

Hi.

To see if there is common ground which can be used as a foundation upon which to begin a dialogue on how to move in the direction, over time, of achieving the intent of the [VNC Diversity Vision Goal](#), I ask each of you to review my below analysis and decide whether you feel it can be so used.

## JDM Venice Diversity Analysis

There are at least two ways to undermine the diversity and creativity of a human settlement like the Venice Community:

### **Walls or Laws**

One difference between **Walls** and **Laws** is that **Laws** are flexible creatures which can be changed in a way that can encourage both diversity and creativity.

**Laws** can also be changed in a way that encourages the retention of cherished recognizable elements of a community – elements which must exist in order to provide us with the psychologically critically important distinctive and stable identity of our Venice Community which can be pointed to by many as “my home town” or “this is where I grew up”, etc.

The Venice Community has experienced significant erosion of diversity – a phenomena which may be related in some measure to **Laws** which may have had the unintended impact of eroding both diversity and creativity.

These **Laws** appear to mandate, rather than allow and/or encourage, the diversity and creativity their supporters intend to stimulate. The paradox is that, to date, this approach hasn't worked and has had the opposite effect in too many instances.

This is not just a Venice Community paradox. The lack of affordable (ie, less expensive) housing affects many jurisdictions across the country and even internationally.

I believe this phenomenon is, in large measure, rooted in the natural human tendency to act upon “fast non-holistic impulses” rather than upon “slow holistic deliberations” as the predominant approach to making decisions.

Ref: [Thinking, Fast and Slow](#) by Daniel Kahneman, 2011

In order to reverse this 55-year-trend of the erosion of diversity in the Venice Community, it seems mandatory that we do what is required to encourage the construction in Venice of large quantities of significantly less-expensive housing capable of attracting & stabilizing the influx of the economically diverse families which can restore & expand the diversity we have lost – diversity which we continue to lose due to gentrification pressures in our increasingly vulnerable Venice Community.

Ref: US Census (compiled by Frank Murphy) \*

If you agree, then we have the common ground necessary to begin a dialogue on how to move in the direction, over time, of achieving the intent of our [VNC Diversity Vision Goal](#) \*\*.

## Do you agree?

Sincerely,

Joe Murphy

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

[joedmur@gmail.com](mailto:joedmur@gmail.com)

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

\* Please note that your response will be compiled into an email which identifies you by name and provides your contact information as the responding individual. At my discretion, I may comment on whatever response you send me. I intend to exercise this discretion for the primary purpose of clarifying what I perceive as misunderstandings. If you disagree with my comments, you will have the 'last word' by responding to my comment. The final version will consist of a compilation of your responses, my comments if any, and your 'last word' without further 'counter-comments' from me. The final version will also be sent to my email list.

*"Given that each of us lives in a different world, what can we do to minimize misunderstandings?"*

\* 90291 (Walgrove to beach, Washington to Dewey)

**LAMSA**

50 year period	1960	2010	% Change
Total Population	35,409	28,207	-20
Total Population	6,746,356	12,840,726	+90
Dwelling Units	16,320	16,190	-1
Dwelling Units	2,501,432	4,498,576	+80
MHI (inflation adjusted)	+/-41,646	+/-70,859	+70

10 year period	2000	2010	% Change
Total Population	31,097	28,207	-9
Dwelling Units	16,311	16,190	-1
MHI (inflation adjusted)	+/-60,228	+/-70,859	+18
0 – 55 Years of Age	26,761	22,746	-15
55 – 100 Years of Age	4,257	5,595	+31
Black-African American	2,087	1,491	-27
Hispanic or Latino	7,834	5,668	-28
Housing for Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional	79	342	+333

18 year period	1996	2014	% Change
SFR avg price/sq. ft.	198	1,037	+523
Condo avg price/sq. ft.	171	750	+438

**\*\* VNC Diversity Vision Goal**

Consider strategies that encourage & facilitate realistic recommendations designed to increase economic diversity, including affordable [less expensive \*] housing, etc. [\* Clarification inserted November 24, 2014 by Joe Murphy]

On Fri, Apr 10, 2015 at 7:40 PM, Rick Feibusch <[rfeibusch1@gmail.com](mailto:rfeibusch1@gmail.com)> wrote:

In a word, Joe;

Where???? The last viable place was the Lincoln Place property, and after a decade of court battles and a bogus historic designation, we now have a bunch of substandard, outdated, and VERY EXPENSIVE market rate housing and a few new modern buildings..... Plays Vista, that is close and used to be available to consider is now all being built upmarket.... As I said, Where????

