

My below March 22, 2016 email and my attached [2016 Candidate Statement of Joe Murphy](#) has been received by the panelists you will be hearing from at tonight's [Candidate Recruitment Event](#) – [Betsy Butler](#), [Ruth Galanter](#), and [Deborah Bowen](#) (if forwarded to her by a recipient of my email) – and by over 1000 stakeholders who voted at the [2014 VNC Election](#).

If you are a potential or currently registered [2016 VNC Election Candidate](#), I would welcome an opportunity to spend time with you to share whatever I have gleaned from my rather intense involvement in many facets of the recent history and politics of the [Venice Neighborhood Council](#).

It has been an enjoyable 12 year experience for me – and ... more to point ... I may be able to help you learn from my mistakes. (^_^)

Subject of March 22, 2016 JDM email: [An issue for panelist consideration at the 3/31 VNC Candidate Recruitment Event](#)

I am Joe Murphy, a 2016 candidate for the [Venice Community Council](#) (flyer attached).

I've been involved in the [Venice Neighborhood Council \(VNC\)](#) for the past 12 years.

Emily Dickinson's 1861 poem encapsulates my VNC experience:

**I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you — Nobody — too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd banish us — you know!
How dreary — to be — Somebody!
How public — like a frog —
To tell your name — the livelong June —
To an admiring Bog!**

My *key concern* is that the VNC has been unable to candidly deal with the following matters:

- Much board time is spent listening to the same familiar arguments between the same opposing factions and their advocates – the [admiring Bogs](#) and their [frogs](#).
- Many who appear before the board leave feeling ignored or poorly treated. They try to avoid further contact with it or fear it if they can't ignore it.
- Many board and committee members lack the time or expertise to adequately research and impartially evaluate the more complex issues confronting them. If they are not members of a faction, they have no real alternative but to 'abstain' or 'shoot from the hip'. This pattern too often generates counterproductive and inconsistent decisions based on factional biases and erodes public and governmental respect. Factional subjectivity and unpredictability is a costly uncertainty of the political and legal environments which fuel this pattern.
- The VNC conducts its business in a procedural framework which neither allows nor encourages the dialogue necessary to stimulate integrated long-term thinking and solutions.

Regardless of my above *key concern* ... I would much appreciate hearing - directly from you - what you consider to be the most important challenges we will need to address if we wish to improve the functioning of – and respect for – the Venice neighborhood council.

Sincerely,

Joe Murphy

[310-305-1444](tel:310-305-1444)

joedmur@gmail.com

Note to recipients of the above March 22, 2016 email and this March 29, 2016 copy of it:

It has been my practice, as chair of the [VNC Discussion Forum Committee](#) since 2012, to append the below to my emails in order to encourage and document dialogue on issues relevant to the [VNC Vision Goals](#).

This email is being sent via bcc to my email list. Your comments and insights in response to this email would, as usual, be much appreciated.

At my discretion, I may decide to distribute all or part of your response including your name and/or email address in what I distribute, unless you state otherwise in your response.

If you wish to be removed from this list, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

If someone authorizes you to add their name to this list, reply with 'subscribe' in the subject line and provide that person's email address.

Please feel free to forward this to others you believe may be interested.

On Fri, Apr 1, 2016 at 11:33 AM, Joe Murphy <joedmur@gmail.com> wrote:

To the best of my knowledge, you are rumored to be considering running, or are already registered, as a 2016 candidate for the VNC LUPC Chair position on the VNC Board.

What do you believe the election outcome will be if all of you run for the LUPC Chair position?

Sincerely,

Joe Murphy
[310-305-1444](tel:310-305-1444)
joedmur@gmail.com

PS - My apologies to the addressees who, due to technical limitations on the number of recipients I can send this to, will receive this email several times. I would have sent it also to Matthew Royce and Thomas Sauer who are already registered as LUPC Chair candidates, but I do not currently have their email addresses.

Note to recipients of this email:

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On Sat, Apr 2, 2016 at 4:02 AM, Jake Kaufman <jake@jakekaufman.com> wrote:

My hope is that the LUPC is not seen as a group with a focused mission to take out new development, but rather encourages "smart development" that supports our community. I think today developers and community members look to avoid (or get around) LUPC and the VNC, rather than work with them - because they are seen as hard to work with and make emotional decisions.

