Venice Neighborhood Council

LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 | www.VeniceNC.org
Email: Chair-LUPC@VeniceNC.org

MINUTES

Thursday, October 29, 2026, 6 PM

1) **The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm**

2) **Roll Call**

Mark Mack, Chair	Mehrnoosh Mojallali	Gabriel Ruspini
~~Jalal Awan~~	Nicole Meyer	David Turnbull
Jenesa Kurland	Robin Rudisill, Vice Chair & Secretary	Sarah Wauters

~~Strikethrough~~ indicates absence

3) **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest or Ex-Parte Communications**
Robin Rudisill announced that because she lives within 500 feet of 1 Washington Blvd she is assumed to have a conflict of interest and required to recuse from agenda item 10; however, she is allowed to give a public comment as an individual/member of the public and then remain a member of the general public (and not act as a committee member) until that matter has concluded. Also, she stated that she lives within 1,000 feet of 301 Washington Blvd, agenda item 9, but as there would not be an impact on her property by the changes proposed--including no change to any leases on her property, no increase or decrease of the potential rental value of her property, no change to the actual or legally allowable use of her property, and no change to her use and enjoyment of her property--she may participate in that matter.

4) **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes for October 7, 2026**
https://www.venicenc.org/assets/documents/5/meeting6ade6e158940c.pdf
Mark moved approval, Robin seconded, and the minutes were approved 8-0-0 (1 absent).

5) **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items** (10 minute limit)

6) **Chair Update**
Need to agendize & review the Walker study, perhaps a joint meeting with the VNC Parking, Transportation & Infrastructure committee.
Noted that re. the many inquires with respect to historic preservation of the Fox Theater, when reviewing the current project at that site an historic preservation review was conducted and it was required that the sign be preserved.
We hope to have an in person meeting at the library on December 3rd.

7) **ADU processing by California Coastal Commission**

Noted that the ADUs (see new cases in Appendix) are small, 3 are prefab/pre-approved by DBS, but David would like to further review 3906 Pacific Ave at the next meeting.

8) **52 Windward Ave** (at Pacific Ave) (rehearing with applicant presentation)
DIR-2026-3938-BSA ENV-2026-3266-EAF
Project Description: Building & Safety appeal ("BSA") of a LADBS determination re. an order to comply related to signage painted on the building.

The ZA hearing took place on October 7, 2026 and the ZA took the case under advisement for 8 weeks.
Planner: Undine.Petrulis@lacity.org (Assistant Zoning Administrator Jack Chiang)
LUPC Staff: Gabriel Ruspini & Sarah Wauters
Prior LUPC Motion:
The Venice Neighborhood Council opposes the DBS appeal and supports the Department of Building & Safety position on the DBS appeal regarding the signage painted on the building at 52 Windward Ave, Case No. DBS-260034-DCP and Order to Comply #A-6539238, and submits the attached letter of explanation to the Zoning Administrator recounting the facts and case law.
Motion:
The Venice Neighborhood Council supports the continued legal non-conforming use of the signage painted on the building at 52 Windward Ave, only for non-illuminated on-site signage.

Moved by Robin, Seconded by Mark
Vote: 6-2 (Sarah & Gabriel)-0 (1 absent)

9) **301 Washington Blvd/Siamese Garden and Baja Cantina** (between Grand Canal & Sanborn Ave)
DIR-2026-2703-CDP, ENV-2026-2704-EAF, ADM-2026-2705-CZW
Case on hold
Planner: Sienna Kuo
Project Description: Al Fresco Dining at existing parking lot & construction of new coverings for portions of the patios.
LUPC Staff: Jen Kurland & Sarah Wauters

Motion:
The Venice Neighborhood Council recommends the approval of the project to make the temporary Al Fresco space permanent at 301 Washington Blvd/Siamese Garden and Baja Cantina, with the following conditions:

1. **Neglected exterior electrical and plumbing is fixed or replaced.**
2. **Fence between Siamese Garden and Baja Cantina is opened to allow Siamese Garden patrons to use Baja Cantina restrooms.**
3. **Remove stage.**
4. **Add four (4) native trees on site in Al Fresco area.**
5. **Remove drive apron and curb cut on Washington Blvd. Install parkway brick pavers to match adjacent parkway and plant a tree. Install curb which allows for legal street parking.**
6. **Al Fresco operating hours remain as per City ordinance for abutting properties: not later than 10:30 PM Sunday – Thursday and 11:00 PM on Fridays & Saturdays.**

Moved by Mark, Seconded by Sarah
Vote: 8-0-0 (1 absent)