Best,

Rick Feibusch

On Fri, Apr 10, 2015 at 8:51 PM, Nancy Lamb <[nancy@nancylamb.com](mailto:nancy@nancylamb.com)> wrote:

Agree.

But where will this housing be built?

Nancy

On Mon, Apr 13, 2015 at 9:41 PM, Molly DeBower <[mollydebower@yahoo.com](mailto:mollydebower@yahoo.com)> wrote:

In a one word answer, yes.

On Sun, Apr 19, 2015 at 12:53 AM, <anonymous> wrote:

Joe,

Just some thoughts on the prospect of creating more units that are less expensive.

1. Lots that currently have those cute bungalows will eventually be sold for a lot of money. The seller may have bought on spec within the last 10 years. The seller may have owned for years and can no longer live by himself. In the former case, it is what many now do for a living. In the latter case, the sale price dictates the seller's standard of living for the rest of his life.
2. Much of Venice is zoned for single family dwellings - R1. My observation is that people who live in R1 areas are generally opposed to increasing density there (rezoning).
3. My observation is that much of Venice is opposed to increasing density period because of the corresponding increase in traffic.
4. Flyers circulated by realtors, showing lists of sale prices and the amount of time on the market, show that many people are willing and able to pay \$1,000,000+ just for a single family lot in Venice.
5. No one is going to pay around \$1,000,000 for a lot and build something to sell to anyone with low or even moderate income.
6. When building apartments, luxury units are more profitable than affordable units.
7. Short term rentals, especially if hotel tax is not paid, are more profitable than long term rentals. And visitors ARE renting them. In some cases, the income is desperately needed. But I suspect that in most cases it is a business.
8. Put all together, I see the diversity challenge as "How to convince people to deliberately make less money than is possible". Mello Act tries to force this, in order to make sure "affordable" units do not become extinct.

On Wed, Apr 22, 2015 at 8:49 PM, Nancy Lamb <[nancy@nancylamb.com](mailto:nancy@nancylamb.com)> wrote:

I agree.

We need diversity!

Nancy lamb

On Wed, Apr 22, 2015 at 8:49 PM, Robert Aronson <[r\\_aronson@ureach.com](mailto:r_aronson@ureach.com)> wrote:

Hi Joe,

Having lived in Venice for just over 30 years, it is my opinion that the conversion of rental housing stock into vacation rentals has significantly reduced the availability of rental housing stock and driven up the rents, making Venice less affordable. On my block alone (Catamaran Street), 10-15% of the apartments are now vacation rentals. I am strongly supportive of the efforts of Judy Goldman and Keep Neighborhoods First. Assuming diversity and affordability are related, the conversion of rental units into vacation rentals is affecting diversity.

Under the theory of supply and demand, I would guesstimate that every tenant in Venice is paying an extra 10%-20% in rent due to reduction in rental housing stock. That money is going into the pockets of those who rent apartments as vacation rentals, and is an obscene, and illegal, transfer of wealth.

Robert

On Wed, Apr 22, 2015 at 10:05 PM, <[nacount@aol.com](mailto:nacount@aol.com)> wrote:

This obsession with "diversity" and the expectation that a "discussion group" can successfully address this is with all due respect, ridiculous.

The discussion group needs to be a discussion, nothing more and nothing less.

Unless the committee becomes more of a discussion than a policy mandate that cannot -- and will not be implemented, I have to reconsider my continued participation.

Nick

[nacount@aol.com](mailto:nacount@aol.com)

On Thu, Apr 23, 2015 at 3:01 AM, Arnold Springer <[ulanbator@venice-ca.com](mailto:ulanbator@venice-ca.com)> wrote:

Forget it. Just let me and us Venice people transpire in peace. Stop dreaming about big projects which create lots of problems for those of us who live here.

