

This is a request that the **VNC Board**, at its July 22, 2023 meeting, renew the [Discussion Forum Committee](#) status as a VNC Ad Hoc Committee.

The [Discussion Forum Committee](#) is a VNC ad hoc committee created by the VNC Board on April 17, 2012 and its term was renewed December 18, 2012, November 19, 2013, June 17, 2014, July 21, 2015, July 19, 2016, January 16, 2018, June 18, 2019, and September 21, 2021. Its mission is:

Discussion Forum Committee Mission Statement

Provide a monthly forum for discussion of long-term matters affecting the [Venice Community](#) within the context of the [VNC Vision Goals](#)*

*The VNC Vision Goals were adopted unanimously by the Board on April 21, 2009 as Standing Rule 20 (now 18) and amended unanimously by the Board on May 20, 2014 to insert the [Focus on Children Vision Goal](#). For further information about the DFC, contact Joe Murphy at 310-305-1444 or at joedmur@gmail.com.

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 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.

Since 2012, although its membership and **Vision Goal** focus has fluctuated, its **intent** has been consistently adhered to – which is (within the context of the above unanimously Board adopted [VNC Vision Goals](#)) to:

create a working framework of integrated strategies capable of achieving, over time, broader consensus

An example of this is the [Discussion Forum Committee](#)'s involvement, with the [Homeless Committee](#), in drafting and orchestrating presentations to the [VNC Board](#) and its adoption of the *Tiny Homes* and *Permanent Housing* motions – thereby providing the [VNC Board](#) with a **working framework** which could enable it to achieve, over time, a **broad consensus** and an **integrated strategy** capable of addressing the ongoing complex issue of systemic homelessness. This issue has polarized the Venice community (and its [VNC Board](#) representatives) into often very angry and hostile factions – indeed, the word “ugly” would not be out-of-place in describing it. It is a pattern which has existed since before the VNC's inception in 2004 and which seems likely to continue to plague the recently elected [VNC Board](#). This thread has been the subject of discussions at almost every DFC meeting since its 2012 formation.

Sincerely,

DFC Co-chairs

Joe Murphy Paul Davis John Palka

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

* Your comments & insights in response to this email would be much appreciated. Please note, however, that, unless you state otherwise in your response, all or part of your response (including contact info) may be distributed to others deemed likely to be interested in your thoughts.

* Please feel free to contact me (Joe Murphy) at 310-305-1444 or at joedmur@gmail.com.