

**Rent Stabilization Commission
City of West Hollywood
Thursday, January 28, 2016 @ 7:00 PM
West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers
625 North San Vicente Boulevard**

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Maggio called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Kurpies led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Commission Secretary Tom Trevor took roll call.

PRESENT:

Vice Chair Richard Maggio, Commissioner Stephanie Harker, Commissioner David Gregoire, Commissioner Alexander Gurfinkel, Commissioner Josh Kurpies, Commissioner Rob Bergstein

ABSENT: Chair Gail Sanes

STAFF PRESENT:

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan, Rent Stabilization Information Coordinators Anwar Zraikat, Chris Uszler and Yellena Orloff, Commission Secretary Tom Trevor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Gregoire to approve the agenda for the January 28, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gurfinkel. The motion was approved (6-0-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Gregoire to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harker. The motion was approved (6-0-0).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Coe Holbrook of West Hollywood spoke regarding his attendance at the January 14 Rent Stabilization Commission meeting. He commented that he was impressed with the attention to detail the Commissioners gave to rent stabilization laws, and he was thankful for the work that the Commission does.

Tory Berger of West Hollywood and Public Safety Commission liaison spoke of a particular resident who was concerned for her safety and asked her landlord if security bars could be installed on her window. The landlord denied the request. Commissioner Berger also spoke about the recent sensitivity training that was conducted with the West Hollywood Sheriff

Department which covered issues involving the transgender and LGBTQ communities as well as homeless and transient issues.

DIRECTOR'S/MANAGER'S REPORT:

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan spoke about resident services that are offered to the community through Jewish Family Services. In particular he spoke about programs that are funded to provide such things as security devices. Mr. Noonan reviewed the Director's/Manager's Look Ahead Calendar. Mr. Noonan spoke about the presentations that will occur at the February 11 meeting. He also announced that the February 25, 2016 Rent Stabilization Commission meeting has been cancelled.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Harker spoke about a recent announcement by Veterans Affairs officials regarding a plan to transform the 388 acre West L.A. Campus by building 1,200 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans.

Commissioner Bergstein spoke about development at the site of the former Circus Disco in Hollywood which will include 31 affordable housing units.

Commissioner Gurfinkel spoke about taking over the duties of Rent Stabilization Commission liaison to several of the West Hollywood Commissions. The Vice Chair requested Commission liaison duties be placed on a future meeting agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. STUDY SESSION:

The Rent Stabilization Commission set its priorities for 2015-16 at its July 23, 2015 study session. Staff uses these priorities to design informational sessions and discussion topics for the Commission throughout the year. Now at the mid-year point, the Commission will review and confirm, or adjust its priorities.

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan began the session by reviewing the status of the current priorities. The Commissioners then had a discussion about the most effective method of ranking the existing and new priorities.

The following items were then added to the list of priorities:

Commissioner Kurpies recommended adding the topic of earthquake retrofitting.

Commissioner Gurfinkel recommended updating all outreach materials to be available in every language that represents a significant portion of the West Hollywood community.

Commissioner Gregoire suggested that staff provide a report on what services are available to non-English speaking community members.

Commissioner Harker spoke about her attendance at the Tenants 101 Building Blocks Seminar. She also spoke about an upcoming seminar on Affordable Housing wait lists and asked staff to provide additional information to the Commission about this topic.

Commissioner Kurpies questioned whether or not multi language outreach documents relating to all City Services unrelated to Rent Stabilization and Housing were under the purview of the Commission.

Commissioner Bergstein suggested that additional information be provided to the Commission regarding the Ellis Act. He also suggested a discussion on the creation of an ordinance similar to the City of Los Angeles' Systematic Code Enforcement Program. Commissioner Bergstein also requested a discussion on the topic of an ordinance to make all residential rental units in the City non-smoking.

Commissioner Kurpies suggested a discussion that would clarify the Commission's purview on housing issues. He also requested periodic updates on Roberts Rules of Order, general public meeting rules and how to place an item on the agenda for future discussion.

Vice Chair Maggio suggested a discussion on whether a new Commission should be formed to address housing issues.

Commissioner Harker spoke extensively about the types of outreach that are done to encourage participation in City sponsored meetings.

The Commission then voted to prioritize the suggested topics, the results of which will be available at the February 11 meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Kurpies reminded the public that January 31, 2016 is the deadline for signing up for Covered California. He also expressed his appreciation for his fellow Commissioners and for their input.

Commissioner Gurfinkel stressed the importance of constant communication with the public and the importance of communicating with non-English speaking members of the public. He also thanked staff and his fellow Commissioners for their work.

Commissioner Harker thanked the public speakers. She also thanked Commissioner Gurfinkel for his assistance with a Russian speaking tenant at the January 14 Commission meeting and spoke about the importance of communicating with, and encouraging participation from, the City's residents.

Commissioner Maggio and Commissioner Gregoire thanked their fellow Commissioners for their work.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Rent Stabilization and Housing Manager Peter Noonan spoke about the recent Housing Open House events and the information that was provided and the community feedback that was received at those events. He also spoke about the seismic retrofit study that is currently taking place. Mr. Noonan introduced the staff that was in attendance and spoke about the combined years of experience within the Division.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Rent Stabilization Commission will be held on February 11, 2016 in the West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers.

These minutes were submitted by Laura Schoonover, Commission Secretary and approved by a motion of the Rent Stabilization Commission on this 11th day of February, 2016.

A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk's office upon request.
(Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore the recordings are not of commercial quality.)

ATTEST:


Gail Sanes, Chair


Commission Secretary