

Contact Information

Neighborhood Council: South Robertson Neighborhood Council

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Date of NC Board Action: 11/18/2010

Type of NC Board Action: For Proposal

Impact Information

Date: 03/19/2012

Update to a Previous Input: No

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 11-1531

Agenda Date:

Item Number:

Brief Summary: In November 2010, SORO NC voted to urge the LA City Council to immediately address the environmental and economic problems posed by single-use plastic bags via a citywide ban. LA residents use c. 6 billion plastic bags/year and only a small percentage get recycled; it costs the City millions of dollars a year to abate their effects; particles from bag breakdown get into the food chain, becoming a health hazard to animal and human life.

Additional Information: Final SORO NC vote: 10-Y, 2-N, 2-A



Approved General Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 18, 2010, 7:00pm
Hamilton Senior High School Cafeteria
2955 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

SORO NC Board President Doug Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 7:10.

Board Members Present: Rachel Lester, Kimber Smith, Harold Bock, Bette Billet, Michael Lynn, Nick Burkhart, Paula Waxman, Nahed Guirguis, Brian Kite, Barry Levine, Martin Epstein, Doug Fitzsimmons, Victor Mitry, Alex Chavarria

Board Members Absent: Robyn Braun, Joe Gjonola, Benjamin Bellet, Terrence Gomes, Gerald Chavarria, Marj Safinia, Susan Burden

Guests: Elizabeth Carlin, David Giron, Rebecca Bernal, Captain Evangelyn Nathan, Mary Earl, Larry DeMers, Ann Hammond, Christel Wilson, Terry Ring Schonwald, Howard Wolf

II. General Public Comment

In the absence of the Secretary, Martin Epstein volunteered to take notes.

Representatives from SoRo, Inc. described the long history and support they've given to the neighborhood and to the NC, including organizing and co-sponsoring the annual SORO Festival. Mary Earl proposed creating an official rep from the NC to act as non-voting liaison between the two groups.

As a neighbor in the area around the LAPD Carnival in mid-November, Howard Wolf described the serious traffic and business impact the event had on Pico and the surrounding residential streets.

III. Old Business

Draft Board Meeting Minutes of October 21, 2010 (Chavarria / GB101810-1). Small spelling corrections only. Nick moved to approve the draft minutes, Brian seconded. **Vote: Y-13, N-0, A-1. Minutes approved.**

Treasurer Report and vote to approve monthly expenses (Gomes / GB101810-2). Bette moved to approve the report; Brian seconded. **Vote: Y-12, N-0, A-2. Report approved.**

IV. Community Reports

LAPD Report. Captain Nathan reported on the aftermath of a robbery on Corning St. the night before. The armed suspect barricaded himself in his home and SWAT was called in. The suspect called 911 to complain about the noise the Police were making (!). Event resolved without injury.

While not without rough edges, the \$15,000 profit from the first Pico LAPD Carnival benefited three youth programs not funded by the City. Planning began in January; many locations explored. Improving outreach seems to be key to success.

Car theft and break-ins continue to be the NC's top crimes. Advised to leave nothing in car: Hide it, Lock it, Keep it.

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Office of Councilmember Wesson. Liz Carlin congratulated the NC on the Town Hall and Community Clean Up. Again running a turkey distribution program for seniors and those in need.

Office of Councilmember Koretz. (report given after NC reports). David Giron reported that his office will send a local shopping guide to residents in December.

Office of the Mayor. No report

Office of Senator Price. Rebecca Bernal reported that they are also giving away turkeys in the 21st district. Toy drive on December 9; need requests from community by December 6.

Robertson Recreation Center. No report.

V. Committee Reports

Executive. Reminder that ethics training must be completed. Exec is working on emergency communication plan and goals.

Land Use. Halm motion tabled for this month.

Education. Co-operative program at Hamilton High between SORO NC and Palms NC in the works. SKATCH has 15 kids participating. New principal at Castle Heights.

Green Team. Spoke about plastic bag ban. Next project is e-waste recycling at Hamilton; date TBD.

Public Safety. Owner of Robertson Car Wash seems to be in compliance; only one OSHA complaint (against a supplier) in 40 years.

Outreach. Peace Picnic had in excess of 300 people. Difficulties with NC funding process, weak public funding, and food donations. Town Hall had 117 people, including 12 non-English speakers. CD10 thanked for donations of chairs, tables, and translator. Both events judged a success.

Bylaws. In the process of updating NC bylaws to adhere to new BONC framework.