These dreams you promote are nothing more than a Trojan Horse to line pockets of local landowners who already have large parcels of land which could be developed, and local ideologues and self interested small fry developers who enjoy and in fact thrive on the psychological aura and high produced by large project fantasies. And all of this under cover of the promise of diversity and helping poor people. Rubbish.

Arnold

On Thu, Apr 23, 2015 at 8:23 AM, CharlotteRulesIC <[charlotterules@me.com](mailto:charlotterules@me.com)> wrote:

sounds like a theory that one would use if one were able to profit off of building these new units. who would profit? know anyone personally?

developers always get around affordable housing.

new units that are built are always at or above market 'value'.

besides that scam, venice is already one big traffic jam.

drive any of the following at rush hour and tell me otherwise: lincoln, rose, AK, riviera, washington, venice.

and, developers never provide parking. they always scam that as well.

how many times must one be fooled before reality is visible?

Thank you, Charlotte

On Thu, Apr 23, 2015 at 9:27 AM, NC Support <[ncsupport@lacity.org](mailto:ncsupport@lacity.org)> wrote:

Hey Joe,

This is an amazing study of what has been happening in Venice area.....my mouth dropped open with the statistics you present.....

Good luck with this discussion

Tom H.

On Thu, Apr 23, 2015 at 12:12 PM, Yolanda Gonzalez <[firstmateyo@yahoo.com](mailto:firstmateyo@yahoo.com)> wrote:

dear Joe I am going to respond to your question asked. But need to put my facts together. And this will be coming not only from me but several tenants and friends.

Yolanda

On Fri, Apr 24, 2015 at 12:56 AM, Robert Aronson <[r\\_aronson@ureach.com](mailto:r_aronson@ureach.com)> wrote:

Greetings,

I don't often send a mass email to the Board, because you surely get enough emails as part of your service to our community. However, I believe we have some serious problems with the City Attorney and the Planning Department that are having a negative effect on our community, and I wanted to share one of my opinions with y'all. Below is my response to our Councilman's survey on mansionization. "Mansionization" is shorthand for compatibility of a proposed building's mass and scale with the surrounding neighborhood.

Robert Aronson

Hi Mike,

I am deeply concerned that you are not doing enough to substantively address several serious planning problems in Venice. They are: (1) the City Attorney's absolutely incorrect advice that the City is not permitted to consider mass and scale when evaluating a project under the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan; (2) the City Attorney's absolutely incorrect advice that no conditions may be imposed on a conditional use application to serve alcoholic beverages; (3) the City's failure to effectuate the intent of the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan when calculating the number of parking spaces required for a proposed project.

This survey is for mansionization, so today I am only going to address the mass and scale issue.

I am a lawyer and I am fairly familiar with land use law, as is your fantastic planning staff. The City Attorney is providing you with incorrect legal advice, to the point of legal malpractice. The advice that the City Attorney is giving you is better characterized as the advice of a buffoon, and it would be laughed out of Court. I have personally met with him several times, and something is seriously wrong. I am not smart enough to figure out the motivation of the City Attorney for doing this, other than Mr. Feuer's personal inexperience and lack of familiarity with land use law.

You recently brought a West L.A. Area Planning Commission decision back to the City Council to overturn it, based in the City Attorney's advice. For many years, the WLAAPC has been making determinations based on compatibility of the mass and scale of a proposed project with the neighborhood. That is the function of adjudicative bodies like the WLAAPC - they make subjective determinations.

The City Attorney is telling you that the compatibility of a proposed project's mass and scale can not legally be considered, and that the building envelope outlined in the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan

is the exclusive criteria for assessing the compatibility of a proposed development with the mass and scale of the neighborhood. This is a reasonable interpretation of the VCZSP, but the other interpretation, which has been applied for many years, is an equally reasonable interpretation. It is simply wrong for the City Attorney to advise you that only one interpretation is legally correct.

If you are going to accept the City Attorney's position, then you owe it to your constituents to fix the problem immediately, with an ICO pending final resolution of the problem, for the Specific Plan area west of Lincoln.

I strongly dislike ICO's. I think an ICO shows that the City is not doing its job in a timely manner. Unfortunately, that is our situation.

