



United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights,
West Adams and Jefferson Park Communities Neighborhood Council

P.O. Box 19219 · Los Angeles, CA 90019
phone: 323-731-8686 · email: info@unnc.org · website: www.unnc.org

May 11, 2015

Lynn Wyatt, Zoning Administrator
Charlie Rausch, Associate Zoning Administrator
Michael Sin, Planning Associate
Zoning Administrator
Los Angeles City Planning Department, Room 763
City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Case Nos. ZA 15227(O)(PA4) and ENV-2014-2482-CE
2126 West Adams Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90018
Applicant: Freeport McMoRan Oil & Gas (“FMOG”)

Project description: Proposed expansion of the oil and gas production facilities of the Murphy Drill Site and proposed installation of a CEB 800 Clean Emissions Burner into the parkland below the existing surface drill site work area at the Murphy Oil site; this equipment to be surrounded by a 120-linear-foot-long and 30-foot-high permanent sound screen/wall previously approved in Case No. DIR-2013-3204-CWC

Dear Zoning Administrators Wyatt and Rausch:

The United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park Communities Neighborhood Council (UNNC) does not support the Project as proposed.

UNNC is **OPPOSED** to the placement of the CEB 800 Clean Emissions Burner outside the established surface drill site work area surrounded by the masonry perimeter wall. UNNC is **OPPOSED** to the expansion into the parkland on the southerly lower sloping portion of the larger parcel.

UNNC is **OPPOSED** to the use of a categorical exemption for the subject proposed project.

UNNC reiterates its **SUPPORT** for a list of proposed Conditions and Mitigations prepared last September at the behest of Community Stakeholders and created during a series of public meetings with proper Brown Act notices and notifications.

UNNC is **IN FAVOR** of clean air, and **SUPPORTS** the addition of a CEB 800, since it is the current best practice technology; however UNNC’s support is limited to the placement of that equipment within the existing surface drill site work area, identified by the early 1960s Zoning Administrator determinations and never subsequently altered.

UNNC has repeatedly voiced its opposition to this project, both because of repeated and extensive violations of procedure, code and conditions established by previous ZA cases, and as well because the proposed expansion into the landscaped parkland not only reduces much-needed green space but also alters all of the previous ZA decisions to maintain this area as a landscaped buffer for the residents of Jefferson Park.

On May 7, 2015, UNNC's Governing Board voted to reiterate its previous vote(s) relative to the proposed expansion and relative to conditions and mitigations needed to make the Murphy Drill Site and its operators better neighbors. Prior to that, the UNNC Planning & Zoning Committee met twice in public session to review this current case, on May 6, 2015 and on April 15, 2015.

The Governing Board of UNNC passed the following motion on May 7, 2015:

The UNNC Governing Board accepts the Planning & Zoning Committee's recommendations and report:

1). The P&Z Committee recommends that the UNNC Governing Board NOT SUPPORT Freeport McMoRan's request to expand the active drillsite (surface work area) into the parkland at 27th Street and St. Andrews Place. And furthermore that UNNC request that the Zoning Administrator orders that FMOG restore the parkland to the condition it was prior to construction. UNNC supports clean air and would support the installation of a CEB Clean Emissions Burner within the existing surface drill site work area surrounded by the perimeter wall.

2). The P&Z Committee recommends that the UNNC Governing Board NOT SUPPORT the use of a Categorical Exemption and to call for a full environmental review of the Murphy site/operation.

3). The P&Z Committee recommends that the UNNC Governing Board reiterate its position voted on in September 2014 of "Conditions and Mitigations" recommended to the Zoning Administrator for the subject site.

Background and Discussion:

The United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park Communities Neighborhood Council (UNNC) was certified on May 14, 2002 and held Governing Board elections in October, 2002. In January, 2003, the UNNC Board established several standing committees, including a Planning and Zoning Committee, which deals with land use matters, and an Executive Committee. These committees meet regularly in public settings. The Planning and Zoning Committee includes as members stakeholders to the neighborhood council (both resident and non-resident) as well as Board members. The Executive Committee consists of UNNC's elected officers. All of these meetings are publicly noticed in accordance with DONE rules.

