring market rate residences back into our neighborhood. I'd love that. Two, for VEN 14 that we're looking at here in the area that's on north Venice, the upper right-hand corner. There's a new build that's right in the middle of that. And so really the idea of that portion being five stories leaves only two homes that would be able to be built to five stories, and those are two single story bungalows. So, to add five stories right there at the corner, which is a scenic corner, right across from what is now a park area, and then to suddenly have two lots combined into a potential five story building that, as you're driving south on any of the original historic canal streets, you would see standing out in much the way when we look down towards the Marina, there's that incongruous, large, structure that is Maxella. That's what we would be looking at as everyone drives towards the beach, and there would just be something that doesn't fit in.

Jill: [00:45:20] So I think this area I would love to see reconsidered in terms of the size of the areas and also that little triangle there. That's a two-story recent build in the last five years that's across from the farmer's market. Is that right? That also would stand out like a sore thumb as you're driving towards the beach, the sunset, I mean, the things that are characteristic of Venice, it's like, right...

Mark Mack: [00:45:43] This market is here. So, this is great for.

Jill: [00:45:48] But again, like all of these streets as you're driving south and east, what you would see then is standing above everything else, this small sliver of five story construction. So, I would love to find out--is there a way to make this VEN 14/Venice Way map more specific by how many units are in those little brown sections? Because I know on the south side there's 20-30 units in apartment buildings, but

when it's four houses and two of those might be five story, that doesn't make any sense. How can we get this more specific?

Jill: [00:46:26] Also, Oakwood, to the speaker who just spoke, in terms of mixed use here in North Venice, North Venice is really a touristed and a commercial area that has more traffic than, for example, other areas of Venice like East Venice, Oakwood. And so special consideration, I think, should be made when we talk about affordable housing in North Venice for the fact that we bear a huge amount of burden in terms of tourist and commercial traffic that other areas don't. So, when we're talking about those additional units on a larger scale, not a unit here or unit there in these five story buildings, I don't feel that North Venice is the place for that. I feel like, sure, Venice and other areas, if people are open to that and those groups decide that, great. But over here it makes less sense to me, as it always has when we've been talking about the Dell project. And finally, Market Street. So, Market is a weird little industrial zone street, but it is historic single-story brick industrial buildings. Now they're all upper echelon, like one affordable and there's a restaurant and there's some meditation thing, but visually, it's one of the few preserved, industrial, original Venice streets. So, to build that up to five stories, that seems to me to be taking away one of the last areas that was about Venice being a mixed use, in character community. And it's beautiful there. I mean, I don't like the places that are there. I can't get in. But it's amazing when you walk down there, you go oh, this is amazing. Just walk down there and take a look.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:48:24] So just to reiterate, we are taking notes. We are recording the statements and comments that people are making, and we're making them all a part of our record.

Mark Ryavec: [00:48:41] My name is still Mark Ryavec, and I've been in the neighborhood for 35 years, and I grew up in Santa Monica. I want to draw your attention to an email I sent you probably 2 or 3 weeks ago, in which I pointed out that the Lost Canal District, which is basically from Westminster all the way down to almost to Venice Boulevard, and from Main Street all the way up to Abbot Kinney. And I would suggest, and I think I'm following on the comment that someone else made that this area roughly here, that the Lost Canals district get moved to join the Canals, because the one dominant problem that we have with the Canal District is most of this was all built before there were cars. I literally mean that. I mean, you got here by rail, you got here by ox cart or a horse cart or horse. So that, much of it was built and there was no on-site parking. So that I think that needs special attention in that regard. I also want to talk about the fact that you're considering Abbot Kinney separately, right? And I'm told by Jill that she looked at the plans and you're looking at five stories with bonus along here, when in fact, right across the alley on Cabrillo you have one- and two-story craftsman bungalows. So, what I'm suggesting is you can't do this in isolation. You shouldn't be allowing for five story buildings shading and blocking light and air along Cabrillo. The final point I'll make, and I know I'm over time, is that I'd really encourage you to broaden your definition of why you're doing this and add to the why we're doing it. You came up with three reasons why the city is doing it. You know it's the land use, zoning and you added open space.

