

Plan to Attend!

WHPOA Annual Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2005
7:00 P.M.

New Location
**WESTWOOD HILLS
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
10808 Le Conte Ave
(near Ralphs)

SPEAKERS

Ron Kosinski
Deputy Director for
Environmental Planning
Caltrans

Jack Weiss
Councilmember, 5th District,
Los Angeles City Council

Refreshments
hosted by
restaurant
NINE THIRTY
W Hotel
930 Hilgard Ave

Please plan to attend this
important meeting

405 Widening, FBI and VA on Agenda for Annual Meeting

WHOPA's annual meeting is a great time to connect with neighbors, as well as to touch base with our elected officials and LAPD Lead Officer. Our Councilmember, Jack Weiss, will attend along Caltrans Deputy Director Ron Kosinski. We have also invited representatives from the offices of all of our elected representatives., along with presidents of neighboring.

Last year's meeting was standing room only, so we have moved to a new, larger location. This year we are meeting at the Westwood Hills Christian Church, on Le Conte Avenue in the block east of Ralph's Fresh Fare Market. To access the church's abundant parking, enter the parking lot from Le Conte and park in the surface lot or in the parking structure. (Do not park at Ralph's). To ensure that our meeting won't be all work and no play, the W Hotel's restaurant **NINE THIRTY** has generously offered to provide refreshments. Our thanks to you, **NINE THIRTY!!!**

In addition to electing new Board Members we will have updates on the issues confronting our neighborhood: Neighborhood Security, Traffic, Caltrans' planned widening of the 405 freeway, efforts to force the GSA to relocate the proposed Westwood FBI headquarters, and the recently revealed West LA VA plan to allow for profit development of VA property in West Los Angeles.

We face large challenges, but we have great resources in our active, organized, multi-talented and involved neighbors. By remaining active and speaking out we can insure that our interests are considered when decisions are made. Stay informed and stay active by attending the annual meeting.

Carole Magnuson, President

Nominations Committee Submits Slate for 2006-7 Term

WHPOA is governed by a Board of Directors, half of whom are elected to two-year terms at each annual meeting. The President appoints a committee of sitting Board members and non-Board members to nominate a slate of candidates to be voted on at the annual meeting. In selecting its slate, the committee seeks representation of all areas of the neighborhood, as well as a balance of new and long-term residents. The nominating committee, chaired by Barbara Dobkin, has submitted the following slate of directors for two-year terms beginning January 2006: Aphrodite Banks (Veteran); Joanne Cowitt (Veteran); Lori Fontanes (Dalkeith); Leona Heritage (Denslow); Bill Gubin (Glenroy); Wayne Hodges (Thurston); Martin D. Kaplan, Esq., (Sunset); Larry Londre (Cashmere); Alvin Milder (Greenfield); Harriet Miller (Cashmere) and Susan Polep (Barlock) ,

FBI/ VA PROJECTS COULD HAVE HUGE IMPACT ON WESTSIDE

"Business Plan Options" developed for a VA committee studying use of WLA VA property confirm the long-rumored intention of the VA to open its Westside campus to for-profit development.

The report submitted to the VA would permit development of office and research buildings, as well as "mixed use" residential, a term commonly used to describe multi-family residential development combined with retail or office uses.

Another government agency, the General Services Administration, is proposing to add up to one million square feet of office and service facilities at the corner of Wilshire and Veteran. These two Federal agencies don't engage in any joint planning, nor do they plan with Federal transportation officials who fund Freeway improvement. Although, they are required to do a Federal environmental impact report, federal projects aren't subject to local law.

Westwood's other institutional land owner, UCLA, is also exempt from local jurisdiction, but set a precedent for inter-jurisdictional cooperation by entering into an agreement with the City of Los Angeles in 1990, that capped new UCLA-generated traffic at the then-approved levels. Some residents and local officials have called for joint development of a similar long-range land use plan for the West LA Federal property before any new development is allowed to move forward.

