



**Mar Vista
Community Council**

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2009-2010**

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Certified Neighborhood Council
August 13, 2002

April 12, 2011

Mr. BongHwan Kim
General Manager
Department of Neighborhood Empowerment
334-B East 2nd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kim,

The MVCC expresses strong concern that a small group calling itself the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Elections Task Force (the "Task Force"), on the strength of four gatherings condensed into a period of less than one month, has issued a recommendation that calls for the elimination of the City Clerk's jurisdiction over the neighborhood council elections and implementation of internet-based voting for the elections.

The MVCC is concerned for the following reasons:

1. It appears that very few Neighborhood Councils participated in the Task Force, and there is no record of official approval or contributions by the Boards of any NCs that were involved at the time.

2. The Task Force assumed as a starting point that the City Clerk's office should not be involved in the future of Neighborhood Council elections, stating in the Report that "The intent of the Task Force was to respond to concerns raised following the 2010 neighborhood council elections. Near unanimous opinion of those participating in town halls hosted by Councilman Krekorian was expressed in his report: "There were a few points of consensus during the town hall discussions and one was that the City Clerk should not administer neighborhood council elections.""

3. The Task Force's report:
(i) contains no specific findings of fact, but only summarily announces its recommendation, and

(ii) fails to present any evidence that the City Clerk failed to manage the 2010 neighborhood council elections properly or effectively.

4. The Task Force provides no evidence that the imposition of an internet-based voting system would not disenfranchise or inconvenience many stakeholders who do not enjoy access to the internet from their homes.

5. The notion that there would be significant cost savings to the City by implementing an internet-based voting system does not take into account that:

(i) without oversight of the City Clerk, the likelihood of disputes over the validity of neighborhood council elections would increase exponentially, along with the costs of addressing those new disputes, and

(ii) neighborhood council elections are a laudable and worthwhile expenditure of taxpayer funds.

In response to these concerns, the Mar Vista Community Council has passed the following resolution regarding the future of Neighborhood Council elections:

Whereas, the MVCC strongly believes that the credibility and legitimacy of Neighborhood Council elections, and thus the credibility and

legitimacy of the entire Neighborhood Council system, is enhanced by having NC elections run by the same official entity that runs all other City elections; and

Whereas, the MVCC believes that the Neighborhood Council system must maintain consistency and transparency in its elections and that all Neighborhood Councils will be tainted by the failures of an individual Neighborhood Council to maintain the integrity of its election procedures; and that proposals to allow individual councils to choose among various other options, such as ‘electronic,’ ‘town-hall’ and/or ‘incumbent-run’ election systems, will result in elections marred by the limitations of those procedures, including the loss of transparency, accuracy, and legitimacy, and will lead to a proliferation of disputes.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Mar Vista Community Council:

- 1. expresses its strong support and preference for the City Clerk continuing to have jurisdiction over, and be solely responsible for, the more than 90 Neighborhood Council elections scheduled to occur in the Spring of 2012,**
- 2. urges the Los Angeles City Council, including CD-11 Councilman Bill Rosendahl, to take all necessary steps to ensure that the City Clerk continues to have jurisdiction and responsibility over the Neighborhood Council elections, and**
- 3. recommends that a geographically diverse group of Neighborhood Council representatives meet with the City Clerk’s Office to discuss ways in which the election process can be made more flexible, cost-effective, and responsive to the scheduling needs of the NC system, including the feasibility of establishing a vote-by-mail alternative for all stakeholders.**

Thank You,



Albert Olson
Chair
Mar Vista Community Council
Board of Directors