Mark Ryavec: [00:51:18] I would ask you to include trees, also on public property, and actually have an element in the community plan for provision of more trees on site. And I would invite you to invite the Venice Arbor Committee of the VNC, your sort of sister committee, to come and make a presentation, which I know they have already prepared to show you with slides. Show how that element can be incorporated, because we only have a 15% canopy in the city.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:51:55] I understand it's very important, and that point has been made. And I just want to say that we're talking about a plan that the city is proposing. What we want from you is what you would propose. So, the city has land use, housing and open space. That's the main focus of their plan. Should we add trees and all of that, then that would be part of our proposal, our suggestion for a change in the plan.

?: [00:52:32] I just have a question. How do you present the data when you guys are all done? Because you're hearing so many different opinions, how are you consolidating into quantitative or how do you...

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:52:43] We get that question at every meeting. So, we are collecting all the comments that come from every meeting, and we're learning from you in terms of specificity and more detailed information that people are wanting. And we are still looking at sending out the 6,000-email list [survey] from VNC, and we'll see how those comments come in: how are they categorized, what is the emphasis that comes from the participants with these suggestions that they're making to us. We'll know better about how we're going to categorize the information and present it to VNC after we have all the information together and we have a chance to look at the data.

Sean O'Brian: [00:53:37] Sean O'Brien, 30-year resident. This is for the audience. I try to say this at most of the meetings. Don't be fooled by the term affordable housing, the way it's done by the state, the county and the city. It's all based on formulas and median income. So, in an area like Venice, median income is over \$120,000 a year, meaning a one-bedroom affordable housing unit is going to be over \$2,000 a month. That's not affordable housing. That's market rate. But that's what the developers are able to get away with without parking. I'm all for maybe very low-income affordable housing, senior housing. But this is a developer's giveaway. The city is trying to get us all on board because they're saying if we add more units it's going to lower the price and we're going to hold the developers to their teeth and we're going to make them build affordable housing. It's not set up that way. The game is rigged against us. Do your homework. Don't just listen to the sound bites and say oh but it's more affordable housing. And the monster on the median, that's how I learned this. The monster on the median--they're going to be renting out places to people making upwards of \$90,000 a year and over \$2,000 a month rent. And given a couple of years at 5-10% rental increases, then it's over market rate. Thank you.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:55:09] We'll see how that all is going to unfold.

Chris: [00:55:14] Hi, I'm Chris, 15-year Venice homeowner. And I basically just wanted to agree with Leslie and Lauren. I want to see as much affordable housing in Venice as we can get. We're losing diversity. We're losing economic and racial diversity. That's not what I moved to Venice for. I think that the Venice Dell Community is an incredible opportunity because it's being built on public land, which means you actually can do 140 units of permanent supportive housing and low-income housing, which is not subject to the kinds of rent increases that you're talking about. It's controlled by the covenants that will be in place there. I also think I disagree with some of the points that people have made. I mean, look, I think we have to do everything we can. I think ADUs can help. I think affordable units in larger buildings. I'm not too impressed with 20% affordable, but it's better than 0% affordable. I think we have to do everything at our disposal. And sometimes that involves increasing, usually that involves increasing density. But I don't see an alternative if we want to have any affordable housing in Venice in the future.

Todd Lorber: [00:56:28] A couple things, real quick, regarding affordable housing. If you do research on it, generally if you exceed 20% affordable housing it becomes detrimental to people in the project, kind of ends up aggregating poverty. And you can go and take extreme cases in Saint Louis and Chicago and things that were blown up after they built them. So, there's actually an advantage to not having too much of it. But getting back to your point about what the comments are. I don't see any provisions here on how we get people in and how we get people out. Right? Even with on site, if you have on-site parking and the city seems to have this notion, well, if we get rid of parking then people won't use cars, which if you can make that work and we got the Jetsons or something, that's great, but we're not there yet. These are really limited streets. The gentleman said they were put in place before the car, and you go up Pacific and you can't even really ride a bike and drive in two lanes of traffic. It's really dangerous. And they're not paved well and they're narrow, etcetera, etcetera. So, I don't understand how we're supposed to get people in and get out, irrespective of how many units we have on site, if we don't address traffic corridors. I don't see getting the rail or mass transit. It's not going to fit. So those elements need to be addressed. We have a dense area with streets that are narrower than [most].

