

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 11/10/08		Item Number: <u>A-5</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Approving a City Council Policy Related to Processing Speaker Cards with Written Comments during City Council Agenda Items When the Number of Written Comments Exceeds 20.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Martin R. Cole, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk		Phone Number: (310) 253-6000	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☐	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Master E-Mail Notification List (11/26/08)			
Department Approval: Martin R. Cole (11/24/08)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (11/26/08)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (11/25/08)		City Manager Approval: Jerry B. Fulwood (11/26/08)	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution approving a City Council Policy related to processing Speaker Cards with written comments during City Council agenda items when the number of written comments exceeds 20.

BACKGROUND:

Recently, the City Council has considered a number of items that solicited public comments (both oral and written) that significantly exceeded the number of comments received on an average item. In an effort to balance the desire of the City Council to hear all comments with the need to conduct the City Council's business in an effective and efficient fashion, the City Council has handled these unusual instances differently than the average item.

Staff is proposing the City Council consider a new City Council Policy that will meet both of these important needs.

DISCUSSION:

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At two recent meetings, the City Council considered items which solicited almost 100 speaker cards with written comments for each item. Assuming the average card would involve one-half minute of reading the written comments into the public record, the time taken to read these comments would approach one hour. Adding this time to speakers present at the meeting, the City Council has devoted several hours on such testimony.

Case Study – Public Hearing of November 17, 2008

The City Council held a public hearing on November 17, 2008 related to a proposed development at 4043 Irving Place. In reviewing the speakers cards presented that evening, the breakdown is as follows:

Speak in-Person:	30
Written Comments:	92

As an alternative to having the City Clerk/Agency Secretary read each of the individual written comments into the record, the City Clerk/Agency Secretary could be allowed some time to review the written comment cards submitted and categorize those cards into certain groups. The draft policy proposes use of the following categories:

Written Comments – General
Written Comments - Specific

The two categories above would be further sub-divided into those in favor of a proposed item, those against, and other. This would yield a table which would categorize all written comments received. Using the cards from the November 17, 2008 hearing, the following table would be the outcome:

Category	“For”	“Against”	“Other”
Written – General	0	77	2
Written – Specific	0	13	0
TOTALS:	0	90	2

It is proposed the City Council could declare a short recess during which the cards would be categorized. Upon conclusion of the recess, the Clerk/Secretary could announce the results. All speaker cards with written comments could be photocopied and provided to the City Council. Also, upon motion of the City Council to receive and file those speaker cards

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with written comments, all such comments would be included as part of the official public record.

The attached policy provides a prototype of an updated speaker card that adds areas to facilitate this categorization. Additionally, it requests written comments be legibly printed. Further, it provides the public with notice that written comments submitted may not be read into the record in full, unless time permits.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

Costs to reproduce the updated speaker cards can be absorbed within the current fiscal year's appropriations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Resolution (with proposed Policy as attachment)
2. Updated Speaker Card

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Adopt a resolution approving City Council Policy related to processing Speaker Cards with written comments during City Council agenda items when the number of written comments exceeds 20.