

Parklets just don't work in Belmont Shore

The community case against Legends' request for additional public space via a parklet

Presented by Citizens About Responsible Planning (CARP) and affiliated neighbors — Aug. 3, 2023

Legends was already given free land in 1996-97 in the form of sidewalk dining, taking away public right-of-way from residents and visitors.

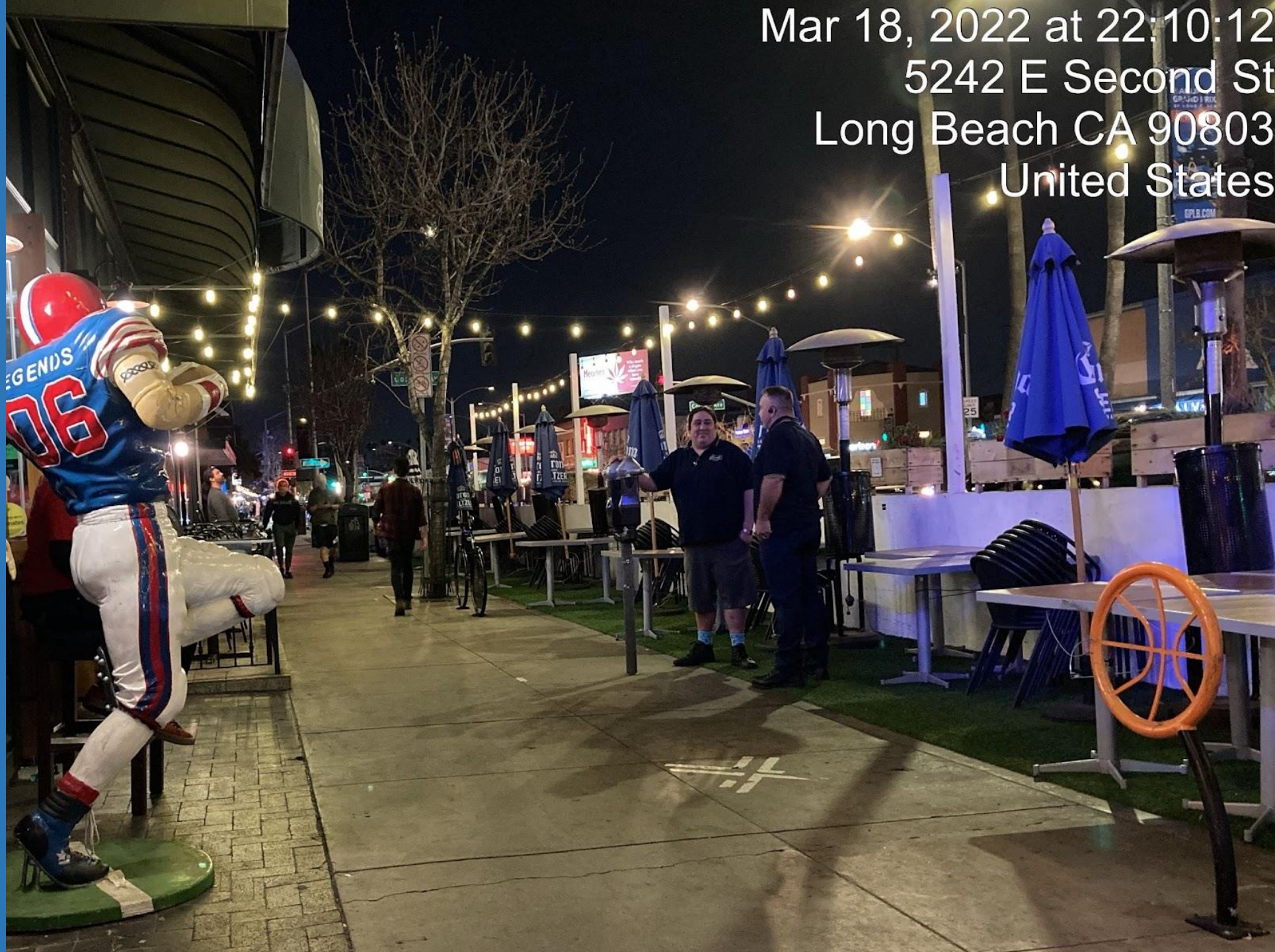
Legends' Back Story

- Legends, one of the biggest bars/restaurants on Second Street, already has four 4-top tables as part of sidewalk dining.
 - Their sidewalk dining space extends beyond the designated area, into the pedestrian walkway. NO City oversight or enforcement has occurred.
 - Issues are identified, but enforcement and solutions are lacking.
- The unique characteristics and geography of Second Street do not support the imposition of structures (temporary or permanent) that bring direct and harmful impact to residents in close proximity in an already congested area.