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:57:50] We have been charged with responsibility for the traffic report. And so, we will be looking at that as well. And I grew up in Venice when there were two-way streets, not one-way streets. So you had to figure out who was going to pull over or back up and let the other person by, and that still happens on some of the streets, because if you're on 4th Street, if cars are parked on both sides of the street, somebody's going to have to back up or pull over into a spot or look for some place where two cars can squeeze by. And so, it was good when they made some of the streets two way. But most of the streets in Venice were not built for cars, at least up until Rose Avenue streets were not built for cars. They were built for Abbot Kinney's dream of having the canals come all the way over. And so, we've had to adapt. But we were charged at a board meeting to look at the traffic report that has been reviewed by the traffic committee of the VNC. So that will be something that we will be incorporating in our work.

?: [00:59:11] This was just based on the process moving forward. As I said, the idea of five-story allowance if there's a bonus for affordable housing. Is there a way for upcoming meetings for different areas of Venice, as well as people who've already met and may be weighing in on this, is there a way for us to take from this meeting that this presentation as well as what's on the website, can that be explained either in an addendum or even in something that comes out from the Venice Neighborhood Council so that it can be circulated to people who've already weighed in and people who will be coming to meetings in the future.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [00:59:58] Something to consider.

?: [01:00:03] The gentleman that brought in the model with the little blocks and stuff, very effective. So, none of us want those joint things, obviously. But for people to see what that scale looks like, if there's some way to portray that instead of just pink and red blocks on there, then here's the worst case possible that could happen in more advanced 15 story, 400 unit building next to a cottage. If there's any way they can depict that scale on the website, I think that would be useful.

?: [01:00:33] So I was going to reach out to him and actually see if he can get models like that for every meeting.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:00:39] Well, we actually have a member of our committee that does those models. I've seen them. Mr. Frank Murphy. I know, I've seen them. I'm just saying in terms of someone that made a presentation, it's not seeing the visual. I understand what you're saying and whether or not it could be done as a computer aided drafting model that can size and resize, and you can move it according to what subarea that you're talking about. It would be great if we could do a CAD presentation so that people could see the visual [rendering] itself.

Frank Murphy: [01:01:17] And that's doable.

Sarah: [01:01:19] That was like when we had another woman come in a couple of weeks ago with pictures. That kind of was the same thing. And I really feel like we should have them in every meeting. I know they were already like, what the fuck? But when you see it, it's really like, what the fuck?

Erica Moore: [01:01:50] So, I have a question because one of the things that is very prevalent in East Venice, and also in the area you're talking about in North Venice, is there are locations that people could live, but they're not inhabited by people that live here. They are empty or they are used for temporary people coming in like Airbnb. There's a huge proliferation of that. And in East Venice, what's very common is they'll purchase property that was in an area that was more affordable, where there were multiple people living there, and they turn it into a gigantic compound that people don't live in, and they rent it out for business things like filming, parties, events, things like that, and it's not a residence anymore. This is happening a lot, and there's no enforcement of the laws to protect our neighborhoods

from this happening. And that takes away a ton of housing. And that, to me is something. My question is, what about enforcement of that? That's something that I think the city should look at, because we bleed out a lot of potential housing for people that could be living here and there's also people that these are their third and fourth residences. I see it a lot. So that's just something I wanted to mention.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:03:10] Unfortunately, Sean couldn't stay tonight. But when we talked last week about issues that come up that are city enforcement issues or county enforcement issues and they have an impact or influence on the plans that we're talking about, we definitely need to make sure that the plan has the networks involved so that all of the resources that are important to the effectiveness or the success of whatever the plans are that are being proposed, that they are also included in the discussion.

