

summer 2008

newsletter

Save the Date!

WHPOA
Annual Meeting
and
50th
Anniversary
Celebration
Monday
September 15

and
Family Fun Day
Sunday
September 14

at the
W Hotel
Westwood

Sponsors
W Hotel
Whole Foods
Larry Young

Parking by C.B. Richard
Ellis

at the
Former Long's Drug
Parking Lot above Ralph's
10861 Le Conte Ave

W Hotel Parking \$7

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Caltrans 405 Plans Moving Forward

Caltrans is moving forward with plans to widen the 405 Freeway through the Sepulveda Pass. The good news is that the revised design approved by Caltrans in June no longer condemns private property in our area. The bad news is that the revised design still moves the Freeway—and Sepulveda Blvd.—closer to homes in Westwood Hills.

Responding to vigorous continuing protests from our neighborhood, Caltrans has trimmed its grandiose design by a few feet in order to save residential and commercial property north of Montana and to increase the distance between Westwood Hills homes and Sepulveda Blvd. But the approved realignment of Sepulveda Blvd. will still require high retaining walls along Sepulveda Blvd. and create added traffic noise and air pollution. Caltrans has promised some mitigations but additional noise, aesthetic, and construction mitigations are being sought by a Task Force of Dalkeith and Thurston Ave. homeowners who have hired an attorney to negotiate with Caltrans.

WHPOA has lobbied long and hard but so far without success to force Caltrans to downsize the project to eliminate the need to move Sepulveda. So far this position has attracted **zero** support from our elected officials from the Federal level on down who enthusiastically support the Caltrans project so long as Caltrans spares most private property.

Caltrans convinced legislators that lack of right-of-way between Montana and Bronwood makes it impossible to build a project that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will approve without moving Sepulveda, even if the FHWA would allow narrower lanes on the new freeway. Further, elected officials have demanded that the new freeway be large enough to accommodate future mass transit that might be funded by bond issues or taxes currently being proposed.

As approved by Caltrans, the freeway provides a single 12-foot High Occupancy Vehicle Lane, (HOV), an 11-foot half median, widens each existing lane by one foot, adds a one-foot buffer between the HOV-lane and existing lanes, and provides a 10-foot shoulder. With planned bridge and intersection improvements, it will cost a billion dollars, much of it from bond issue money, but some from Metro funds and some from the Federal Government.

Among features promised to mitigate the project's impacts on the community are 14-foot soundwalls from Cashmere to Sunset; promises to consider "extraordinary" noise abatement measures for some homes on Dalkeith and Thurston; project phasing to avoid congestion on Sepulveda during construction; textured and landscaped retaining walls; replanting of slopes damaged during construction; limits on night-time construction, among others.

Sepulveda Pass Project FEIR---FAQs

?????

Caltrans' final environmental report includes a mitigation so strange that we can't find anyone in or out of government who will claim it as his or her own. It provides a southbound traffic signal and left-turn pocket to be installed at Sepulveda Blvd. and Homedale Ave. as a mitigation for traffic displaced by the closure of the northbound 405 Montana Ave. off-ramp.

As of this writing, LADOT, which said it did not ask for these mitigations in the first place, says it won't install the traffic signal. But the agency is considering the turn pocket as a safety measure. The City has promised to consult with neighbors before adding the turn pocket.

Q: Who can tell me more about the 405 Task Force and its negotiations with Caltrans?

A: E-mail Task Force contacts Chet Bhavsar, cbhavsar@rrjlaw.com, Doug Marshall, Marshall@klabin.com, and Ron Rosenfeld, rar@beverlyhillslaw.com. They can tell you how to become a part of the Task Force and how to contribute to their legal fund.

Q: What happens to private property?

A: Acquisition of the Verizon Building and Rodeo Realty is no longer planned. The project will not take homes in our area and, as approved, the project no longer requires subsurface easements from homes on Dalkeith and Thurston..

Q: How does Caltrans plan to mitigate increased noise from the Freeway?

A: The project proposes soundwalls on the freeway shoulder from south of Cashmere to Sunset and will provide for "Unusual and Extraordinary Abatement" on a case-by-case basis for homes on Thurston and Dalkeith.. The project does not provide soundwalls on the east side of Sepulveda above the retaining walls although homeowners in that area have asked for them.

Q: Will construction of the retaining walls congest traffic on Sepulveda?

A: Caltrans says that it will stage construction so that the relocation of Sepulveda Blvd. will occur before the freeway widening begins and the retaining walls will be constructed before the roadway is relocated. Caltrans expects this schedule to minimize congestion.

Q: What will be the impact of having high walls on both sides of Sepulveda?

A: Caltrans says "...walls on both sides of Sepulveda could result in a semi-enclosed roadway section that could reinforce noise...mitigation would include treating the walls with absorbent materials or texturing the walls ...this would also provide more visually appealing wall surfaces."