By "smart", I would like for LUPC and the VNC to first define what change is good change and make adjustments to the VCZSP, LUP, etc, so that people have the chance to work within that framework from the start of design. Second, LUPC should be the research arm and filter, to look over ALL new applications within this framework. LUPC should not be the judge or jury or making decision on the fly to what they think feels good rather than what the code says - they should be the research group that does the research and drafts staff reports. And, when code needs to be updated to affect new waves of development and changing climate, they should draft reports to change code - not focus only on stopping singular projects.

I am curious to see who runs, and who wins!

2016 Candidate Statement of Joe Murphy

Candidate for VNC At-Large Community Officer Position



I believe Joe D. Murphy brings experience plus the will to research difficult subjects as a board member.

I will vote for Joe.

D&D Audet

↓My concerns are outlined below↓

Resume: Notre Dame (1959-1964); Army Lieutenant with service in Vietnam (1964-1966); Cornell Law School with focus on *Local Government & Land Use/Urban Design* (1966-1969).

Seattle (1970-2004): law/mediation practice & teacher. Extensive experience in neighborhood & citywide political action groups and campaigns with emphasis on urban design, election of City Council reform candidates, campaign finance disclosure, & opposition to bank loan red-lining practices. Mayoral appointee to *Seattle Downtown Transportation Committee, Seattle 2000 Commission, Pioneer Square Renewal Task Force* (co-chair), & *Seattle Human Rights Commission*. 1981 City Council candidate.

Venice & VNC (2004-present): *Bylaws Committee* (2005-2006). *Community Officer* (2006-2008 & 2014-2016). *Administrative Committee* (2006-2011). *Secretary* (2008-2011). Chair *Rules & Elections Committee* (2006-2010) responsible for drafting *Standing Rules*. Co-authored **VNC Vision Goals** (2009). Founder/chair **Discussion Forum Committee** (2012 to present).

Interest: Continue **Discussion Forum Committee** dialogues exploring strategies to implement the **VNC Vision Goals** for Board & Venice Community consideration, currently emphasizing the LA Housing Crisis and its relationship to Diversity, Creativity, Homelessness, and the Discriminatory Ghettoization of minorities.

I respectfully request your vote

At the Sunday June 5, 2016 VNC Election

10am to 6pm at Oakwood Recreation Center, 767 California Avenue
310-305-1444 - joedmur@gmail.com

1. Questions generated at 2/9/2016 **VNC Discussion Forum Committee Meeting**

The Paradoxical Impact of Zoning on the **VNC Vision Goals**

It seems that our efforts to create more 'creativity, diversity, & collaboration' are gradually but inexorably producing a socially & physically sterile community which seems unable to consider possible constructive changes to the current 'status quo'.

Are we morally obligated to increase the supply of less expensive housing in our LA communities?

For more information addressing these issues, see the below 2/9/2016 DFC meeting materials:

Agenda: <http://www.venicenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/160209VNCDiscussionForumMeetingAgenda.pdf>

Discussion Generator: <http://www.venicenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/160209DFCMtg-DiscussionGenerator.pdf>

Discussion Generator Supplement: <http://www.venicenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/160209DFCMtg-DiscussionGeneratorSupplement.pdf>

2. JDM Research – Housing/Diversity Relationship

<http://www.venicenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/151027VNCDiscussionForumMeetingAgenda.pdf>

My research indicates a strong argument can be made that nothing the VNC Board has done since its formation has addressed the long-term impacts of the erosion of residential diversity in the Venice Community. Without change, the Venice Community is likely to become the equivalent of a gated community. This is the same issue being faced by the City of Los Angeles except that the erosion of residential diversity in the Venice Community has been significantly more serious and has even accelerated under the additional pressures of *Gentrification* and *Short Term Rentals*.

3. JDM Concerns

My fear is that, if nothing realistic is done to deal with this housing problem in LA – if nothing but talk and promises and half-measures are proposed which cannot be realistically implemented – then we will be straightjacketed by a regional dynamic that promises long-term segregation between ‘them’ and ‘us’. The city mayor and council declared a housing emergency which they couldn’t do and reneged on. They now propose a broader alternative which is equally questionable.

Proposals are made which our government and our VNC adopt without evaluating their realistic likelihood of proving successful.

Perhaps we should seriously consider enacting laws based on a moral obligation to provide, in our communities, a proportionate share of the less expensive housing necessary to offset anticipated population growth and immigration as it occurs so that our human settlements can minimize the risk of inadvertently creating the architectural/urban-design equivalents of ghettos (whether for the rich or for the poor, or thru nimbyism or by enacting laws which smack of *Jim Crow Tactics*).

