



Drop-In Office Hours Workshop | August 23, 2018 Venice Local Coastal Program

SUMMARY

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WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

The Local Coastal Program is a policy and regulatory document required by the California Coastal Act that establishes land use, development, natural resource protection, coastal access, and public recreation policies for the Venice Coastal Zone. The Planning Department of the City of Los Angeles is undergoing a multi-year effort to prepare, adopt, and certify the Venice Local Coastal Program (LCP) as the coastal planning tool for the area with public input.

The Office Hours workshop, held on August 23, 2018, was conducted by the City of Los Angeles Planning Department, and took place at the Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Public Library. It was set up in an open format so that community members would feel comfortable bringing up issues that were important to them in a comfortable setting while meeting directly with planners. This workshop was a follow up to the Office Hours workshop held on June 21, 2018 at the same location. The Venice LCP Planning Team is committed to providing the community with a variety of opportunities to connect with planners in order to attain the information they need while learning about issues that are most important



to them. This summary documents the August Office Hours workshop objectives, outreach activities, format, and major themes collected from both verbal and written community input.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

The workshop focused on three objectives:

- Reviewing the Local Coastal Program update process
- Providing an overview of the recently completed sea level rise analysis
- Facilitating the collection of community input and discussion topics that were important to the community

WHERE AND WHEN

Thursday, August 23, 2018, 2:00-7:00 pm
Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library
501 Venice Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90291

OUTREACH AND ATTENDANCE

The City used multiple methods to inform community members about the workshop and encourage participation, as shown in the table below. Approximately 55 people attended the workshop, 49 attendees signed in at the registration table.

<i>Outreach Methods</i>
E-mail announcements to community members using database of contacts.
E-mail invitations and phone calls to prioritized organizations, including canal area and affordable housing organizations, with request to forward invitation to members and constituents.
E-mail and announcement by Venice Neighborhood Council
Outreach via City's External Affairs Office on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and at City stakeholder meetings.
E-mail postings on Nextdoor to target Venice LCP subareas.

FORMAT AND ACTIVITIES

The workshop consisted of an open house format where attendees could walk around stations and speak directly with city planners regarding any planning matter they wanted to discuss further. Descriptions of the workshop components follow below.



Registration

Participants were welcomed at the registration table and provided information about the workshop format. Snacks and water were available beside the registration table for the public.

Open House

Four open house stations were set up in the community room at the library. Stations 1 and 2 supplied background information on the Venice Local Coastal Program and preliminary research on the existing conditions in Venice. The existing conditions station included a board depicting a parcel analysis of the residential lot size, building size and height in the area. The second board at this station depicted the height of buildings by parcel as well as the year buildings were constructed in increments of Pre 1977, 1978-2001 and 2002-Present by Census Block Group. The reason these year increments were selected was to try and understand what patterns of development took place before the California Coastal Commission was created in 1977, before the Local Coastal Policy was adopted by the City in 2001, and after its adoption up until the present day. This analysis will support our understanding of mass, scale and character patterns across the Venice LCP area as we draft the local coastal policies and implementation plan to create the local coastal program.

Stations 3 through 4 were dedicated to showcasing the draft adaptation strategies and community input. The table below lists the stations and their topics.

Station Number	Topic
1	Venice Local Coastal Plan Overview
2	Existing Conditions Research
3	Sea Level Rise
4	Laptop: Guided Online Access

The open house stations provided a chance for community members to ask questions and obtain answers about the any planning issues pertaining to the Venice LCP area and the City of Los Angeles. Members of the project team were available at each of the stations to answer questions, provide information, and collect input from community members. Community members were encouraged to visit all stations and provide input by speaking with planners.

INPUT THEMES

The themes below represent those that appeared the most frequently in the collected input. The themes are listed alphabetically, and their order should not be taken to suggest their priority or importance. Although the workshop was designed to foster verbal communication and dialogue, a few



attendees provided written comments. Staff also made a point of taking notes to record verbal comments and concerns. A summary of all feedback received at the workshop is below.