Lauren: [01:03:52] This might be wildly unpopular, but I also feel like people have their own private responsibility to do with their property what they like. And for us to say, you can't do this, you shouldn't do that. Or we think that's too much or too little. It just makes me really uncomfortable. So, to the comment of people having a second or third or fourth house. Yeah, I would love that to be me. But it's not. But I don't feel like I have any right to tell people what they can do with their own private property. And for us to say you can't build or you can't add. It's a fine line between we buy our properties, we want to keep what we do to ourselves on our properties and what's good for the community. So, I understand in the big picture it's not good for the community, but we kind of can't lose sight of what everybody buys their own properties for.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:04:44] The city does have an ordinance against Airbnb's. So, for those areas that are applicable, I think the city should have enforcement for it. Also, if houses that are being used for commercial when they're there for residents, issues like that. But on the other hand, if you want to tear down your house and build something bigger, that's a different issue. But that's also part of what's being discussed here in terms of the overview of the neighborhood. Maybe you want to build a 10,000 square foot house on your FAR that it will fit, but maybe that's not characteristic of your neighborhood. Maybe that doesn't fit the ideal of what other people are wanting to see in the community, and that's what we're receiving here. So, we'll hear all of that, people that want it and people who don't want it.

Steve Bradbury: [01:05:44] I'm Steve Bradbury. I live on the Marina Peninsula. I think that as useful as these hearings have been, and I appreciate all the work that everybody has done, I think it's important that we take a step back, because what happens is we tend to look at just our little neighborhood, look at the blocks right around where we live, which is great because that's where we live. But we should be looking at Venice holistically. So, what hasn't been said here tonight, and I've been at several of these meetings, is that Washington Boulevard, as an example, is going to be rezoned to anywhere from 8 to 15 story buildings. Parts of Venice Boulevard are going to be rezoned to much taller buildings. Lincoln Boulevard north and south from Venice down to Marina Point, where the Ralphs is and those buildings are going to be rezoned to 15 stories. So, if you're concerned about the buildings on your street that are

going to go from two stories to three stories...and by the way, the Marina Peninsula is going from three stories to five stories, they want to turn it into South Beach. I've mentioned this before, so I'll just say very briefly, from a resilience standpoint and an evacuation standpoint, there's already a couple thousand people living on the Peninsula, and another 1,500 people living on the Silver Strand. And the only way out is Washington Boulevard. Now, if you live in North Venice or you live in the Canals. think about how you're going to get out with whatever density is going on, but not just on your block, but what's going on on Venice, what's going on on Washington, what's going on on Lincoln.

Steve Bradbury: [01:07:41] Now, I'm still young enough that I can get on my bike, and I can ride out if I need to. I don't know that I can run to Lincoln at this point, but I can ride my bike out. But I had a meeting last week with someone on the Peninsula who's older than me, heavier than me, not moving as well as me. And I said, how are you going to get out? And she goes, I'm going to get in my car. I said, no, you're not. You're not going to get in your car and go out. So, she's going to go up to the roof of her building and pray that whether it's a tsunami or it's a gas leak or a fire or something like that, that she's going to be able to get out. So, what I would just say to the committee, and Richard you and I have had a couple of emails back and forth on this, is that I think it's important to look at the bigger picture, not just look at we're in North Venice or oh, we're in Millwood or, oh, we're in East Venice. Look at the whole picture of what's going on and give your comments to that. Because even if you don't live on Washington, it's going to impact you. What's going to happen with Venice? What's going to happen with Lincoln? It's still going to impact you, even if it's just not the change that you're looking at on your particular street.

?: [01:08:54] So for housing, is there any rule as to if something is built in the Oakwood region and there's two houses on my street that are pretty huge now, that they are the exact same house. So, I was curious if there are any reasons as far as can those be built or if there are any laws that are in effect that require a difference in the architecture? There are two [of the same] houses on my street. I'm just curious if there's anything against that, that there has to be a certain architectural review.

Mark Mack: [01:10:03] If both of these conform to the current laws, you can do this by right. Essentially the height is a given, the side yards are a given. So, you can just do a very big house. Are you talking about two side by side saying that they're the exact same?

Robin Rudisill: [01:10:23] I've seen that come up as an issue before and actually in front of the Coastal Commission. And they basically discourage it because it looks like one huge development.

?: [01:10:38] When you say discourage, does that mean prohibit or are they just...

Robin Rudisill: [01:10:42] I can't remember.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:10:51] I'm going to move to the committee members having closing remarks and ask the committee members to keep your remarks to two minutes.

