

**WINNETKA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**  
**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
**CALIFORNIA**

**Public Works &  
Transportation Committee**

**Chair**                      **Vice Chair**  
Armineh                      Wayne Schulte  
Chelebian

**Members**  
JJ Popowich  
Marilyn Robinson  
Wayne Schulte  
Dwight Burgess



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**WINNETKA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**  
**PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**From:                      J.J. Popowich, Secretary**

**Date:                      March 23, 2005**

**Subject:                  Meeting Minutes for 03/23/05**

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**1. Call to Order and Committee Members Roll Call.**

Armineh Chelebian	Marilyn Robinson	Dwight Burgess	Richard Montaine
JJ Popowich	Wayne Schulte – Excused		

Ms. Chelebian asked everyone to introduce themselves.

**2. Approval of minutes.**

- 2.1. Ms. Chelebian addressed the issue of her attendance.
- 2.2. Mr. Popowich agreed to fix.
- 2.3. Ms. Chelebian asked about the letter from the Westfield Mall traffic mitigation project and how they were getting them.
- 2.4. Mr. Popowich said he was receiving them from Ms. Lamishaw.
- 2.5. Ms. Chelebian said she was not notified.
- 2.6. Mr. Popowich said he had sent a note that it was posted.

**3. Discussion and possible action on a presentation by the MTA regarding the Orange Line**

- 3.1. Ms. Chelebian introduced Ms. Brown
- 3.2. Ms. Brown outlined what the Orange line included. Busway, bikeway, pedestrian right away. She outlined advantages of the Busway. She said it was immune to slower street buses, fewer conflicts with other vehicles slowing traffic, fewer stops than a standard bus, reduced travel times (stops every 1 mile), and half the cost of a light rail. It's estimated to have a travel time of 35-40 minutes. Buses will be spaced out about every 10 minutes. The buses will have signal street priority which is triggered by ground sensors. There is no truth to the rumor that drivers can control the system. The computer manages the length of time between signals.

The stations will have the amenities of the light rail stations including original art work, landscaping, digital bus times, bike racks, and even lockers. She ran through some artist renditions of what some of the stations and park and ride stops would look like. She said that the MTA has bought new buses that can hold up to 60 people. They have low entry points for easy access. They will have three doors to improve access. Tickets can be bought at ground station. In addition they are CNG powered and very quiet.

Currently the project is 64% complete. 27 of 31 intersections have been completed. The intersections have been ripped up and the utilities were buried and it was repaved. Still to go is the rest of the sound walls, bikeway, and

pedestrian walkways. One change of the project was the permanent irrigation which was added. They have also included a special pipe to use reclaimed water for irrigation when the city is ready.

Landscaping will include 5000 trees, about 800,000 ground plants. Most will be California Heritage scheme which is primarily native California plants and some other's from similar drought areas.

3.3. Ms. Chelebian asked what the cost was.

3.3.1. Ms. Brown responded the cost is 330 million.

3.4. Ms. Chelebian is the funding available?

3.4.1. Ms. Brown responded yes.

3.4.2. Ms. Chelebian where is it from

3.4.3. Ms. Brown funding from city and state and fed.

3.5. Mr. Sims asked what would be done about the gap between the wall and private property. What is going to be done to prevent misuse

3.5.1. Ms. Brown said there will be gates that are locked and only the DOT or MTA will have a key. She is aware that some people are still unsure of this and afraid that someone will get back there. She said that they have had these discussions with the Sheriffs department who handles the security. They are asking the Sheriff to add it as part of their patrol duties.

3.5.2. Mr. Sims asked about adding razor wire.

3.5.3. Ms. Brown said that it was not something that was under consideration, but she would suggest it.

3.5.4. Mr. Burgess commented it would be a liability and the MTA wouldn't want that.

3.5.5. Mr. Sims said that he is still concerned because it relies on people to adhere to the sign.

3.5.6. Ms. Chelebian asked about putting cameras there to watch those areas.

3.5.7. Ms. Brown said it's not something they are talking about but she would share it.

3.6. Mr. Burgess asked about handicap access. He stated he could not get on the Red Line because areas of the Red Line were too small.