COMMUNITY OPPOSES VA LAND GIVE AWAY

Veterans' organizations, elected officials and community groups from throughout the Westside have come together in an unprecedented coalition to oppose any "for profit" development of West Los Angeles VA land. Opponents of the VA plan packed the University High School auditorium last week to hear a parade of local officials, including County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavy, but in the nation: Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood Boulevards, and Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue. The 405 Freeway — the second most congested freeway in the nation — has an on-ramp and an off-ramp within one block of the building. The largest VA medical center in the country (the 388-acre Greater Los Angeles Health Care System) is directly across the street from the federal building. UCLA is just over a mile away. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation rates the level of service at the location as an F, the worst possible grade. There is bus, but no transit service, in this area. Traffic is terrible for many hours every day, including weekends, and peak hour traffic volumes are extreme. The infrastructure simply cannot support the plans GSA and the FBI have for the property...In addition to the severe infrastructure problems that expansion of the site would cause, there are serious security concerns. First, it is difficult to understand how the FBI could deploy in an emergency in the middle of this densely populated area with some of the worst gridlock in the nation...The surrounding communities believe, however, that while the federal government will make an effort to harden a potential target against attack, there doesn't seem to be sufficient concern that the FBI's consolidated presence at this location would leave the residents more vulnerable to attack with an infrastructure further burdened as a result of the expansion...The community is also worried that during a national emergency requiring the deployment of the FBI, its residents would not be able to reach the trauma center at UCLA or the VA medical facility to receive care...."

Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, a representative of Congressman Henry Waxman, community leaders and veterans promise to create a "buzz saw" of opposition if the VA persists in moving forward with its land give away.

What You Can Do

✓ **Community members were asked to log on and comment at the CARES Project website <http://www.va.gov/CARES>. (Text of the Business Plans Options is available at this site.) or to write to West LA Study, VA CARES Studies, PO Box 1427, Washington Grove, MD 20880-1427.**

✓ **Contact Senator Barbara Boxer Senator Diane Feinstein, Congressman Waxman, and Secretary of Veterans Affairs R. James Nicholson to demand that the VA land be used exclusively by and for Veterans. (Addresses on Page 5)**

OPPOSITION TO FBI PROJECT GROWS

Congressman Henry A. Waxman has sided with westside community organizations to oppose the Federal plan to add a FBI headquarters building next to the existing Federal Building at Veteran Ave. and Wilshire Blvd. The General Services Administration (GSA) which is the agency responsible for managing Federal property, would develop the new building,

The GSA has refused all requests to search for locations that would be more secure, easier to reach by public transit and closer to potential employees from jobs-poor neighborhoods than the Westwood site.

Waxman Opposition

A statement issued by Representative Waxman summarizes the community position on the FBI proposal as follows:" (full text at www.house.gov/waxman/).

...The federal building sits between two of the busiest intersections not just in Los Angeles,

but in the nation: Wilshire Boulevard and Westwood Boulevards, and Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue. The 405 Freeway — the second most congested freeway in the nation — has an on-ramp and an off-ramp within one block of the building. The largest VA medical center in the country (the 388-acre Greater Los Angeles Health Care System) is directly across the street from the federal building. UCLA is just over a mile away. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation rates the level of service at the location as an F, the worst possible grade. There is bus, but no transit service, in this area. Traffic is terrible for many hours every day, including weekends, and peak hour traffic volumes are extreme. The infrastructure simply cannot support the plans GSA and the FBI have for the property...In addition to the severe infrastructure problems that expansion of the site would cause, there are serious security concerns. First, it is difficult to understand how the FBI could deploy in an emergency in the middle of this densely populated area with some of the worst gridlock in the nation...The surrounding communities believe, however, that while the federal government will make an effort to harden a potential target against attack, there doesn't seem to be sufficient concern that the FBI's consolidated presence at this location would leave the residents more vulnerable to attack with an infrastructure further burdened as a result of the expansion...The community is also worried that during a national emergency requiring the deployment of the FBI, its residents would not be able to reach the trauma center at UCLA or the VA medical facility to receive care...."