Mark Mack: [01:11:02] So, regarding affordable housing, I think it's a very important subject and there should be more of it. But institutional housing like what you pointed out, Pruitt-Igoe in Chicago, Peter Stuyvesant, those are very large housing projects and something like the Dell project will also be an institutional housing project. Those never fare well. But we have very innovative architects and developers in Venice who can do development under these guidelines of smaller like 8- or 10-unit buildings on smaller lots. And we can have many more of those because they are not adding to the bulk, so to speak. And also, I would kind of favor a more fine-grained zoning rather than the hammer zoning, which is going on, like what we heard today: somebody is facing an alley and it's five story on one side and then three stories on the other side. Also, there are solar axis shading issues. There's a famous study by USC that is called solar zoning, which allows higher on one side of the street and lower on the other, because when you are facing north you're not giving a shadow to your neighbors. But when you're facing south you are shadowing the neighbor behind it. So, zoning can help these kinds of situations. And also, regarding the Lost Canals, I think we should put canals back there. I think it's more attractive. I know it's a parking issue, but also these larger streets, either they become restriped, or re-parking can be done. Many things you can do to make Venice more beautiful or more real for everybody.

Steve Williams: [01:13:45] I'm just going to try to distill some notes I took of other people's comments because that's what we're here for, right, to represent you guys. I just noted a couple of things that sort of resonated with me. And one of them was the disparity between the description of affordable housing and actual affordable housing, which is not really called out on this plan yet. It's not really specified. And so that is a concern. So, I think we do need to get to the bottom of that, because we know there's affordable. And like what this gentleman said-- that that could be 2,000 bucks a month plus for a single bedroom unit. When you compare it to what's around them. And then there's low and very low income. Very low income used to be a lot safer but you describe it as that rather than as affordable in my opinion. The other thing is the bonus. What are we giving away? Three story max, but five stories with a bonus of affordable housing. And again, there's the affordable housing moniker problem. And then it's like, how many units? And that leads to the next point. We had some comment that greater than 20% in any one building is problematic. I'd like to see that because...

Todd Lorber: [01:15:11] Well, look at Pruitt-Igoe or Cabrini-Green. Those are like...

?: [01:15:15] I really disagree with you.

Steve Williams: [01:15:16] Yeah, I'm skeptical. I'll look it up because I've never heard that.

?: [01:15:22] That's really interesting. Well, this is just for large housing projects.

Steve Williams: [01:15:29] I want to move on. We had a comment from a gentleman who mentioned what makes Venice. It's always been sort of a melting pot with economic and racial diversity. And we've lost that and how do we claw a little back? That is through truly affordable housing. That's what we really need.

Frank Murphy: [01:15:57] I wanted to hit a couple points. I'm from Saint Louis, so I used to box in the gym in the Pruitt-Igoe projects, which was a black section of the... Anyhow, it was very interesting, and it was a catastrophe. But that's a low income [project and] there was a problem with the mix. There was not a mix. So, we have to be careful about how we define that mix. And what goes right into that is, there's a requirement by RHNA to supply 465,000 new homes in Los Angeles. Now, that's a one third increase in our current housing. We have a million two hundred something housing units in Los Angeles. So that's a one third increase. Now we're going to get that through production and realization. They are two different things. Production accounts for a hell of a lot of it. Realization accounts for other change of uses in many buildings. But the low-income housing element of that is 185,000 units low income. I'll need to verify that. That's close enough. I won't bother verifying it, but it's a number like that. Because the number of 465,000 is intended to bring about a market equilibrium, which will drive the prices down. So, when you have more like everybody's talking about, well, we can get four houses on a lot as opposed to 2 or 1. The four houses at the same price per square foot, is far different than two houses at the same price per square foot. So, you've got a \$400,000 project--that's four units or two units at 2 million each. So, we need to be looking at our neighborhoods through different eyes. And we see that with the comments that come through. There are a lot of different eyes looking at the neighborhoods through a lot of different lenses.