3.6.1. Ms. Brown said that it was taken into consideration. She wasn't sure how much area there was but it does have areas for wheelchairs, and some room to maneuver.

3.7. Mr. Burgess also asked about security cameras.

3.7.1. Ms. Brown said that the stations would all have them

3.8. A stakeholder, Mr. Marx said he has spoken to Ms. Brown and he has stressed they really don't want razor wire because it would look like a prison. He said the best long term solution is to let the property go. He said that Ms. Brown said that there were some chemicals that the railroad used and they didn't want to have that liability. He went on to say that for he is willing to pave it if that is the case. He continued to stress his case for letting the property go to the landowners. He wants to discourage the process as much as possible and save the costs that are going into this. He feels that the Sheriff will look at this as a minor priority. He also spoke about the flooding concerns and he feels the property owners can better manage it.

3.8.1. Ms. Brown said she would take all of this to management. She said that the present time they have this soil contamination problem and the EPA which over saw the environmental handling has restricted the use to the MTA or if it was paved. She would take it back to her managers.

3.8.2. Mr. Marx asked if it would be possible to at least ask the homeowners.

3.8.3. Ms. Brown said that she couldn't really speak on that until she has had some direction from the MTA. She said if that was something they would explore, then they would come to the homeowners.

3.8.4. Ms. Chelebian said that she thinks the MTA should call a town hall meeting with the adjacent landowners because this is something that they really should hear what they are saying because it is impacting their quality of lives and their property value. She said that she would like to make that motion.

3.9. Ms. Robinson asked what the hours of operations for this project were.

3.9.1. Ms. Brown responded that it would be open from 5 AM to midnight

- 3.10. Mr. Popowich asked about the pool problem and the gaps in the wall.
- 3.10.1. Ms. Brown said the wall gaps will be filled in as its being built. It's been done so far for easier access for equipment and personnel. She said that construction should help the pool issue. As for graffiti she said that they will be planting vines along the wall as that's one of the best ways to deter it. In the meantime the MTA facilities will deal with this. It can be reported to Brown Brown, Senior Community at 213-922-4444.
- 3.11. Mr. Popowich asked about trash that may collect behind the walls and about maintenance.
- 3.11.1. Ms. Brown said that there would be a regular maintenance schedule. She said that in the past there have been things that have collected on this land and it wasn't really addressed very quickly because it's not in use and the maintenance is reduced. She said there will be a maintenance hotline.
- 3.12. A stakeholder, Mr. Marx, asked about the hotline and if it was available now.
- 3.12.1. Mrs. Brown said that she is currently the hotline.
- 3.12.2. Mr. Marx asked about the response time because when he called it was slow.
- 3.12.3. Mrs. Brown said that she was the one who got the call and handled his issue with the pool. When it happened the response was a bit slower than normal because the current cleanup and maintenance is handled by the contractor and they had to call people in. She acknowledged it has been a challenge but it's getting better.
- 3.13. Ms. Cheleblian asked if the Committee thought it would be a good idea to send a letter to the MTA asking them to have a meeting with the landowners to have a discussion about their concerns.
- 3.13.1. Mr. Burgess said he was surprised that they haven't been contacted already.
- 3.13.2. Mr. Montaine asked what the other meeting they held was.
- 3.13.3. Ms. Brown said it was primarily a landscaping meeting. She said it was about 2 years ago. For the last year she's been trying to get out to the NC's because it's been a more productive forum.
- 3.14. Mr. Sims said he rescinds his previous suggestion and would support Mr. Marx's ideas.
- 3.15. Mr. Popowich asked about the contamination and what was there to prevent it from leaking into it now.
- 3.15.1. Ms. Brown said once they found out about it they contacted the Dept of Toxic Substance control was contacted for advice. They tested all along the line. There were places where they had some where the background level was normal and some areas that were considered contaminated. They had found 21-22 sites that had higher toxic levels that required the soil to be dug up and treated at a special site. The remainder is what are contaminated soils, which is above background, but below what is normally considered dangerous to humans. So to err on the side of caution, they decided to create the barrier. The direction was to pave or landscape to keep the dust down and prevent human use.
- 3.15.2. Mr. Popowich asked if the current area is a buffer. He said at this time there is no way to prevent the contamination from seeping into the property now.
- 3.15.3. Mrs. Brown said that the levels are not so contaminated that they are worried about the ground water. It's just erring on the side of caution to limit the liability. She offered to have an environmental scientist come to a meeting.
- 3.16. Mr. Burgess asked if the MTA would be willing to attend a town hall.
- 3.16.1. Ms. Brown said she believes they would be open to that.
- 3.16.2. Ms. Cheleblian asked Mr. Marx what he felt would be a good idea. Would he feel a town hall a good idea?
- 3.16.3. Mr. Marx said he would encourage more discussion. He doesn't want this to be the end all. He feels that we should have the meeting, we should write the MTA, we should write others along the route, and we should write the other Council members to get them involved.
- 3.16.4. A discussion was had on which council members would be involved in this.
- 3.16.5. Ms. Cheleblian said that right now she didn't think we needed the council members at this time, but maybe we can get the other NC's along that route to be involved.
- 3.16.6. Ms. Robinson said that we should include the council members to make them aware.
- 3.16.7. Ms. Cheleblian said agreed that we should and asked how we wanted to go about this.

