

Proposed Mansionization Ordinance Said to be Weak

Critics Call it Poorly Written

By Katharine Russ

Many industry experts say the building of over-sized homes on small lots is likely to be a long-term trend. According to a Harvard study, homes in the U.S. have grown from an average of approximately 1,200 square feet to over 2,000 square feet over the past 45 years forcing cities to restrict the size of homes developers want to build on razed lots.

After nearly three years, the baseline mansionization ordinance authored by Councilmember Tom LaBonge will move to full council for consideration absent some amendments that will probably be made in the interim.

On his website, LaBonge is quoted as having said, "Keeping the scale of a neighborhood intact has a lot to do with its value as a place to live. We must make sure that there's a balance between the existing structure and what is a fair development. This ordinance will help us do just that." But critics call the latest Baseline Mansionization Ordinance poorly written and obscure and say that the city makes the ordinance look good by comparing it to the current ordinances. However, the proposed ordinance, in contrast to other mansionization ordinances, is startlingly weak.

Shelley Wagers said, "R-1 zones are by far the biggest segment of residential zones that will be affected, and my neighborhood, Beverly Grove, is in a fairly typical R-1 zone. Lots average 6,000-sq. ft. Older homes average 2,000-sq. ft. The so-called mansionization ordinance will allow structures of 4,100-sq. ft. -- twice the size of the median older home. For example: Total lot size is 6,000-sq. ft. and base Floor Area Ratio (or FAR) is 50 percent; 6,000-sq. ft. (total lot) x 50 percent = 3,000-sq. ft.; 3,000 base x 20 percent bonus for second-story setback = 600-sq. ft. Allowance for double-height space = 100-sq. ft.; Uncounted attached garage = 400-sq. ft. Discounting

balconies, decks, loggias, and other spaces open on at least two sides, the total = 4,100- sq. ft."

Wagers, further stated, "Under this ordinance, LA will still allow houses that can't be built anywhere else. The City Council's Planning and Land Use Management Committee has already weakened an inadequate ordinance by adding a sham 'green' bonus and by making it easier to get a variance. Strong zoning benefits long-term property values across entire communities. Stable property values protect local governments from getting whipsawed on the revenue side."



Continuing, she added, "To name a few, cities such as Beverly Hills, Pasadena, and Culver City have much tougher restrictions and have maintained the balance between the larger homes and property values of existing homes. Cities such as Valley Glen, Sunland-Tujunga, Menlo Park, Del Mar, and Valley Village are demanding more protection against these boxy monstrosities citing loss of privacy, sunlight and the retention of the distinguishing characteristics of neighborhoods."

Dick Platkin, who retired after 20 years of service as Los Angeles Planning Director had much to say about the proposed Mansionization ordinance, using his city as an example. "Beverly Grove, because it has an ICO to control McMansions, is a major catalyst for the citywide ordinance, and is also an excellent case study to determine the economic impact of the proposed ordinance. What applies to us also applies to many other communities opposed to the mansionization. For the following reasons, we have concluded that mansionization, as well as any ordinance, such as the Baseline Ordinance, that allows further mansionization, will negatively effect our property values. Of course the speculators, their network of subcontractors, and their laborers, all of whom are part of the informal cash economy, will make a killing, but those of us who keep our homes as nest egg, will be economically hurt. This is because we, like many areas, are surrounded by other cities and neighborhoods which do not allow McMansions. As a result, Beverly-Grove became a magnet for them before the ICO (Interim Control Ordinance), during the ICO, and as far as we know, will still be a magnet if or when the proposed ordinance is adopted."

Elaine Brown, an activist in Sunland-Tujunga, said she has always opposed the Floor Area Ratio Interim Control Ordinance including the original ICO from the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council. "I brought up the probability that the City of Los Angeles, by adopting this ordinance, may be ignoring the dictates of the General Plan of the State of California which requires that the City of Los Angeles follow its General Plan. Therefore, if Los Angeles adopts this ordinance, it would be breaking state law." She based this conclusion on a statement by the City Attorney who cited a case that stated the following: "The State General, Section 65680, reads, "Virtually all local

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City Council Violates City Ordinance

By Katharine Russ

Los Angeles - For several years, Neighborhood Councils (NC) have been asking the Los Angeles City Council to support the creation of a Neighborhood Council File Index which would give NC's the ability submit a motion that is assigned a council file number. NC's would then have the ability to track its progress. The Los Angeles City Council voted to approve the motion on January 15, 2008, which requires three neighborhood councils to submit the file together. However, the Council also added an amendment that requires members of those Neighborhood Councils to complete a Form 700 (financial disclosure form) in order to submit a file.

The filing of the 700 Form was never discussed during the Education and Neighborhoods Committee (ENC) meetings chaired by Councilmember Richard Alarcon. The additional requirement proposed by Councilmember Greig Smith was unexpected. It was passed by the Council after a lengthy

discussion between council members and testimony from the community members. Neighborhood Councils supported the motion while (Valley Industry & Commerce Assoc. (VICA) and Chambers of Commerce representing business opposed the motion citing possible undue influence and corruption by Neighborhood Councils.

Unaware of the possibility of this amendment, Alarcon accused the Council of "blindsiding" him because that motion should have been discussed during the ENC Committee meetings. He said he did not agree with the motion which appears to punish Neighborhood Councils who want to open a file. Not only did the City Council "blind-side" Alarcon; they violated Chapter 1, Article 3 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code by passing that motion.

Section 2.20.1 provides "Exemption for Neighborhood Councils from Government Code Section 87300, requiring the Adoption and Promulgation of a Conflict of Interest

Code. Neighborhood Councils hereby are exempted pursuant to Los Angeles Administrative Code section 2.20.2, subsections (d) and (e) from the application of Government Code Section 87300, requiring the adoption and promulgation of the conflict of interest code. (Ordinance 176477 was passed at the Council of the City of Los Angeles on February 8, 2005)"

In a letter to Leeann Pelham, Executive Director of the City Ethics Commission, Councilmembers Janice Hahn and Wendy Greuel said, "The new responsibilities granted to Neighborhood Councils may change the terms of their current exemption from State law. In addition, before the amendment was adopted by the Council, the City Attorney warned that if the City were to rescind the ordinance (176477) which exempts neighborhood councils from some of the requirements of the State Conflict of Interest Code, then it would be precluded from

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COMMUNITY NEWS

A Sharp Music Method

Students from "A Sharp Music Method" (pictured above) brought holiday cheer to patients in local Convalescent Homes and Hospitals during the holiday season. The number of student volunteer performers, between ages four to adult, who came together to entertain patients throughout the foothills area, has been growing yearly. The students are happy because the patients thoroughly enjoy the holiday music and cheer that the shows bring, and look forward to seeing them because they always ask for more. For more information, contact "A Sharp Music Method", at 9915 Commerce Ave, Tujunga, 91042, (818) 951-5077.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast

By: M. Pichon

The San Fernando Valley African American Leadership Committee held their 1st Annual "Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast" to celebrate his designated Holiday on Monday, January 21, 2008, at the Boys and Girls Club in Pacoima. Robert Winn, President of Winn Consulting Group, was the Master of Ceremony.

