

Mar Vista Community Council Renters' Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

15 August 2020

The MVCC Renters' Subcommittee (Renters') is a subcommittee of the MVCC Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUM)

1. Call to order (2:05 pm)

2. Announcements

2.1 Co-Chair Introductions.

Annie and Tyler introduce themselves and explain the structure of subcommittee within MVCC.

2.2 Board of Directors introductions.

None

3. Public Comment for Items NOT on This Agenda

None

4. Reading and Approval of Minutes from previous meeting - July 18th, 2020

5. Unfinished Business and General Orders

5.1 Discussion of possible action to request an MVCC Request for Action to stop LAPD involvement in illegal evictions

Tyler introduced the actions taken by the LA City Council so far to prohibit LAPD involvement in illegal evictions while the moratorium on evictions for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency and limit LAPD responsibility to ensuring tenants' right to housing and safety during the COVID-19 emergency.

Derl Clausen and Nathalie Folkerts expressed support for an action. Tyler and Annie will draft a request for action to bring to the next MVCC PLUM committee meeting.

5.2 Discussion of resources for renters facing potential eviction due to COVID-19 economic impacts

Tyler introduced the resource document assembled by Annie for tenants based on ideas and resources discussed at our July 18th, 2020 meeting. He shared that evictions are illegal right now but tenants must pay back rent after the state of emergency ends. The document includes information from HCID and Councilmember Bonin's office which put together a webpage of resources for community members, and the LA Tenants Union also provided Tyler and Annie with a list of resources that were included in this document.

Derl Clausen asked what kind of information is okay to share. Annie responded that the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment has informed us that if something is shared by an elected official, we can assume it has been vetted under the same rules the MVCC is held to and is appropriate to share.

As discussed with the PLUM chair at our July 18th meeting, these resources will be posted to the RES webpage.

6. New Business –

6.1 Discussion and possible action about a Request for Action from the MVCC asking LA City councilmembers and local California Assembly-members and Senators to lobby Governor Newsom to invoke the California State Rainy Day Fund for rent and mortgage relief

Tyler introduced the Request for Action motion (including in the supplemental materials for this meeting) asking LA City Council and local state assembly-members and senators to ask Governor Newsom to declare a state of housing emergency in order to use the \$16.5 billion in Rainy Day Fund reserves for rent and mortgage relief.

Annie explained that the MVCC Board has passed a community impact statement expressing support for eviction and mortgage relief protection. These motions follow up from this general expression of support for relief with more specific policy recommendations.

No questions or comments were provided. The motion was passed unanimously (4 yes, 0 abstentions, 0 no)

6.2 Discussion and possible action about a Request for Action for CA Senator Mitchell and CA Assemblymember Klamlager to support immediate passage of AB 1436 (Chiu)

Tyler introduced the Request for Action motion (including in the supplemental materials for this meeting) for our representatives in the state senate and assembly to support immediate passages of AB1436.

Motion was unanimously passed (5 yes, 0 abstentions, 0 no)

7. Additional discussion

Tyler encourages everyone to attend PLUM meetings on Tuesdays (next meeting not posted yet).

Annie requested Nancee of LA Tenants Union introduce herself after joining a bit late. Nancee asked if RS will consider supporting Rule 1. Judicial Council of LA passed rule 1 which blocked courts from issuing a summons for eviction process. Other rules have passed about protections like the ability to repay back rent. Even with these protections, some owners will try to move forward with eviction. Judicial Council voted to get rid of rule 1 as of September 1st. Work is being done to protect Rule 1 at state level.

Tyler requested that Ashley Zeldin introduce herself after joining late. She is vice chair of the community plan subcommittee of the PLUM committee. She is grateful that Tyler and Annie stuck around and suggested this idea since Mar Vista is two-thirds renters and it's helped bring in new folks.

Nancee proposed an amendment to the Request for Action on AB 1436 that, in the strongest language possible, the motion also include support for Rule 1 provisions which demand that courts cannot issue summons for evictions in this state of emergency.