VI. New Business

Resolution to formally thank Jennifer Forkish, Kirsten James, and the Town Hall participants (GB111810-3)

- Bette moved to vote; Kimber seconded.
- **Vote: unanimous. Motion approved.**

Discussion of responsibilities and possible nomination of official rep(s) to SORO, Inc. (GB111810-4)

- **Motion tabled.**

Motion to support a motion pending before the L.A. City Council implementing a City-wide ban of single-use plastic bags (GB111810-5)

Paula: clarified that the motion asks that the Bureau of Sanitation to prepare a report on the steps necessary to implement a city-wide ban

Bette: precedents for proposed 10¢ bag charge?; Paula: still being researched.

Doug: phase bags out slowly?; Paula: targets haven't worked, problem too large.

Kimber: concerned about impact on lower income families.

Brian: file a CIS once on Council's agenda.

Michael: concerns from community, including bacteria in reusable bags, lead contamination, loss of secondary uses for disposable bags.



- Kimber moved to vote; Harold seconded.
- **Vote: 10-Y, 2-N, 2-A, 0-R. Motion approved.**

Motion to send a letter to PLUM regarding proposed project at 2046 Halm Ave. (GB111810-6)

- **Motion tabled.**

Motion to approve revised 2010-2011 Budget (GB111810-7)

- Bette moved to vote; Michael seconded.
- **Vote: unanimous. Motion approved.**

Motion to fund up to \$1200 to co-sponsor CD-10's Winter Wonderland (GB111810-8)

Doug: proposed amendment to add "That SORO NC issue a funding resolution letter to DONE to expedite payment."

- Doug moved to vote on amendment; Bette seconded.
- **Amendment vote: unanimous. Amendment approved.**
- Bette moved to vote on motion; Michael seconded.
- **Motion vote: unanimous. Motion approved.**

Motion to fund up to \$1000 for business cards for SORO NC Boardmembers (GB111810-9)

Doug: proposed amendment to add "That SORO NC issue a funding resolution letter to DONE to expedite payment."

- Doug moved to vote on amendment; Paula seconded.
- **Amendment vote: unanimous. Amendment approved.**
- Doug moved to vote on motion; Paula seconded.
- **Motion vote: unanimous. Motion approved.**

Discussion and possible nomination of official rep(s) to the LA DWP Oversight Committee (GB111810-10)

Michael nominates Harold Bock to the seat.

- Brian moved to vote; Doug seconded.
- **Vote: 13-Y, 0-N, 1-A, 0-R. Nomination approved.**

Discussion and possible nomination of official rep(s) to WRAC LU, Mobility, Emergency Preparedness Committees (GB111810-11)

Doug nominates Nick Burkhardt for Transportation & Mobility

- Brian moved to vote; Bette seconded.
- **Vote: unanimous. Nomination approved.**

Brian nominates Nick Burkhardt for Land Use

- Brian moved to vote; Bette seconded.
- **Vote: unanimous. Nomination approved.**

No nominee for Emergency Preparedness rep

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.



Vote Tally

Y: yes | N: no | A: abstain | R: recuse | X: missed vote

Motion	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08 A	08	09 A	09	10	11		
Rachel Lester	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Kimber Smith	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y		
Harold Bock	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Robyn Braun	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Bette Billet	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Michael Lynn	Y	Y	Y		N		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Nick Burkhart	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Joe Gjonola	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Paula Waxman	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Zone 10															
Brian Kite	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Nahed Guirguis	A	A	Y		A		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Terry Gomes	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Ben Bellet	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Gerald Chavarria	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Barry Levine	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Marj Safinia	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Martin Epstein	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Business 5															
Sue Burden	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Doug Fitzsimmons	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Victor Mity	Y	A	Y		A		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Alex Chavarria	Y	Y	Y		N		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
School 2															



Motion to Support a Motion Pending Before the L.A. City Council Implementing a Citywide Ban of Single- Use Plastic Bags

Agenda Item: GB111810-5
Date: November 18, 2010
Proposed By: The SORO Green Team Committee

Summary

Pending before the L.A. City Council is a motion to implement a citywide ban of single-use plastic bags. L.A. residents use an estimated 6 billion plastic bags a year. Because they do not completely decompose, they have become a pollution problem. It is costing the city millions of dollars a year to abate the effects of plastic bags. Efforts by the County Board of Supervisors to get the stores to reduce bag use has been unsuccessful.

Full Proposal

L.A. residents use an estimated 6 billion single-use plastic bags a year. Plastic bags...are essentially "forever": they do not biodegrade or dissolve into organic matter that can reenter the life cycle. Instead plastic photodegrades, which means it breaks up into smaller pieces when exposed to sunlight." (Algalita Marine Research Foundation, "Pelagic Plastic" April 9th, 2007).