Boy Scouts Participate in Community Clean-Up



Sunland-Tujunga -Boy Scouts from various troops participated in the Sunland-Tujunga Community Clean-Up that was focused on the Tujunga Wash on October 27th, 2007. The Clean-Up was sponsored by Councilmember Wendy Greuel, the Angeles National Golf Course and the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC). They were assisted by LAPD Senior Lead Officer Larry Martinez and Tomi Lyn Bowling, STNC Land Use Committee member and organizer of the event,

The boy scouts who were recognized at the STNC General Meeting on January 9th for their outstanding work are: Rays Tee, Jesse Sullivan, Andrew Schwartz, Dylan Share and Nick Hopwood.

Remember the "Big Red Cars"?



Little Landers Historical Society presented "The Ubiquitous Big Red Car Los Angeles' 1st Rapid Transit System" to a packed house at Bolton Hall Museum on Saturday, January 12th. Attendees looked back at the largest interurban electric railway system in the world known as Pacific Electric. The historic film took everyone back to the beginning of the Red Cars in LA in 1872 then on to the very end in 1961 when the last Red Car route was shut down. The film show why streets in many cities such as Brand Blvd. in Glendale and Hollywood Blvd. in Hollywood fell on to hard times after the Pacific Electric trains were pulled off the Streets, Those who rode the Big Red Cars remembered riding all day on Sundays for a Dollar.



Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is flanked by members of the San Fernando Valley African American Leadership Committee. (from L-R) Rev. John Lett, Rev. William T. Broadous, Rev. Rebecca S. Gull, Mayor Villaraigosa, Rev. Ida Dickason and Rev. M. L. Garrett.

The event's theme was "Good Health and Economic Power". Guest of Honor, Los Angeles City Mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, spoke of the important contributions Dr. King made to improve the country and said "all Angelinos owe a debt to Dr. King."

The special event was sponsored through the generous support and contributions of many businesses, individuals, and Churches throughout the San Fernando Valley.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council

By Michael O'Gara
Outreach Chairman

We are actively seeking candidates to run for Election. The Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council (SVANC) Election for new Board Members is Saturday, April 5, 2008, at John H. Francis Polytechnic High School, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

If you live, work, own property, or are a member of an organization within our SVANC boundaries, YOU CAN VOTE in our election, and YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO BE A MEMBER of our Board of Directors.

The SVANC boundaries include Zip Code 91352 and sections of 91504 and 91505 within the L.A. City limits, with the exception of:

- La Tuna Canyon, bordered on the North & South by the ridgeline, beginning at Highway I-210 to Sunland Blvd.
- Shadow Hills, from Wentworth on the West, to Sunland Blvd. on the South, to Stonehurst Ave. on the North, and a line from the intersection of Stonehurst Ave and Sunland Blvd. to the intersection of Wentworth Ave and Sheldon St.

Please consider becoming a Candidate for the SVANC, YOUR Neighborhood Council. You can help determine the future of our Sun Valley area community! The following seats are up for election: Residential Representative - 4 seats; Business/Property Representative - 4 seats; At-large Representative - 4 seats.

Candidate filing forms are available at Sun Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, 8133 "A", San Fernando Road, Sun Valley. Call (818) 768-2014 for business hours. Sun Valley Library, 7935 Vineland Blvd, Council office of Tony Cardenas, 9300 Laurel Canyon Blvd, Arleta Ca. Call (818) 778-4999, or (818) 756-7558. Filing forms must be delivered, faxed, or mailed to: Stephen Box, SVANC Election Administrator, 1738 North Canyon Dr., #10, Los Angeles, Ca. 90028, or, Fax (866) 390-1379. The deadline to file your application is March 6, 2008. For more information, call Mike O'Gara, (818) 767-6766

Hey, have you driven through San Fernando Road and Tuxford Street in our community during our recent rains? Wasn't it a pleasure not to have the road blocked from flooding during the rain? Thank you Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, County of Los Angeles, and the Sun Valley Watershed group for their years of hard work in funding, designing and installing their innovative system. The water is now routed underground to Sun Valley Park where it pours into an underground aquifer that is replenishing our water supply. Now we are able to retain millions of gallons of water during the rain seasons.

If you want to become involved in our community, attend our SVANC meetings held the second Tuesday of each month. Our next meeting is February 12, starting at 6:30 pm in the Villa Scalabrini Retirement Center, 10631 Vinedale, Sun Valley. For more information call (818) 767-6766.

Mission Hills Neighborhood Council

By Betty Ley
Corresponding Secretary

Council News: Our Mission Hills Neighborhood Council (MHNC) has many events scheduled in and for our community in the up coming months. Very importantly, we are preparing for the election of our new Board. We will be holding a Candidate Information Session February 21, at our MHNC Office, 10161 Sepulveda Blvd., at 7:00 pm. We encourage all stakeholders to consider running for an office. The filling deadline is February 28, and paperwork must be in by 5:00 pm. We will be holding a Candidate Forum on March 11, at San Jose Elementary School auditorium, 14928 Clymer St. in the auditorium, starting at 6:30 pm. Our MHNC Election Day is set for March 29, at the same school from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Please make time to participate by voting for the candidates of your choice. Our election procedures can be found on our website under "Resources" at www.mhnconline.org

During our General Meeting on February 12, our Beautification and Cultural Affairs Committee will be providing a presentation by the Palmer Group regarding the Las Lomas project at San Jose Elementary School auditorium, starting at 7:00 pm. Our Board Meeting will begin at 6:00 pm. If you are interested in Las Lomas, surveys can be found on our website. You can print it out and mail it to the MHNC, 10161 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills, CA 91345.

We will have another presentation by that same committee regarding open space for pocket parks in Mission Hills at our March 11 meeting. The presentation will start around 7:30 pm in San Jose Elementary School auditorium.

Community News: Manny Figueras has replaced Eric Sugay and Ackley Padilla as Mission Hills Representatives for Council District 7. He can be reached at (818) 756-9115.

Mission Hills Senior Lead Officer Angeles is out on maternity leave. Various officers are assigned on a rotating schedule to cover her responsibilities. They can be reached at (818) 838-9846 or call the Community Relations Office at the Mission Hills Station, at (818) 3838-9860.

In case you are wondering why construction is going on in Brand Park, they are building a 1,925-sq. ft. Community Building with an event capacity able to accommodate 160 people. It will be complete with a kitchen, restroom, storage room, gazebo and beautiful landscaping.

