



WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER - FALL 2015



Dear Neighbors -

After more than five challenging years for our neighborhood, the 405/Sepulveda Pass project is now virtually complete—we can breathe a sigh of relief after having to deal with all the impacts of this massive project. We're still waiting for all the promised landscaping and tree replacements to be installed, but those are progressing slowly. However, new transportation and traffic issues loom on the horizon for the Westside, as reported by our Traffic Chairperson, Debbie Nussbaum, in this newsletter. Another issue facing the neighborhood is the legality of short-term rentals (via online systems like Airbnb) in R-1 single-family zones such as Westwood Hills. We've received a number of complaints from neighbors suffering from loud parties that go on until dawn and trash from adjacent homes which are being rented short-term.

That's why, as always, it's important that you attend this year's Annual Meeting on **Wednesday, October 21st!** We need a big turnout of caring neighbors to convince our elected representatives that they must be responsive to our continuing concerns.

Our featured speakers include **our NEW Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl**, who will be addressing us for the first time (she also sits on the Metro Board of Directors, which oversees most of the regional transportation system)—Sheila was elected to replace our long-time Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky who retired last year; **our Councilman Paul Koretz** (who can help us with all the various City agencies); and our **LAPD Senior Lead Officer Chris Ragsdale** (with his annual update on security and crime in the local area). Officer Ragsdale has also invited **August Cziment from Ring.com** to tell us about an inexpensive wireless camera surveillance system to help enhance security in our homes.

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

We're meeting in the same venue as last year: the Westwood Presbyterian Church, 10822 Wilshire Blvd. (the south side of Wilshire, next door to the new iPic Movie Theater). Surface parking will be available for our meeting in the lot behind the church—but we've been told that space is somewhat limited this year, so please consider carpooling with other neighbors.

Our Annual Meeting is always a great opportunity for us to get together in person—socialize, enjoy some delicious munchies, meet new neighbors, renew old acquaintances, and catch up on local news.

I look forward to seeing you all on October 21st!

Best regards,

Terry



Good News on Tree Replacement

Westwood Hills has lost many trees during the past few years to freeway construction, drought and disease. This has been a matter of great concern to the neighborhood since our tree canopy is one of our treasures, contributing to our quality of life and our property values. Recently scientists have found even that walking among trees promotes health and youthfulness!

The 405 project alone removed more than 800 trees between Wilshire and Sunset Blvds.—a huge loss to us considering the role trees play in cooling the planet and combatting air pollution and water loss. As a first step toward mitigating these impacts, and at the same time improving our local quality of life, WHPOA has campaigned to have at least some of the trees replaced here, instead of in the Santa Monica Mountains as was first proposed.

And now we have great news! Metro and the City have agreed on a tree replacement plan for Westwood Hills, thanks in great part to heroic efforts by Councilman Koretz's Deputy Jay Greenstein and a number of key staff in the offices of the Mayor and County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl.

It has taken about one year of negotiations to finally reach this point. Metro will contribute funds necessary for the trees, the preparation required for planting, the planting of the trees, and for a tree maintenance program during the early years of growth. WHPOA residents interested in helping with this effort should email westwoodhills-owner@yahoogroups.com

Street Resurfacing Scheduled!

After years of campaigning to have our streets included in the City's street resurfacing program, we have good news to report. Thanks to a big assist from Joan Pelico, Councilman Paul Koretz's chief of staff, several streets have been placed on the schedule for resurfacing this fiscal year. They are Denslow Ave. between Levering Ave. and Cashmere Terrace; Denslow Ave. between Bentley Ave. and Cashmere St; Levering Ave. between Montana Ave. and Veteran Ave.; and Ophir Drive between Levering Ave. and Veteran Ave. Bentley Ave. south of Cashmere was resurfaced earlier this year.

Now that the 405 construction has moved on, DWP utility holds are the most common reason for delay of resurfacing, coupled with the continuing need to allocate funding throughout the City. Our 1928-era concrete streets pose additional delay, since the City has a quota on the number of miles of concrete streets that can be resurfaced each year. The DWP has completed some of its work and so released holds on the streets scheduled to be resurfaced this year.

Although we have seen some progress, the need to upgrade our 90-year-old infrastructure continues. Residents on streets not scheduled for resurfacing should continue to report potholes and street repaving needs by using **the City's app, MyLA311 (Google MyLA311) or the Bureau of Street Services website, bss.lacity.org**

Who You Gonna Call?