- 3.16.8. Mr. Essavi, a stakeholder, suggested we invite LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, since he is responsible for this area on the county side.
- 3.16.9. Mr. Sims thinks the NC would be the most effective way to do this. This would be a lot of pressure to come to bare on them.
- 3.16.10. Mr. Marx suggested the Sheriff as well.
- 3.16.11. Ms. Chelebian agreed it is a Safety issue.
- 3.16.12. Ms. Robinson said it would be a partnership between 3 committees.
- 3.16.13. Ms. Chelebian made the following motion:

***WNC-PWT-032301-1: The WNC will write a letter to the MTA management, Council members, County Supervisors, Sheriff, and the various NC along the Busway and request a town hall with all land owners adjacent to the Busway. Concerns to be addressed include public safety, crime, graffiti, littering / illegal dumping, the contamination issue, and general quality of life issues. (Chelebian)***

- 3.16.14. Mr. Cubillas said he thinks it's just an excuse for the MTA to not deal with it. He feels if they want to do it, then
- 3.16.15. Mr. Popowich agreed and said if there was contamination its either a toxic otherwise it leaves it open for the entire route to sue

- 3.17. Ms. Robinson seconded the motion.
- 3.18. Ms. Chelebian called for the vote and the motion passed 5 – 0.

**4. Discussion and possible action on selecting one of 3 bids for the Winnetka Sign Beautification project.**

- 4.1. Ms. Chelebian introduced the item.
- 4.2. Mr. Popowich asked if everyone had a copy of the bids.
- 4.3. Mr. Sims said that they now have three bids available. He said that he really does like the lowest bidder so far. He likes what they have to offer. He went on to say that he has spoken to the city manager in charge of the medians who is willing to help. He feels we should pick up the plants from the city and if there are areas that run over cost then we can negotiate with the contractor. He said the contractor would take care of the area for 3 months or so. He said that that bidder would use native plants as much as possible.
  - 4.3.1. Mr. Popowich said he would like more solar lamps even it costs more.
  - 4.3.2. Mr. Burgess pointed out Sequoia would have 30 small lamps and 8 larger lamps
- 4.4. Ms. Chelebian asked why the cost is lower.
  - 4.4.1. Mr. Sims not sure
- 4.5. Mr. Burgess asked about the grass where appropriate
  - 4.5.1. Mr. Sims said that it was because we weren't sure where they were going to put the grass and the flowers.
- 4.6. Mr. Cubillas asked who would maintain it.
  - 4.6.1. Mr. Sims said that it would be the city.
- 4.7. Ms. Chelebian said that she would like to have a side by side comparison.
- 4.8. Mr. Sims referred to the letter we sent them.
- 4.9. Mr. Popowich asked if what we want is an itemized list.
  - 4.9.1. Ms. Chelebian not really.
- 4.10. Mr. Montaine brought up the fact that this looks like this is not really a full project. He feels there are discrepancies in what they contractors are providing.
- 4.11.
- 4.12. Mr. Popowich said that maybe we do need it to be itemized because the city often has cost overruns and maybe we need to do a better job.
- 4.13.

