



Venice Neighborhood Council

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 / www.VeniceNC.org

Email: info@VeniceNC.org Phone: 310-421-8627

Venice Arbor Committee (VARb) Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: August 21, 2026

Meeting Time: 11:00 AM Pacific Time

Meeting Location: Zinque, 1440 Lincoln Ave., Venice, CA

Contact: sarahwauters123@gmail.com, andreas.kemkes@venicenc.org

PUBLIC ACCESS OF RECORDS:

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Andreas Kemkes, Chair	Present	Barry Campion	Absent
Isabelle Duvivier	Present	Janin Paine	Absent
Eric Schiff	Present	Sarah Wauters	Present

1. Call to Order at 11:05
2. PUBLIC COMMENT - Bethany Gorfine from Marina del Rey made a statement regarding the Coral Trees on Via Marina and their precarious state vis-a-vis Beaches and Harbors removal. (Statement attached) Caroline Dixon, who is actively involved in saving the Coral Trees on San Vicente Blvd. Los Angeles has established the Coral Trees on the LA side (East of 26th Street) as a Los Angeles historic cultural monument #148 and this has resulted in watering the trees. But the Santa Monica portion has not been designated and the trees had their watering cutoff about 10 years ago. This year more than 13 trees have been cut down. Question: does Santa Monica plan to replace them? Why?
3. REPORTS
 - a. Chair Report – Andreas Kemkes - need for new members of VARB - Cadine Navarro has been proposed.
 - b. CFAC/NCSA Report – Isabelle Duvivier - CFAC has a new Chair, Adele Slaughter - who wants to change the way CFAC runs. She wants each rep to present reports monthly on impactful projects related to trees. Isabelle will send out email regarding the tree projects in CD11 – Jay Ross in West LA/Sawtelle is on land use committee and is similarly (to SRW) effecting the planting of trees through his LUPC. The report would include all projects that effect trees. Also, SRW of LUPC could give report on projects that remove trees, private land, trees lost, trees not planted because of shortened setbacks due to density bonuses, ADU building, as well as trees required of developers.
 - c. CFAC report – from Shade LA (Edith de Guzman) interviewed tree planting partners with findings that the tree spacing guidelines are too far apart. VARB should draft a letter to support John Lee's motion to shorten the tree width - Mariane King is his rep on CFAC. Seconded motion we would like to see other things added to it. More mulch and less concrete. SRW Task to draft CIS for next meeting.



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- d. LUPC Report - Sarah Wauters - Working on AI Fresco applications. ID has idea that we could plant trees as part of shading AI Fresco diners.
- e. VVG Report – Isabelle Duvivier - N/A
- f. Pollinator/Watershed Project – Janin Paine - N/A

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Tree Removals -

i. Street widening -

Developers are required to widen the street to a regulation width. This is a dated requirement: Municipal Code 12.37 (from 1962) also known as the R-3 Ordinance. In late 2024, State AB 3177 was passed, then LA City Council adopted this to limit the automatic requirements to developers unless there was some overriding safety consideration. SRW will inform LUPC that these requirements can be gotten around by addressing Traci Park's office.

ii. Illegal pruning - what can be done and what is the City doing?

CD11 monthly tree report (past and proposed large scale tree removals) - can someone prepare monthly? Leadership considering drafting a motion that would increase enforcement of illegal trimming penalties – we need to draft a motion to perhaps establish pruning fines and language in the permit as to how trim a tree. LAMC Section 46 (protected tree ordinance) Section 62.165 (gives city control over the trees in city property). Must obtain permission to cut trees that are city property. More stringent for protected trees. We should draft a motion to enforce higher fines and lower standards of guilt.

- b. Encinitas Native Tree and Plant Ordinance - LA County is now drafting its own version. Draft a motion to support and start movement in LA for similar legislation.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Budget for Rec and Parks - this is going to be on the ballot in November.

6. ADJOURN - 12:30pm

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