UNNC has been dealing with the Murphy Drill Site's proposals and cases for about a dozen years, and has previously submitted multiple communications to the Planning Department, some of which are appended to this letter.

We want to specifically call to your attention UNNC's letter of September 9, 2014 in which we outlined multiple conditions and mitigations UNNC and its Stakeholders believe are mandatory to ensure there are no impacts to our community from the continued and proposed expansion of activities at the Murphy Drill Site.

Important among these conditions is UNNC's strong request that a full-fledged environmental review be conducted. We have been troubled with these recent proposals that the multiple proposed smaller projects should really be evaluated as one larger project, e.g., the expansion of the number of active oil wells (although 38 had been initially authorized, it is only now that the last group are anticipated to be drilled and come online), the expansion of the gas plant and sales of gas to The Gas Company (plus the related disposal/burning of waste gas that cannot be sold), and now the proposed physical expansion of the active work area.

We have now heard multiple different versions about WHY a CEB 800 is needed. The first explanation was that it was needed to replace existing burners (the microturbines), which had reached the end of their useful lives. The second explanation was that the CEB is needed to handle the expanded gas production (that is, additional capacity is required.) The third version, most recently aired, is that the CEB is needed merely to provide redundancy.

UNNC discussed at its Governing Board meeting that perhaps the only way to know accurately its purpose would be to have a third-party evaluation of the project, e.g. an EIR.

Moreover, Applicant proposes a new 30-foot-deep by 60-foot-long enclosure (1,800 square feet) for a single CEB, which at most requires a 7X7 foot pad. The original submission by Applicant showed what Planning Staff thought was TWO separate pads for two burners (per communications released in 2014). During the current round of UNNC meetings, Applicant's representative indicated that THREE concrete pads were in the plans. The varying descriptions beg, again, for a independent environmental evaluation and a stable project description.

Applicant also now proposes to be allowed to operate and/or have deliveries and/or do construction from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. if necessitated by DOT. If DOT in fact may have such requirements (does the department?) then that should be evaluated and mitigated, and not excused by the use of a categorical exemption. Similarly, Applicant proposes utilizing 27th Street relative to this expansion of the gas production equipment into the landscaped parkland area – because there is likely no other way to do it (perhaps the underlying reason why predecessor operators stuck to the original surface drill site active work area, with access from Adams Boulevard – the original ZA Determination made clear that the only access was to be from Adams and not from 27th Street in Jefferson Park. Changing that situation is not categorically exempt.

UNNC is equally troubled by the fact that at least some of the previously-required conditions are not being followed. Among these: A required annual review of the landscape and plantings to be held with the neighborhood council (UNNC) and the Council Office.

Given the changing nature of the project descriptions, UNNC urges that the case file in this matter be kept open so that we – and Community Stakeholders – may respond to whatever material and/or oral description may have been introduced at the public hearing on May 12, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Meyers, UNNC Planning and Zoning Chair
Jeff Camp, UNNC President



*United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights,
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P.O. Box 19219 • Los Angeles, CA 90019
phone: 323-731-8686 • email: info@unnc.org • website: www.unnc.org

September 9, 2014

The Honorable Herb Wesson
Council President
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street, Room 430
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Council President Wesson:

At the September 4, 2014 regular UNNC Governing Board meeting, UNNC took an action regarding Case ZA-1959-15227-O-PA5, which is a new project request to install a CEB 800 clean enclosed waste gas burner and sound walls in the lower landscaped section of the Murphy Oil parcel in Jefferson Park. The applicant is Freeport McMoRan.

At this meeting, the UNNC Governing Board voted unanimously to approve the following motion.

MOTION: Laura Meyers moved that UNNC recommend the following additional conditions and mitigations (without prejudice to existing conditions and mitigations) for the Murphy Oil site waste gas burner project, case ZA-1959-15227-O-PA5.

Norman Gilmore seconded.