Robin Rudisill: [01:18:54] First, I just wanted to say this information we're getting from all of you is so important. And I really thank you for being here. These are details that we do need to communicate to planning that I know they haven't thought about. Someone said earlier, Washington Boulevard is going to be rezoned to 8 to 15 story buildings. Don't assume it's for sure going to happen. We're hearing in these meetings that a lot of people are seriously questioning that. The city has basically done a cookie cutter approach to all the community plan areas, including Venice. As we know, a huge part of Venice is the Coastal Zone, and we have very unique issues in the Coastal Zone. And I know that our council member, Traci Park, understands that, and I think she's already had a few words with the planning department about that. Up to five stories on Market Street? I just can't see that happening, because number one, it's by the ocean and I don't think they're going to allow added density right by the ocean. There's something going on called sea level rise and the Coastal Commission has historically not allowed increases in density in areas nearby the ocean and in our case also the canals. I've seen determination after determination that denies increases in numbers of units in those areas.

Robin Rudisill: [01:20:28] So I can't see them blessing a plan that has all these increases in density. And then lastly, and related to that is Steve's point about needing to be able to evacuate if there's a tsunami or an earthquake, flood, etc. I've been through a tsunami evacuation. I used to live in Hawaii. It's scary, and the gridlock happens so fast. And so, it's just another reason why we have to be very sensitive about adding density here at the terminus of Washington or Venice. Those are our only two routes out, really. And so, there are areas that will work for increased density. We need to pinpoint those where we can find them.

Richard Stanger: [01:21:15] In 1972, the citizens of California approved Proposition 20, which required the state to present a plan and an act that would protect the coastal resources. And in 1975, the California Coastal Protection Plan was published, and it included special communities along the coast that were felt to be important to protect as natural resources. There were 13 of them, and one of them was Venice, because of its uniqueness. That plan became the California Coastal Act and established the California Coastal Commission. So, what I'd like to remind people is that in Venice, we have an obligation not only to ourselves, but we have an obligation to other people in California--and that's in the Coastal Act--who look at Venice as a resource, a coastal resource that they're interested in. They want to visit, and so we have to protect, somehow, what the Coastal Act says is the mass, scale and character of Venice, for those of us that don't live here but live in Riverside or Bakersfield or Europe who want to come and see the real Venice. And so yes, we have our own interest and that's important. But in the back of our minds, we have to remember that we live in a California special community and special coastal resource.

Ed Ferrer: [01:23:22] So the person that presented what the canals would look like in the previous meeting described himself watching two buildings burned to the ground, right by his house, because the fire hydrants could not be found. And it took a while for the firemen to get a fire hydrant so they could approach and deal with the fire. And that's a situation that the city of Los Angeles I'm sure has known about and has done nothing about. So, the people at that meeting also talked about the historical nature of the Venice Canals, which Richard has again pointed out that the Coastal Plan supposedly recognized. But we also have state laws that now have weakened the Coastal Plan so that they could develop. I mean, the state has basically gone gung-ho in trying to make it easier for developers to give us 15 story buildings. And that's a problem that we're facing, that our government...which side are they going to take, are they going to be on? And so, I'm hoping that we can shout. I'm here because Naomi twisted my arm that it's worth shouting. I'll have to say that I'm sort of very skeptical because I've seen what the city has done, what kind of waivers they do. The building department seems to have their way of being nice to developers and not enforcing laws that exist. So that's the problem we have.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:26:05] So, Mr. Ryavec, I grew up in Santa Monica. I went to SaMoHi. I graduated from there and moved to John Adams Junior High, Middle school. You were on the other side of the tracks. So, Venice was a restricted covenant area, which most of you might know, which was the only place that black people could live, which we call Oakwood. My grandparents lived here. My mother and father lived here, and relatives have been here in the community since the early 40s. And we were, at