- 4.14. Mr. Sims said that the issue is that we need to require them to do something, and the issue is not what their costs are, the issue is whether they are going to do what we want them to do.
- 4.15. Ms. Robinson asked if this includes the free city plants.
  - 4.15.1. Mr. Sims said no, those would be added.
- 4.16. Ms. Chelebian wanted to compare the roses. She pointed out the differences.
- 4.17. Mr. Popowich stated his concerns about the way that we are going about this. He said that one of his concerns was that we are being a bit general. He suggested that we hire a landscaper to draw us plans so that we know exactly what we are getting. He referred to his review of various Neighborhood Grant programs which all came with some type of illustration. He concluding we cant mess it up.
  - 4.17.1. Mr. Marx, a stakeholder, commented he was in favor of that suggestion.
  - 4.17.2. Ms. Chelebian said she agrees that we should first state how many roses we should get and then get the cost for that item.
  - 4.17.3. Mr. Montaine said he agreed with Mr. Popowich. He feels we need to see it and then make comparisons.
- 4.18. Mr. Cubillas again asked about the maintenance.
  - 4.18.1. Mr. Burgess said city.
  - 4.18.2. Mr. Sims said they will maintain it for a period of time to guarantee the planting was good and it will last. He went on to say that he is not so concerned about what the contractors say their costs are. The fact is if we are going to be more specific then that's what we are going to get the costs for what we state. The only thing is the lights are not spaced. Since none of us are landscapers how can we say?
- 4.19. Mr. Popowich said the more he thinks about it we need to see a diagram and a picture of what it is. The worst thing that can happen is they put something in and we don't like it and they just say that it meets the requirements. Now we have no recourse.
  - 4.19.1. Mr. Sims said that they have said what they will provide. He said that at first the city wouldn't allow roses but he convinced them after he discussed it.
- 4.20. Ms. Chelebian said that she wanted to thank Mr. Sims for all his efforts. She then asked what would be the negative aspects if we placed this on hold and open up the room for a discussion on what Mr. Popowich has proposed. What would be the negative aspect of going to the contractors and asking them for diagrams? Will we lose the flowers from the city?
  - 4.20.1. Mr. Sims said as far as the flowers I spoke to him about a month and a half ago and I gave him the impression that we were ready to go. It didn't happen. One of the landscapers suggested from me a plan from the city so that the can outline what he would do. He tried to go through Councilmember Zine's office and they couldn't get the plan so he personally walked with them.
- 4.21. Ms. Chelebian said that verbally they have explained it, but can they visualize it for us.
- 4.22. Mr. Popowich said he is unwilling to allow this to go forward. We will regret it. We will have to live with it. I want to do it like I originally said. He apologized for giving in to the committee earlier, but he can't do it unless we do it.
- 4.23. Mr. Cubillas said that when he did his landscaping he had the landscapers come in and present their ideas.
- 4.24. Mr. Sims asked how he is going to create this.
  - 4.24.1. Mr. Popowich said that they have to do it.
  - 4.24.2. A discussion on plan drawings, who would do it, how could we get the plans, and so on?
  - 4.24.3. Mr. Cubillas said that he was aware of a company he used which does this...and they did it for free because they are bidding on the job.
  - 4.24.4. Mr. Popowich said that we have to stop thinking so small. We need to start requiring the developers to do their job.
- 4.25. Ms. Chelebian asked if we can send this back to the committee.
  - 4.25.1. Mr. Popowich said he wants the company to do it.
  - 4.25.2. Mr. Sims suggested Mr. Cubillas get in touch with the company he was talking about.

4.25.3. Mr. Popowich said that he wants to run this like a company and request RFP. He apologized for not doing it that way. He explained and RFP. He said this has to be a step by step process and we have to do it the right way. We don't want to be

4.25.4. Mr. Sims suggested we add the new contractor.

4.25.5. Mr. Cubillas said that we should still contact these folks.

4.26. Ms. Chelebian said that we should refer it back to the committee and

4.26.1. Mr. Popowich said that the committee will meet and create a time line and specifics on what we will do going forward.