Here are the Westside deputies for our elected representatives: for Councilman Koretz: Jasmine Shamolian, (323) 866-1828, jasmine.shamolian@lacity.com, who has recently been helpful in our efforts to have illegally dumped debris removed from the front of Veteran Ave. rental properties. For Mayor Garcetti: Daniel Tamm, (213) 978-0836, daniel.tamm@lacity.org. For Supervisor Kuehl: Rachel Zaidan, (213) 974-3333, rzaiden@bos.lacounty.gov. For U.S. Congressman Ted Lieu: Janet Turner, (310) 321-7664, janet.turner@mail.house.gov. To report service needs to city, you may also call 311. **Always dial 911 for an emergency or crime in progress.**

Important -- Plan to Attend!

WHPOA ANNUAL MEETING

Featured Speakers:



Supervisor Sheila Kuehl and Councilmember Paul Koretz

**LAPD Senior Lead Officer Chris Ragsdale
and**

Special Presentation on New Home Security Camera

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015

6:30 pm - Socializing

7:00 pm - Election and Speakers

Westwood Presbyterian Church

10822 Wilshire Blvd.

(adjacent to the iPic Movie Theater)

Sponsors:

Larry Young, Luxury Properties Director,
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services California Properties, Ranked Top 20 Nationwide

Nancy Eisenstadt, Associate Partner, PartnersTrust

Special Thanks to:

simplethings, 10874 Kinross Ave., and **Whole Foods Westwood**, 1050 Gayley Ave.

Thoughts on Security and Safety

-- Jane Schwab, Security Committee Chair

Neighborhood Watch Signs Update

"Slow and steady wins the race" Aesop

That's how I feel in relation to finally obtaining our Neighborhood Watch signs. Some of you may recall that about two years ago the board voted to obtain eleven of these signs to be installed at access points in our neighborhood.

At last, we are near to finally accomplishing this task, and I want to personally thank those homeowners who have so graciously consented to have these signs on their parkways.

This has been such a long process in part because our application has to be approved by *three* different city departments: LAPD, Bureau of Street Lighting, and LADOT.

These past two years have been an interesting lesson in civics for me. More importantly, it has afforded me the opportunity to meet many thoughtful and gracious neighbors. I want you all to know that I am committed to the completion of this task.

El Nino: Preparation Tips

Some suggestions for you to prepare for what is projected to be a big El Nino deluge:

1. Check your roof, skylights, gutters, gutter guards and downspouts and look for loose tiles and shingles.
2. Check your window and door seals and weather stripping. Don't forget your garage doors too.
3. Make sure water is directed away from your house.
4. Prune your trees to reduce risk of broken branches. Make sure nothing is hanging over your house.
5. Aerate your soil; punch holes to help absorption.
6. Check your sump pump if you have one; make sure it is in working order.

7. Much like an earthquake, make sure you have adequate emergency provisions, including long life non-refrigerated provisions, plenty of flashlights and batteries, and a supply of bottled water.

8. If you have a pet, make sure you have provisions for them.

9. Check brakes and tires on your car.

10. Keep a full tank of gas.

Home Safety: Caution and Planning are Always Best

Some ideas to prepare your home with the holidays approaching. More to come on the email network.

1. Install quality deadbolt locks on all exterior doors and windows. Use them.

2. To discourage prowling or loitering, light the outside of your home; use floodlights for all entryways, pathways, stairways, trash and parking areas.

3. Use motion-detector lights and connect outside lights to a timing device, or a light-sensitive switch so they come on automatically when it is dark.

4. Install an alarm system. Watchdogs help, too. If you live in a two-story house, leave the alarm on when you are upstairs or outside.

5. Use timers to turn on inside lights and radios to give the appearance that someone is home. Set timers to go on and off at different hours in different rooms.

6. Cut back shrubs and plants so that there is little cover for anyone who might want to hide outside of your home.

7. If you are home and someone is trying to break in, call 9-1-1. *Keep emergency phone numbers on every telephone instrument in the house.*

8. Never enter your home if anything seems unusual.

Traffic Committee Report

-- Debbie Nussbaum, Traffic Committee Chair

Mobility 2035

The City of LA's philosophy on how to manage traffic flow, speeds, and transportation is on course to do a 180 degree about-face. Rather than making it easier for people to drive around town, LA's new Mobility 2035 Plan adopted by the City Council will redesign streets to actually *move traffic slower than it currently moves*. Planners say these so-called "road diets" will make conditions safer for pedestrians and bicyclists by slowing traffic. WHPOA has joined other community organizations in asking planners to do more study on how the plan will affect actual traffic situations in a variety of neighborhoods.

