

**Palms Neighborhood Council
Area Representatives**

Randell Erving Jr., Co-Chair
Gabriela Sotomayor, Co-Chair
Natasía Gascón, Member
Markhum Stansbury Jr., Member
Gerry Furth, Member
Lee Wallach, Member

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PALMS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

**Joint Board & Renter Support & Affordable Housing
Advocacy Committee Meeting Agenda
Monday, March 21, 2022 – 7:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting Online at**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83793857161?pwd=REcrTkczRDZ0ei9Kb2wxa2l0WEF4Zz09>

or by telephone, Dial +1 669 900 6833 to join the meeting

Enter this Webinar ID: 837 9385 7161 Then press #

**The toll free call-in numbers are: (833) 548-0276, (833) 548-0282, (877) 858-5257, and (888) 475-4499
Press *9 to raise hand for public comment**

The Neighborhood Council system enables meaningful civic participation for all Angelenos and serves as a voice for improving government responsiveness to local communities and their needs. We are an advisory body to the City of Los Angeles, comprised of stakeholder volunteers who are devoted to the mission of improving our communities.

VIRTUAL MEETING TELECONFERENCING NUMBER FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CONFORMITY WITH THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2021 ENACTMENT OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY BILL 361 (RIVAS) AND DUE TO CONCERNS OVER COVID-19, THE PALMS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED ENTIRELY WITH A CALL-IN OPTION OR INTERNET-BASED SERVICE OPTION.

Every person wishing to address the Palms Neighborhood Council must join the zoom meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83793857161?pwd=REcrTkczRDZ0ei9Kb2wxa2l0WEF4Zz09> or dial +1 669 900 6833, and enter 837 9385 7161 Then press # to join the meeting. Instructions on how to sign up for public comment will be given to listeners at the start of the meeting.

AB 361 Updates -Public comment cannot be required to be submitted in advance of the meeting, only real-time public comment is required. If there are any broadcasting interruptions that prevent the public from observing or hearing the meeting, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned. If members of the public are unable to provide public comment or be heard due to issues within the Neighborhood Council's control, the meeting must be recessed or adjourned.

Notice to Paid Representatives -If you are compensated to monitor, attend, or speak at this meeting, City law may require you to register as a lobbyist and report your activity. See Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 48.01 et seq. More information is available at ethics.lacity.org/lobbying. For assistance, please contact the Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960 or ethics.commission@lacity.org

Call to Order & Roll Call

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Announcements

General Public Comment

Committee Business

- III. **DISCUSSION** Planning another panels for our committee
- IV. **MOTION** to authorize the Palms NC to submit a [CIS](#) opposing [CF 19-0603](#) which would ban type IV (heavy timber) and V (wood-frame) construction in areas with 5,000 of more residents per square mile. This would both exacerbate our affordable housing issues and work against greener buildings in Los Angeles. Concrete lobbyists may be an influence on this - this topic being one of the specific entities <https://buildwithstrength.com/>
 - A. Supplemental- Abundant Housing LA Letter re [CF 19-0603](#)
- V. **MOTION** to authorize the Palms NC to submit a [CIS](#) in support of [CF 21_0658](#) to create a strategic plan for expediting the permitting and approval process for 100% deed-restricted affordable housing projects.
- VI. **MOTION** to authorize the Palms NC to submit a [CIS](#) in support of [CF 20-0200](#)

Adjournment

Time allocations for agenda items are approximate and may be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the President. Public comment will be taken for each motion as well as for any item in the consent agenda prior to Board action. The public is requested to fill out a "Speaker Card" to address the Assembly on any item of the agenda prior to the Assembly taking action on an item. Comments from the public on Agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the Agenda that is within the Assembly's subject matter jurisdiction will be heard during the Public Comment period. Public comment is limited to 1 to 2 minutes per speaker, at the discretion of or unless waived by the Assembly. In the interest of addressing all items on the agenda, time limits for individual comments and discussion may be set at the discretion of the President. All items on the consent agenda will be determined by a single Committee vote and without Committee discussion. Committee members may request that any item be removed from the consent agenda and considered individually at any time prior to that vote.