What You Can Do

✓ **Thank Congressman Waxman for his support and ask him to take steps to cut off funding for the FBI project so long as the GSA turns a deaf ear to the community.**

✓ **Contact Senators Boxer and Feinstein and ask them to direct GSA's efforts to benefit all of Los Angeles. (Addresses on Page 5)**

TRAFFIC ON MONTANA—CAN ANYTHING BE DONE

From time to time there are requests and suggestions for traffic safety and calming measures on Montana Avenue. LADOT has a variety of things that can be implemented to improve traffic; you might have seen some of these in other neighborhoods. Here are a few road calming ideas with reasoning for their use:

Edge Lines, solid white lines painted on the road about 7 to 10 feet out from the curb, have been reported to be beneficial. The lines act to visually narrow the road, which according to authorities gives drivers the feeling that they must not swerve too wide on curvy undulating roads. These lines have been used on Beverly Glen between Sunset and Mulholland with much success.

Speed bumps will never be approved for Montana because the Fire Department and MTA use this route extensively.

Stop Signs or Signal Lights on Montana would be a very bad idea. They would inhibit the flow of traffic through Westwood Hills and will most likely redirect traffic to the narrower, hillier, windier streets of Westwood Hills that can't handle a constant flow of cars. Cheviot Hills took action to slow traffic on Motor Ave. by adding stop signs and the result was a quagmire as reported by the Los Angeles Times: 'commuters detoured onto quieter side streets, local residents complained about the inconvenience of having to stop for new 4-Way Stop Signs and traffic is still bad'.

A decoy Police Car can be parked on Montana for a few days, giving the impression that the

police are watching. This works for a while.

A Neighborhood Sign Campaign along Montana might be a starting point. For a month signs could be posted on the parkway in front of every home along Montana. The signs could share concerns and opinions about commuter traffic i.e. Slow Down, Children live in this neighborhood, Montana is not a grand-prix track, Start earlier and you wouldn't be in a rush now, There are too many cars for the streets in West LA think about taking a bus to work, or Obey the Speed Limit.

Attempts could be made to get the speed limit reduced from 30 to 25 mph, which is much safer given the twists, turns, and grade of Montana. The drawback of this is that more Westwood Hills residents would potentially get speeding tickets. Traffic Officers on local traffic councils are quick to relate stories about drivers that they pull over who feel that they don't deserve a ticket because they live in the area or even on the street where they have not obeyed the posted speeds or turn signs.

A Speed Radar Trailer can be positioned along Montana for a few days. The radar display acts to warn drivers that they are driving too fast and should slow down.

Leave things the way they are, given the number of commuters in cars, conditions might be as good as is possible.

Call me or e-mail your ideas and opinions, especially if you live on Montana.

**Debbie Nussbaum
Traffic Chair**

WHERE TO WRITE OR CALL:

Congressman Henry A. Waxman
8436 West Third Street
#600
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(323) 651-1040
Fax (323) 655-0502
Staff contact Lisa Pinto
Email: Lisa.Pinto@mail.house.gov

Senator Diane Feinstein
11111 Santa Monica Blvd. Ste. 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 914-7300
FAX (310) 914-7318
Staff contact: Trevor Daley
Email: trevor_daley@feinstein.senate.gov

Senator Barbara Boxer
312 N. Spring Street, Ste.1748
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 894-5000
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Staff contact Vincent Jones
Email: Vincent_jones@boxer.senate.gov

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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring St. Room 303
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 978-0600
Fax (213) 978-0750

WHPOA Welcomes New Members

It's a pleasure to welcome these new members of the Westwood Hills Property Owners Association: **David B. Stern**, (Barlock); **Josh and Robyn Mandelberg Ronald and Natalie Bernudz**; **Marc and Dianne Jacobs**; **Maxim Kokhlov and Elena Zykova**; **Jeffrey and Cecilia Glassman**; **Andrew Tomasi (Cashmere)**; **Annabelle and John Powell (Cashmere Terrace)**; **Jason, Carly and Robin Friedberg (Denslow)**; **Beth Wertz and Dr. Lawrence Schwartz (Homedale)** **David Kan**; **Mark and Ellen DeVitre**, **Rita and Paul Freeman**, and **David and Casey Vogel (S. Bentley)**; **Laurie Glick (S. Glenroy)**; **Dr. James and Roella Louie**; **Holly Richmond (Tavistock)**; **Chet Bhavsar and Bella Doshi (S. Thurston)**; **Kathleen T. Marino**, (Veteran). Please let us know about new neighbors so that we can invite them to join our Association.