Legends' Back Story (continued)

- The proposed parklet would remove two parking spaces even when the parklet is not in use.
 - The ripple effects on the community are 24/7/365.
 - Underutilization is shown in the following photo at 10:10 pm on a Friday night in March of 2022.

Mar 18, 2022 at 22:10:12
5242 E Second St
Long Beach CA 90803
United States



The Long Beach California Local Coastal Program was adopted by the Long Beach Planning Commission and the Long Beach City Council and then certified by the California Coastal Commission in July 1980.

Per the Local Coastal Program (LCP)

- 2nd Street and Belmont Shore are too crowded and dense and simply not conducive for parklets.
 - “Belmont Shore is one of the denser housing developments in the coastal zone.”
 - “Due to extremely small lot sizes and narrow streets in the area, the overall character is dense. Parking in the area, even for the residents, is a major problem.”
 - “The density across this zone is a fairly dense.”
 - “Second Street and Ocean Boulevard are the major east/west streets in Area D with Second Street recording the highest volumes. Second Street is the primary route between the east side of Long Beach and downtown. It is always congested because of the commercial activity along its length, and because of frequent traffic signals.”

Per the LCP (continued)

- Parklets will make parking for Alamitos Bay visitors more difficult.
 - “Belmont Shore adjoins Long Beach’s most popular beach on Alamitos Bay.”
 - “The influx of visitors in the summer, combined with a complete absence of parking for the Alamitos Bay beach and the restricted (pay) parking for the ocean-front beach, impact the community during several months of the year.”

Per the LCP (continued)

- Legends' parklet will NOT maintain nor enhance the special character of Belmont Shore; parklets are not an existing aspect of the Shore.
- The unique character of the 2nd Street will not be preserved if parklets are allowed.
 - “The fundamental goal of this policy plan is to maintain and enhance the very special character of Belmont Shore. Aside from the existing commercial strip along Second Street and the node at Ocean and Granada, the Shore shall remain entirely residential in character. Preservation of viable neighborhoods, a principal goal of the City's General Plan, shall prevail as a policy of this LCP.”
 - “The unique character of the shopping district in Belmont Shore should be preserved. Retail shops which encourage foot traffic and window shopping shall be the predominant uses. “

“In order to approve an LCDP request, positive findings must be made pursuant to section 21.25 of the LBMC. Applicable findings include conformity with the LCP”

Per the Staff Report

- Per the Staff Report, “the parklet would remove two metered parking spaces along 2nd Street. The removal of these two parking spaces was considered in light of coastal access considerations of the LCP. The net loss of two metered parking spaces on 2nd Street would not represent a significant cumulative effect on parking within Belmont Shore.”
- However, two metered parking spaces is NOT the case here. The 20 parklet patrons and staff supporting it also have vehicles, thus potentially 20+ additional parking spaces being taken on 2nd Street and in the neighborhood.
 - Now add that up, as Legends is the first bar/restaurant on 2nd Street asking for your approval. There are another 10 Shore bars/restaurants on the application list, with an additional four new restaurants opening soon. They, too, will want free land.

20 parklet patrons and more staff members will create additional parking burdens on Second Street and the neighborhood.

Per the Staff Report (continued)

- Per the Staff Report, “mobility and access to the coast considers multi-modal transportation methods beyond just that of single-occupant automobiles. Therefore, in consideration of the activation benefits and multimodal access in this location, the net loss of two parking spaces at a mid-block location of 2nd Street would not result in cumulative effects to coastal access within Area D of the LCP. The proposed parklet would serve individuals of the general public that access the coast by all modes of transportation and would serve to enhance the public realm by enhancing the pedestrian orientation of 2nd Street. Therefore, as conditioned, this project conforms to the LCP.”
- However, people with disabilities have not been taken into account, as so frequently occurs. Many people with mobility disabilities require a parking space very close to their destination, thus directly ON 2nd Street.