Per Board of Neighborhood Commissioners Policy #2014-01, agendas are posted for public review at: 1) Woodbine Park Kiosk, 3409 S. Vinton Ave.; 2) Palms Neighborhood Council website, www.palmsnc.la.

In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board in advance of a meeting may be viewed at Woodbine Park Kiosk, 3409 S. Vinton Ave, at our website: www.palmsnc.la or at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of any record related to an item on the agenda, please contact the Secretary at secretary@palmsnc.la

Palms NC Board and Committee members abide by a code of civility (<http://empowerla.org/code-of-conduct/>). Any person who interferes with the conduct of a Neighborhood Council meeting by willfully interrupting and/or disrupting the meeting is subject to removal. A peace officer may be requested to assist with the removal should any person fail to comply with an order of removal by the Neighborhood Council. Any person who resists removal by a peace officer is subject to arrest and prosecution pursuant to California Penal Code Section 403.

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services, and activities. Sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability of services, please make your request at least 3 business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting you wish to attend by contacting the Secretary at secretary@palmsnc.la

SI REQUIERE SERVICIOS DE TRADUCCION, FAVOR DE NOTIFICAR A LA OFICINA 3 DIAS DE TRABAJO (72 HORAS) ANTES DEL EVENTO. SI NECESITA ASISTENCIA CON ESTA NOTIFICACION, POR FAVOR LLAME A NUESTRA OFICINA AL secretary@palmsnc.la

Directed To: City Council and Committees
Council File Number: 19-0603
Agenda Date: 3/21/2022
Item Number:

Summary: The Palms Neighborhood Council strongly opposes Council File 19-0603. We recommend that the City of Los Angeles vote against this measure. While the Palms Neighborhood Council applauds careful and well-thought-out fire safety measures, this measure would disincentivize affordable housing development in West Los Angeles, a sorely needed resource for our district.

Community Impact Statement

[Council File: 19-0603](#): *City Building Code Fire District 1 Expansion / California Department of Forestry / Fire Protection Very High Fire Severity Zone / City High Wind Velocity Zone / Ordinance*

The Palms Neighborhood Council strongly opposes Council File 19-0603. We recommend that the City of Los Angeles vote against this measure. While the Palms Neighborhood Council applauds careful and well-thought-out fire safety measures, this measure would disincentivize affordable housing development in West Los Angeles, a sorely needed resource for our district.

The measure seeks to expand the [Fire District 1](#) designation to many areas of the city. The Fire District 1 designation is unique to Los Angeles in major California cities and was first created over 100 years ago to address issues of insurability in buildings constructed before the advent of modern construction techniques and sprinkler systems. Simply put, a Fire District 1 designation severely restricts the type of construction, building materials, and lot setbacks that can be applied to properties within those zones. Part of the proposed ordinance uses height districts, which allow certain areas to build taller buildings than the rest of Los Angeles, as a proxy for wildfire hazards.

The policy does little if anything to address the very real threat of wildfires to our communities.

The source inspiration for the ordinance, the [2014 Da Vinci apartment fires](#) that destroyed an unfinished building, were the result of arson, rather than wildfires. This motion does not focus on the real safety risk of fires in parts of the city exposed to wildfires. It would ban type IV (heavy timber) and V (wood-frame) construction of larger projects in areas with certain height districts - which includes a large portion of the city, including many of Los Angeles' most walkable and transit-rich communities, where we should be encouraging new housing. We propose that the City prevent wildfire damage by making affordable housing more available in the very places that Fire

District 1 is already or is proposed to expand to. By promoting density, we prevent sprawl into unsafe, heavily forested communities which are much more susceptible to damage from increasingly common wildfires.

