

Venice Neighborhood Council

LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 www.VeniceNC.org Email:
Chair-LUPC@VeniceNC.org

Contact Information:

Name: Sarah Ross Wauters

Nombre el letra de Molde

Qualifying Stakeholder Address: 

Dirección

Street address (if different): N/A

Dirección, si diferente

City: Los Angeles State: CA Zip Code: 90292

Ciudad

Estado

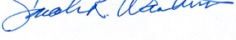
Código Postal

Email (mandatory)  Phone (mandatory): 

Corero electronico (obligatorio)

Telefono (obligatorio)

I hereby certify, that I wish to serve on the Land Use and Planning Committee of the Venice Neighborhood Council and I am a Stakeholder within the boundaries of the VNC area.

Stakeholder Signature  Date Aug 12, 2025

Firma

Proof of stakeholder status via a valid credential must be presented at the August Board meeting. A valid credential includes, but is not limited to one of the following: a CA Driver's License or CA Residency Card (for an address within the VNC area); a school ID Card (for a school with in the VNC boundaries); a business card (in combination with any of the following with a matching Venice address: Business license, business check, or pay stub); a recent utility bill (for an address within the VNC area); an imprinted check (including an address within the VNC area); a Pay stub (from a business within the VNC area); a Passport (only in combination with any other credential item); a school report card (from a school with in the VNC boundaries); a property tax bill (with an address within the VNC area)

Answer all these questions; please limit your answers to 200 words or less each and return to the chairs of the Land Use Committee (chair-LUPC@venicenc.org), Rules & Selections Committee (rules@venicenc.org), and the Secretary (secretary@venicenc.org)

Questions:

1) Please explain why you wish to serve on the LUPC.

a) Have you served before on the LUPC or other planning and land use related committee? If so, what committee and when? *I have served on the Venice Arbor Committee for 5 years, and I have served as its chair or co-chair for 4 of those years.*

b) Please state your professional qualifications or related experience relevant to this position. *I am a lawyer (UCLA '94), former solar energy developer, and photographer. As a former developer of solar energy for affordable housing builders, I am aware of the interplay of code, the demands for affordable housing development, and the difficulties of planning communities that serve all constituents. I have worked on many projects involving State, county and local government bodies and this informs my awareness of the challenges of sensitive development. My work as a photographer makes it possible for me to see that the creative impulse in Venice must also be acknowledged and respected for the community to retain its unique nature.*

c) Please indicate your understanding of the time involved in terms of meetings and case work. *10 – 15 hours per week. Meetings are once a month or more.*

2) Please list your previous and/or current neighborhood or community involvement. *I work extensively as a volunteer for Verdant Venice Group, working to plant trees, enhance public spaces and educate our residents and businesses about green spaces and urban canopy. I have also served on the Board of Grid Alternatives, a nationwide non-profit that installs free solar energy on residential buildings for lower and modest income households. While I did not serve on the Venice Neighborhood Council adhoc planning committee, which met most of the first half of this year, I attended over 50% of the meetings, learned substantially about the planning department's plans and goals, and heard the constituents of Venice speak about their concerns and desires.*

3) Please list the three most critical planning and land use issues you feel are facing the Venice Community. *1) The balance required to meet the demands of state laws and city planning to further densify the neighborhood as against 2) the economic forces that push to build larger homes as opposed to affordable homes. 3) Additionally, we must balance these two demands against the need for park and green space as healthful access to nature for children and all residents of Venice. There is room for all if development is done thoughtfully, carefully and sensitively.*

4) Please review the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan and the Venice Land Use Plan (which was certified by the California Coastal Commission) and comment on your opinion of each of them. I support both of these plans as they are presently law – in other words, my opinion matters little as I would be tasked with interpreting and following these pieces of legislation. In the Venice Community Plan, I particularly support the specific issues and opportunities identified in the “Community Issues and Opportunities” and wish to identify ways to further the pursuit of those opportunities. As far as future changes are concerned, I believe greater density should be concentrated on major thoroughfares such as Washington Blvd. and Lincoln Blvd, but that setbacks should be larger to afford greater and more attractive visual break of trees and landscaping. Such space also allows for absorption of storm water runoff and greater soil health, both important aspects of the environment which affect the health of our ocean. Where community efforts have inserted trees and landscaping and parks, these should be left intact and protected from destruction. Within the smaller streets and neighborhoods, I believe that building heights and density should remain commensurate with the existing housing stock, except that ADUs can be added, and that roads should not be widened, as the greater speed of vehicles results in less safe streets.

5) How do you view your role in private interactions with Applicants who have projects proposed before the Land Use and Planning Committee? I will not speak privately to anyone who has an active project in the pipeline – all discussion should take place during meetings. I consider such private conversations unethical, and I will follow not only the ethics of the LUPC but also the ethics demanded of me as an attorney. If I am acquainted with and known to the developer, architect or other participant, I will recuse myself from the discussion and voting on such project.

6) What is your understanding of and opinion on the VNC Ethics/Conflict of Interest requirements? My understanding is that the VNC ethics and conflict of interest is perhaps a bit looser than I would recommend. However, I looked everywhere and did not see an actual “Code of Ethics” on the VNC website. I would impose a strict “appearance of conflict” standard to the self-disqualification of a voting committee member necessary for any conflict arising from an agenda item. If I am elected, I will impose upon myself the strict code of ethics of the CA Bar – which would impose the same or greater level of financial interest standards and self-recusal standards as the City of Los Angeles form I signed when on the Venice Arbor Committee. Any appearance of conflict, financial or otherwise, would cause me to recuse from a discussion or a vote on any project.

Access VCZSP at <http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/specplan/pdf/VenCoastal.pdf>.

Access Venice Land Use Plan at

<http://cityplanning.lacity.org/complan/othrplan/OPAREA/VENLUP.HTM> Page