Repairs are being made to the Historical Fountain in Memory Garden at Brand Park, due to erosion of the cement. They are also putting in copper piping. By the time you read this according to Ken Novak, from the Dept. of Recreation and Parks, who met with the MHNC to explain the need for the repairs, said project repairs should have been completed.

Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council

By Jim Summers
President

Granada Hills South Neighborhood Council (GHSNC) held our monthly general meeting Thursday, January 10, in the Tulsa Street Elementary School auditorium. Mr. Davis from Granada Hills Charter High School gave a brief presentation regarding a possible joint venture with the L.A. City Department of Parks and Recreation, Sean Rivas, and Granada Hills Charter High School, to build a year-round swimming pool on their campus for students and our community. Although at a very preliminary stage, input from the community is sought. The Department of Parks and Recreation held a meeting to seek input from the community involving issues of concern on January 15, at the Granada Hills Recreation Center.

The GHSNC granted \$5,000 to improve the Granada Hills' Veterans Park at the southwest corner of Zelzah Ave. and Chatsworth Street. This is a community improvement project spearheaded by Rotary Club members Dr. Melnick and Don Carlson, also including many local groups participating in a joint community effort.

The GHSNC Board approved Public Safety's Jim Yoder and Outreach Committee's Mark Barrionuevo's request for our second community-wide mailing, which includes information regarding the next GHSNC sponsored CERT program, the 2008 Community Survey, and the GHSNC informational pamphlet. The mailings will go to approximately 10,000 stakeholders.

Planning and land use issues still carry the greatest weight on the agenda. The GHSNC encourages all developers to contact the GHSNC Planning and Land Use Committee's (PLUC) John Seletos at the initial stage of their project. The Board also approved the following Community Impact Statement, submitted by Maria Fisk and Jim Summers: "The GHSNC believes in enforcement of the current laws and ordinances, and, specifically, a more thorough review of hardship requirements in relation to variances and other entitlements, in both residential and commercial sectors within the boundaries of the GHSNC, and, in addition, to support other Neighborhood Councils in the same."

Other planning issues discussed were the revision of the Granada Hills-Knollwood Community Plan, the establishment of the GH Specific Plan's Design Review Board, and residential and commercial zone variance requests. An announcement was made of the upcoming appeal dates concerning Regency Centers' proposed Kohls overbuilding project with the L.A. City Planning and Management Committee which is included on the agenda for L.A. City Council on February 6, at 10:00 am.

GHSNC General Meetings are held at the Tulsa St. Elementary School at 10900 Havenhurst Ave., GH, the second Tuesday of each month, starting time 7:00 pm. Visit our website: www.GHSNC.org or call (818) 321-6259 for more information.

Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council

By Royan Herman
Vice President, Outreach

There is a major push going on in the horse keeping communities La Tuna Canyon, Lake View Terrace and Shadows Hills, served by the Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council (FTDNC), to license 2,000 horses of the estimated 4,000 to 5,000 unlicensed horses in the immediate area. Adding the 2,000 to approximately 1,500 presently licensed horses will give the horse communities much needed visibility. If you have a horse and it's not registered, please don't delay, we need your count to give us a stronger voice in regarding equine matters in City Hall.

Our Neighborhood Council is excited. We now have our long awaited office. How it will be staffed and what hours it will be opened is yet to be determined. However, we expect to be posting that information in the near future. We are still in the process of setting up. We are located in the middle of our district boundaries at 9747 Wheatland Ave., in Shadow Hills. Our phone number is (818) 353-2000.

Our election of new Board Members is coming up on April 5. It is going to be held in our new office at the previously mentioned new address, for the first time. Are you interested in advocating for stakeholder concerns in La Tuna Canyon, Lake View Terrace and Shadow Hills regarding Land use, planning, and development? Also, do you have a desire to preserve our rural, recreational, ethnically diverse, and environmentally sensitive area? Then this is the organization you will want to volunteer for. We encourage and welcome you. So, please, give full consideration to becoming a Candidate. The FTDNC comprises one of the four remaining horse keeping areas within the entire city of Los Angeles, and it is important to keep the nature of our area as an important low-density oasis within the city limits. The FTDNC not only outreaches to our communities and keeps them informed on issues, but also advises the city on matters regarding Public Services, Zoning and Land Use, Public Safety, Scenic & Historic Preservation, etc. The Candidate filing period ends March 6. Call our office at (818) 353-2000 for more information regarding locations for application pick up sites.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Sunland – Tujunga Neighborhood Council

It is "STNC Election Season". If you ever thought about running for a neighborhood council board position, this is the time to check it out. Any day now, you will see our Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council News" in your mail box. In it you will find details on how to run for office as well as more Sunland-Tujunga news. This year we are expanding our outreach efforts by joining with Sun Valley Area and Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Councils. All three councils will hold elections on April 5th in their respective boundaries. See the ad on page 12 for more info on how you can become a candidate and vote on April 5th.

The Verdugo Hills Golf Course Notice of Preparation deadline has passed. We hear that hundreds of letters have been received by the City for this process. It will be several months before we see the Draft Environmental Impact Report. In the meantime, efforts to preserve VHGC and save the site from development are still being pursued with the City. Stay involved by visiting the STNC web site and savethegolfcourse.org.

Katie Peterson, Planning Assistant at the City's Community Planning Bureau for the Sunland-Tujunga-Lakeview Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon Community Plan -- our Community Plan, has begun the land use survey. Last week she was on Commerce Avenue in Tujunga. Parcel by parcel, Katie and her assistants will be taking notes on what is actually on site currently in our neighborhoods. If you see her, be sure to say hello. Community meetings will begin soon. To stay in touch with this process, visit the STNC web site or call the STNC office. Because Katie will be dedicated full time to our Community Plan, Edward Sanderson at City Planning will be our Foothill Blvd. Corridor Specific Plan contact. We look forward to meeting him at a DAC and/or STNC meeting soon.

Education rep, Lydia Grant has met with Vons staff, teachers and community members to discuss theft problems at the store. Look for some new systems and staffing to overcome this problem so the community can enjoy our community's grocery store, Vons. They are also working on changing the existing bus stop to a different location to cut down on safety issues for kids walking home from school and curtail loitering.

Save the date -- March 9 ---STNC meeting where you will "Meet the Candidates". This will also be a night of community appreciation.

I want to invite you to the President's Page on the STNC web site at www.stnc.org. This is a place where I write about the most current information coming through the "information pipeline" for our community. Check it out and check back often!

Benefit for San Fernando Ranger Held



By Katharine Russ

Lake View Terrace - Dozens of people gathered for an afternoon of fun, food, and music at a Chili Cook-off hosted by the San Fernando Rangers, a volunteer equestrian group dedicated to helping disabled children, to raise needed funds for the family of Norman Lucier. Lucier who served on the Board of the Rangers for five years was proud to be a part of the organization. The event was held on January 13, 2008 at Ranger Park and featured auction items, raffles, and entertainment.