**5. Discussion and possible action on street issues. Includes discussion on 6900 Lubao Ave in Winnetka.**

5.1. Ms. Chelebian introduced the issue. She said that we have created the ad hoc committee for grading and this would fall under that. She then went on to say that the WNC received a letter about the condition of Lubao St. She said that Ms. Lamishaw contacted Mr. Basch and together they reviewed the problem and responded to the stakeholder. She went on to read the full letter from Ms. Lamishaw.

5.2. Mr. Montaine asked if Mr. Basch could even write the letter.

5.2.1. Mr. Popowich responded that only the Secretary can do it.

5.3. Ms. Chelebian read the responses from Ms. Lamishaw.

5.4. Mr. Popowich corrected his statement and said that the President and committee chairs can write letters. He went on to say that we have just set a precedent for having the letters approved by the committees before we send letters.

5.5. Ms. Chelebian read Mr. Basch's letter. She announced that Ms. Lamishaw and Mr. Basch were invited to attend a meeting with Mr. Bwaire who will be unveiling more information on the plan. She said she has recently been invited as well, but couldn't attend.

5.5.1. Mr. Popowich said that he would go.

5.5.2. Ms. Chelebian then read another response from Ms. Lamishaw.

5.5.3. Mr. Popowich said he can't attend due to previous commitment with his daughter.

5.6. Mr. Popowich updated on the Mason issue. He commented that three of the four letters have gone out, and that the letter to the Bureau of Street Services has not gone out yet.

5.6.1. Ms. Chelebian will follow up.

**6. Discussion on setting a meeting date for the Winnetka Street Grading Ad Hoc Committee.**

6.1. Ms. Chelebian asked when this committee can be set up.

6.2. A general discussion was had on what date would be good. It was decided April 11, 2005

**7. Discussion and possible action on Mayor Hahn's plan to allow NC's to have discretion over \$100,000.00, of street funding. Details of this proposal are not yet known, we hope to have information at our meeting**

7.1. Ms. Chelebian said she spoke to Mr. Bwaire about the meeting. She said if we can't have someone attend then she has already got Mr. Bwaire's agreement to provide the information to her to share.

7.2. A discussion ensued about what streets were paved and why they were paved.

**8. Discussion and possible action on updates to the traffic impact taskforce for Westfield Mall**

8.1. Ms. Chelebian reiterated that she would like to be informed in the future of these items. She said that she was not informed of this meeting.

8.1.1. Mr. Popowich said he would make sure she was.

8.2. Ms. Chelebian asked if there were any other comments.

8.3. Mr. Popowich responded that the appointed representative was not here.

**9. Public Comments – Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Committee’s subject matter jurisdiction.**

9.1. Mr. Cubillas asked about street lighting and how it was done.

9.1.1. Ms. Robinson said it was a street tax that was assessed to the landowners who want.

9.1.2. Ms. Chelebian stated that it should come before us and we can discuss it.

9.2. Mr. Sims asked why we were having the street grading meeting.

9.2.1. Ms. Chelebian said hat it was a way to sort and organize which streets we want to address and which we want to focus on.

9.2.2. Mr. Sims said what if we don’t get the funds. We said we were going to take the pictures.

9.2.3. Ms. Chelebian said even if it’s just to report the problems.

9.2.4. Mr. Sims said his concern is if we don’t have the power.

9.2.5. Mr. Popowich responded that it’s for us to determine. This will allow us to focus on certain streets that matter. The concern is that if we don’t then we’ll be like the boy crying wolf. This will make it fair.

**10. Committee Business –**

- A. Comments on Committee Member’s own activities/ Brief announcements.**
- B. Brief response to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising their general public comment rights.**
- C. Introduction of any new issues for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting/request that the item be placed on the next meeting’s agenda.**
- D. Requests for Committee Members to research issues and report back to the Committee at a future time.**

**Adjournment**