Under the plan, traffic lanes will be eliminated or severely narrowed, inevitably increasing congestion during more of the day. The plan doesn't consider or evaluate what happens to safety on adjacent residential streets when frustrated drivers decide to cut through on residential side streets. For example, the *L.A. Times* (9/16/15; 9/30/15) and ABC News (10/1/15) report that Silver Lake, where bike lanes and road diets have been implemented on Rowena Ave., is now experiencing heavy cut-through traffic, "road rage" incidents and unsafe conditions on nearby residential streets.

While slowing car traffic, the sweeping new transportation overhaul would add hundreds of miles of new bike and bus-only lanes—hoping to make public transit faster than car speeds, and thus more desirable. The "elephant in the room" that planners and the City Council are ignoring is the fact that LA does not have a comprehensive, efficient public transportation system in place that would allow people to get where they need to go quickly and easily. The plan also calls for increasing housing density by rezoning neighborhoods near "transit hubs."

The Final Environmental Impact Report for the Mobility 2035 plan concluded that, "despite the adoption of feasible mitigation measures,

the MP 2035 would result in unavoidable significant adverse impacts that are not able to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level: transportation (circulation, neighborhood intrusion, congestion management plan and emergency access); noise and vibration (excessive noise from buses and permanent noise increase from buses); and biological resources (sensitive species/habitats, Wetlands)."

In addition, the Final EIR finds that "the plan's projects would double the percentage of major streets that are heavily congested during the evening rush hour." With these types of serious negative impacts, one must ask: is this a mobility plan or *an immobility plan* for the majority of LA's population?

Only two Councilmembers voted against the Mobility 2035 Plan—our own CD5 Councilmember Paul Koretz and CD1 Councilmember Gil Cedillo. The *L.A. Times* (7/17/14) reported that despite being an early advocate of bike lanes, Cedillo halted indefinitely the northbound and southbound bike lanes planned for a three-mile stretch of North Figueroa Street because the loss of a traffic lane would have an adverse impact on emergency response time in his district.

Westwood Blvd. (Le Conte to Pico) is on the list of streets to have bike lanes added, starting by narrowing travel lanes in Westwood Village itself. Sounds innocuous on the surface, but the protected bike lanes favored by the biking community would be positioned between the curb and street parking, and have significant design flaws for areas with heavy bus traffic, like Westwood Blvd. Bus loading and unloading would no longer be at the curb, but at a designated area in the parking lane. Bus riders will have to cross the bike lane to get to the curb and sidewalk. Additionally, traffic signal phases must be added to separate vehicles

intending to turn right from bicyclists traveling straight at intersections. Visibility is an issue. Also, bicyclists desiring to turn left must exit the protected bike lane. WHPOA has joined other Westwood community groups in requesting that alternate bike routes be evaluated.

The Wilshire BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) bus-only lane is now operational 7-9AM and 4-7PM. Work to extend the bus lane west of the 405 to the Santa Monica city border at Centinela is currently under construction.

Expo Light Rail Phase 2 to Santa Monica is slated to be operational sometime in 2016, and will carry passengers from Santa Monica to downtown LA in less than 50 minutes.

Subway Purple line extension is under way. Construction in the Wilshire/La Brea-La Cienega area is proceeding with a completion target of 2023. The Westwood subway station stop, to be built under Wilshire Blvd. between Westwood Blvd. and UCLA's parking Lot 36, west of Gayley, currently is scheduled to start construction in 2027 and continue to 2035.

Tunnel connecting the San Fernando Valley with the Westside under the Sepulveda Pass, to include heavy or light rail transit and vehicle toll lanes, has been proposed and has support among business and others in the Valley. So far, there's no funding source; public-private partnerships are being considered to cover the costs and operate the tunnel.

Changes in zoning around transit corridors are proposed to allow greater housing density and more mixed-use development. Metro/LADOT/city planners envision a future where people depend on mass transit and *walk the first and last mile* from home to public transportation, which would add an average of 40 minutes to such trips.

Sunset issue: The northbound 405 Sunset Blvd. Off-Ramp sign that reads "No Right On Red" is scheduled to be removed in response to WHPOA complaints, allowing right turns on red again.



They're Growing!

Thanks to our elected officials for supporting our sustained effort—spearheaded by WHPOA Traffic Chair Debbie Nussbaum—to persuade LADOT to permit Metro to plant trees and vines to soften the trench effect of the retaining and freeway walls north of Montana. Without WHPOA's efforts, no trees and few vines would have been planted either in this area, or south of Montana. However, we have yet to see trees promised for the area near Cashmere where Shell Oil removed mature trees to make room for construction staging, or on Sepulveda's west side with no soundwall. Metro needs to step up on this.