10) **1 Washington Blvd/Nalu Vida** (at Ocean Front Walk) **SUBSEQUENT TO A PUBLIC HEARING, CONTINUED TO A FUTURE MEETING PENDING RESOLUTION OF DISCREPANCIES & COMPLIANCE CONCERNS**
DIR-2026-3288-CDP, ENV-2026-3289-EAF

Case on hold
Planner: Sienna Kuo
Project Description: Al Fresco Dining patio on existing portion currently operating under the temporary program, with 872 sf & 67 seats
LUPC Staff: Sarah Wauters & Gabriel Ruspini

Notes from meeting, to be carried forward to a future LUPC Staff Report:

- **A CDP was granted in 1995, *subject to restrictions on seating capacity that have not been followed and conditions requiring certain improvements that were not completed.***
- **The current application seeks retroactive approval of the 2019 consolidation of three spaces and approval of outdoor dining under the Al Fresco program.**
- **The applicant indicated willingness to comply with restrictions on outdoor amplified sound, including removal of outdoor speakers and limiting live music to the interior.**
- **Seating capacity was discussed, including 67 seats; per the applicant, *the relationship between interior seating, awning-covered seating, and outdoor seating requires clarification.***
- **Sarah W. noted an inconsistency between earlier representations that outdoor speakers had already been removed and the applicant's current statement that they would be removed.**
- **She presented photographs showing that the existing patio configuration differs from the submitted drawings. In particular, the patio appears to extend into the bicycle lane.**
- **The property owner's representative agreed to revise the application drawings to accurately reflect existing patio conditions.**
- **Four public commenters, including the Venice Pier Association chair, a former VNC VP, and the owner of Venice Paparazzi, expressed strong support for the current application, noting the importance of the broader economic context and of supporting local businesses.**
- **One nearby resident asked why the applicant was seeking committee support while the property remained out of compliance for so long and another asked about the accuracy of the applicant's representations, citing ongoing music on the outdoor patio and commercial activities occurring outside.**
- **One resident reported recurring complaints concerning outdoor live music, describing the disturbances as persistent and ongoing. Another noted that the restaurant was supposed to stop the live music, but it continues.**
- **Committee member Robin Rudisill (speaking as a member of the public) expressed concern about the conflicts between the conditions in the existing CDP and existing conditions and the current CDP application and suggested an amendment to the existing CDP. She noted that the restaurant would be subject to closing times of 10:30 p.m. on weekdays and 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. She questioned whether the trellis over the sidewalk area should be allowed as it seems to privatize the sidewalk area.**
- **A resident living behind the property described the cumulative impacts of restaurant and other commercial activity in the area, expressed concern about deteriorating street conditions, including circumstances that have made walking his dog uncomfortable, and emphasized that businesses should, at minimum, comply with applicable regulations.**
- **The applicant's representative acknowledged that the property is not currently in full compliance and explained that the application is intended to address those deficiencies. She noted that they are no longer proceeding with the hearing date that planning had**

issued because the Coastal Commission is making some amendments and considering some procedural updates to the Al Fresco Ordinance.

- **The restaurant owner/operator stated that outdoor music and speaker use had ceased and committed to removing the remaining elevated speakers and correcting the patio configuration.**
- **Sarah W. recommended continuing the item until the applicant addresses the outstanding compliance issues and reconciles the submitted plans with actual site conditions, including status of the bike lane or directional, and reiterated concerns regarding outdoor speakers and amplified music, noting that the committee had received numerous letters complaining about outdoor music.**
- **The applicant will return to LUPC after resolving the identified discrepancies and compliance concerns.**

11) **924-926-928 Marco Place** (between Linden Ave & Lincoln Blvd) **CARRIED FORWARD FR PRIOR MTG. CONTINUED TO NEXT MEETING**
ADM-2026-1810-CEX, DIR-2026-3122-SPPC, ENV-2026-3123-CE
Case NOT on hold
SPPC Determination letter issued on August 12th (last day to file appeal August 27, 2026):
https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/document/MTUxNjg0/82065561-f922-4efb-8b32-0e189f041683/pdd/archive
City Planner: Luis.c.Lopez@lacity.org (SPPC)
Alex.Vela@lacity.org/Coastal Staff (CEX)
Project Description: Repair & rehab of existing bungalows.
LUPC Staff: Nicole Meyer