Film Festivals Coming To Westwood

Westwood is soon to be the site of two important film festivals. First is the Westwood International Film Festival which debuts Friday, September 30 through Friday October 14, 2005 at The Majestic Crest Theater, 1262 Westwood Boulevard, (310) 474-7824.

The festival is being organized by the Crest Theater's owner Robert Bucksbaum, a Westwood neighbor who deserves great credit for saving the Crest from a dubious future as a swap meet, nightclub, church or adult theater.

Several Westwood filmmakers are represented in the Festival. A

complete Festival schedule and ticket information is available at www.westwoodfilmfestival.com or by calling (310) 470-6008.

Coming also to Westwood in June 2006 is the 12th Annual Los Angeles Film Festival, one of the two largest and most established film festivals in Los Angeles. The festival, which is relocating from Hollywood to Westwood, screens over 200 films from around the world, and draws upwards of 60,000 filmgoers.

Sunday Farmer's Market in WLA

Now entering its second year, the West Los Angeles Farmer's Market offers locally grown and organic produce and cheese as well as other food and craft items each Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. You'll find the market in the West LA Civic Center/Court House Plaza, at 11360 Santa Monica Blvd. and Purdue Ave, behind the public library. The market also features entertainment and special events. This market is a nice weekend alternative to the Westwood Farmers Market, which continues Thursday afternoons, on Weyburn east of Westwood Blvd.

Architectural History Group Forming

If you are interested in learning about your neighborhood, or just love architecture, consider joining WHPOA's new Architectural History and Preservation committee which will study and compile information about the architectural history of our neighborhood and encourage its preservation.

For information email us at whpoa@msn.com.

Waterford On-Ramp to Close October 7

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will permanently close the Waterford Street on-ramp to the southbound San Diego Freeway (I-405) on October 7, 2005.

The ramp is being closed in connection with a \$50 million project to extend the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane on the southbound 405 from Sunset Boulevard to the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10).

Caltrans says that the closure will improve freeway traffic flow and enhance safety by reducing the need to traverse several lanes in a short distance. Motorists will be diverted to the nearby Sunset Boulevard on-ramp, which is being improved to provide additional capacity.

WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Carole Magnuson
President

Alvin Milder
Lori Fontanes
Larry Londre
Deborah Nussbaum
Vice Presidents
Margot Barron
Treasurer
Susan Polep
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yahoo.com](mailto:westwoodhills-owner@groups.yahoo.com)

SAVE OUR HOMES—ACT NOW

The California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) has resumed work on the stalled *Sepulveda Pass Project* which will widen the northbound 405 between the 10 Freeway and Greenleaf Street in Sherman Oaks to provide a carpool lane. The project got new life when the Federal government agreed to include \$130+ million in the new Transportation bill and now appears assured of State funding as well. Westwood Hills residents need to remind our elected representatives—who supported that funding—that they should protect our homes and our neighborhood as the Caltrans project moves forward.

PROJECT ALREADY UNDERWAY

Caltrans is beginning environmental review now on several alternative schemes for widening of the 405 that would negatively impact our neighborhood. (See the back of this page for a description of the alternatives). Caltrans plans to obtain approval for a preferred alternative in 2007 and to build a first phase of the project beginning in 2009. During the month of October, Caltrans will accept public comment on potential impacts from the project that should be studied as part of the environmental review. The start of this “scoping” process will be announced in the Los Angeles Times probably on September 26 and 27.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Caltrans has told its engineers to design a freeway that meets Federal highway standards but “minimizes takings” of private property. To meet the minimum Federal standards, the 405 would be widened to allow two extra feet for each existing lane plus the new 12-foot HOV lane, a median and a shoulder. The least disruptive of the Caltrans alternatives would provide a single HOV lane and widen existing lanes to meet the Federal standards. The other alternatives are more ambitious and would require taking more private property. Except for a required “no build” alternative, all of the Caltrans proposals would take property, create visual eyesores, increase traffic, noise and pollution, and undermine our property values.