New in the Village...

Historic Restoration Among New Buildings

Thanks to Topa Management President Jim Brooks, this historic building at Kinross and Gayley Aves. in Westwood Village is being restored to its former glory. Completed in 1930 as the Shepherd-Mitchell Bldg., it was designed by architect Stiles O. Clements, who also designed the Geffen Playhouse building, the El Capitan Theater, and the Richfield Oil Building, among many others. Brooks and architects Nadel Associates worked closely with representatives of the Westwood Community Council on the project, which will be completed later this year. This project, and several others coming on line soon, represent a notable improvement in the commercial area. Adjacent to the building is a new building that will provide housing and retail, and across the street is another renovation in progress. And Plaza LaReina, a boutique luxury hotel near Hilgard and Tiverton, is getting final touches.

Great Streets Initiative Comes to the Village

The Mayor's program to build community by making neighborhood streets more attractive and safer has come to Westwood Village. WHPOA is among community organizations that have been invited to meet with program representatives to provide feedback. Some of the amenities proposed include improved crosswalks and pedestrian signals, landscaping and sidewalk repairs. Bicycle lanes are included in Great Streets programs, but are not essential to implementation of program amenities.

Free at Westwood Library and UCLA

WHPOA is among community organizations supporting a series of free Sunday afternoon concerts at Westwood Library. The concerts are among an rich variety of programs offered at the library for children and adults. The schedule is available on-line and at the Library on Glendon Ave. between Wilshire and Ohio. UCLA Museums and some departments also offer programs for children throughout the year. Check the Hammer Museum, the Fowler Museum, and on-line at www.ucla.edu.

UCLA Permitted to Sell Japanese Garden

UCLA has settled a lawsuit that sought to prevent the sale of the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel-Air. The settlement will allow the University to sell both the residence and Garden with conditions that preserve the Garden for 30 years.

**WESTWOOD HILLS
PROPERTY
OWNERS
ASSOCIATION**

Officers

Terry Tegnazian

President

Carole Magnuson

Vice President

Alvin Milder, Esq.

Vice President

Margot Barron, CPA

Treasurer

Sue Polep

Secretary

Directors

Aphrodite Banks

Judy Brown

Joe Hilberman

Wayne Hodges

Caroline Lee

Donald Lumpkin

Harry Macy

Debbie Nussbaum

Frank Ponder

Stephen Rohde, Esq.

Jane Schwab

Sherry West

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

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

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 **re-election** this year are: **Aphrodite Banks** (Veteran), **Joe Hilberman** (Bentley), **Wayne Hodges** (Thurston), **Caroline Lee** (Bentley), **Donald Lumpkin** (Montana), **Alvin Milder, Esq.** (Greenfield), **Frank Ponder** (Homedale), and **Jane Schwab** (Bronwood). **Sam Grayeli** (Veteran), **Eric Tung** (Bronwood), and **Alex Spataru** (Levering) are **proposed for election to a first term**. **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** (Montana) and **Stephen Rohde** (Montana) are serving the second year of a two-year term.

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following families who have joined the Westwood Hills Property Owners Association since October 2013: **Kenneth Firtel and Jana Posalski; Amy and Ben Weiss; Yassaman and Siamak Vaziri** (Barlock) **Jay Kwan and Elena Cho; Bethany and Adam Korn; Elizabeth Tsai and Andrew Fond** (Bronwood); **Kathy and Jean-Philippe Langevin** (Cashmere); **Andrew Brown and Kimberly Bertz Brown; Carmen Licea-Elliott and Pierce O'Donnell** (Dalkeith); **Nasim Ravari and Robby Rezaei; Cam Do and Viet Duong** (Denslow); **Joshua and Stefanie Tam; Nancy and Michael Cohen** (Homedale); **Jeryll Cohen; Jerry and Masami Torgerson** (S. Bentley); **Pedram Salehi and Arezoo Nasiry; Fatim and David Fields** (Sunset); **Mike Robinovick and Svetlana Kotova** (S. Thurston); **Robbie Brenner and Aaron Sanor** (Tilden); **Jason and Liana Eng; Julia and Rick Shuart; Clarence Braddock III and Janet Leader** (Veteran). We apologize if your name is missing. Please email westwoodhills-owner@yahogroups.com

Not a Member Yet?

WHPOA—the Westwood Hills Property Owners Association—is a 57-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**. Unlike other homeowner associations, there are no annual dues, just a one-time payment of \$100. For more information and an application, contact our Membership Chairperson at s.polep@gte.net . **To join the email network** email your name and address to westwoodhills-owner@yahogroups.com .