Lucier and his new wife, Julie, were married only six months when Lucier died from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Medical bills from his accident are staggering and the Sunday event was to help raise over \$8300.00 to defray some of those costs.

The Sidekicks, the women's auxiliary for the San Fernando Rangers, were also on-hand support the event. Laurel Carpenter, President of the Sidekicks, said, "Norman was always a happy person and he loved life." Others say, Lucier was dedicated to the Rangers and always willing to help with anything.

Country Singer Debra Lee and her band, "Trigger Happy", donated their time and performed from 1:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m. Lee auctioned off the band as a prize for another afternoon of fun to a lucky winner.

A Memorial Service to commemorate his life was held on Sunday, January 20, 2008. Donations may be sent to San Fernando Rangers, PO Box 4298, Sunland, CA 92014, to help support their effort.

katharine.russ@charter.net

Little Landers Historical Society Officers Installed



Councilwoman Wendy Greuel with son Thomas presents certificate to Jackie Karvis

Councilmember Wendy Greuel, assisted by her son Thomas and Deputy Jackie Keene, installed the new officers of the Little Landers Historical Society during their first 2008 meeting. Officers for 2007 were awarded Certificates of Appreciation for their outstanding citizenship and for enhancing community betterment. The new Board of Directors consists of Lloyd Hitt, President, Irene Munroe, Membership Chair, Harry & Barbara Hughes, Ways and Means Chair, Paul Armbruster, Program Chair, John Gustafson, Treasurer, Sheryl Smith, Recording Secretary, and Shirley Neuenswander, Corresponding Secretary. Their 2007 Board of Directors were thanked for a year of success and congratulated.

Wendy was awarded the Little Landers Flagpole Award by the Society for the support she and her staff have given them and the community over the years. The award is made-up of a slice of wood taken from the 1914 flagpole that was removed because of termite and dry-rot problems during the Prop K renovation in the park. Replacement of the historic 40' flagpole has been difficult but Wendy and her staff have continued to press City Services to replace the pole with a wooden 40' pole because of its historic value as part of the Bolton Hall historic site. Recent vital issues they sited her support on included: preservation of Weatherwolde Castle, Stonehurst neighborhood preservation, Prop K for Little Landers Park, concerts and movies in the park and fencing of their local cemetery.

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P.O. Box 674, Tujunga Ca 91043

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Special Recognition to Elaine Brown, Cindy Cleghorn, Tina Cameron, Peter DiNova, Erna Royal, Bobby Royal, Mark Seigel

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Protecting our Neighborhoods



*Councilmember
Wendy Greuel*

I had the opportunity, at the dawn of the New Year, to swear in the new officers at Little Landers Historical Society. It is always an honor to partner with an organization so essential to the character and integrity of our

community. I hope all our critical community organizations will partner with me in our new campaign to enhance our neighborhoods.

We are kicking off a major effort to protect the pristine, rural character of our hillside communities. Our first salvo was "Graffiti Reporting Day" on Saturday, January 26th/ Thank you for joining us to report graffiti and illegal dumping hotspots within our neighborhood.!

I've also partnered with LAPD and LAUSD to sponsor a Public Safety town hall meeting in our community on Thursday, February 28, 6:30 p.m. at All Nations Church. I will outline the efforts we are mak-

ing to improve public safety and neighborhood protection across Council District 2. In addition, I have asked representatives from all our City departments to attend and provide information about the resources available to help make neighborhoods cleaner, safer and a better place in which to live. Community participation is critical to this effort. As our Police Chief reminds us, the safest neighborhoods are the most engaged neighborhoods.

For more information, please contact my office at (818) 352-3287. Join us in our effort to keep the North Valley safe.

LAPD Financial Disclosure Requirement on Hold

L.A. City Council Enacts Section 245 Jurisdiction

By Katharine Russ

On Thursday, January 24, the Los Angeles City Council voted to assert Section 245 jurisdiction, under of the Los Angeles City Charter, over action taken by the Board of Police Commissioners relative to their proposed Financial Disclosure Program and the draft Special Order passed on December 20, 2007. Community members and representatives of Neighborhood Councils from North Hollywood, Panorama City, Sunland-Tujunga and Van Nuys were also present to support the Motion presented by Councilmember Jack Weiss, to have the City Council assert jurisdiction over the Commission in order to further review Commission's proposed requirements.

The Federal Consent Decree (paragraph 132) specifically states "all LAPD officers and employees handling valuable cash and contraband were subject to financial disclosure." Yet, the order fails to include officers above the rank of lieutenant and other special units, which may also handle cash, contraband, or other valuables. Although, Paragraph 132 of the Consent Decree does call for financial disclosure, the City Attorney agrees that it did not call for disclosure to the extent or procedures passed by the Police Commission.

The Special order passed last December called for sworn employees of the rank of lieutenant or below, assigned to the Gang Impact Team (GIT), Gang Enforcement Detail (GED), Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) unit, Narcotics Division (ND), and Narcotics Enforcement Detail (NED) and employees assigned or loaned to such details, to complete Confidential Financial Disclosure Face Sheet, Form 01.74.00. They must also complete

a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, Form 01.74.01 listing all financial information, including all sources of income, all business relationships and all assets, to disclose all debts, including credit cards, loans, mortgages, judgments, and vehicle loans. Additionally, it requires the same of any person in partnership with the officer or anyone with any joint liability to include wives children or other family members.

An Investigator/Auditor would be assigned to evaluate any unexplained wealth, debt to income ratio, past due accounts and bankruptcies, and, if necessary, an Officer must provide a self-generated credit report from a list of Department approved agencies.

Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley, in his letter of Jan. 17, 2007, outlined existing oversight of LAPD: Internal Affairs, the Police Commission, the Inspector General, the Justice System, Integrity Division of the District Attorney's Office, the District Attorney Rollout Team, law enforcement criminality referral protocols, the Grand Jury, the media, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the Civil Rights Plaintiffs' Bar, and the watchful monitoring, as well as the basic honesty of the vast majority of police officers who are supposed to insure that the officers themselves meet required standards of performance and integrity.

Cooley cited his concern over the proposed disclosures saying, "It would unnecessarily invade family privacy and create risks of identity theft and other mischief, representing a disincentive for the best and brightest to apply for or remain in assignments that would make them subject to the disclosures. The public safety implications of this fact cause us great concern."

Cooley predicted that, "Recent successes in reducing serious crimes in Los Angeles would be

LAPD - *Continued from cover*

quickly reversed, and a dangerous resurgence of gang and drug crimes in the areas served by LAPD would occur."

Police Chief William Bratton believes that the policy is the minimum of what the federal judge would accept and doubted that the Council would be able to draft a policy that would address alternatives acceptable to the judge.

