

ZONING INQUIRY TO BE STARTED

*Grand Jury Opens Hearings
Monday at 11 a.m.*

*Politicians Reported Given
Council Favors*

*Deals in "Spot" Concessions
Declared Involved*

Charges that certain Los Angeles politicians have been receiving special privileges from the City Council and have dealt in "spot zoning" concessions will become a matter of official investigation by the Los Angeles county grand jury at 11 a.m. Monday, William W.

Widenham, foreman, and Charles O'Hara, secretary, announced yesterday.

Foreman Widenham said the inquiry is not being made on a mere complaint, but is based on the statements of numerous witnesses who have appeared before the grand jury committee on criminal complaints setting forth facts sufficient to warrant a thorough inquiry.

O'HARA ISSUES STATEMENT

Secretary O'Hara issued the following statement:

"Complaints have been made to the grand jury of the county of Los Angeles relative to questionable practices in connection with city zoning.

"During the past few weeks the county grand jury has been receiving statements alleging that irregularities exist in relation to zoning and, further, that the City Council, on recommendation of the City Planning Committee, overrides the recommendations of the Planning Commission in granting or refusing zoning permits.

"It appears that the Planning Commission and the Planning Committee of the City Council are two separate and distinct organized bodies. The Planning Commission is a body composed of five commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the city and the Planning Committee is composed of three members of the City Council.

HEARINGS SCHEDULED

"The grand jury of the county of Los Angeles will hear witnesses relative to this matter during the course of the next few days and any person or persons who have been approached or solicited for sums of money for the zoning of their properties will be given an opportunity to make a complete statement before the grand jury as a body."

Statements welcoming the investigation were issued yesterday by the three Councilmen comprising the City Planning Committee.

"I am in favor of a full and thorough investigation," said Chairman McKnight.

"I know of no irregularities, but I would welcome an investigation by the grand jury if it has any evidence of irregularities," said Councilman Henning.

RANDALL URGES INQUIRY

"I hope the grand jury will sift everything it can find," said President Randall. "I court a full investigation."

For some weeks it has been known about the City Hall that a grand jury committee has been interested in zoning matters, always a source of argument and recrimination.

Several months before the last election an initiative petition was filed asking for the abolition of the "spot zone" on the grounds it had been abused. Instead of letting the matter go to a vote of the people the Council adopted the alternative ordinance and the next week proceeded to "reclassify" lots, the result being the same as the "spot zoning" of lots.