

Neighborhood Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Westchester Senior Center

August 22, 2013, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Committee members present

Lynne Scarboro - LMU community liaison, Co-chair
Erika Anderson-Kemmerer – community representative, Co-chair
Hampton Cantrell – representative, LMU Department of Public Safety
Anthony Garrison-Engbrecht – representative, LMU Student Affairs Division
Linda Kokelaar – community representative
Shirley Sher – community representative
Ross Williams – community representative
Patricia Lyon - representative, Westchester-Playa del Rey Neighborhood Council
Nate Kaplan - representative, Council Office
Sergeant Jeff Merlo – representative, Los Angeles Police Department

General Updates

1. Field Lights
 - Field lights were recently installed over the soccer field.
2. Life Sciences building – LMU provided an update.
 - Construction began this summer with completion expected in summer 2015.
 - When finished, the building will effectively double the number of parking spaces that were taken away during its construction.
3. Status of previous projects – LMU provided an update.
 - The height of the perimeter fence along Fordham and 78th Street was increased from six feet to eight feet. A green screen covering along the fence was also expanded.
 - The LMU Facilities Department will develop a comprehensive, multi-year landscaping plan by Thanksgiving. Neighbors will be invited to help prioritize needs.
4. Back to School – LMU provided an update.
 - On the first day of school, both undergraduate and graduate students will receive a welcome letter from the Dean of Students that will outline expectations and 'good neighbor' policies for off-campus student living.
 - An address verification process was initiated last week for all non-resident students.

- All students who live off-campus will go through orientation about expectations and neighborhood relations. The orientation will also cover the code of conduct and adjudication process for off-campus living.
 - All students living on campus are now required to register their cars and purchase a parking permit.
 - New Student Population: First-Years: 1300, Transfers: 390
 - Off-Campus Population: Estimating: 2600 (Westchester: 1200 = 500 addresses)
5. Public Safety – LMU provided an update.
- Neighbors are encouraged to report excessive noise or disturbances by calling LAPD first and then contacting LMU’s Department of Public Safety.
 - There has been discussion between LAPD and LMU regarding the possibility of LMU providing funding to LAPD law enforcement in the areas where complaints about speeding, running stop signs, disruptive parties, roaming, and loud music have been filed. There is a month-long process for approving a contract of this nature.
 - To address perimeter fence jumping, LMU safety officers will be stationed near the fence for 15 minutes before the start of each class during the first few weeks of the semester. Offending students will be ticketed.
6. City Councilman’s Office – City Councilman’s Office provided an update.
- The City Councilman’s Office requested that LADOT make special push in the neighborhood for the first weeks of school for violations of 72 hours parking rule and blocked driveways.
 - Neighbors who observe any parking violations should call 1-800-ABANDON
 - The Police Commission will review a party house ordinance, which may include the creation of inventory of suspected party houses.
 - A team of land-use attorneys have joined Councilman Bonin’s staff and will review the entire Master Plan to ensure that nothing has been missed.
 - Temporary parking districts are a new option for neighborhood residents. If 67% of residents sign a petition on a block by block basis, preferential parking can be implemented. Days and times of enforcement can be restricted by block. It takes about 60-90 days to set up a temporary parking district.
7. Parking – LMU provided an update.

Background

- LMU’s Master Plan requires LMU to add parking. The first addition of parking will be added beneath the new Life Sciences building.
- When approved in 2011, the Master Plan gave LMU the authority to charge for parking.
- LMU is required to support a preferential parking district in Westchester, if the community wants it.

- LMU implemented a paid parking system for visitors in fall 2012 and for faculty, staff, and students in January 2013.
- LMU parking fees do not generate profit for the University. 100% of generated revenue is allocated to costs associated with parking lot construction, parking enforcement and transit.
- LMU paid over \$200,000 in taxes related to paid parking in just the last year.

LMU's efforts to mitigate parking-related issues since last year:

- The price of parking permits was cut 50% for Pell Grant students, contract workers, and lower income faculty and staff.
- Parking fees will be included on tuition bills. Parents and students will have the ability to opt-out. LMU is hoping to implement this change in time for the spring semester.
- LMU increased its communication with students and parents regarding the student code of conduct and reminders for students to not park in the neighborhood.

Other suggestions addressed:

- Closing the Loyola Blvd Gate to pedestrian traffic is not a viable option for LMU as it would fundamentally change the character of the university and would impact approximately 1,500 residents.
- LMU is actively exploring ways to create incentives for students to park on campus, including additional OneCard benefits for students who pay for parking.
- LMU is working with the LAPD to bring additional patrols to the Westchester community.
- If neighbors choose to pilot a temporary permit parking area, each block can tailor restrictions in whichever way they would like.

Preferential Parking District - Neighborhood Temperature Survey

- Surveyors walked door-to-door August 12th, 13th and 16th from 3:00 – 8:00 pm, and gathered responses from approximately 35% of the homes.
- Overall results: 67% agreed that parking is a significant problem, 63% supported a one-year pilot preferential parking program.
- Support for the parking district is overwhelming among people who believe parking is a significant problem on their street.
- Among people who don't think that parking is a significant problem on their street, a majority supports the creation of the parking district.

Discussion / Open Forum

- The majority of the open forum focused on the neighbors' frustration and concern over the parking situation, which began when LMU started charging faculty, staff, and students for parking in January 2013. Frustration focused on students parking in front of

driveways, moved garbage bins, and the inability to secure street parking in front of residences.

- Neighbors in attendance expressed opposition to permit parking. Permit parking would be a 'nuisance' and 'gross inconvenience' to the neighbors.
- The preferential parking survey was discussed. Many neighbors voiced concern that the questions were biased and that the survey results were not reflective of the Westchester community's general feeling towards preferential parking. A request was made for a similar survey to be taken during the academic year. Additional requests were made for the survey results to be published on a block by block basis.
- Neighbors offered several suggestions to help alleviate the parking congestion on their streets, including closing LMU's back gate to pedestrians, bundling parking fees with tuition, and ending parking fees altogether. One neighbor suggested that LMU cap enrollment, while another neighbor suggested that the University should secure funding for parking through donors.
- In response to LMU's defense of the policies set forth through its Master Plan, calls were made for LMU to change the Master Plan.
- One neighbor voiced the possibility of suing the University in small claims court for devaluation of property.
- Some neighbors expressed concern for their own safety due to reckless student behavior, including speeding, running of stop signs, and drunk driving. One neighbor provided an anecdote of a pedestrian who was hit by a LMU faculty/staff member nearly 10 years ago.
- Other concerns included construction noises late at night, glare from the newly installed field lights, and disruptive student behavior (public intoxication, loud noises, roaming, and public urination).