

January 15, 2014

Hon. Mike Bonin
Councilman
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Mike.Bonin@lacity.org

RE: Winter Shelter Storage Location

Dear Mike:

At its regularly scheduled board meeting on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 in response to a letter from you, the VNC board solicited various possible locations from stakeholders where an alternate location for the voluntary storage program might be moved to function complementary to the annual Winter Shelter Program operated by the City and County.

You chose to site for the 2013-2014 Winter Shelter Storage program at an existing, fenced storage container located in a Recreation and Parks area behind the paddle tennis courts and asked Venice Community Housing to manage the volunteer effort to staff the facility.

The VNC solicited suggestions from stakeholders for possible other locations at a publicly noticed meeting where this matter was agendized. Several locations were discussed followed by the board voting to rank the suggestions. The recommendations were sent to you in a letter dated 1.2.14 asking you for a final decision. (Full disclosure: due to my working relationship with Venice Community Housing, I chose to recuse myself from the discussion and vote, although their participation is not for remuneration).

To date, we have not heard from you directly, but after reaching Cecelia Castillo by telephone for an update to prepare the January agenda, I was told that your office doesn't accept that locations recommended by the VNC were properly vetted. Those locations in order are: Westminster Senior Center (8 votes); First Baptist Church of Venice (3 votes); miscellaneous other locations 1 or 0 votes each, including the present location.

In addition, the VNC Administrative Committee was informed at its 1.12.14 meeting, that the current storage bins are full and can accept no additional clients who wish to access the storage program to go to the shelter.

We find this situation untenable and respectfully request that you attend the Board meeting on Tuesday, January 21 to explain why the program cannot be moved to Westminster Senior Center, as it is an unused City building and deemed a good location for a voluntary storage program, especially since until 2 years ago served for years as the site for winter shelter pick up and drop off location and also served as home to a Safe Place for Youth.

It also meets the criteria of being close to the beach area, adjacent to a dog park where lots of noise and foot traffic exists and where neighbors are accustomed to many coming and goings. Most importantly, now that the Warn, Bag and Tag program is underway, it is legally imperative that an adequate, functioning storage program be available to all those who wish to safely maintain their possession to avoid being picked up. At present, there is insufficient space for more storage which must be resolved.

I am attaching the VNC's 1.2.14 letter listing the VNC recommended locations and look forward to your future plans for the voluntary storage program. We request a visit in person so that we may ask questions.

Thank you very much and stay warm.

Sincerely,



Linda Lucks
President