

# Parking dispute between church, Farragut neighbors to be continued

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By

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Representatives of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church will have to wait until a later date to find out if the city is willing to lift parking restrictions in a nearby residential neighborhood in order to provide more parking for their congregants.

The City Council on Sept. 8 deferred voting on whether or not to change the preferential parking designations for the 10700 block of Farragut Drive, which have been in place for 32 years. Under the current guidelines, only those with a parking permit are allowed to park on Farragut, which is a block away from the church on Overland Avenue and near Culver City High School.

Attorney Ilbert Phillips, the church's representative in the parking matter, said the decision to defer until a later date was not as important as what criteria the council uses to decide the matter.

"It seems like the council wanted to take another look at this with fresh eyes, and I think that's appropriate," he said.

Les Greenberg, who lives on Farragut, said prior to the meeting the church's contention that homeowners on Farragut sought the parking district because of overflow parking from a former sports complex on Overland Avenue several years ago was patently false.

“That is a flat out lie,” Greenberg, who is also an attorney, said. “In 2013, we were grandfathered into the parking district by the City Council. The church has no standing to remove [these restrictions.]”

Greenberg said he thought the turning point in the meeting was when Councilman Andrew Weissman expressed the opinion that the council might not be able to decide on the agenda item that night after a long discourse.

“This was after a lengthy, pathetic council discussion that demonstrated a few councilpersons’ lack of knowledge of the law or their utter disregard of it in an attempt to repay political debts,” Greenberg asserted in an interview with the News after the meeting.

Parking throughout Los Angeles and particularly on the Westside can be notoriously difficult and in certain locations very scarce. Some neighborhoods have resorted to establishing parking districts in residential areas as a means to prevent an overflow of parking from non- residents.

In nearby Westchester, homeowners on Fordham Road decided to establish a parking district on their street because students and employees from nearby Loyola Marymount University often park on Fordham as well as adjacent streets. In Los Angeles, homeowners are required to gather approval for such a preferential parking zone from two-thirds of their neighbors on the same block and submit them to the city’s Department of Transportation.

Phillips, a Westchesterbased lawyer who lives in Culver City, said he recognizes how emotional parking can be in some neighborhoods, but he hopes the council makes its final decision based on facts and not emotion.

“The important thing here is that the city’s leaders make a carefully considered decision without ambiguity,” Phillips said.

The attorney said he spoke with city officials after the meeting who told him that the council will not consider the parking restrictions until next year.