Q: How long will the project construction take?

A: The project is projected to take about four years to complete but construction will be phased, so that only a portion of the project is under construction at any given time. Caltrans says that the construction is not expected to impair local access.

Q: When will the Montana Ave. off-ramp be closed?

A: The off-ramp will remain open until improvements at Getty Center, Sunset Blvd. and Wilshire Blvd. are completed.



President's Letter

Dear Neighbors, It is my pleasure to write this first letter as president of Westwood Hills Property Owners Association (“WHPOA”). Many of you know my name from the neighborhood email network, which I set up seven years ago and for which I am co-moderator. My husband and I have lived in our home on Cashmere Street for twenty-two years. When we first bought the house, I thought we’d be there for no more than five years – and now, it would be hard to imagine moving, because we love the Westwood Hills neighborhood and have really put down roots here.

Like some of you, we joined WHPOA when we first moved in, but were so busy with our own lives that we paid little attention to the neighborhood association. It wasn’t until years later that I began to understand and appreciate the critical role that homeowner associations must play to protect the quality of life in our neighborhoods and surrounding community.

This September, WHPOA will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Everything about WHPOA is voluntary, from your membership to the board of directors and officers, committees, neighborhood watch, block parties and the email network. If someone doesn’t step up to the plate, then it doesn’t get done. No one gets paid, and there is no other paid staff. The fact that this volunteer association has survived for 50 years is a great testament to the caring and involved neighbors who make Westwood Hills their home.

Please join me in extending our heartfelt thanks to Carole Magnuson, who recently stepped down as WHPOA president after six years. Carole brought an incredible level of professionalism, dedication, intelligence, experience and energy to this job – she has set a standard that will be difficult to live up to. I feel very lucky that Carole remains on our board of directors and has been graciously willing to assist me with her sage advice and good judgment.

I am also most grateful to the seventeen other members of our board of directors who are volunteering their time and expertise for the benefit of our neighborhood as a whole. Unlike some volunteer organizations, we truly have a “working board” -- every director has taken responsibility for one or more aspects of WHPOA’s affairs. Having such an active board strengthens the entire organization.

Everyone has family, work and a multitude of other commitments in their lives. But when our wonderful neighborhood works together, as we have done many times in the past, we can accomplish a lot! So, finally, I want to thank *each of you* for making Westwood Hills such a gem of a neighborhood.

And remember, if ever you start thinking about some issue that WHPOA is involved with: “Why don’t *they* do” – change that thought to: “What can *I* do”!

Terry Tequazian

Our Traffic Committee Wants you to know:

399 is the cell phone number for non-emergency Los Angeles County freeway roadside assistance.

We followed up on complaints about motorists running through the red light at the intersection of the Montana Off-Ramp and Sepulveda Blvd. at Montana Ave., at the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's Mobility Action Committee in January. LADOT decided not to recommend the relocation of the limit line for the northbound traffic on Sepulveda Boulevard at the freeway off-ramp but the LADOT signal crew will be asked to adjust the masking of the traffic signal indication at Montana Avenue for the northbound traffic at or around the freeway off-ramp. We hope this will improve safety at this intersection, since we too have experienced northbound drivers paying attention to the wrong signal and moving into the intersection on a red light.

The Sepulveda Blvd. Reversible Lane/Bike Lane and Intersection Improvements Project has a Feb. 2009 start date with expected completion of June 2010. The project consists of the following specific improvements:

1. Create a reversible lane operation in the Mulholland tunnel during peak hours of traffic.
2. Create a third southbound through lane on approach to Skirball Center Drive, add a northbound bicycle lane and a northbound right-turn only lane.
3. Add northbound and southbound bicycle lanes from Skirball Center Drive to Bel Air Crest Road.
4. Create a third southbound lane to access the southbound 405 Freeway Getty Center Drive on-ramp.
5. Re-stripe the #1 northbound lane to create a much longer northbound left-turn pocket at Moraga Drive to access the northbound 405 Freeway on-ramp.
6. Create northbound and southbound right-turn only lanes at the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Wilshire Boulevard.

The website <http://trafficinfo.lacity.org> will show you real-time traffic information along 1,000 miles of major street segments in Los Angeles.

Westwood Village Traffic Mitigations

Changes aimed at protecting a few Holmby-Wetwood streets from cut-through traffic that traffic engineers expect to be generated by Casden's Palazzo Westwood at Weyburn and Glendon project are continuing their six-month trial. The new traffic patterns restrict through traffic at the Le Conte & Hilgard intersection, the Weyburn & Hilgard intersection, and at the Lindbrook & Hilgard intersection. LADOT and the Holmby Westwood neighborhood held a meeting where opinions both positive and negative were expressed about the restriction of traffic, especially for the Le Conte & Hilgard intersection. It was pointed out that traffic that once mainly stayed on Le Conte or Weyburn is now being redistributed to some of the smaller streets and creating speeding and congestion problems into new places. Information is still being gathered by LADOT and Councilman Jack Weiss' office; please contact them if you have an opinion at (213) 473-7005 or weiss@council.lacity.org

Regional block captains in place (at last)!