- 1) **No expansion into the parkland on South Side (27th St).**
- 2) **Restore parkland on South side to ZA required condition as of early 2013, before construction started.**
- 3) **Enforce all already existing conditions & mitigation measures for the drill site. Establish Mitigation Monitoring Measures to track compliance with all established conditions.**
- 4) **Landscape with trees on the North, East, and West sides to hide view of drilling rigs and temporary sound walls.** Rigs are brought to the site repeatedly to work over and re-drill old wells as well as new wells. The HPOZ or UNNC, and/or other appropriate body shall conduct a public design review of the proposed landscaping.
- 5) **Regularly scheduled mandatory Reviews of Conditions by ZA with a public hearing.** Mandatory reviews should happen every 5 years. Given the

recent history, this schedule should be supplemented with a review 1 year after the current PA5 case and 3 years after the current PA5 case, and subsequently at no less than 5 year intervals. Environmental conditions and environmental science change over time, even if there are not new major projects at the site. For that reason all drill sites should have periodic mandatory reviews.

- 6) **A CEQA Environmental Impact Report must be produced on the cumulative impact of the Murphy Drill Site, with special attention to the current major expansion of the facilities that was given partial approval by the ZA in 2007 and was commenced without receiving full and final approval in 2013.** There has never been an Environmental Impact Report for any project at Murphy, nor any study or even the filing of a basic Environmental Assessment Form, despite the fact that such reviews have been required by law since the passage of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 1970. A baseline study must be conducted now, and future projects must undergo proper CEQA reviews.
- 7) **The operator must replace all five (5) waste gas burning microturbines with new CEBs because the CEBs are a proven technological improvement that emit less noxious gases and carbon than the microturbines.** This condition should be required as per Zoning Code Section 13.01.F.18, which is included as a condition for operations at the Murphy Drill Site in all ZA determinations. Section 10.01.F.18 says “all production equipment shall be so constructed and operated so that no noise, vibration, dust, odor, or other harmful or annoying substances or effect which can be eliminated or diminished by the use of greater care shall ever be permitted.” It additionally requires that “[p]roven technological improvements in methods of production shall be adopted as they from time to time become available if capable of reducing factors of nuisance or annoyance.”
- 8) **Website with updated information on the Murphy site (or all FMOG sites in the City, or all well sites in the City):** to keep the community informed about all projects, supply contact information, and prevent the kind of failure of communication that occurred in 2013.
- 9) **City Petroleum Administration is required by the City Administrative Code and must be reactivated.**
- 10) **City fees should be set to pay for needed City supervision/regulation of oil and gas production. Such supervision/regulation is already required by the City Administrative Code and sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, especially the Zoning Code, the Fire Code, and Public Works Code.**
- 11) **Constant monitoring and logging of airborne emissions including CO₂, Hydrogen Sulfide, and Methane. Logs to be publicly reported to City and to the public website on a monthly basis.**
- 12) **Mitigation for CO₂ that is leaked, released, vented or exhausted at the drill site.**
- 13) **Ground water and soil monitoring at the drill site, results to be publicly reported to City and to the public website annually.**
- 14) **Payment for repair and maintenance of streets and sidewalks trafficked by construction & drilling equipment.**

- 15) **Public Notice for all Hearings must go to all owners and tenants (residential & commercial) within the Oil Drilling Districts tapped by wells at the Murphy site.**
- 16) **Continue to require that no vehicles are allowed on 27th Street (with the exception of gardener's small pick-up trucks used for routine landscape maintenance i.e.: like any neighborhood gardener.)**
- 17) **The applicant shall maintain response plans for various plausible emergency conditions and file and update them with LAFD and LAPD. The ZA should verify that the plans have been filed before approval of the case. FMOG should annually orient and review the emergency plans with the three nearest LAFD stations on-site.**
- 18) **An emergency alert system will be established for the community within 1 mile radius of the well.**
- 19) **Emergency plans should specifically address plans for nearby concentrated populations such as schools, senior housing, disabled housing, and churches.**
- 20) **Posting of complaints from the public on the oil company website within 5 business days of receiving said complaints from the public.**
- 21) **Post website address and hotline number on north and south walls of facility.**
- 22) **Develop a phase out plan for when the site is depleted and conduct a public hearing once the property ceases production.**

Vote: 14 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, approved unanimously.

