

Title: Fair and Open Road Diet Task Force Meetings	Item No. _____
Meeting date: September 5, 2017	
Agendized by: David Voss	
Contact person: David Voss	Phone number:
Committee Vote (if appropriate): 3-0-1	
Does this item have a fiscal impact on the Neighborhood Council? ____ Yes __X__ No	
Additional documents attached? ____ Yes __X__ No	

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approved by Ad Hoc Committee on Road Diet by a vote of 3 Aye (Aniolek/Smith/Voss), None opposed, 1 Abstaining (Cooley-Strickland)

**BACKGROUND:**

In the letter sent to Councilmember Bonin on August 15, 2017, the NCWP called for an “Open and Transparent Process”. To date there has been no reply from the Councilmember to the various requests made therein.

In part we stated that: “...we are concerned that the proposed membership selection process for the Task Force needs to be open, transparent, and balanced. The concern is to prevent the perception of creating a closed group comprised of hand-picked members to avoid public comment or “stack the deck” toward a pre-ordained outcome. We ask that the Neighborhood Council is given representation on the Task Force since they were created to specifically to advise the City Council and are comprised of elected representatives. If the community does not feel they were provided a fair and open process, they will likely not accept the outcome.”

At the meeting, Chief of Staff Chad Molnar indicated that as of that date only one member of the NCWP had been selected and further indicated that she was viewed as being “pro” road diet. He further indicated that consideration was being given to adding two more members to the Task Force to increase NCWP representation.

Three days later on Friday, August 18, Councilmember Bonin announced the members of the Task Force. Contrary to the indication from COS Molnar, no additional members of the NCWP were added and despite the position of the NCWP calling for the immediate reversal of all but one lane closure, no representative of the NCWP opposed to the Road Diet was selected to the Task Force. A further review of those appointed by many community members shows that the members are not even split 50/50 on the issue, but are instead biased in number in favor of the plan opposed by this NCWP.

It has been further revealed that the Task Force “neutral facilitator” is an individual from a company that is highly compensated to do lobbying work for government to promote bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation.

At the first meeting, it was proposed that the meetings be held in public and that they be live streamed on Facebook so that the public could see the meetings themselves. These proposals were rejected and the meetings are to be conducted in secret. In fact, members

of the Task Force have been specifically instructed "...not to make public statements about the Working Group's deliberations to the media..."

### **DISCUSSION:**

As noted above, the NCWP believes in a fair, impartial, open and transparent process. Meetings conducted in secret with a biased facilitator do not meet that test.

Neighborhood Councils were created by the City Charter to advise the City Council on matters affecting our local community and great care is taken by the City Board of Neighborhood Commissioners to see that each Neighborhood Council is created to reflect the various facets of the community and to have fair elections on regular intervals to elect community stakeholders that the community itself chooses to be its representatives.

Despite these facts, the NCWP is woefully underrepresented especially when compared to other individuals not elected by any group to represent the community and does not reflect the 15-2-1. vote in strong opposition to the current Road Diet plan following two public hearings with standing room only turn out.

Publication of the NCWP position has heretofore been achieved only by means of the internet and social media. An ad publishing the complete text of the August 15 NCWP letter has been placed for publication but not in the other newspaper of local circulation; The Argonaut.

### **FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

Up to a maximum of \$1000.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

None.

### **MOTION:**

The Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa:

- 1) Calls on Councilmember Bonin to reply to the prior requests made at both its June and August 15 meetings including but not limited to immediately revealing the raw data from the CD11 survey.
- 2) Shall take action to immediately publish the August 15 letter in the Argonaut. Cost not to exceed \$1000.
- 3) Calls on Councilmember Bonin to make further appointments to the Task Force to better balance the views thereon.
- 4) Calls on Councilmember Bonin to increase NCWP board participation on the Task Force. Elected NCWP members residing in the affected districts should be included by default including in particular those serving on the Ad Hoc Committee that has been tasked with review of the Road Diet.
- 5) Calls on Councilmember Bonin to appoint a facilitator who is believed by all participants to be unbiased and has no prior history of compensation to advocate for either side of the issues. This facilitator may be a paid consultant to ensure impartiality.
- 6) Strongly opposes Task Force meetings in secrecy and calls for the immediate opening up of the Task Force meetings to public observation both in person and by means of live streaming on the internet.

