

WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

fall 2012

newsletter

WHPOA ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday
November 8, 2012
Village Church
343 Church Lane
(north of Montana,
west of the 405)

AGENDA

6:30 p.m.
**Refreshments and
Conversation**

7 p.m.
Speakers

Assemblymember
Holly Mitchell
47th Assembly District

Supervisor
Zev Yaroslavsky

Councilmember
Paul Koretz

405 Project Manager
Mark Van Gessel

LAPD Lead Officer
Chris Ragsdale

Elections and Prizes

**Special thanks to our
meeting sponsors
and contributors:**

Larry Young
Prudential California
Realty
Whole Foods Market
Westwood
Lemonade
Brentwood Village
Luxe Hotel
Sunset Blvd



Dear Neighbors,

The past two years have been extremely challenging for our neighborhood, as we've had to deal with all the impacts of the 405/Sepulveda construction.

That's why it's especially important that you attend this year's Annual Meeting on Thursday, November 8! We

need a big turnout of caring neighbors to convince our elected representatives that they must be responsive to our concerns.

Our featured speakers include **our State Assemblymember Holly Mitchell**, who is appearing before us for the first time; **our Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky** (who also sits on the Metro Board of Directors, which is overseeing the 405 construction); **our Councilman Paul Koretz** (who can help us with City agencies that approve traffic mitigations and landscaping); **Mark Van Gessel, Metro project manager** for our segment of the 405 project; and our **LAPD Senior Lead Officer Chris Ragsdale**.

This is your chance to ask questions and demand results from our elected representatives.

We're now about halfway through the 405 construction project. We are still concerned with short-term problems during the remainder of the construction period, such as traffic mitigations, noise, air pollution, etc.

However, the big long-term issue is now facing us: What are we left with after the contractors move on to their next project?

The most important aspects of this question: appropriate landscaping, including the originally promised (but still uncertain) replacement of the hundreds of trees removed along Sepulveda Blvd. from Wilshire to Sunset, and covering the new concrete retaining walls on both sides of Sepulveda with ivy or other greenery; and acceptable sound walls.

Our Annual Meeting is also always a great opportunity for us to get together in person—socialize, enjoy some delicious munchies from local Westwood businesses, meet new neighbors, renew old acquaintances, catch up on local news, and maybe even win a raffle prize! I look forward to seeing you on November 8. Best regards, *Terry*

Neighborhood Council

Election Oct. 28

Who will speak for Westwood Hills? That was the question two years ago when the City of Los Angeles established the Westwood Neighborhood Council (WWNC) to advise elected officials and agencies on community issues that affect us. Unfortunately, the WWNC did not provide a seat for each of Westwood's residential neighborhoods. In fact, it was and is possible for all four residential seats to be filled by candidates from the same neighborhood or even the same condo building.

Fortunately, a community coalition called **Team Westwood** was organized to field a slate of candidates that would guarantee representation for each neighborhood and all stakeholders. We were very proud that **Scott Whittle, the Team Westwood candidate from Westwood Hills**, was on that slate and polled the most votes among all residential candidates.

Now a new WWNC Board is to be chosen and our neighborhood once again risks being left out unless **you and all members of household over the age of 17 take time to vote in this important election**. Scott Whittle is once again a candidate on the **Team Westwood** slate.

Voting will take place on **Sunday, October 28, 2012, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.** at the Westwood Recreation Center on Sepulveda, south of Wilshire behind the Federal Building. (Same place as the last election.) Parking is available and there will be curbside voting for persons who need to vote without leaving their cars. If you need information or a ride to the poll, please call 310-472-9352.

Westwood Hills residents should **request a residential ballot**. The ballot will list the names of candidates for four residential seats, along with those running for six other categories for which you are allowed to vote. In addition to Scott, the list includes another Westwood Hills resident, Steve Reasner, who is not on the Team Westwood slate. **You may vote for only one** of the residential candidates. A full list of candidates and their statements may be viewed at <http://empowerla.org/wwnc/westwood-nc-elections/>.

Your vote is important because turnout is extremely low in these elections. In the first election one race was decided by a single vote. It will take just 30 minutes of your time, but it will mean very much to Westwood Hills. We need to have our voices heard on important issues such as bus routing, development, permit parking, library and park improvements and more. Let's turn out!

Got Potholes? Useful Contacts

If you live in Westwood Hills, where most of our streets haven't been resurfaced since the Janss Company installed them in 1928, the answer is yes. Don't look for any change this year, since none of our concrete (read expensive to repair) streets made it onto the Bureau of Street Services current repair and resurfacing list. However, Councilman Paul Koretz's office says that the Bureau will fill potholes. You may report them to the Councilman's Field Deputy **Sarah Mallory**, who is available to help with this and other issues, at (310) 289-0353 or sarah.mallory@lacity.org and at the Bureau's website www.bss.lacity.org.

405 “Blues”...What’s Taking So Long?