Tyler proposed to suspend the rules of order. AB seconds.

Nancee Lenurmand asks that if the motion for 1436 is not passed, that RS consider a separate motion to support Rule 1 provision.

Ashley Zeldin suggested minor edit "therefore be it resolved".

JoAnn Paolantonio joined the Zoom and introduced herself as a volunteer with Eviction Defense Network. Executive Director Elena Popp also sends a message of support.

Annie asked if additional officials should be included in this request for action. JoAnn replied that they are working on state assembly and state senate, and city councilmembers. Nancee suggested the governor as well.

Ashley also suggested copyedit "be it further" in final paragraph.

Tyler describes edits: (1) added additional "whereas section" to discuss context of Rule 1, (2) added governor and city council to recipients of request for action, (3) also include a request support of Rule 1 even if AB1436 does not move through legislature.

Ashley asked about reason for 25 unit limit on AB1436. No one knew why that number was the limit other than the general goal of supporting smaller "mom and pop" landlords. Ashley said she supports.

Ashley asked if Neil or STacy of PLUM have heard about Rule 1 yet. Tyler responded that they've generally discussed the need for upstream solutions to eviction.

Ashley pointed out that higher vacancy rate could affect the Ellis Act. Above 5% is when renters will be at greater risk.

Tyler moves to amend. Annie seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Tyler asks what we should be thinking about for Sep 1 when "eviction tsunami" begins. These two policy measures will be key to address. Nancee will share calls to action with the co-chairs. She emphasizes that this is an emergency. Evictions have always led to homelessness which has often led to death. Even if you don't care about homelessness, if you are worried about COVID this is a public health issue.

As private individuals, they need to respond to summons within 5 days or they will lose the eviction case. The formal return to it is called "the answer". File any kind of answer then amend it later. This will go on tenants' records.

Ashley suggests that Tyler and Annie write something informational up to include in the MVCC Weekly Roundup.

Tyler points out that people don't just need eviction protection, they need money in order to make payments.

Final comments:

Westside Regional Alliance of Councils' Land Use and Planning Committee held a town hall on Vote No to SB1120 and 1902 which will be agendized for assembly appropriations committees. What are the co-chairs' understanding of this bill and whether it will address housing needs for renters? AB replies that this approach sounds like what Austin has been doing to prevent sprawl and add housing into neighborhoods immediately surrounding suburbs surrounding the city center. Ashley is coming around to the idea of duplexes at market rate or below.

Elena Popp joined the call. EDN is a nonprofit that represents tenants in eviction. Counseled around 5k 2018 and 2019 around LA County. Represented around 1k in the downtown court. Part of a coalition called the Right to Counsel Coalition (made of 10 legal services organizations that represent tenants). EDN became countywide and put together the coalition to address eviction concerns. (1) Public information campaign to reach 1.5 million and education to 150k households and 120 virtual know-your-rights webinars (one a day); (2) Access LA: limited representation and negotiation of pay-to-stay (3)full representation to at least 30k households. Goal is to address "Access to Justice" gap for tenants who cannot receive help with their eviction case. Working with nonprofits, faith-based orgs, bar association, legal orgs, etc. Each partner will undergo a 5-part training to counsel tenants and will have multiple times per week to consult with lawyers.

If AB1436 passes, they will be able to use a longer period of time to renegotiate back payments over the 12 month period instead of just a few months without the bill passed. Westside falls under EDNs effort connected to courts in Santa Monica and Inglewood. LAFLA will be a point of contact organization on the west side.

Elena: Mike Bonin has been a key partner. When the Tenant Protection Act passed, were able to address a huge loophole allowing almost 60k units to become at risk of eviction.

Ways to get involved: all NCs could get trained and set up clinics to connect tenants with advocates. Pilot in CD11 for communities that feed into SM court. Develop a specific proposal and get it to MVCC and CD11 office, then consider participation. Elena will email information to follow up. Co-chairs will be in touch to continue learning about the proposal.

8. Meeting adjourned (3:45)