Plastic from these bags which makes it to the ocean are mistaken for food and eaten by marine life. It then clogs their intestines and leads to starvation or, if they survive, it enters our food chain. "Plastic debris affects at least 267 species worldwide, including 86% of all sea turtle species, 44% of all seabird species, and 43% of all marine mammal species. (Laist, D.W. (1997) "Impacts of marine debris..." New York: Springer-Verlag; J.G.B. Derraik). The loss of these species is not only an environmental disaster but significantly effects the fishing industries.

Because oceans connect the globe, our marine debris is becoming a global problem. Currents carry plastic originating along the Pacific Coast to the North Pacific Central Gyre. Studies by the Algalita Marine Research Foundation "...found that six times by weight more plastic particles than zooplankton exist in this location." (C.J. Moore et al., (2001) "A Comparison of Plastic and Plankton in the Pacific Central Gyre" Marine Pollution Bulletin 42:297-1300.)

Although recycling efforts have improved, recycled plastic is different from products like glass or aluminum that can be made back into the products they were before. "...recycled plastic becomes clothing or carpet that goes to the landfill once its second use is finished." (Stallone, Steve, "Plastic Seduction," San Francisco Bay Guardian (15 Dec. 1993)

Plastic bag litter on land also poses an expensive problem for the City of Los Angeles. One study has estimated that the cost to subsidize the collection, recycling, disposal, and environmental clean up of plastic and paper bags could be as high as \$.17 per bag (1 billion dollars per year). Governments must absorb the costs of cleaning littered streets, beaches, and catch basins that become clogged with plastic bag debris, increasing flood risk.

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Proposed Motion

That the South Robertson Neighborhoods Council write the attached letter to The City Council in support of the following motion pending before the City Council:

"...that the Bureau of Sanitation be instructed to report back to the City Council with the next steps necessary to implement a citywide ban of single-use plastic bags, and include in that report the status of the County's Environmental Impact Report and the State's Master Environmental Assessment that relates to single-use plastic bags."

(See attached letter.)

Considerations

Pro

Most manufacturers of plastic bags make an array of plastic items, such as food containers and recycled bags. So it will impact only part of their business. It is also assumed that there will be a greater demand for recycled bags.

This same infrastructure can be used to collect other categories of recyclable plastic.

Once plastic bags are taken from circulation, the savings of marine species, wildlife habitat, fishing industry, and costs in litter removal will greatly offset compliance costs

Con

Banning plastic bags will potentially put at risk several hundred manufacturing jobs in the county.

A ban on plastic bags will result in the dismantling of local plastics recycling infrastructure that has been steadily diverting more material from disposal each year

Banning plastic bags will require government to spend scarce resources to implement these new requirements, audit the collection of bag tax revenue and ensure overall compliance.

Board Notes

Votes For: 10

Against: 2

Abstain: 2

Proposed Amendments:



President Eric Garcetti and Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

17 November 2010

Re: Implementing a citywide ban of single-use plastic bags

Dear Council President Garcetti and Members of the Los Angeles City Council:

The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council supports the motion pending before the City Council to explore the implementation of a citywide ban of single-use plastic bags.

L.A. residents use an estimated 6 billion plastic bags a year. Because they do not completely decompose, they have become a pollution problem. It is costing the city millions of dollars a year to abate the effects of plastic bags, and efforts by the County Board of Supervisors to get stores to reduce bag use has been unsuccessful.

Plastic bags... "are essentially "forever": they do not biodegrade or dissolve into organic matter that can reenter the life cycle. Instead plastic photodegrades, which means it breaks up into smaller pieces when exposed to sunlight." (Algalita Marine Research Foundation, "Pelagic Plastic" April 9th, 2007). Plastic pieces from these bags, which have made it to the ocean, are mistaken for food and eaten by marine life. It then clogs their intestines and leads to starvation or, if they survive, it enters our food chain. "Plastic debris affects at least 267 species worldwide, including 86% of all sea turtle species, 44% of all seabird species, and 43% of all marine mammal species. (Laist, D.W. (1997) "Impacts of marine debris..." New York: Springer-Verlag; J.G.B. Derraik). The loss of these species is not only an environmental disaster but significantly effects the fishing industries.

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The South Robertson Neighborhoods Council encourages the City Council to immediately address the environmental and economic problems posed by single-use plastic bags.

Yours truly,

Doug Fitzsimmons, President, South Robertson Neighborhoods Council

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