Nearly all property owners who want to build a larger home on their property will consult with their neighbors, show them their plans, and seek feedback. Otherwise, they will be living next door to people who are angry with them, and very few people would purposely put themselves in that position. I have been the lawyer in numerous property boundary disputes. Having your neighbors dislike you is no way to live.

The current situation exists because developers are building spec houses in Venice and their goal is to max out square footage, neighbors be damned. Your decision to accept the City Attorney's advice allows spec builders to build large houses that block the sunlight and ocean breezes of the neighbors, and destroy their privacy with roof decks looking into yards and windows. Your decision to follow the advice of the City Attorney is only helping spec builders, and the rare property owner who does not consult with or care about their neighbors when they build. Your decision to follow the City Attorney's advice is hurting the community that you have been elected to serve.

Under the City Attorney's new advice, City Planning is going to allow a VSO for any building west of Lincoln that is 30' tall with a sloped roof and is set back 5' from the neighbors on both sides, except for the walk streets neighborhood in Milwood. If we have spec builders coming to Venice and putting up three-story boxes of this size, we might as well be Manhattan Beach. All character of Venice will be lost, not to mention the sunlight and ocean breezes of the neighbors.

Please assist the community in working with the City to address mass and scale. Please convene a Community Meeting on this subject. You have an amazingly talented planning staff. Please put them to work on this, with urgency.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Robert Aronson  
[\(310\) 278-8018](tel:3102788018)

On Fri, Apr 24, 2015 at 12:10 PM, soiam3 via Board of Officers <[board@venicenc.org](mailto:board@venicenc.org)> wrote:

Dear Robert,

Thank you so much for this letter to Councilman Bonin and others. I have been so very upset and frustrated with the building of the monstrosity next door to me at 417 Sunset Avenue. It is massive -- taller than the 2-story apartment building west of my home on the corner of 4th and Sunset Avenue. When the Ramos' moved away in 2013 two women showed up stating they were the new owners of the property. They borrowed items from me as they set up house and pretended they were going to be residents.

Shortly after different people every weekend were occupying the house and I discovered my neighbors did not live there at all. Instead they were using the house as a vacation home for people visiting from all over the world - South America, Japan, Germany, etc. When I asked them what was going on they said they were going to tear the house down and build side by side single family residence. She also told me that she was part of a development company that was building houses throughout the Venice community. They were at that time already building two such homes on Rennie Avenue.

When this building next door to me is finished it will be a three-story mansion blocking sun and view, from front to back, allowing top down viewing into my kitchen, dining area and family room. I have had to remind the workers that they are not to begin work before 8am because at time they begin with the hammering and use of power tools as early as 7:15 am.

I am so disgusted that as I walk or drive my community I see changes so intrusive, counter to our architecture and community culture, and as you stated, so indifferent to the voices of the indigenous community, it is sickening. I hope that Councilman Bonin hears and listens to you. This is too much to bear.

Naomi Nightingale  
[310-663-6694](tel:310-663-6694)

On Fri, Apr 24, 2015 at 2:03 PM, g <[soiam3@aol.com](mailto:soiam3@aol.com)> wrote:

Yes, I agree and I thank you for your continuing pursuit of inclusiveness, dialogue and action regarding extremely important and life-changing issues in the Venice Community.

Naomi

P.S. I am overwhelmed with too much to do but in the face of laws and walls effecting and potentially eradicating all that is meaningful to me in Venice -- tired or not, I have to actively involve myself. Thank you for your lead.

On Sat, Apr 25, 2015 at 8:35 PM, Elaine Spierer <[espieler@verizon.net](mailto:espieler@verizon.net)> wrote:

I found the approval by VNC to encourage topless on Venice's beach's entertaining. Why some people would be a bit exercised about this frivolous subject when Rome is burning around this town is understandable. But, really, Joe--you had no opinion on the loss of Venice's housing stock because of the extraordinary proliferation of STR's by owners who once rented to people who actually want to live in Venice and who form the backbone of our community. And I won't even get into the pressure on rent controlled unit occupants to get rid of those who are often old and weak and who don't have the stamina to fight back to save their homes. There is a reason why less than 30 days rentals are against the law. For a person dedicated to quality of life issues in Venice, the loss of masses of rentals and the destabilization of our neighborhoods should worry you and I am surprised with your abstention.