From Security Chair Jane Schwab:

One of my main goals, as security chair, is emergency preparedness for the whole community. I intend to focus on that just as soon as we get our block captain program fully underway. We have divided the community up into six regions with six regional block captains who will work with the independent block captains in those regions. This kind of organization should assist us in the distribution of the newsletter, and facilitate better communication in case of emergency.

I am happy to announce that, after a lengthy search, we finally have six regional block captains (RBCs)!! I want to congratulate them and thank them, in advance, for their enthusiastic support and dedication to our community. These individuals are:

REGION #1. **Terry Tegnazian** -- Sunset between Bentley and Veteran, Denslow north of Montana, Cashmere north of Montana, Tilden and Greenfield, Montana north side between Veteran and Bentley

REGION #2. **Jackie Joseph** -- Barlock, Tavistock, Bentley north of Montana, Sunset between Glenroy and Bentley

REGION #3. **Sherry West** -- Bronwood, Glenroy, Montana north side between Sepulveda and Bentley, Sunset between Thurston and Glenroy

REGION #4. **Sandy Holmes** -- Thurston, Homedale, Dalkeith, Sunset between Sepulveda and Thurston

REGION #5. **Debbie Nussbaum** -- Denslow between Montana and Levering, Cashmere Terrace, Cashmere Street between Sepulveda and Montana, Bentley south of Montana, Montana south side between Sepulveda and Bentley

REGION #6. **Billy Rose** -- Montana south side between Levering and Veteran, Veteran, Ophir and Levering

"We would like to have more than one person for each block. The job takes very little time, and is a great way to meet your immediate neighbors..."

Info on door to door solicitors

Door to door solicitation is not against the law in Los Angeles, as long as the solicitor has filed with the Police Commission for an "Information Card". Los Angeles City Municipal Code (LACMC) Number 44.00 requires that regardless of where an organization is based (even out of state charities) an application must be filed with the City of Los Angeles if the charity plans to solicit within the City. The application must state the intent of the charity and where the funds raised will be dispensed. If the organization passes a background check, the City issues a permit or "Information Card" to the organization to proceed using any solicitation method they chose. After the solicitation is completed the organization must file a report of results of activity with the City of Los Angeles.

Celebrating WHPOA's 50th Anniversary

When we thought about celebrating WHPOA's 50th Anniversary, we thought about a big block party, where we could meet our neighbors, honor our volunteers, learn about our community, and have fun. Also, it would be nice to make a lasting contribution to our neighborhood—something that residents of Westwood Hills could enjoy for the next 50 years. And what better time to pull together all of the bits and pieces of neighborhood lore and information into a format that can be passed forward. That's our concept—and the two-day event planned for September 14 and 15 is its centerpiece.

Our sponsors are the W Hotel Westwood, Whole Foods Market, and Larry Young, Prudential California Realty. The W Hotel wanted to do something that the whole family could enjoy—hence the invitation to a pool party and movie on Sunday. On Monday, we are back at the W Hotel for our Annual Meeting which will feature a presentation on our community by the authors of a highly acclaimed history of Wilshire Blvd. and an exhibit of early photographs of Westwood. Bill Gubin has been documenting Westwood Hills homes designed by prominent architects of the 1930's and 1940's, and we hope to have his work available.



Among our honored guests will be Westwood Hills residents who have lived in the neighborhood for 50 years or more. We have located about 15—if you know of long time residents, email chmagnuson@mac.com or call 310-472-9352 weekdays before 5 p.m. Also, if you grew up in Westwood Hills during the 1970's and 1980's—how much fun was that!—and would like to share some memories, use the same email address. Please also let us know if you have early photographs, perhaps showing homes under construction, or Montana Avenue when the eucalyptus trees were young. See you there!

50 Trees for 50 Years

In commemoration of WHPOA's 50th Anniversary we are proposing to plant 50 new sidewalk parkway trees within our neighborhood. Over the years, Westwood Hills has lost many of the beautiful parkway trees that distinguish our neighborhood to disease or insects. Montana Avenue has been very hard hit during the past several years. Elsewhere trees have died, been removed, or were never planted in the first place. We want to replace these trees and, if possible, to add trees in locations where they were never planted. If you have a location for a new tree please contact the anniversary committee at westwoodhills-owner@yahogroups.com.