Notes from minutes of October 1, 2026 meeting: The committee discussed the removal of the entire previously existing landscape, which also removed the shade previously covering the walk street. It was noted that the Coastal Act's definition of "Development," which requires a CDP, includes the "removal or harvesting of major vegetation other than for agricultural purposes." This is particularly relevant in the walk streets, a "highly scenic area" as per LUP Policy I.D.3 (page II-26). All elements of the building must be considered (framing, windows, doors, roof, foundation, outside stucco or siding or other materials) to determine extent of demolition, not just framing. It was noted that there was no historic review done in the City's review of the project because the project was processed as a Coastal Exemption, which is a ministerial permit. Only discretionary permits, such as a CDP, trigger a CEQA review and a Mello review (which might have been beneficial for the then-existing tenants). An historic property being processed as a Coastal Exemption is an important issue and should be looked at more carefully by City and State (Coastal Commission). Some of the neighbors applied for historic preservation, but too many of the historic elements had been changed (including 100% of the landscape, which was a key part of the historic property), and the historic preservation application was denied by the City. However, the property is still listed as a Contributor. Members noted that we do not want to see a precedent of projects evading CDPs and that we should be very firm about not setting a bad precedent. Nicole is in process of obtaining the details of the building permits obtained by the applicant, which appear to be self-issued online.

12) **Al Fresco Dining visual standards for public right-of-way and enforcement issues. CONTINUED TO NEXT MEETING**

13) **Review of new projects listed in the CNC City Planning Early Notification Reports since the last LUPC meeting**: See **APPENDIX.** **CONTINUED TO NEXT MEETING**

14) **Case Status/Stalled Cases, New Case Assignments, Procedures**—roundtable. **CONTINUED TO NEXT MEETING**

15) **Brainstorming on Policy Issues for future review**—roundtable. **CONTINUED TO NEXT MEETING**

16) **The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 pm.**

APPENDIX

Note: there will not be a hearing on the individual projects listed below. There will ***only*** be a discussion on whether additional review by LUPC and the Board will be waived. If not waived, the project will be assigned and reviewed by LUPC.

a. Projects for which additional review is waived will be forwarded to the VNC for their review. As per the VNC Standing Rules (6-18-24), those projects for which additional review is waived will appear on the next VNC Board Agenda under the Agenda Item title "Projects for which VNC Recommendation is Waived, Without Prejudice." The Board can vote to approve the list or approve a modified list and send any one of the projects listed back to LUPC for review and a public hearing. The following cases for which further review is waived by LUPC will be forwarded to the VNC for its disposition:

3906 Pacific Ave
625 Crestmoore Place
636 Vernon Ave
708 Brooks Ave
676 Marr St

b. Projects needing further review/assignments:

None

NEW PROJECTS FROM CNC REPORTS SINCE LAST MEETING:

October 17, 2026 CNC report:

1321 Palms Blvd (between Walgrove Ave & Glyndon Ave)
VTT-85418-SH-HCA
Case on hold
Planner: Luis.c.Lopez@lacity.org
Project Description: Vesting Tentative Tract Map for a 7-lot subdivision & 7-unit housing development pursuant to SB 1123 SHRA (Starter Home Revitalization Act).
LUPC Staff: Robin Rudisill

3906 Pacific Ave (between Ironsides St & Hurricane St)
DIR-2026-5250-MEL-HCA
Case NOT on hold
Planner: Connie.Chauv@lacity.org

Project Description: Addition & conversion of portion of existing 3 dwelling unit property to 2 accessory dwelling units & 1 unpermitted dwelling unit.
LUPC Staff: David Turnbull

625 Crestmoore Place (between Abbot Kinney Blvd & Oakwood Ave)
DIR-2026-5280-MEL-HCA
Case not on hold
Planner: Ira.Brown@lacity.org
Project Description: Detached ADU approved by Coastal Commission Waiver 5-26-0008-W.
LUPC Staff: David Turnbull

636 Vernon Ave (between 6th Ave & 7th Ave)
DIR-2026-5288-MEL-HCA
Case NOT on hold
Planner: Ira.Brown@lacity.org
Project Description: Detached ADU.
LUPC Staff: David Turnbull

708 Brooks Ave (near 7th Ave)
DIR-2026-5292-MEL-HCA
Case NOT on hold
Planner: Ira.Brown@lacity.org
Project Description: Junior ADU approved by Coastal Commission Waiver 5-26-0176-W.
LUPC Staff: David Turnbull

676 Marr St (at Olive St)
DIR-2026-5357-MEL
Case NOT on hold
Planner: Ira.Brown@lacity.org
Project Description: Conversion of existing garage to JADU.
LUPC Staff: David Turnbull

613 Rose Ave (between 6th Ave & Ruth Ave)
DIR-2026-5375-CDP, ENV-2026-5376-EAF
Case NOT on hold
Planner: Connie.Chauv@lacity.org
Project Description: Change of use of 1st floor restaurant to fitness studio.
LUPC Staff: Jen Kurland