UNNC greatly appreciates your time and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Norman Gilmore
UNNC Secretary
secretary@unnc.org

cc via email:

Mayor Eric Garcetti
City Attorney Michael Feuer
Linn Wyatt, Chief Zoning Administrator
Staff member assigned to process the case c/o:
Faisal Roble, City of Los Angeles Planning Department
Lynda Smith, City of Los Angeles Planning Department
Ken Bernstein, Director Office of Historic Resources
Michelle Levy, HPOZ Unit
Kimberly Henry, HPOZ Unit
John Arnold, Chair, Jefferson Park HPOZ Board

Additionally hand-delivered:
City of Los Angeles Planning Department, City Hall



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April 18, 2014

City Planning Department
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Michael Logrande, Director of Planning
Linn Wyatt, Chief Zoning Administrator
David Weintraub, Director of Development Services Center
Jack Chiang, Case Manager, Development Services Center
Lisa Webber, Senior City Planner
Ken Bernstein, Director Office of Historic Resources
Michelle Levy, HPOZ Unit
Kimberly Henry, HPOZ Unit

RE: 2126 W Adams Blvd - Case No. ZA-15227-O-PA4- Proposed expansion of the oil and gas production facilities of the Murphy Drill Site, including the drilling of three new oil and gas wells, the installation of a CEB800 waste gas burner, the expansion of the footprint of the work facility on the drill site lot by turning a 25' x 60' section of parkland reserved since 1961 into part of the work facility, and enclosing that new addition to the footprint with a permanent wall 25' x 60' and 26' tall.

To the Planning Department,

The United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council (UNNC) Governing Board voted unanimously on April 4, 2014, and thereby passed the following motion:

UNNC supports both appeals of case ZA-1959-15227-O-PA4-1A without reservation; and further, that by this action UNNC no longer supports the original project as it was presented to UNNC on November 7, 2013. Subsequent to that time, UNNC has learned many material new facts regarding this project, and the drilling of new wells. UNNC has also learned information that makes us concerned about the process and procedures at the Planning Department; and in addition we have heard from many of our stakeholders; all leading to UNNC reversing its initial position on the CEB-800 installation.

We endorse the two appeals of ZA-15227-O-PA4 in their entirety and demand that this expansion project be stopped and that this project along with any and all future expansion projects be subjected to a full Plan Approval Review complete with public hearing.

The two appeals UNNC is supporting were written by respected stakeholders of our community who have worked closely with UNNC on this case. The authors reviewed the case file and based their appeals on a close reading of all of the documents made available before the closing of the appeals window, as well as a close reading of pertinent City codes and State laws.

During the course of the appellants' review of the Planning Department case file, numerous documents were noticed to be missing from the files. A few were provided promptly in time to be referenced in the appeals, but others required a second and more formal Public Records Request, which was not answered until after the appeal window closed. That batch of released documents consists of hundreds of pages of communications, several of which were projected on a screen during the discussion of the motion at the April 4 UNNC Board meeting while others were read aloud in whole or part.

The unanimous vote of the UNNC Governing Board reflects our deep concern as we were made aware of the following issues, which only came to light in the released Planning Department documents made available by a formal Public Records Request:

- That as late as February 24, 2014, the Applicant was still insisting that UNNC supported its project. However, Planning staff had been advised otherwise through a series of phone calls and emails from UNNC Planning & Zoning Chairperson Laura Meyers.
- That the Applicant proposed new wells and the gas plant expansion together to the Planning Department, at the same time, as one project.
- That Jack Chiang, then a Case Manager in the Planning Department's Development Services Center, issued "approvals" and signed documents as a "zoning administrator" on all aspects of the expansion project even though he has never been a ZA.
- That Jack Chiang has been tasked with being the principal and, at many junctures, the only reader of submissions from the applicant, and has always been called on by David Weintraub for the final word on all questions related to the project.
- That on October 24, 2013 Jack Chiang persuaded Director of the Development Services Center David Weintraub that no Plan Approval review was needed and that the Applicant should attend the upcoming UNNC meeting and *tell UNNC that new drilling was not part of its project.*
- That on January 8 and 9, 2014, *Jack Chiang wrote to CD10 deputy Sylvia Lacy and told her that there was no ZA determination of any kind from 2013 that approved the drilling of new wells that the Applicant began drilling in early December, 2013, and that the only document he had on file related to this new drilling was a "statement of intent" and a "well path map" from the Applicant.*
- That on January 23, 2014, Jack Chiang told David Weintraub and others that Laura Meyers (UNNC board members and Chairperson of our Planning and Zoning Committee) would continue to oppose the project. Not only did they

impugn a UNNC board member who is volunteering her time and energy on behalf of both the community and the City, but she has acted as an honest and reputable representative of the UNNC community. But the Planning Department decided to disregard her instead of respecting our community's elected UNNC board representative.