Community Activist David Hernandez said, "The Order submitted by the Police Chief and passed by the Police Commission contradicts what the Police Chief and members of the Commission have been saying, in public, about the ability of the officers to transfer out of the units. The gang units have a three-year term and the officer can apply for two more years in the unit after the third term. There are 78 officers who will be at the end of their third term in 2008 and will be required to submit to the Financial Disclosure. There are 70 officers who will fall into that category in 2009. That means a 45% reduction in the next two years. This does not count those retiring or injured on the job. It is not the Consent Decree's Financial Disclosure that is being challenged; it is the Order passed by the Police Commission. What was presented by Bratton and voted by the police commission was their own creation, not in the Consent Decree."

The Los Angeles Police Protective League filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles County Superior Court seeking an immediate injunction against the disclosures, contending that they violate state laws and collective bargaining rules that protect officers' privacy rights.

The City Council referred the Commission's Proposal back to the Council's Safety Committee. After their review, it will come before the full City Council in early February with their recommendation.

katharine.russ@charter.net

Safer Cities Initiative



*By Captain Jorge Villegas
Commanding Officer
LAPD Mission Hills Station*

The Safer Cities Initiative (SCI) program has been in existence here in Mission Area for a little over two years now. This program was created in Mission Area to address quality of life issues in the North Hills/Panorama

City communities. This region historically has been plagued by illegal activities such as street gangs, narcotics sales and violent crimes such as robberies, burglaries, and homicides, in addition to a multitude of property crimes. Unfortunately, this has led to an overall decline in the quality of life for the residents that live and work in these communities.

Public entities such as the City Attorney, the local

Council Office and a host of other City agencies have been working in collaboration with the Mayor's Office. Numerous resources have been dedicated to the area to assist in abating the crime and quality of life issues. Initially, Mission Area was "bonused" eight officers to combat crime in this area. Although there has been much success in crime reduction and quality of life improvement since the SCI's inception here in Mission, there was still an increase in Part I crimes when comparing 2006 to 2007 statistics. Recognizing a need to further commit resources to the SCI area, the number of officers deployed in the Safer Cities of Mission Area increased to a total of fifty officers, five supervisors and one lieutenant. This included a bicycle patrol contingency, as well as narcotics enforcement efforts to combat the blatant illegal narcotic drug sales. The additional resources allowed for a 7-day a week deployment in the Safer Cities Initiative area to work with the Community to address crime and quality of life issues.

The results have been overwhelmingly positive. When taking a look at violent crime (homicides,

rapes, robbery, and assaults), crime has dropped 11% compared to last year to date. There has been a 44% decrease in violent crime in the fourth quarter. Similar success has been seen in the number of arrests in 2007. There has been a 28% increase in arrests.

The long-range objective of the Safer Cities Initiative will be to sustain crime reduction efforts, continue to build Community confidence regarding the fear of crime and continually work to improve the quality of life issues that effect the Safer Cities Initiative community. In an effort to accomplish this, City Councilmember Richard Alarcon is working toward the funding of a wireless camera system that will be a tremendously effective crime-fighting tool.

I would like to extend a sincere appreciation to the Community for partnering with the LAPD's Mission Area personnel to succeed in improving the quality of life in the North Hills/Panorama City area. We have come a long way in this endeavor, working hand in hand with the Community. Let's stay on the road to success because working together is the only way we can be successful.

Mark YOUR Calendar

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Arl - Arleta, G.H. - Granada Hills, K.C. - Kagel Canyon, LA - Los Angeles, LVT - Lake View Terrace, LTC - La Tuna Canyon, M.H. - Mission Hills, NR - Northridge, NVCH - North Valley City Hall, Pac - Pacoima, S-T - Sunland-Tujunga, S.V. - Sun Valley, Syl - Sylmar, V.N. - Van Nuys, PC - Panorama City

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Saturday, Feb. 2

Zero Waste
Citywide Conference
L.A. Convention Center
Cherry & 12th St, LA
8:30 am - 3 pm

Sunday, Feb. 3

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Monday, Feb. 4

STNC-DAC (Land Use)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

Tuesday, Feb. 5

VOTE in the CA
Primary Election

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

SVF Art Club
Featuring David Gallup
Encino Comm. Center
4935 Balboa, Encino
\$6 6:30 pm 342-4601

Wednesday, Feb. 6

Recreation & Parks Needs Assessment Workshop
Sunland Recreation Center
8651 Foothill Bl., Sunland
6:30 pm

Thursday, Feb. 7

Kagel Canyon Civic Assoc
Dexter Park
7 pm

Elks Lodge #2098
11037 Commerce, S-T
6:30 pm 352-2098

Sylmar Women's Club
Odyssey Restaurant
15600 Odyssey Dr. M.H.
11:30 am 833-8033

Panorama Ciy NC
Land Use Comm
Mission Community Hospital
14860 Roscoe, PC
6:30 pm 785-9355

L.A. Rec. & Park Meet.
Sunland Park
8651 Sunland, S-T
6:30

Sunday, Feb. 10

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Health Fair
Our Lady of Piece
15444 Nordhoff, N. Hills
8 am-3 pm 894-1176

Tuesday, Feb. 12

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Mission Hills NC
General Meeting
"Las Lomas-Dan Palmer"
San Jose Elem.
School
14928 Clymer St.
MH
7 pm

Northridge West N/C
Beckford Elementary
7 pm

Sun Valley Area NC
Villa Scalabrini Center
10631 Vinedale,SV
6:330 pm 767-6766

Wednesday, Feb. 13

Foothill Optimist
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

STNC Candidate Info & Gen.Meeting
Mt. Gleason Middle School;
10965 Mt Gleason, S-T
6:30 pm 951-7411

Granada Hills South N/C
Granada Hills Rec Center
16730 Chatsworth St. GH
7-8:30 pm

Thursday, Feb. 14

Community Police
Advisory Board (CPAB)
Villa Scallabrini, SV
6 pm 756-8866

S-T Lions
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:30 pm

Saturday, Feb. 16

STNC-Outreach Comm.
Joselitos West
7308 Foothill, S-T
1 pm 951-7411

Sunday, Feb. 17

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Monday Feb. 18

Mission Hills NC
Beautification &
Cultural Affairs Comm.
10161 Sepulveda, MH
6:30

Sun Valley Area NC
General Meeting
Villa Scalabrini Ret. Home
10631 Vinedale, SV
6:30 pm 767-2024

4H Meeting
Shadow Hills Pres. Church
Sunland, SH
7 pm 352-0864

San Fernando Pioneer
Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, Syl
9 am - 12 pm 365-5860

Arleta NC
Beachy Elementary School
9757 Beachy,ArI
6:30 [pm 897-9122

Wednesday, Feb. 20

Foothill Optimist
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Wednesday, Feb. 20

Stonehurst HPOZ Workshop
Stonehurst Recreation Center
9901 Dronfield, SV
6 - 8 pm

