

DRAFT for Sept 18, 2007 Board meeting

The Honorable Bill Rosendahl
Council District Eleven
City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilman,

One of our board members recently journeyed to Santa Barbara to view the RV Safe Parking program adopted by ordinance by the S.B. City Council (administered by New Beginnings Counseling Center). The accompanying report is an account of that experience.

While the Venice Neighborhood Council does not endorse a particular program, it does endorse the need for control of "live aboard" vehicles parked in the Coastal Zone and elsewhere in the City as well. Persons living in vehicles parked on city streets are not safe and are not always careful with refuse or able to deal with leaky holding tank outlets. Since there are no places to dump holding tanks in Venice they may seek other means. During winter storms, this unsanitary discharge washes directly into the ocean to contribute to the high bacteria count which makes our beach unsafe to use.

Health considerations aside, not all persons using the streets for residency are there by choice. Many are seniors trying to get by on minimal Social Security income. Their desire to remain independent should be honored as long as they can do so safely. Their risk of abuse is high. Also, it is hard for them to use assistance such as Meals for Millions without a permanent address.

So there are social as well as health issues to take into account when citizens take to living on the street. In addition, it has been noted that RV's, campers, and vans are often parked near jurisdictional boundaries. One conclusion that can be drawn from this is that stepping into another jurisdiction is helpful in avoiding arrest. Living in vehicles can be the ploy of scofflaws avoiding child support, parole officers, and other legal obligations.

Finally, it would not be fair for Venice to bear the burden for any RV Safe Parking program. It appears to us to be a regional problem requiring a regional solution. A fractional approach will only produce fractional results due to the mobility factor.

Please use your good office to research this program as a possible solution to resolve a growing and frightening social and health problem. Again, the Venice Neighborhood Council does not endorse the program described in the accompanying report. But active consideration of creative ways to solve the problem is necessary.

Thank you for your kind attention. We look forward to your response.

Venice Neighborhood Council

President

Secretary

Date _____