In follow up to Laura Meyer's phone calls and emails to the Planning Department, UNNC is now formally expressing our dismay and concern at the Planning Department's handling of this case.

- On October 22, the Chairwoman of our Planning and Zoning Committee discovered that UNNC had not been notified of proposals being approved by the Planning Department to expand the Murphy site's gas plant with new equipment and a large expansion into reserved parkland. She demanded a full Plan Approval review with a Public Hearing. ***Internal Planning Department documents show that ZA David Weintraub and Chief ZA Linn Wyatt agreed that a full Plan Approval case with a public hearing was necessary***, only to be dissuaded by Case Manager Jack Chiang, who had wrongly been signing off on all parts of the Applicant's project, and also by protests from the Applicant, who claimed to have spent more than \$700,000 already on the project (though no part of the project had as yet been approved in a determination).
- On November 6, the Applicant, FMOG, attended the Planning and Zoning Committee meeting to present its plans for the gas plant expansion, but did not mention that new wells were to be part of the overall expansion project.
- On November 7, the UNNC Governing Board met and heard the P&Z Committee's recommendation that a full Plan Approval review with a Public Hearing should be required.
- At the November 7 UNNC Governing Board meeting, FMOG attended and never mentioned that new wells were part of its expansion project. FMOG said the CEB800 burners were to replace existing Microturbines. However, FMOG never mentioned that these Microturbines had never been approved by prior ZA cases and, in fact, were expressly forbidden by existing conditions.
- At the November 7 UNNC Board meeting the P&Z Committee recommended that a full PA case with a public hearing should be called. FMOG stated that they could by right expand their operations to the area they were proposing to put the CEB800. Board members were persuaded to think that FOMG was offering a compromise when the Board agreed to approve the burner expansion plans in return for a condition that guaranteed UNNC would be consulted on any other expansion plans.
- On November 15, Laura Meyers, Chairwoman of the P&Z Committee, was notified by neighbors that preparations were being made for new drilling at the Murphy Site, and she immediately wrote to ZA Weintraub about this.
- On November 26, FMOG informed UNNC that ZA Weintraub rejected UNNC's terms from its November 7 vote to approve FMOG's plans for the burner expansion. ***By this date UNNC had learned that it had not been informed about FMOG's plans to conduct new drilling and its terms from its November 7 approval vote had been rejected by ZA Weintraub; therefore, after this date any***

and all claims that UNNC endorses or approves of FMOG expansion plans are manifestly incorrect and untrue.

- On January 7, the UNNC Board passed two motions opposing FMOG's expansion plans, none of which has been properly reviewed or approved by the Planning Department:
 - MOTION:** Dolores Spears moved that UNNC seek that appropriate agencies solicit public testimony, and make public findings that public health and safety is not jeopardized by oil extraction activities at the Murphy Oil site and that the agencies describe which laws are applicable and how they will be enforced, and until then UNNC supports a moratorium on drilling, extraction and injection activities at the Murphy Oil site. Vote: 16 in favor, none opposed, 1 abstention.
 - MOTION:** Laura Meyers moved that UNNC ask the Zoning Administrator to require a new public hearing based on Freeport McMoRan's failure to abide with all conditions, invoking condition 14, which allows the Zoning Administrator the right to invoke a hearing, and further that UNNC holds that a legal "Review of Plans" process does not involve a letter on applicant letter head, nor a non-disclosed determination, and further that the UNNC Executive Committee is authorized to write a more detailed letter expressing our concerns.
Vote: 16 in favor, none opposed, 1 abstention
- Since early January there has been an outpouring of opposition to FMOG's expansion plans not just from UNNC, but from an enraged local community. There have been public meetings attended by hundreds and several groups and churches have been publicizing opposition. The Planning Department has been fully aware of this. At least several dozens of letters from the community are in the case file, along with a petition with hundreds of signatures. And, yet, Planning Department officials have continued to claim that UNNC supports the gas plant expansion and they focus on our Board member, Laura Meyers, as if hers was the only voice of opposition instead of recognizing that she is a designated representative of the UNNC community.