Thursday, Feb. 21

Battalions 12 & 15
CERT Community Meeting
Shepherd of the Hills
19700 Rinaldi, Porter Ranch
7 - 8:30 pm

Candidate Info. Session
Mission Hills NC
10161 Sepulveda, MH
1:30 pm

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JimSummers.com
EscapeToBigBear.com
HorsePropertyUSA.com

Community Websites:
OGHRG.org, GHSNC.org,
GranadaHillsHistory.com

Mark YOUR Calendar

STNC Safety Commit.
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
6 pm 951-7411

S-T SERVS
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 563-1962\

Foothill Trails District NC
General Meeting
Village Christian Church
8930 Village Ave., LTC
7 pm

Saturday, Feb. 23

Health Fair
Playa del Valle
8610 Van Nuys, P.C.
10 am 3 pm 892-7816

Mission Hills NC
Outreach/Youth Outreach
10161 Sepulveda, MH
2 pm

SNC Land Use
Sylmar NC Office
13515 _ Hubbard, Syl
3:30 pm

Annual Monte Carlo Night
S-T C of C & Elks Lodge
10137 Commerce S-T
\$20 in advance/\$25 @ door
8-10 pm 352-4433

Sunday, Feb. 24

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420s

Monday, Feb. 25

STNC-DAC (Land Use)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

Tuesday, Feb. 26

Bolton Hall Museum
Presents "Sports Appeal"
10110 Commerce, S-T
Docent Tours
1-4 pm 352-3420

Wednesday, Feb 27

Foothill Optimist
Fairways Restaurant
Hansen Dam Rec Center
10400 Glenoaks, Pac
6:30 pm

Rotary Club
Coco's Restaurant
10521 Sunland, S-T
7 pm 951-5299

Panarama City NC
Knob Hill Bank. Center
8229 Van Nuys, VN
5:30 pm 785-9355

San Fernando Pioneer Memorial Cemetery
Foothill & Bledsoe, Syl
9 am - 12 pm 365-5860

L.A.'s Bicycle Master
Plan Update - Room 1B
Braude Consituent Center
6262 Van Nuys, VN
6:30-8:30 pm 213-978-1379

Thursday, Feb. 28

S-T Lions
Joselitos Restaurant
7308 Foothill, S-T
6:30 pm

Wendy's Public Safety thru
Neighborhood Empowerment
All Nations Church
10000 Foothill, LVT
6:30-8:30 pm 352-3287

Panarama City NC
Gen. Meeting
Mission Community Hospital
14860 Rosco Blvd, PC
6:30 pm 785-9355

Sylmar NC Genral Meet.
Hubbard Street School
13325 Hubbard St., Syl
6:30pm

Friday, February 29

Stonehurst HPOZ Hearing
Panning Commission
Marvin Braude Center
6262 Van Nuys Blvd, VN

Saturday, March 1

Capt. Stacy Gerlick
CPR & 1st Aid Class
S-T Elks Lodge #2098
10137 Commerce, S-T
8 - 12 am 563-1962

Thursday, March 6

STNC Candidate Filing Deadline
5:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 8

Community Blood Drive
S-T Elks Lodge 2098
10137 Commerce, S-T
352-2098

Panorama City NC
Board Election
Panorama Presbyterian Ch.
1421 Roscoe , PC
10 am - 7 pm 785-9365

Monady, March 10

STNC-DAC (Land Use)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

Tuesday, March 11

Candidate Forum
Mission Hills NC
San Jose Elem. School
14928 Clymer, MH
6:30 pm

Mission Hills NC
Presentation on Pocket Parks
San Jose Elem. School
14928 Clymer, MH
6:30 pm

Wednesday, March 12

STNC Monthly Meeting
Mt. Gleason Middle School
10965 Mt. Gleason Ave, Sunland
7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 24

STNC-DAC (Land Use)
NV City Hall
7747 Foothill, S-T
7 pm 951-7411

April 5, 12, 19
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
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Preparedness Training
Sunland Recreation
Center
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Info: 951-7411

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SOUND OFF

Las Lomas Given New Life by Councilmember Alarcon

Commentary by Bart Reed

Progress in gaining approvals for Las Lomas, a controversial 5,553 home development located in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County in the Newhall Pass, just west of the frequently tangled I-5 / 14 interchange has taken a number of disturbing turns recently. The project has been dormant for several years and has gained few, if any, neighborhood or political supporters. However, money is buying hired guns to provide support, including the Building Trades, Valley Industry and Commerce Association, the Central City Association and approximately 11 lobbyists and their attorneys.

A change occurred when Richard Alarcón was elected to the Los Angeles City Council in the spring of 2007. Councilmember Alarcón had a perfect "green" record with the Sierra Club up to this point. However, at a recent meeting, members of the Angeles Chapter Political Committee met with Alarcón, and he was asked flat out to oppose the project. He took the position that he doesn't approve the project "as proposed" and wants the developer to process his entitlements so that the project can be better defined for further review.

Alarcón proceeded to introduce an L.A. City Council motion to allow for a supplemental fee agreement to enable the developer, Las Lomas Land Company, to move the project forward.

If enacted it will leapfrog the project past the current backlog in the City Planning Dept. plus send signals to staff that the project has been embraced. The Planning Dept. is short of staff, so projects in line would be skipped over to pay special attention to Las Lomas. However, this project is not within L.A. City boundaries, but actually situated in the Santa Clarita Valley in unincorporated L.A. County who are both in opposition to the project.

County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich says the Las Lomas property is legally entitled to approximately 200 to 247

dwelling units under the L.A. County General Plan and lies within a Significant Ecological Area. Slopes in excess of 50% cover more than one half of the property and the project, which is proposed for 5,553 dwellings plus commercial, industrial and retail uses, is well in excess of what the County would allow.

The role of the City of L.A. is to review, not process an EIR. Concerned citizens in Los Angeles are asked to take action by addressing issues, developer Dan S. Palmer, Jr. has been raising by attending the City Budget and Finance Committee meeting Monday, February 4, 2008, at 6:00 pm, at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 9501 Balboa Blvd., Northridge. Visit their website: stnicholasnorthridge.org or call 818-886-4040 for more information. The Sylmar Civic Association is also holding a Community Forum regarding Las Lomas on Monday, February 25, 7:30 pm at Sylmar High School, 13050 Borden Ave., Sylmar, Call 818-833-3700 for more information.

You can also call, write, or e-mail your City Councilmember to request that they oppose this motion. Demand that they reject any Las Lomas processing by the City and to leave the Las Lomas project in L.A. County, where significant opposition to the project may possibly bring it to a standstill. Hopefully that will protect the Rim of the Valley Wildlife Corridor Act, signed on Dec. 26, 2007, by President Bush. Las Lomas would block that wildlife corridor. Concerned volunteers are also needed to attend the City Council meeting, when this item comes up in February.

