

Windward School Annual Neighborhood Meeting
Tuesday, January 5, 2016
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Pursuant to duly given notice, the Windward School Annual Neighborhood Meeting was held in the Center for Teaching & Learning at Windward School, 11350 Palms Boulevard, Los Angeles, California on Tuesday, January 5, 2016.

Proposed Goal: Hold an annual public community meeting at Windward School to improve our neighborhood partnerships; inform Mar Vista neighbors of upcoming plans, school events, etc.; field concerns from neighbors; and find avenues for continued conversation.

Representing Windward School:

Tom Gilder, Head of School, Windward School

Dawn Barrett, Director of Institutional Advancement & Operations

Representing Community Organizations:

Len Nguyen, Senior Field Deputy for Councilmember Mike Bonin

Bill Koontz, Chair, Mar Vista Community Council

Michael Millman, Mar Vista Zone 4 Director

5:30 p.m. Meeting held in the Center for Teaching and Learning, 2nd Floor.

5:40 p.m. **Tom Gilder** (Windward's Head of School) opened the meeting, offered greetings, and introduced the evening's agenda.

Bill Koontz (President of Mar Vista Community Council) gave a brief update on recent MVCC business. Mr. Koontz expressed continued appreciation for Windward's positive impact and community-focused work within Mar Vista. He thanked Windward for sponsoring local activities like the *Mar Vista Fall Festival*, *Pop-Up Mar Vista*, and the *Mar Vista Block Party*. He looks forward to continued partnership with Windward in many areas, from the collaborative efforts undertaken in support of Mar Vista Park to ideas generated by the Mar Vista-Windward Partnership Steering Committee, a group which meets several times a year to identify new opportunities for working together.

Len Nguyen (Senior Field Deputy for Councilmember Mike Bonin) gave an update on the Councilmember's latest activities. In 2015, the Councilmember's priorities include: a focus on technology and strategic job growth; leveraging new transit plans while minimizing impact to residents; and growing Mar Vista in sustainable ways that retain the "livability" of the neighborhood.

Mr. Nguyen noted the long-standing cooperation between Windward and the District Office on efforts to support Mar Vista and help improve the community. He commended Windward for being responsive to feedback from neighbors and helping to navigate local issues with city

officials. A recent example of an issue that neighbors, Windward, and the Councilmember's office have teamed to resolve involves overnight campers on Palms Boulevard. A continued dialogue among neighbors, Windward, and the Councilmember's office has resulted in fewer campers and a timely removal of local encampments near the wash. Windward's open exchange and collaboration with neighbors continues to be helpful in bringing issues of import to the attention of the Councilmember's Office and other stakeholders within Los Angeles.

Dawn Barrett (Windward Director of Institutional Advancement and Operations) provided updates on security and operational measures at Windward. A variety of steps continue to ensure that the area around campus remains a safe environment for Windward families and neighbors alike, including: crossing guards at Palms Boulevard during high traffic hours; installing additional safety cameras (in part to discourage jaywalking near the vicinity of Palms Boulevard and Mar Vista Park); conducting increased patrols on perimeter streets to monitor parking; and deploying enhanced parking lot management during major scheduled school events to help maintain smooth traffic flow through the school's lots. Windward has encouraged dialogue with immediate neighbors of the campus and furnished them with a round-the-clock point of contact so that any issues or questions may be immediately addressed. Quarterly newsletters are distributed to support improved communications and provide immediate contacts for any issues that may arise. The Windward in the Community web page includes all Steering Committee minutes, local news, and links for easy access.

Ms. Barrett noted that Windward enjoys participating in community events and has extended invitations to local residents to engage in events taking place on Windward's campus:

- Guest Speakers
- Performing Arts Events
- Screenings
- Musical Performances
- Homecoming

Additional outreach has occurred through Windward students participating in community service. Students work with Grand View Boulevard Elementary School, One Voice (food bundles), Safe Place for Youth, Westside Children's Center, and Family Portraits.

Neighbors in attendance thanked and complimented Windward for the school's proactive course of communication and, especially, for acting promptly to address any inquiries made regarding school facilities and operations. Windward's responsiveness to questions and the personal care taken to address any individual concerns has been very much appreciated. In addition, both individual and group communications from the school have been clear, informative, and helpful.

Neighbors asked for additional ways to connect with those immediately in their neighborhood, in particular when a new homeowner moves in. Mr. Koontz identified several possible steps that could be undertaken to improve these connections.

Tom Gilder gave an update on programs of note in the 2015-16 academic year and other school plans. The school is focused on providing a dynamic, college-preparatory education to students in

ways that will ultimately equip them to lead happy, healthy, and meaningful lives. This involves implementing research-based approaches to help students perform at their mental and physical peak, as well as providing them with skills and competencies to succeed in careers that may not yet exist today. There has been a welcome expansion of programmatic offerings in areas such as STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics), global studies, entrepreneurship, and technology. Students are doing everything from creating iPhone apps to building robots that can be controlled by thought. Arts programs have expanded as well, with professional artists working with students to create productions staged in spaces like the Grammy Museum and the UCLA Freud Playhouse. Building on past success with university models and partnerships, Windward's faculty are engaged in deep research and visits to some of the world's leading educational institutions; these trips yield ideas and best practices that Windward will use to develop future innovative programs and educational facilities.

Windward students are engaged in partnerships with organizations and programs around Mar Vista and across the city, from collaborating on robotics efforts with students at Venice High to creating Spanish-language book clubs with children at Grand View Boulevard Elementary School. They are also engaged in service projects at numerous local organizations such as the Salvation Army Transitional Village, Westside Children's Center, and Mar Vista Elementary School. Service learning is an integral part of the school curriculum; Windward students spend thousands of hours engaged with the community every year.

Mr. Gilder shared that the school is in the preliminary stages of creating a new strategic plan. The process takes several months and involves internal and external constituents. The new strategic plan will look at creation of a long-term master campus plan and may look at development on the site of an apartment complex currently owned by the school on the southeast corner of campus. This would be potentially followed by redevelopment on the footprint of the existing main structure that currently faces Palms Boulevard. As noted in the 2014 Neighborhood Meeting minutes, Mr. Gilder strongly emphasized that *any* future plans for campus additions, if proposed, would be thoroughly vetted with neighbors and the Mar Vista Community Council. In addition, prior to starting any construction efforts, the school would first approach the community through public hearings as it has historically done.

Mr. Gilder concluded by reminding attendees that their input and feedback—whether in the form of a phone call or participation in a community forum like this one—is vitally important to the school's ability to address any issues. Windward places a high priority on transparency, partnership, and open communication with fellow neighbors; if a concern ever arises, please contact the school so that necessary steps can be taken.

Mr. Gilder closed the evening by thanking all attendees for their time and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to talk and work together on improving our community.

6:30 p.m. Meeting adjourned.