The impact goes well beyond the “rich/poor” segregation into bigotrous discriminatory practices.

I do believe that we in Venice and our Neighborhood Council peers have an opportunity to lead LA toward changes which, over time, can erode this negative dynamic in which all of us seem to be, at present, trapped.

4. The Role of the Blame Game

The **Blame Game** serves no useful purpose.

It creates the factions which undermine the search for common ground by creating labels which are often misapplied. A faction can always find a conspiracy which it can apply with a too-broad brush. I have personally found it difficult to find individuals who make decisions which are **not** well-intentioned in their frame of reference – I often learn this after spending time getting to know them.

JDM Advice to 2016 VNC Candidates

Getting elected has been, in large measure, a contest between factions claiming to be more aligned with their imagined visions of the *Venice Community*. As a result, Board meetings have reflected these competitions between these factions on contentious issues. There is therefore little opportunity to seek common ground on such issues at time-limited board meetings.

My perception is that on only one occasion did these factions agree unanimously on a contentious issue – an agreement that lasted only briefly before quarreling resumed – despite the board’s prior unanimous adoption of the VNC Vision Goals including one calling for **collaboration** and **dialogue**. Since then, the same factional dynamic has continued to undermine the intent of the VNC Vision Goals on all contentious issues. At present, the laws – as interpreted by these factions and the unhealthy dynamic between them – continues to result in the quarreling which not only undermines the VNC Vision Goals but also prevents these factions from talking with one another to see if they can identify common ground.

The reorientation of the VNC to seek long-term solutions to the issues confronting it requires that it shift its energies from quarreling about short-term “minutiae” to identifying and supporting long-term changes to laws which could implement rather than undermine the VNC Vision Goals. This is, in my opinion, the central issue the VNC – and you as candidates (if you are elected) – will be facing after the June 5, 2016 VNC election.

Useful links for VNC Candidates

City Clerk Candidate Registration Site: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/nccr/#/register>

City Clerk List of Registered VNC Candidates: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/nccr/nccand/cand.html?nc=VENICE%20NC>

City Clerk VNC Election Timeline: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/nccr/deadlines.pdf>

VNC Election Committee Election Timeline: <http://www.venicenc.org/elections-ad-hoc-committee-for-2016/>

VNC Vision Goals

(VNC Standing Rule 20 was adopted unanimously by the Board on April 21, 2009 & amended unanimously by the Board on May 20, 2014 to insert the [Focus on Children Vision Goal](#))

To stimulate the vitality of the VNC, the Board and VNC Committees are encouraged to consider the below **VNC Vision Goals** in their deliberations.

Although the VNC is a political body, and inevitably it may become embroiled in issues that divide the community, these goals are designed to promote a more proactive, collaborative vision for **VNC Committees** to include in their deliberations as they formulate recommendations for Board consideration. The **intent** is to create a working framework of integrated strategies capable of achieving, over time, broader consensus and increased:

Focus on Children

Consider strategies that promote & expand opportunities for children to experience direct meaningful involvement in all aspects of the social and economic and cultural activities of the Venice Community. Include this **Focus on Children** as an integral part of the **consideration of strategies** in all of the below **Vision Goals**.

Participation

Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate broader involvement of stakeholders, major organizations, community groups, and government institutions, etc.

Walkability

Consider strategies that reduce the use of cars and that promote alternatives such as walking, skateboarding, biking & bike racks, circulation systems (trolleys), park & ride rather than additional parking, street-narrowing/sidewalk-widening, walk/bike/skateboard lanes separated from traffic, easier neighborhood pedestrian access to commercial stores, etc.

Diversity

Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate realistic recommendations designed to increase economic diversity, including [[affordable less expensive](#) *] housing, etc.

Creativity

Consider strategies that promote the arts, encourage & facilitate creativity. This can apply to architecture, public art, social events (neighborhood gatherings/street movies/theatre/dance/pottery/...), etc.

Collaboration

Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate 'level playing fields' for collaborative negotiation; opt for procedures & policies that 'promote flexibility & dialogue' over 'reacting defensively to rigid criteria', facilitation/mediation training, etc.

Brainstorming

Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate exploring of non-traditional options for achieving shared objectives, etc.

[*[affordable less expensive](#) clarification inserted November 24, 2014 by Joe Murphy]