We are particularly troubled by the way the Planning Department has treated the UNNC. Planning has cut us out of mandatory early notification of major planning cases. Planning apparently told the Applicant to lie to us about plans to drill new wells. Planning has attempted to grant secret "approvals" to the drilling of new wells. Planning has not communicated with us directly when it rejected our terms for conditional approval of plans. And, not only has Planning continued to claim, erroneously, that we endorse the expansion of the burner facility, but it has gone a step beyond that and insulted one of our most active and knowledgeable members, P&Z Committee Chairwoman Laura Meyers, as if her opposition to the project was an isolated and irrational view and discounting her stature as a UNNC Governing Board member.

It merits underscoring that Laura's commentary on this case has been largely correct and was recognized as such by Chief ZA Linn Wyatt and ZA David Weintraub when, on October 23 and 24, they agreed with Laura's position that the gas plant expansion required a new Plan Approval case with a public hearing. Their judgment was then reversed when Mr. Weintraub was persuaded by the Applicant and Jack Chiang that Jack Chiang's approvals were valid and did not require a Plan Approval case or even true

review by a credentialed ZA. Mr. Chiang has been allowed to handle virtually all of this case by Mr. Weintraub. The Development Services Center was never intended to play the role of ZA, and Mr. Chiang was not and is not a ZA, yet he has signed numerous documents as the ZA and has been treated as the real authority in this case.

UNNC has grave concerns regarding the procedures used by the Planning Department and FMOG in this expansion project. UNNC is looking to the Planning Department to reverse the improprieties in the way it has handled this case, the non-transparency in its transactions with the operators of the Murphy Drill site, and the lack of procedures per the City Codes and the Conditions set down for the 2126 W. Adams drill site.

We oppose the expansion of the gas plant and the drilling of the new wells. No expansion plans should ever be approved without a full Plan Approval review.

We ask the Zoning Administrator to require a new public hearing based on FMOG's failure to abide by the Conditions as it pertains to the Murphy Oil drill site.

We endorse the two appeals that have been submitted.

Our endorsement of the two appeals negates the original UNNC board vote to support this expansion project. We do not support the expansion project.

Respectfully submitted,

Stevie Stern
UNNC President
president@unnc.org

cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti
City Council President Herb Wesson, CD 10
City Administrative Officer Miguel Santana
City Attorney Michael Feuer
Assistant City Attorney Carmen Hawkins, NC liaison
Deron Williams, CD 10
Sylvia Lacy, CD 10
Rae Connet, FMOG
John Martini, FMOG

UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS
of the historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park
Communities Neighborhood Council

*Our Voice * Our City * of Neighbors * by Neighbors * for Neighbors*



Our Mission

*To empower and bring together our diverse community
to maintain and improve our quality of life*

Community Impact Statement
January 19, 2006

United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park
Communities Neighborhood Council (UNNC)

RE: Conditional Use No. ZA 15227(O)(PA3)
Underlying previous case file ZA 15227
2126 West Adams Boulevard
Redrilling of wells at existing oil drilling site

Applicant: Plains Exploration and Production Co. (PXP)

SUMMARY

The United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council Executive Committee, made up of the Governing Board Officers, has conditionally approved the application for Plains Exploration for the re-drilling of three class "A" oil wells, with the following conditions and mitigations:

1. Design, review, and implementation of a good landscape plan that includes, but is not limited to, tall trees and other tall landscaping along all site perimeters in order to hide the oil drilling operations from the view(s) of the adjacent residential communities, as required by the project's original 1961 CUP (Condition No. 4) and the project's Review decision dated April 15, 2005 (Condition No. 7). Further, such trees and other landscaping material shall be full and large so as to create a lush screen covering unsightly equipment and filtering noise and fumes. We further urge that the landscape

plan be developed in conjunction with and then approved by UNNC before being to the Zoning Administrator for final approval.