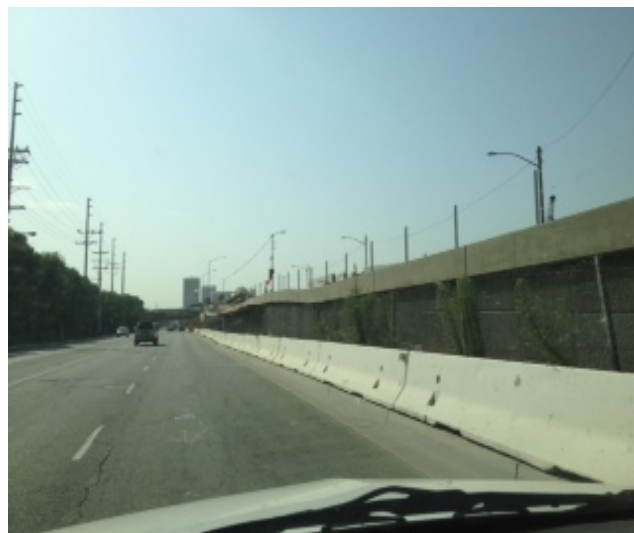
Traffic congestion and cut-through traffic continue as side effects of 405 Widening Project construction. ***Sepulveda between Montana and Church Ln/Ovada is ground zero for the contractor***, with 26 utilities buried under this section of Sepulveda needing to be relocated to a fresh new patch of soil so the new eastern edge of the freeway (yet to be started) will not rest over any utilities.

Kiewit has its crews along this stretch all night and day. The only time they pick up the orange cones is to allow for two lanes of traffic in both directions on Sepulveda during the AM and PM peak drive times. Construction activities along and at the base of the two huge retaining walls on the east side of Sepulveda, known as 1720 & 1730, generate dirt, noise and earthshaking jolts that keep our Thurston and Dalkeith neighbors up all night.

Expect another 12 months of the same intense construction and frequent closures. Substantial completion of the project is targeted for the end of 2013 at which time the northbound HOV lane will be complete and open to traffic. Critical aspects of the project, including landscaping, resurfacing of Sepulveda, sound wall installation, and possibly even the face of 1720 & 1730 will take additional time. Getting back to normal is still far off.

Getting back to normal for me includes replanting trees on both sides of Sepulveda. There is scientific data that shows that trees reduce the hydrocarbons in the air alongside freeways thus improving air quality. Trees planted at a freeway edge reduce the visual blight of the freeway. I’m appalled whenever I drive along

Sepulveda and witness the devastation of construction. Once there were almost 800 trees, some majestic others just scrubby, all surviving unattended on Sepulveda between Wilshire and Sunset. The vegetation made for a pleasant separation from the freeway edge.



Sepulveda Blvd. between Wilshire and Montana

Metro’s landscaping plans for the project are paltry and disappointing. The last published count replaces nearly 800 removed trees with 38 trees dotted around Sunset’s on & off ramps and at Montana, with a possible 27 additional trees in the sidewalk at the base of the 1720 & 1730 walls. This in spite of an EIR that promised new landscaping at a replacement ratio of 2:1 and 5:1 for removing California native trees. It now appears that most of those trees are to be planted somewhere in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Metro, the City, the County, and the State are still wrangling over whose job it is to maintain any trees that are planted.

We aren't giving up on our request for additional trees to be planted, especially along the west side of Sepulveda from Constitution to Cashmere St. where the freeway will seem practically on top of motorists without tall vegetation to screen the it from Sepulveda.

The 405 Widening Project is a “design-build” project, meaning that construction is allowed to move ahead without all the details in place.

Unfortunately for us, an agreement to maintain the landscaping was not part of the final approval documents. The “right thing to do” would be to plant trees wherever possible and to provide as many trees as possible.

Trees reduce some of the air pollution and visual blight of freeways. The devil is in the details and “design-build” leaves many, many details that are vague. Promises of a tree-lined boulevard appear to be empty rhetoric.

Debbie Nussbaum—Traffic Chairperson



Westwood Hills seen from the Getty Museum, showing trees and vegetation completely removed from the eastern side of the 405 Freeway from Wilshire Blvd. to Sunset. So far, Metro’s landscape plans show that only a few of the nearly 800 trees removed in this area will be replanted there. No vegetation is planned for the huge retaining walls on the east side of Sepulveda or on the Westwood Hills side of the Freeway wall.

Keeping Safe

Writing an article for our WHPOA annual newsletter always makes me feel as if I were writing my own State of the Union address. During this past year we have made many adjustments due to the work on the 405 and Sepulveda Blvd. **Fortunately, I feel as if (for the most part) we have survived pretty well.** I must admit that as the Safety Chairperson I anticipated an uptick in our crime stats. Although we have had a few unfortunate residential burglaries this past year, I am happy to say that it has been relatively quiet in the area of security in our neighborhood.