Bart Reed is Executive Director of the Transit Coalition, a Sylmar based nonprofit dealing with transportation, planning and land use issues and is a member of the Angeles Chapter Sierra Club Transportation Committee. www.stoplaslomas.com

They're Paving Over Paradise

Paradise....a small 3-par neighborhood golf course and driving range nestled in the foothills of the valley frequented by local residents. The parking lot... ticky-tack houses built by profit-seeking developers. Literally..."you don't know what you got 'till it's gone. Developer greed vs. small town quality of life. Going, going, gone. It's sad we are so seduced by money at the expense of quality of life. "When will they ever learn?"

Jerry Houser
La Crescenta

Tax Relief for Mortgage Defaults

By Tomi Lyn Bowling

President Bush has offered some relief to persons who have lost, or are losing, their homes to foreclosure. Previously, someone who lost his or her home through foreclosure, sold it for less than was owed, or signed the deed to the home over to the lender in lieu of foreclosure. The "home owner" was then taxed on the loss.

In an effort to ease the pain, the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act has now been signed into law. This new law removes the previous concern over being taxed for the loss by those already facing loss of their home. This shortfall will no longer be viewed as taxable gain. This news came just in time for the Christmas season and is welcome news for many in the US. People who are facing difficult economic times now will at least know that they are not going to be taxed on top of, what for most, had already been a traumatic loss.

Mansionization – from cover

decisions affecting land use and development must be consistent with the general plan."

Browne added that, "The Los Angeles General Plan Policies 3.5.2, 'Require that new development in single-family neighborhoods maintains its predominant and distinguishing characteristics such as property setbacks and building scale.'"

"The proposed ordinance reduces the ratio of square feet to lot size, reducing the opportunity of supersizing a single family home. But it also will allow for hardship cases and has flexibility for homeowners living in neighborhoods with unique zoning parameters," according to LaBonge.

He is, also, calling for greater restrictions for homes built in hillside areas pending the final wording of the anti-mansionization ordinance now under consideration.



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THIS & THAT

Carrick's Journey -Part Five

By Tomi Lyn Bowling

Drake was fast asleep when the sun rose and began to lighten the deep woods in the early morning hours. There was a light mist floating in between the trees in sections like it was low flying clouds grazing the sides of the tall trees. A drop of water hit his face and he began to stir. He rose up to a sitting position to find a jolly old bearded man leaning over him. The man was laughing with a toothless grin that you could barely see through his scruffy and ragged mustache and beard. The man was dirty and smelled quite foul. Drake pinched his nose and grumbled "who are you?" to the old man as he tried to duck away from the foul smelling man. As the man dried his hands of the water he'd been dropping on Drake's head he replied, "My name is Whiskers and who be you young whipper snapper?" Drake saw friendliness in his eyes. The man had smiling eyes. Drake felt he had found a, very needed friend.



Whiskers had already put together a small fire, a few feet away, and had been cooking some eggs he'd pulled out of a local nest. It was not much food but Drake was so hungry that it seemed like a gourmet meal. Drake could hardly contain himself from staring at the feast. Whiskers seem to laugh a lot as he chatted and walked back to the fire. He also rocked back and forth when he walked; it looked quite funny, like a duck's waddle. He was not very tall, was hunched over and a funny looking old man, except for the huge rifle he had that was leaning on a nearby tree. There was a serious side to Whiskers and Drake was about to experience that.

An odd humming started up and Whiskers dropped the pan - those yummy eggs and all went crashing down - and he grabbed the rifle, shoved Drake down beneath a stone near the tree all in one motion. He had moved like lightening. Drake was shocked. Whiskers began trying to explain what was going on.... to be continued.

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bank must agree to sell the house for less than is owed.

Consultations are completely free. Assistance, such as budget help, ideas to help you out of the dilemma, advice on financial aids, such as social security, financial seminars, ethics situations and more may also be included. Their primary goal is to save the house from foreclosure!

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City Council – from cover

passing such a law again.” Both Council members were asking for advice on the adopted amendment and seeking to modify it in order to make it more friendly and avoid reductions in community participation.

Nick Velasquez, Director of Communications, in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office said, “I wanted to impart to you the fact that we expect that the final report, in response to this letter, will recommend any necessary ordinance changes to harmonize existing laws/ policies with this new policy.”

Cindy Cleghorn, President of the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) and a member of the Neighborhood Council Review Commission, who recommended that NC's open Council Index Files, said, “I've already received a number of calls and inquiries regarding the disclosure vote. The perception from those inquires is, if Form 700 is required, all personal financial information will become public. The idea of unloading all personal financial information and privacy in a time when identity theft is high is discouraging and burdensome. Also, it will become an unnecessary additional bureaucratic burden, especially because volunteer NC's can not legislate, whereas Commissioners do. We still will only be able to advise, and track our motions for follow-up, only we will now have an assigned Council file index number. Therefore, the comparison between the NC's and Commissioners, as made by Councilmembers during the Council Meeting, is unjustified. The burden to complete the Form 700, plus the chance of error or inaccuracy, will open a huge can of worms for stakeholders who just want to make their communities better and to advise the City of their communities needs and ideas.” Cleghorn added, “Perhaps in the "conflict of interest" area and defining conflict, The Dept. of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) could help with the training and call upon the Ethics Department to assist.”

Mary Benson, Vice President of Sun Valley Neighborhood Council, says “Rather than follow the existing ordinances, City Council is now directing the City Attorney to change a series of laws to accommodate their actions. Financial disclosure will shut down Neighborhood Councils within three years, or sooner in neighborhood councils with significant minority populations.” katharine.russ@charter.net

Emily Rose Hober



1914-2007

Emily Rose Hober of Westlake Village, died December 22, 2007. Emily was born in Meacham, Saskatchewan Canada. May 14, 1914, the child of John Robert Dolphin and Mabel

Ethel Strickland Dolphin. She married Oric Scott Hober in 1932 and soon after became a naturalized American citizen.

Her life has been one of beautiful service to others, whether in her home, helping her family or volunteering in various organizations. She was affiliated with the Order of Eastern Star in her younger years, then was initiated into Chapter DJ, P.E.O., Glendale in 1957 and has been a member of four chapters, one in Lompoc, California, in Laguna Hills Leisure World, and most recently, Chapter TS, Westlake Village. She received her 50 year pin last fall.

Her children are Marlene Ann Hitt and Robert Scott Hober. She leaves five grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

Emily has been well known as a warm and loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, excellent friend and hostess. She has left a moral legacy as well as a material one. Her many sewn, knitted and crocheted items are treasures as is her paintings.

A celebration of her life was held at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Westlake Village January 5, 2008.

