



MINUTES
Ad Hoc LADBS Policies Committee Minutes
Wednesday, July 6, 2022, 4 PM-5 PM

Call to Order and Roll Call: Stella Grey, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

6 Present: Robin Greenberg, Stella Grey, Ellen Evans, Bobby Kwan, Nickie Miner, Bob Schlesinger, Leslie Weisberg

5 Absent: Shawn Bayliss, Maureen Levinson, Stephanie Savage, Michael Schweitzer

1. **Motion:** Approve proposed April 6, 2022, Ad Hoc LADBS Policies Committee meeting Agenda. **Moved** by Leslie Weisberg; **seconded** by Bob Schlesinger; **6/0/0 passed** (At 4:48 PM)
2. **Motion:** Approve February 2, 2022, Ad Hoc LADBS Policies Committee meeting minutes. **Moved** by Leslie Weisberg; **seconded** by Bob Schlesinger; **6/0/0 passed** (At 4:49 PM)
3. **General Public Comments**
Don Loze raised the issue regarding cumulative number of retaining walls at the last PLU Committee meeting. This Ad Hoc Committee will write a letter to reflect his concerns. (At 4:53 PM)
4. **Discussion:**
None
5. **Discussion:** The following topics related to haul routes were discussed:

#1. Stella: Approval of haul routes requires knowledge of codes and regulations, including CEQA requirements. BBSC commissioners are not well versed in specific hillside regulations and in CEQA. For instance, they are unaware of maximum by-right grading quantities allowed by BHO and often approve export volumes that exceed BHO without requesting that the project obtain a discretionary approval. Also, they approve categorical exemptions without considering specific circumstances for each project.

What can be done to improve their expertise? Could grading plans be made part of the submittal package for haul route application?

Dina: Commissioners went through formal training however they do not remember specific code limits. They rely upon staff members of the Commission and of the Planning Department to provide technical opinions, including CEQA related. LADBS does not have an ability to enforce in right of way, but Department of Public Works (further DPW) does. Houle route review could be moved to a separate agency

or could be done by DPW. Preliminary grading plans are part of the submittal package for haul routes. Public can request them as part of the Board Files.

Soil expansion factor is now included with the Soils Approval letters and bulk factor is now accounted for export/import calculations. Grading quantities are submitted for environmental review. While the City carefully reviews grading calculations, haul route enforcement remains a problem.

SG: Acknowledged that under Dina's leadership the template for approval letters was revised to identify enforcement agency for each condition of approval.

Ellen: - Any advice on how commissioners can be more skeptical about information they were given by planners regarding environmental review. We noticed glaring mistakes such as a reference to an existing building on a lot that was not there. – What is the best way for the community to advocate at the hearing.

Dina: Communicate found discrepancies to staff engineers. They will try to address issues with the City Departments.

#2. Stella: We see a conflict of interest when Deputy Grading Inspectors are hired by the contractors or owners.

We would prefer if LADBS created a roster of approved Deputy Grading Inspectors and paid them with funds collected from respective projects, similarly to how third-party plan checkers are paid.

Dina: Currently City investigators oversee performance of Deputy Grading Inspectors, making sure they follow codes. It may be worth finding out whom to report if you find a deputy inspector violating city requirements.

#3. Stella: Reporting violations is complicated, and it takes experience to identify the correct website/enforcing agency for each condition without having a staff report in front of you.

Can MyLA311 add tabs for specific violations?

Dina: To implement this, a council district will have to advocate for allocating a budget for the webpage update. The update will have to include transferring violation reports directly to the inspectors assigned to the respective areas. The list of the inspectors will have to be maintained current to assure quick response. Because several departments are involved, a CD will be a lead on implementing these revisions.

Ellen: Is the Commission Office adequately funded?

Dina: All departments are understaffed.

Stella: From my sources, funding is adequate, but it has been difficult to hire, train and retain staff.

Dina: The process of hiring is so slow that by the time funds are available, potential candidates forget what for they were interviewed.

#4. Stella: Projects that export by-right quantities of soil do not have designated haul routes. Instead of having trucks roaming around in the neighborhoods, by-right projects that export in excess of 200 CY (random number for discussion) should have designated routes. It can be a standard route for each specific area that does not require hearings.

What will it take to implement it?

Dina: How will this route be provided to a project?

Stella: As part of permit approval. Routes can be pre-determined by the same entities that approve haul routes (BSS, DOT). It should apply to hillsides and identify entry points. Or it can be part of permit application approval.

Dina: A permit clearance by DOT could be added to plan check review, that will require a project to commit to a prescribed haul route. This clearance could be attached to the plans. This will increase DOT load – needs budget. It can be also incorporated to HCR or a specific plan.

Bob: Who keeps track of haul route in specific areas.

Dina: Only in the Bird Streets. Bel Air has a requirement of having only one project at any given time. A violation of it should be handled by code enforcement.

#5. Stella: We would like to add two columns to the Haul Route Status Table: one to post actual exported quantities to date as reported by Deputy Grading inspectors; and another one to mark completed haul routes.

Whom do we contact to implement it?

In the meantime, how can we find out actual quantities that were exported by older projects?

Dina: It will require someone to maintain a spreadsheet. You can request it at the Commission hearing, it can possibly be done internally.

Ellen: What is the worst thing that the community advocates can do at the hearings.

Dina: Being harsh to the staff who only try to do their job.

Leslie: What we can do to make the system work as intended?

Dina: Enforcement is the biggest issue, to make sure the reports reach the right enforcement agency/personnel quickly. Inspectors should be held accountable for responding to complaint in a timely manner.

Items **1, 2** and **3** of the Agenda were discussed at the end of the meeting due to the lack of quorum at the very beginning.

6. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:59 PM.

Next meeting date August 3, 2022.