The recent [report back](#) from the Department of Building and Safety reiterates that building costs would increase **10.6% to 47.1%** if this ordinance is enacted. It also concluded that an expansion of Fire District 1 would likely reduce the financial feasibility of affordable housing projects and may result in fewer affordable housing units in the City. Fire District 1 is a relic of an era before modern building standards and offers no known fire safety benefit.

The Palms Neighborhood Council urges the City Council **to vote no** on this measure. It also urges the Council to consider the repeal of Fire District 1 altogether.

- COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT -

Council File: [21-0658](#)

Title: 100 Percent Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing Projects / Expedited Approval Process / Strategic Plan

Position: Support

Summary:

The Palms Neighborhood Council supports this motion to create a strategic plan for expediting the permitting and approval process for 100% deed-restricted affordable housing projects.

With the city facing a dire housing crisis and options for low-income renters scarce, more affordable housing is much needed. However, the permitting and approval process for housing development in Los Angeles is both expensive and time-consuming, which not only makes it take longer for affordable housing projects to be completed but decreases their odds of being initiated in the first place.

According to [research from the Turner Center for Housing Innovation](#), in California, “streamlining and bringing more certainty to the permitting and approval processes can mitigate labor and materials cost increases, as well as having the added benefit of bringing down pre-construction and contingency costs.”

Adopting a more streamlined process for the development of 100% deed-restricted affordable housing therefore stands to benefit low-income households in Palms and in the City of Los Angeles. We therefore endorse proposed methods to speed up the permitting and approval process for such developments, including additional staff resources, quicker staff review and appeal times, and an administrative review process.

We urge that this expediting not come at the cost of other projects, particularly projects with an income-restricted component like TOC, and that added resources be dedicated to permitting instead, to avoid treating this issue as “zero-sum.” We also ask the City to reevaluate the lengthy timelines for all permitting.

Council File: [20-0200](#)

Title: Rent Stabilization Ordinance / Consumer Price Index / Rent Increases / Rent Freeze / Amendment

Position: Support

Summary: In service of keeping housing affordable—now more than ever—the Los Feliz Neighborhood Council welcomes and supports this motion to reform how allowable rent increases are calculated for rent-stabilized units. As Los Angeles is among the most rent-burdened cities in the country, this motion will help keep renters in their homes, make rent increases fairer, and bring them more in line with changes in other costs of living.

Currently, the City’s Rent Stabilization Ordinance allows rents to increase at least 3% each year, even if inflation is less than 3%. However, since 1994, inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) has been under 3% almost 70% of the time¹. In other words, most years, rent has been allowed to rise faster than other prices. This has worsened the burden of rent for many Angelinos and residents of Los Feliz.

To help rectify this, the proposed motion would 1) eliminate the 3% floor and 2) peg rent increases to a fairer metric (60% of the Consumer Price Index) that would help make up for all the years of higher-than-inflation rent increases. Taking these steps would put Los Angeles in line with other cities in California with similar policies, while balancing the interests of both landlords and tenants.

Passing this motion is all the more urgent during the current pandemic and economic downturn. If the economy slows, inflation will likely rise by less than 3%, or may even fall. Yet—at a time when many renters are least able to pay—rents will still be allowed to increase by a full 3%. The emergency rent freeze currently in place for rent-stabilized units has delayed this from happening, but as soon as it is lifted, the issue will arise again.

In our city, almost two-thirds of households rent. Many have lost income and now worry about making rent each month. Making rent increases fairer is a small but vital step to help. On behalf of over 40,000 neighborhood stakeholders, the LFNC urges you to pass this motion and adopt a subsequent ordinance to implement it without delay.

¹ Shane Phillips, Revisiting L.A.’s Rent Stabilization Ordinance and “Allowable Rent Increases,” UCLA Lewis Center Policy Brief, 2019, <https://www.lewis.ucla.edu/research/revisiting-las-rent-stabilization-ordinance-and-allowable-rent-increases/>