that time, what I call a self-contained community. People moved here from the south. They moved to communities where people that they knew lived because they were used to community, and they were used to bartering for services and being self-contained. We had a mortuary owner in the community. We had mom and pop stores. There were several throughout the community: 6th and San Juan, 4th and Vernon, 7th and Sunset, Westminster and Electric. There were black-owned businesses, Browns Barbecue, paint shops, automotive services. When I say self-contained, probably the dollar circulated in that community many, many times before it left the community. On 7th and Westminster, where you see First Baptist Church of Venice, that's actually the second of the First Baptist churches. Across the street on the southwest side was the church that was built in 1927 on land that was owned by Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor; there's a ceremony coming up for Irving Tabor. They were both from Louisiana, moved here and brought their families here after building on the land. My family came from Tennessee and other families came from Arkansas and from Texas.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:28:29] And in 1966, because I was a civil rights advocate/activist, the federal government gave money to the community, actually, to really try to thwart any riots because the 1965 Watts riot had happened. And I wrote a grant because I was always talking about what we should have, what we shouldn't have, what needed to be done. And actually, the grant was awarded. It was for three months. It was called the Summer Crash Program. And we provided employment, study, we did beautification programs, anything that we could do in that three-month period to make things better. But we created a program called Project New Action. Project Action. And the point of this is that as a result of Project Action, we began to build this community and we proposed to the federal government low-income housing. And that low-income housing produced 15 low-income apartment buildings. We didn't want it to look like "the projects" that you have read about in New York or in Saint Louis. That's why you see those 15 buildings spread throughout the Venice community. The smallest one is on Rennie Avenue right off Sunset. And then there's four on Indiana Avenue, and then there's another one up on Brooks, one on Brooks, two on Brooks. And so those apartment buildings were very low income. People were paying like maybe \$100 a month for rent or \$25 a month for rent.

Dr. Naomi Nightingale: [01:30:11] Back in the 70s is when the first ones were built. It a collaboration between the federal government, private corporations, and the community. And Project Action managed those apartment buildings. And so, you can build low and very low-income apartment buildings and not have it look like a project like Aliso Village or Jordan Downs or Nickerson Gardens, or even Mar Vista Gardens that categorizes those kinds of building as where poor people live, or where we don't want those kinds of buildings in our community because they suggest poverty or unsuitable residents. So, when you disperse low-income housing throughout the community and when you allow the diversity in those apartment buildings in reference to income and affordability or very low income, and it's managed in that way, then you can keep the diversity in the community that we're looking for that is that eclectic part of the Venice community. So, thank you. I think even though there's doubts, I'm a believer because I'm a fighter. And I just think that we can get what we want if we just stick together, and we come to a

common consensus about what that is. And taking the high point, because we aren't just isolated communities, we are Venice as a whole. So, thank you. I'll call for adjournment.

ADDENDUM—received via email

January 25, 2024

Ms. Nightingale,

As your CP/LCP Committee considers updating the Venice Community Plan, may I ask that you provide an opportunity for residents of the Lost Canals District to present the unique challenges and historical anomalies facing this area of Venice. The Lost Canals, bounded roughly by Westminster on the north, Cabrillo on the east, N. Venice Blvd. and Grand on the south, and Main Street on the west, were Abbot Kinney's first development, and featured the original canals. As you know, they were filled in and paved a few years after Venice residents voted to be annexed to the City of Los Angeles in 1927. Our principal challenge is a lack of onsite parking. I would ask that you and your committee consider the letter below on this subject, which I sent to the city planners assigned to the Venice Community Plan update last November.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Ryavec, Venice Stakeholders Association

Mr. Janacua,

Following up on our discussion at the recent VNC meeting, I am writing to recommend that you and your staff maintain or strengthen residential parking requirements in the Venice community plan and local coastal plan. When the areas west of Abbot Kinney were initially developed by Mr. Kinney, automobiles were not widely in use. Thus, many properties had no on-site parking spaces or garages. These areas include the western walk streets, the Canals, the Lost Canals (Cabrillo to Grand to Windward Traffic Circle along Main Street to Westminster and back to Cabrillo), and Venice peninsula. To this should be added the eastern walk streets, which have on-site parking but little street parking.

For example, in my immediate neighborhood, there are:

1. A cottage with no parking.
2. A fourplex with no parking.
3. Four cottages with only one on-site parking space.
4. Four-unit apartment with only one parking space.

So, I would encourage you and your staff to maintain or strengthen parking requirements. I would be pleased to lead you on a walking tour to view the situation on the ground in my neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Ryavec, President, Venice Stakeholders Association