Planning

We heard from several individuals who had specific questions about the timing of the various westside community plans that were recently launched, and how it affects the Venice LCP. A few individuals had specific questions related to their projects that were either proposed or currently in the project planning process. Our project planner city staff were on hand to answer these more nuanced questions on a broad scale. Below are some of the written comments we received regarding the issue of planning.

- Interest in learning about how container homes can be built and meeting other contractors who are interested in building green.
- Remove requirement that all units (including ADU and MF) along walk streets need to face the walk street. The lots are so small in these areas that it prohibits development of a second unit
- The requirement to receive a 1:1.5 FAR bonus for mixed use projects should change because commercial developers are abusing what constitutes a “commercial” component. One developer was able to get an entire bonus by only including a unit of housing for a security patrol officer, however this is unfair they should be required to provide a minimum 50% residential area for a 1:1.5 FAR bonus
- Some developers are skirting height limits by abusing the City’s varied roofline requirement. They basically created a 1:6 slope to create an unsightly zigzagged “mechanical screen” that gave them a height bonus for a 40ft height in a 30ft height limit zone.
- Concern about the elimination of an open space zone in order to turn it into residential.

Appeals

- Frustration expressed by Silver Triangle neighbors who appeal projects that are built to code (2)
- There appear to be many abuses of appeals that are unproductive

Survey LA and Historic Preservation

Many of the concerns regarding historic designations via Survey LA that were raised at the June Office Hours event were also raised at the August Office Hours event. We heard from a variety of individuals who were concerned about the perceived limiting affect that Survey LA would have on the potential of \ property to be developed. We also heard from individuals that were concerned about new development being out of character with the existing community. We heard from one couple, who were counting on the development of their property to provide the needed retirement benefits they had been counting on when they purchased the property, decades before Survey LA was finalized. Several individuals sat with planners to express concern about the designation. Planners listened and spoke with residents about their concerns. Below are some of the written comments we received.

- The historic designation should be only based on landmark status
- Opposed to the implementation of Survey LA because the process was/is undemocratic. It should be left up to homeowners to determine if their property should be included in Survey LA.



- How can I remove my property from a Survey LA designation?
- Survey LA should not be allowed to stifle or limit development

Mass, Scale, Character

At this particular event we heard and read less comments regarding mass, scale and character than for the June Office Hours event, however it has been made clear that this is still a major concern for the Venice LCP area. Generally speaking, the community would like to ensure that development is allowed to remain creative, while being mindful of the mass, scale and character of existing surroundings. Below is a written comment we received regarding this topic:

- Seems like many new developments are not being designed with family considerations in mind, they look like compounds. They should adhere more to the character of the local community. These new developments are not conducive to family bike riders.

Public Safety

The conversations regarding this topic in particular remained minor, however one concern that was brought up was to reconsider limiting fence heights on the Boardwalk Walk Streets. A resident was concerned about being required to lower their fence as a condition of approval for redeveloping their property. The resident noted that there were many individuals experiencing homelessness outside their front door on a walk street, and that by lowering the fence, they fear they would be more susceptible to property theft which has already happened with the taller fence currently installed. Below are the written comments we received regarding this topic, both positive and negative.

- Crime needs to be addressed better.
- The [boardwalk] curfew should not be eliminated, especially given current high crime rate. There are too many people drinking and smoking in the open without consideration for school age children who live in the area.
- The BID seems to be doing a good job
- We need increased sanitation services to address all of the trash as a result of this community being a visitor destination center. Consider increasing street sweeping to twice a week

Parking/Driveways

The single comment we received with regards to this topic was to consider limiting parking for the public on a public street in favor of those with permits. Below is the comment we received:

- Interested in allowing for permit only parking for the residential area surrounding Abbott Kinney in Milwood

Venice LCP Overall

In general, the community is supportive of updating the Venice LCP in order to streamline permitting, protect mass, scale and character, and to protect the environment. Community members are eager to be a part of the public process and remain engaged as the planning department moves forward with finalizing the LCP. Below are some written comments regarding the topic of the Venice LCP update as a whole.



- An update to the LCP is welcome, please consider using prior land use component as basis
- Allow for a shorter process to rehab a property, costs have sky rocketed in recent years