



Venice Neighborhood Council



Questions:

Please limit your answers to the 9 questions below to 200 words or less each.

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

I care about the future of our community. I feel to make change in the world I need to start locally and work my way outward.

One of the biggest problems that faces us today as Los Angeles residences is poor leadership by our city officials and employees. By participating in the VNC and most particularly on the board of the LUPC, I feel my time will be best spent getting my ideas and visions heard.

2) Have you served before in the LUPC or other planning and land use related committee? If so, what committee and when?

Yes, as a member of Councilwoman Galantars' Citizen Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC), I served the Venice community for a little over ten years. These were monthly meetings that heard any land use and planning cases that were asking for exceptions to the Venice Interim Control Ordinance (Venice ICO). The ICO was the first attempt by the City to create a local coastal program for the State Coastal Commission. It later was revised and re-written to become what is now known as the Venice Specific Plan (VSP) and the Venice Land Use Plan (LUP).

As a member of CPAC, I heard many cases of the type and nature that the LUPC is now hearing. I have a lot of history about cases that were heard in the past and how the CPAC board advised the council office on these projects.

I also participated in the planning workshops of the late 1980's that were conducted by the California Coastal Conservancy. These workshops produced a vision statement for the City and the Coastal Commission that were later incorporated and used to create the LUP and the VSP. I regularly attended Area A, B and C workshops and wrote the roof-top sightline study with my wife. This document was included as a reference in the LUP.



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- 3) Please state your professional qualifications or related experience relevant to this position:

I have a California Contractors License. I studied architecture in school. I know how to create and read building plans of any technical level of difficulty. I am very computer savvy and hold several U.S. patents in the computer industry.

- 4) Please list your previous and/or current neighborhood or community involvement:

I am the manager of the Venice Farmers' Market. I have held this position for about twenty years. Basically I started the market and managed it ever since. I meet and greet about 1000-1500 local shoppers a week. Over the years I have grown to know many of them and frequently have conversations about things that are going on around the community.

I worked and was funded by Caltrans to plant trees in the Venice area. The grant allowed me to plant about 1400 trees. The grant was funded in 1992 and the trees were all planted by 1995. The plantings were lead through a program conducted by TreePeople, a local Los Angeles based environmental group. Through their support, I was able to get over 4000 Venice residences to volunteer in the plantings. The trees were installed on 43 local streets, 3 schools and 5 parks.

The grant also funded the landscaping plan for Venice Blvd between Lincoln Blvd and Pacific Ave. The plan was completed in part by the planting of 650 trees along this stretch of roadway. A portion of the ground cover was also installed along with a 1-1/2 mile of sprinkler system.

I personally maintained the trees on Venice Blvd for the five years that followed their plantings. The survival rate of the trees was 100% as a result of my maintenance work.

I served on the Board of Directors of the Venice Chamber of Commerce for about 10 years. I served on the Board of Directors of the Venice Family Clinic, Artwalk Steering Committee for 8 years. I served on the Board of Directors of the State Food and Ag Dept.

I have two kids that are attending Venice High School.



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Please list the three most pressing planning issues you feel are facing the Venice Community:

Poor leadership by City officials and employees.

Traffic and parking

Lack of implementation

- 5) Under what kinds of situations do you feel it to be appropriate to grant exceptions or variances to the Venice Specific Plan or other LA City Planning codes?

Exceptions that make good common sense. The VSP was a plan that was drafted from many hundreds of people in the communities but that was later interpreted by City planners and written up by how they understood things should be. The planners that did the writing never attended any of the workshops nor were even involved in the process at the time. They came in after the fact and then only took into account what they understood from the written workshop final documents. This left many holes in the VSP.

There are a lot of unique conditions that the VSP never considered. Property owners should not be held to the lack of vision that was included in the plan. That for one reason is why the plan includes an exception process – we (the community and the city) all knew at the time the plan was being adopted that it was flawed but we also knew that anything was better than the old system which went entirely through the council office and did not require any community input.

- 6) What is your opinion of the Venice Specific Plan?

The VSP is a good starting point. It gives good guidance of what the community wanted in the workshops of the late 1980's. It does not cover every fine detail and needs to be revised. I think it needs to be considered as a "work-in-progress" document and not the final piece that should be cast in stone.

- 7) How do you view your role in private interactions with developers who have projects proposed before the Land Use and Planning Committee?

Neutral, I'm not a developer but I understand development. I lean on the side of sensible planning. I live in Venice and have for about 20 years and prior to that spent that previous 30 years living in Westwood and Santa Monica. I have seen a lot of changes over that time. I'm not opposed to development but I feel we must get a handle on where it is going in Venice. I do not have any vested interests in any development projects other than my own properties.



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Thank You for Volunteering to Help Our Community!