I think, however, that these changes prompted me to become more proactive in my desire to mitigate any negative actions that might occur. As a result of my concern, with the approval of our board, **I recently put in an application to the city for large Neighborhood Watch signs** that could be posted in strategic areas around our neighborhood. It is important to recognize that action on this matter may take some time; we must follow the rules of the bureaucracy. The application has to be approved by a number of agencies: LAPD, Bureau of Street Lighting, and the Department of Transportation (for final approval). I want to personally thank our **Senior Lead Officer, Chris Ragsdale**, who got the ball rolling and delivered the application to our **Area Commanding Officer Captain Evangelyn Nathan**. Chris is always on top of things, and ready to assist with any problems that we might have.

Some of you may remember that a number of months ago, I put out an email asking

if anyone wanted the small Neighborhood Watch signs. **I had a number of responses, and have not forgotten any of you.** I decided to wait on that until we get some sort of action on the large signs.

Additionally, the board has been actively working on getting a dedicated ACS car for the area. Action on this matter is still pending.

Last month, I was asked to attend a WLA community meeting at the WLA Police Station. There, Captain Nathan reported on crime stats, property crime trends and patterns, and new officer allotments. **As of October 7th, seventeen new officers started in our area.** These officers will be deployed in the field. As far as burglaries go, the newest target is copper piping, and **the newest type of burglary** is where two people act in tandem, one pretending to be the gardener, and the partner who goes around back and tests to see if doors or windows are open.

As usual, I wouldn't be me without some mention of the critters with whom we share this environment of ours. Last week as I was taking my morning walk, I found a dead coyote lying in the parkway on the southwest corner of Sunset, just north of South Glenroy. I suspect that it had been hit trying to cross Sunset. After a morning of phone calls to (in this order) 311, West Los Angeles Animal Shelter, and finally Dead Animal Pickup, the latter agency said that the animal would be picked up within twenty-four hours. I call this to your attention because I think it is important to realize that although we live south of Sunset, we are not immune to these problems, so just be aware of the creatures who live alongside of us.

Jane Schwab, Security Chairperson

WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY
OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Officers

President

Terry Tegnazian

Vice Presidents

Carole Magnuson

Alvin Milder, Esq.

Treasurer

Margot Barron, CPA

Secretary

Sue Polep

Directors

Aphrodite Banks

Judy Brown

Wayne Hodges

Russell Korobkin, Esq.

Caroline Lee

Larry Steven Londre

Harry Macy

Debbie Nussbaum

Frank Ponder

Stephen Rohde, Esq.

Jane Schwab

Stacey Siegel

Sherry West

Mitchell Wong, M.D.

P.O. Box 24515, Los Angeles, CA 90024
E-mail: westwoodhills-
owner@yahoogroups.com

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

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following families to the Westwood Hills Property Owners Association: **Alex Lee and Soyon Kim** (Levering); **Michael and Regina Adler** (Veteran); **Devon and Sean Corrigan** (Barlock); **Marilyn Sebesta** (Tavistock); **Katie and Brian Anderson** (Tavistock); **Markus and Lily Tjahjadi** (Veteran); **Robert and Julie Edelstein** (Cashmere); **Sanam Ahmadina and Kamal Bijanpour** (Bronwood); **Rachel Silverstein and David Dozoretz** (Montana); **Lynn Jacobs** (Homedale); **Sharam Yashar** (Thurston); **Eric Tung** (Bronwood); **Mark and Karina Wiesenthal** (Cashmere); **Meg and Alan Resnikoff** (Glenroy); **Kirk Pasich** (Tilden).

Not a Member Yet?

WHPOA—the Westwood Hills Property Owners Association—is a 54-year-old all-volunteer organization devoted solely to maintaining the quality of life in the Westwood Hills, a community of 607 single family homes bordered by Sunset Blvd., Veteran Ave., the Veterans Cemetery and Sepulveda Blvd. More than 85% of Westwood Hills residents are members and most of them subscribe to the WHPOA **neighborhood email network**.

Joining is easy. Unlike other homeowner organizations, there are no dues, just a one-time payment of \$100. For more information and an application, contact our Membership Chairperson at s.polep@gte.net.

Board Elections

Each year at the Annual Meeting, WHPOA elects members to serve on its Board of Directors for the coming two years. Candidates for election this year are: **Terry Tegnazian** (Cashmere); **Carole Magnuson** (Ophir); **Margot Barron, CPA** (Tavistock); **Sue Polep** (Barlock); **Judy Brown** (Bentley); **Harry Macy** (Cashmere); **Debbie Nussbaum** (Cashmere Terrace); **Sherry West** and **Stephen Rohde** (Montana). Aphrodite Banks (Veteran); Alvin Milder, Esq. (Greenfield); Wayne Hodges (Thurston); Russell Korobkin, Esq. (Bentley); Caroline Lee (Bentley); Larry Steven Londre (Cashmere); Frank Ponder (Homedale); Jane Schwab (Bronwood); Stacey Siegel (Tavistock); and Mitchell Wong, M.D., (Bentley) are serving the second year of a two-year term.