We will be working with a not-for-profit organization and there will be no charge for the trees or for the planting, although we hope to make the planting day a fun, community-wide event. For parkway trees, there will be a choice between varieties that currently are planted on your block. If you wish to plant on your own property, there will be a broader choice of varieties. More details to follow once locations are identified. Fall is the target time for the plantings since we want the new trees to have the benefit of winter rains.

UCLA plans new dorms

UCLA has announced plans to construct half a million square feet of new housing and related facilities on the Northwest Campus east of Veteran Ave. The new housing, called the Northwest Housing In-fill Project (NHIP) would provide 1525 dormitory beds, plus faculty apartments, dining, assembly and support facilities. It would consist of four buildings, two located near the existing high-rise Sproul Hall dormitory and two located adjacent to Gayley Ave., two and a half blocks east of Veteran Ave. The buildings proposed for Gayley Avenue will be seven and nine stories tall and will be visible from some Westwood Hills locations. No new parking is planned.

This project was not included in the 2002 revision of the Campus Long Range Development Plan (LRDP), which forecasts campus growth through 2010. In order to approve the project the campus will need to update that LRDP, providing for increased housing and additional campus population. The amendment to the LRDP will also explore the need for additional recreational space to serve the new dormitories. New recreational facilities are not currently proposed but may be added to the LRDP as part of the Amendment. In the past, UCLA has sought to build a new recreation building and basketball court facilities on the hillside immediately east of Veteran in an area where uses are restricted by the terms of an agreement with our community. A Draft Environmental Impact Report on the possible environmental consequences of the NHIP project is due out late in 2008.

WHPOA Neighborhood Email Network

Have you signed up yet for our neighborhood email network? At recent count, 498 of your neighbors are members. If you haven't joined yet, you're missing a terrific resource!

Do you need referrals for services such as electricians, tree doctors, plumbers, furniture refinishers, etc.? Or perhaps help finding a nanny or housekeeper? Maybe you have a teenage son or daughter who would like to find babysitting or dog walking jobs? Lost a pet? Have tickets to a Dodgers game or Hollywood Bowl concert that you can't use and would like to sell? Want to sell an old car or used furniture or sports equipment? These are only some of the ways our email network is being used by your neighbors.

The email network is a private, unlisted group which uses the free yahoogroups system. The group is fully moderated by WHPOA president Terry Tegnazian and board members Carole Magnuson and Debbie Nussbaum. What this means is that in seven years of operation, there has been NO SPAM. The email network is only open to members of WHPOA (and their tenants, if any). To sign up, email westwoodhills-owner@yahogroups.com with your name, street address, telephone number and email address



This tree-covered slope on Gayley Ave. just east of Veteran Ave, is slated to become the home for two new UCLA residence halls, one nine stories high and the other seven stories high.

WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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This newsletter is published by
the Westwood Hills Property
Owners Association
as a service to members.

Carole Magnuson, Editor

WHPOA Welcomes New Members

It's a pleasure to welcome new neighbors who have joined the WHPOA during the past year. They are Jeffrey and Christine **Krolik**, Tavistock; Mrs. Afreh **Khazee**, Sunset; Jarmilla and Daniel **Kummermann**, Denslow; Vivian and Rob **Gabel**, Cashmere; Preethi **Srikanthan** and Kalyanam **Shivkumar**, Cashmere Ter.; Arletta **Tronstein**, Bronwood; Maureen **O'Dea**, Thurston; Christina **Conti**, Denslow; Emily **Pallans** and Joseph **Mulkey**, Bentley; Ram R. Singh and Sushma Bhadauria **Singh**, Cashmere; Robert G. **Friedman**, Denslow; Catherine **Kaufman**, Ophir; Daniel **Gutierrez** and Judith **Palag**, Thurston; Elizabeth and David **Winkler**, Dalkeith; Jennifer **Tronstein**, Cashmere Ter.; Sharen **Ghatan-Sterling** and Amir Andrew **Sterling**, Tilden; and Laura **Brand** and Adam **Weene**, Montana.

Not a member yet?

Our membership is at an all time high, at 83 percent of our homes. But we want it to be a record-setting 100 percent!! What a great goal to achieve before our 50th anniversary in 2008! Join now and we promise to make you an honored guest at our celebration party at the W Hotel, Westwood. Please let us know the names and addresses of new homeowners on your block so that we can invite them to join the Association. This is a very easy way to help your neighborhood and also a good excuse to greet your new neighbors. For information call Carole Magnuson at 310-472-9352 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. only) or email westwoodhills-owner@yahoogroups.com

WHPOA CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Save these dates

Sunday, September 14, 2008
Family fun and movie night poolside at the W Hotel

Monday, September 15, 2008
Annual Meeting and Gala Celebration
W Hotel

Parking provided by CB Richard Ellis

Watch the mail in August for your invitation!