

**Mayor Villaraigosa and Jack Weiss Ignore Residents,
Businesses, Religious Institutions, Neighborhood Councils and City Councilmembers.
Business, Residential Communities to Fight Back with Lawsuit**

Mayor Villaraigosa and Councilman Jack Weiss have short-circuited the democratic process and plan to force the Pico/Olympic plan on the City over the objections of just about everyone – including other City Council members.

Jay Handal, Chair of the Greater West Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce announced today that a coalition of businesses and residents will file suit to stop the Mayor's ill-conceived plan.

Handal stated *"The actions of Villaraigosa and Weiss have made a mockery of the Neighborhood Council process and even the democratic process. Every neighborhood council along the route has opposed the plan until key issues have been addressed. The two other City councilmembers whose districts will be impacted have opposed the plan. The Beverly Hills City Council hasn't even been given the respect of discussing the matter prior to its implementation – even though Olympic passes through their city."*

Jon Liberman, Chair of the South Robertson Neighborhood Council Safety Committee said *"We are supposed to have a system of representative democracy. Unfortunately, Mayor Villaraigosa and Jack Weiss seemed to have missed that civics class. Instead, the Mayor seems to believe that the City Council is unnecessary and doesn't need to be involved."*

The Mayor's action came after dozens of business owners and residents alike attended a transportation meeting this last Wednesday to discuss the proposed plan. The committee heard the testimony and voted to table the matter until critical questions could be addressed. The issues raised at the hearing? Little ones like:

- How does the City pay for the mitigations they have been promising given the City's money problems?
- Why do the Mayor and Jack Weiss believe they are above the law and can avoid a legally-mandated environmental review?
- How will small businesses and the tax revenue they generate be impacted by increased traffic and a loss of parking?
- How will the plan impact kids who cross Pico and Olympic to get to school?
- How will fire trucks and police cars navigate through the north/south congestion that will be created by the plan?

After hearing of the Mayor's actions, Scott McNeely of FixTheCity.Org stated *"Apparently, the members of that committee and the dozens of community members were simply wasting their time. Hearings don't matter. Democratic processes don't matter. Representation doesn't matter. Only the Mayor's dictatorial tendencies and Weiss' ambitions to be the Mayor's City Attorney matter. Only their downtown lobbyist and developer friends matter. What a slap in the face to the members of the Transportation Committee."*

In response to that slap in the face, Councilman Rosendahl stated: *"You just don't bowl over the community like that. You have to appreciate who's there. It's disrespectful to my constituents, and it's an insult to my constituents."*

Marilyn Cohen, a board member of the Westwood South of Santa Monica HOA echoed that sentiment at the Transportation Committee hearing calling Weiss' constituents "CD5 Orphans," and asked Councilman Rosendahl to annex the district away from Weiss so that there could be actual representation.

Judy Bowen, VP of the South Carthay Neighborhood Association commented on the Mayor's actions. She said: *"The Mayor and Jack Weiss negotiated in bad faith with the Neighborhood Councils, businesses and residents. The Mayor's actions prove that he was never interested in anything other than pushing this dangerous plan through. He never had any intention of listening to the people."*

Albert Olson, Mar Vista Community Council member, summed it up by saying: *"When it comes right down to the bare facts, the Mayor doesn't seem to care about the democratic process and Jack Weiss doesn't seem to mind carrying the Mayor's water – even if he does so over the objections of just about everyone else. The City of Los Angeles is getting a taste of what happens when an executive branch starts believing it is all-powerful and starts abusing its power. We can only hope the City Council has the nerve to stand up to this raw grab for power and abuse of process."*

James O'Sullivan of the Miracle Mile Residential Association had a word of warning for the rest of the City who may not be paying attention: *"Pay close attention. The Mayor has stated that he wants to bring this plan to you – whether you want it or not. He has stated that he is going to model other streets on this ill-conceived Pico/Olympic plan. If you think you will have input, that your opinions will matter or even that your councilperson will matter, think again. The Villaraigosa/Weiss team will walk over you just as they have done to our area."*

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