WHAT YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE DOING

WHPOA has asked Lori Fontanes, who led the successful campaign to force Caltrans to abandon the disastrous plan to have an off-ramp go through our neighborhood, to head a new Committee to “Save Our Homes.” The latest Caltrans threat can be overcome— but only with your help.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW

- ✓ **SPEAK OUT DURING THE EIR “SCOPING” PERIOD.** Write to Ron Kosinski, Deputy Director of Environment Planning, Department of Transportation, 100 S. Main Street, Suite 100, Los Angeles, CA 90012 and demand that Caltrans proceed with this project only if the project can be implemented within the existing public right of way, even if that means that the project will not meet all Federal Highway standards. Demand full analysis and mitigation of increased traffic, noise, and air pollution.
- ✓ **GET ON THE CALTRANS MAILING LIST.** Contact Amy Pettler, Environmental Planner at (213) 897-8081 or via e-mail at Amy-Pettler@dot.ca.gov, and ask to be placed on a mailing list to get information about the project and opportunities for public comment.
- ✓ **CONTACT YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND LET THEM KNOW WHERE YOU STAND.** Valley constituents are lobbying heavily for this project. Our elected officials have supported them and need to know what is at stake in our neighborhood. (List of contact numbers and addresses on back of this page)
- ✓ **Fax copies of your letters to 310-472-8914 or email to WHPOA@msn.com**

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES LISTED

In June, Caltrans distributed a statement describing these alternative schemes for the Sepulveda Pass project:

Alternative 1: No Build

The no build alternative would provide no additional improvements to the I-405 Sepulveda Pass corridor.

Alternative 2: Standard At-Grade Northbound HOV Lane

This alternative would widen I-405 to add a northbound HOV lane between National Boulevard and Greenleaf Street. The HOV lane would be constructed to current design standards that include 12-foot freeway lanes, median, and shoulders. The only section that would have exception to design standards would be the I-10/I-405 interchange

Alternative 3: Standard At-Grade Northbound and Southbound HOV Lane

This alternative includes all the improvements in Alternative 2 (above) and will also standardize the southbound lanes, median and shoulders (except at the I-10/I-405 interchange).

Alternative 4: Four Lane Viaduct Structure

This alternative would construct an elevated structure or viaduct in the median with a total of four HOV lanes – two in each direction. The addition of one mixed flow lane at-grade would be included in each direction of I-405. Freeway lanes, medians and shoulders would be standardized with the exception of the I-10/I-405 interchange.

Alternative 5: Transit Enhancement

This alternative includes Alternative 4 and involves design features that would facilitate increased carpool, bus and potential rail use in the corridor. An on-and off-ramp exclusive for HOV lanes and bus use will be constructed near the northbound I-405 to eastbound Wilshire Boulevard off ramp. The elevated structure would be constructed to accommodate potential future conversion for rail options.

Write, call or email Caltrans c/o Ron Kosinski, Deputy Director of Environmental Planning, 100 S. Main Street, Ste. 100, Los Angeles, CA 90012, regarding these alternatives. Let them know that

- 1) You oppose condemnation of private property for this project and demand that the segment of the project between Wilshire and Sunset either be exempted from the project or that the project be confined to existing Caltrans right-of-way even if that means that Federal safety standards will not be fully implemented.
- 2) Insist that Caltrans analyze visual, noise, air quality, traffic, flora and fauna, and economic impacts and proceed only if all significant impacts are fully mitigated before or *concurrent with construction*.
- 3) Fax or e-mail copies of your letters to (310) 472-8019 or whopa@msn.com.

Send copies of your letters and e-mails to your elected officials:

1) Jack Weiss, Councilmember 5th District, City Hall Rom 440, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 473-7005, <weiss@council.lacity.org

2) Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, 200 N. Spring St., Room 330, Los Angeles, CA 90012, (213) 978-0600 FAX (213) 978-0750 mayor@lacity.org

3). Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, 500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 974-3333 FAX (213) 625-7360 zev@lacbos.org