I enjoy reading your emails.

e

On Sat, Apr 25, 2015 at 9:58 PM, Barbara Lonsdale <[barblonsdale@yahoo.com](mailto:barblonsdale@yahoo.com)> wrote:

Nice Joe! I may be losing the place I live in n needed the laugh so thank you too Melissa :)  
Barbara Lonsdale

On Sun, Apr 26, 2015 at 10:54 AM, Barbara Lonsdale <[barblonsdale@yahoo.com](mailto:barblonsdale@yahoo.com)> wrote:

And also it spreads awareness that the VNC even exists as many people are not aware of it - even local residents. And it goes far beyond that - it's about equality.

Barbara Lonsdale

On Thu, Apr 30, 2015 at 7:43 PM, <[anonymous](#)> wrote:

Okay, Joe. According to the by-laws,  
"ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

A. Mission Statement: To improve the quality of life in Venice by building community and to secure support from the City of Los Angeles for the resources needed to achieve our goals.

B. Purpose: The purpose of the VNC shall be:

1. To engage the broad spectrum of Stakeholders for collaboration and deliberation on matters affecting the community including events, issues and projects.
2. To work with other organizations in Venice and other Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils that want help in accomplishing their objectives or projects that the Venice Neighborhood Council desires to support.
3. To promote Stakeholder participation and advocacy in Los Angeles City government decision-making processes and to promote greater awareness of available City resources.
4. To be an advocate for Venice to government and private agencies."

Why DO you abstain so much, as a VNC Board member?



On Mon, Jun 1, 2015 at 11:01 AM, Mike Bonin <[mike@11thdistrict.com](mailto:mike@11thdistrict.com)> wrote:

Dear Vnc --

In the past few months, many of you have contacted me about one of the hottest issues on the Westside -- the short-term rental industry. I have heard from hundreds people, representing a variety of perspectives. Critics have spoken about the negative impacts on residential neighborhoods, rental stock, and affordable housing, and about unfair competition with hotels. Supporters have spoken glowingly about the ability of hard-working Angelenos to make ends meet by renting out a room or back house.

The City has begun working on a new set of regulations to govern short-term rentals. Personally, I want a set of regulations that: strictly forbids the elimination of existing rental housing; protects neighborhood character while still allowing people to augment their income by renting out a room or their primary residence; collects transient occupancy tax to help fund affordable housing and other city services.

But the City of Los Angeles will never have smart and sensible rules if our ability to govern short-term rentals is short-circuited by the state. There is a proposed law that we sorely need in order to come up with any reasonable and enforceable standards. Senate Bill 593 — will protect local control and guarantees cities will have the information they need to enforce its rules — has a hearing this coming week, and I have proposed the City of Los Angeles go on record supporting this legislation.

**I need your help to make sure SB 593 passes.** If you believe the City of Los Angeles and other cities should have the ability to regulate short-term rentals as you see fit, you can help. **Urge your state legislator to support SB 593.** You can find your legislator and her or his contact information

here: [http://www.legislature.ca.gov/legislators\\_and\\_districts/legislators/your\\_legislator.html](http://www.legislature.ca.gov/legislators_and_districts/legislators/your_legislator.html)

The City Council will also consider my resolution to support SB593 and there will be a brief hearing about the motion at tomorrow's Council meeting. You can **attend the City Council hearing on the matter 10 a.m. Tuesday at City Council Chambers**, City Hall, 200 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles.

Thank you very much for helping me put neighborhoods first.

Regards,

MIKE

***P.S. Please forward this message to your friends and neighbors.***

Council District 11 - 1645 Corinth Ave, 201, Los Angeles, CA 90025, United States  
This email was sent to [board@venicenc.org](mailto:board@venicenc.org). To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).  
You can also keep up with Mike Bonin on [Twitter](#).

On Mon, Jun 1, 2015 at 4:01 PM, joedmur <[joedmur@gmail.com](mailto:joedmur@gmail.com)> wrote:  
I support this, Mike.