Per the Staff Report (continued)

- Per the Staff Report, “the appeal expresses opposition to the loss of two parking spaces. The LBMC does not require any additional parking for parklets.”
- Why is that that the case in our parking-impacted zone of Belmont Shore?
 - In San Diego it is a requirement that businesses must “replace any lost parking spaces taken up by outdoor dining areas they operate on the street.”
 - Why doesn’t Long Beach do the same, when we have such substantial issues with parking throughout our coastline?
 - In fact this is a new requirement by the Coastal Commission and therefore, should be added into our LCP.

Who Loses? (We know who wins.)

Benefits to Legends, detriments to others

- Residents and visitors will see the loss of parking spaces to the parklet and its patrons.
 - Residents and visitors will only lose more access with the 10+ bars and restaurants lined up for permanent parklets and the four new restaurants, set to open in the near future, who will also likely seek permits for this free space.
- While the Parking Commission plans to charge an offset fee to bars and restaurants with parklets, the spaces themselves are forever lost to residents and visitors.
 - We have 600+ petition signatures of local residents who do NOT want parklets in Belmont Shore.
 - We've also spoken to dozens of non-bar/non-restaurant businesses in the Shore who do not want parklets because of the negative impact to their retail and service clientele.

ADA and General Accessibility Issues

- Despite city staff repeatedly advising city council that ADA rules are being followed, that is simply not the case.
- Up until this past January, when Legends' temporary parklet was removed, the cross traffic on the sidewalk made it very difficult and dangerous for pedestrians with mobility- and sight-related disabilities to visit Second Street.
 - Bikes and dogs are tied up to the sidewalk dining railing, which is in the walk zone of the sidewalk. NO enforcement by management or the City.
 - Bar patrons did not remain in temporary parklet areas, encroaching on sidewalk and obstructing pedestrians. Again no management enforcement occurred.
 - Servers and bussers barrelling out of the door toward the temporary parklet with heavy dishes and glasses with blinders on, not looking out for pedestrians traveling down the sidewalk.



ADA and General Accessibility Issues (cont'd)

- Large delivery trucks cannot find legal parking, so they are parking in bus stops, causing people with disabilities to travel beyond their destination. This only worsens when parklets are in place.
 - We have hundreds of photos documenting this issue.
 - We have brought this topic to each of the following Boards/Commissions multiple times:
 - LB Transit
 - Citizens' Advisory Commission on Disability (CACOD)
 - Belmont Shore Parking and Business Improvement Area Advisory Commission
 - Belmont Shore Business Association

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Cart Before the Horse

- City Traffic Engineer Paul Van Dyke advised in February 2023 that the city's Curb Management Study would be a comprehensive curb assessment for individual business districts.
 - It was scheduled to begin with a set of Pilots where they would identify existing curb zones, quantify peak delivery periods and then recommend new loading zones.
 - The Citywide Management Guide would then build on lessons learned in Belmont Shore, attempt to avoid fees for individual businesses and provide convenient and functional curb access.
- But the application for Legends could be approved well before Public Works conducts the curb pilots and study.
 - Parklet application reviews should not occur until after the pilots and study.

Parking Has Never Been Worse

- Parking is a longstanding and ever-problematic issue in Belmont Shore.
- The increase in bars and restaurants continues to cripple the parking on our residential streets.
- The City has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars multiple times for consultants to conduct parking studies to find parking solutions for the highly parking-impacted Belmont Shore. The challenge only worsens with parklets, their patrons and additional staff.
- Creating permanent parklets means never regaining lost parking spaces and likely losing even more.

Parking Has Never Been Worse (continued)

- Existing access hurdles for residents and customers of Second Street businesses were exacerbated by the temporary parklets and will only expand with permanent parklets.
- The recent statistics shared at the last six parking commission meetings show that the businesses requesting parklets have minimal staff members using the free bus ride program. This only intensifies the situation.
 - Legends' told the Zoning Administrator at the Zoning Hearing that they make use of the bus program. However the stats show Legends' staff usage of the bus program was nonexistent the first half of 2023. During that time, Legends did not have a single employee boarding.

Giving Public Land to For-Profit Businesses

- If the city allows permanent parklets, public land will be turned over to for-profit businesses. These businesses increase their real estate at the cost of impacted parking and reduced safety. The legality and ethics of such a giveaway are highly questionable.
- As new restaurants and bars move in, the number of parklets will increase.
- The move to permanent parklets will be irrevocable.

Jun 18, 2022 at 12:01:05
5243 E Second St
Long Beach CA 90803
United States



Retain the neighborhood feel, safety and walkability of Second Street.

No permanent parklets should be permitted in Belmont Shore.

As the first applicant seeking such, Legends should be denied.