2. Noise, vibration and emissions monitoring shall be conducted throughout the drilling process.
3. No heavy trucks shall be allowed on residential streets, except Adams Boulevard.
4. 24-hour emergency phone number to be answered by an on-site employee.
5. 24-hour security at the Murphy site and the 4th Avenue site.
6. UNNC also asks for a public review hearing of the conditions for the overall project itself to be conducted within one year of the approval date for this application, and regular reviews thereafter, to ensure that all original and new conditions are complied with, and that those conditions are sufficient to mitigate the impacts this oil drilling operation has on the adjacent residential communities.

Background:

The United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park Communities Neighborhood Council (UNNC) was certified on May 14, 2002 and held Governing Board elections in October, 2002. In January, 2003, the UNNC Board established several standing committees, including a Planning and Zoning Committee, which deals with land use matters, and an Executive Committee. These committees meet regularly in public settings. The Planning and Zoning Committee includes as members stakeholders to the neighborhood council (both resident and non-resident) as well as Board members. The Executive Committee consists of UNNC's elected officers. All of these meetings are publicly noticed in accordance with DONE rules.

In July, 2004, the Zoning Administrator scheduled a hearing to review existing conditions at the subject site, after receiving complaints from both neighbors and elected officials regarding noise, vibrations, fumes, and odors during a previous re-drilling operation.

At that time, UNNC's Planning and Zoning Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the UNNC Governing Board the following modification to the original 1961 Conditional Use Permit for this site:

“The UNNC Planning and Zoning Committee recommends to the UNNC Governing Board that we request that the Zoning Administrator to modify the existing CUP to provide a landscape buffer on all sides of the subject property, including two adjacent lots owned by the Los Angeles Roman Catholic Archdiocese; and to require applicant to submit a landscape plan to the Zoning Administrator for approval. In addition, the property is to be maintained free of graffiti, and dumped items, both of which must be removed within 48 hours.”

Committee members present at a regularly-scheduled public meeting had heard from representatives of prior owner Bentley-Simonson, Inc. about the history of oil drilling operations at this site and at two nearby sites. We also reviewed historic permits and required conditions, including original condition number 4 (page 11 of the Zoning Investigator's Report), which required the retention of mature existing trees and shrubs, “particularly the tall eucalyptus trees on the front 100 feet of the drill site area.” The landscaping design was described as requiring

trees “at least 50 feet in height above the level of the lower graded level, so as to effectively screen” the operations.

Over time, much of that screening/buffering landscaping has disappeared, so that the oil drilling operation is visible from all sides. Moreover, the large portion of the property to the rear is unlandscaped, often the site of dumped debris, and there is routinely graffiti on the rear wall – which both prior operator Bentley-Simonson and current operator PXP does routinely remove.

Committee members discussed at length the desirability of a much greener space, perhaps in the form of a park-like setting open to the community. Prior operator Bentley-Simonson observed that the property owner to the East, an apartment building, had actually requested the removal of landscaping to alleviate a growing homeless encampment problem. The committee decided that there are solutions other than the removal of landscaping that could help solve that problem, and voted to request better landscaping per above.

In April, 2005, a decision was rendered in the July, 2004 matter. In that new decision, Condition No 6 was a determination that all previous conditions still applied, and Condition No. 7 required that the operator (then Bentley Simonson, now PXP) submit a landscape plan within 90 days, to be reviewed by the 10th District Council Office and the community, and then submitted to the Zoning Administrator for approval.

On January 17, 2006, new operator PXP met with UNNC’s Executive Committee, its Planning and Zoning Chair, and members of the community in a public meeting. PXP outlined its community outreach efforts and described its plans for the redrilling of wells at the subject site. There was a lengthy discussion before the committee voted to conditionally approve the current application with the aforementioned requested mitigations.

*Submitted by:
Laura Meyers, Zoning and Planning Committee Chair,
United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council*

*1818 South Gramercy Place
Los Angeles, CA 90019*