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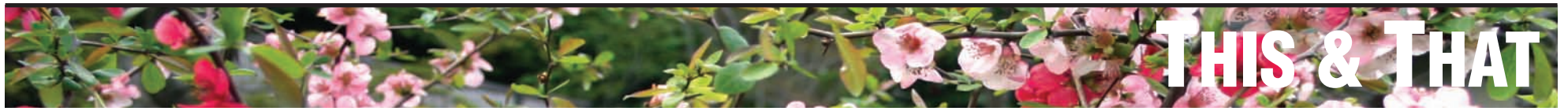


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Permits for Repair Issued to Home Depot

Los Angeles - On Wednesday, January 30, Council District 2 was informed by the Department of Building and Safety and the Department of City Planning that all requirements for the issuance of the three Home Depot "Lock Down" permits have been met and that the permits would most likely be issued the following day. The permits are for the purpose of putting the building in "safe mode."

In his email to both the Sunland-Tujunga NC and the "No to Home Depot" group. Planning Deputy for Councilmember Wendy Greuel said, "As you may recall, Home Depot requested the 'Lock Down' permits in order to protect the building while its lawsuit against the City was pending. With that in mind, we requested that the departments review the applications to assure that only the minimum security-related work would be permitted at the former K-Mart building and to make sure that such work did not advance the project in any way."

"We are informed by the departments that they are allowing only the bare minimum security work including 1) weather-proofing work to protect the building against water and mold damage, 2) minimal interior ventilation to prevent moisture build up, and 3) electrical work necessary to support the ventilation equipment, fire sprinklers and security lighting. Once the 'Lock Down' permits are issued, we expect that work will begin at the site within a few days."

According to Joe Barrett, head of "No to Home Depot in Sunland-Tujunga", "we will be closely monitoring Home Depot's activities on the site to insure they do not over step their bounds and stay in compliance with their permits."

What Will Wendy Do?

By Elaine Brown

Tucked away in the Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon Community Plan are 23 Footnotes that deal with many details that apply to the Community Plan. Footnote #6 is a powerful directive available to Los Angeles City Councilmember Wendy Greuel that would allow her to save two significant properties highly worth being redesignated as open space.

Footnote #6 reads, "Desirable Open Space is land which possesses open space in characteristics which should be protected and where additional development controls such as proposed in the Open Space Plan are needed to conserve such characteristics. These lands may be either publicly or privately owned."

There has been an extensive effort to save a privately owned, RA- zoned, 4 3/4-acre property located at the southeast corner of Oro Vista and Big Tujunga Canyon Road in Sunland for four years. This property is sensitive wetland that sits south of Big Tujunga Canyon Road a few feet from the Big Tujunga Wash which is traveled by numerous wildlife who share their trails with humans for hiking and biking. The wildlife corridor passes under Oro Vista on its way west via a culvert. If development were allowed on this property that culvert would be sealed.

There are extensive references in the General Plan, the Community Plan and the San Gabriel/Verdugo Mountains Scenic Corridor Preservation Specific Plan that require the preservation and expansion of animal/horse keeping properties. The State General Plan requires that the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles be followed: "Virtually all local decisions affecting land use and development must be consistent with the general plan. (Id. at p. 570; see, e.g., Gov. Code, SS 65860, 65359", and "A specific plan must be consistent with the general plan. (Gov. Code, S 65454.")

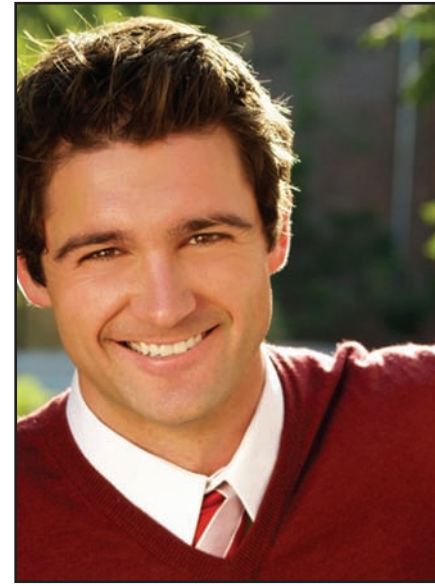
The Oro Vista property is located completely within a Scenic Corridor as defined in the San Gabriel/Verdugo Mountains Scenic Corridor Preservation Specific Plan that states "... to assure that the design of projects and related improvements within designated scenic highway corridors, preserve, complement and/or enhance the views from these corridors." Additionally, it is located in a flood zone according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA.) In order to bring the property, which sits eight to ten feet below the flood level as measured in the 1969 flood, into compliance with the Los Angeles Flood Control policy, the property would require over 15,000 cubic yards of dirt to be hauled onto the property. That is highly unlikely. However, an application has been filed to develop the property with 18 houses, but the Subdivision Tract Map has been appealed. There are precedent-setting lawsuits which allow for the city to rezone properties to Open Space in order to preserve them even when there is an application to develop. One of those cases is NJD, LTD. v. THE CITY OF SAN DIMAS.

The other significant property is the Verdugo Hills Golf Course in Tujunga, at the northwest corner of Tujunga Canyon Blvd. and La Tuna Canyon Blvd. It is zoned mostly agricultural. There is an ongoing effort by residents of Sunland-Tujunga, Glendale, and the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County to save the golf course via a four-way purchase by the cities of Los Angeles and Glendale, the County of Los Angeles, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. MWH, the developer, has submitted an application to develop the property with 229 condominiums. An Environmental Impact Report is required and the City Planning Scoping meeting took place on January 17. Comments regarding the EIR must be submitted by January 31. It may not be possible to save the golf course with "Footnote #6" and also retain the golf course as a recreational facility. However, if there are no other methods to stop the condominium development, it is a better option than losing the property to development altogether. Furthermore, it may also be possible to save a portion of the property that does not contain the golf course with Footnote #6 and purchase the remaining golf course which would then have a reduced value.

Two questions remain: will Wendy Greuel use "Footnote #6" as a tool to save the environmentally sensitive, and significantly located Oro Vista property? Also, will she use "Footnote 6" to save the Verdugo Hills Golf Course by either re-evaluating the property for purchase, or, designating the whole property open space?

Miracles Do Happen in L.A.

You Won't Believe This!



Travis (T.S.) Clark

Twenty Five year old Actor Travis (T.S.) Clark, from Kennebunk, Maine, a new California resident did something absolutely unheard of for a rising screen star or for anyone who might be struggling financially.

T.S. was driving down a dimly lit street in his little borrowed beat up economy car on a drizzling and windy night on Saturday evening, January 26, around 8:00 pm. His mind was focused on his destination, where he was to meet up with his co-star and co-writers, Blake Leifer and Dannel Perkins, to discuss their independent movie production called, "A Dose of Both", due for release in 2009.

As he was driving, he thought he saw a flash of what he believed was a dollar bill flipping across the street. He said his first thought was, "My mind is playing tricks, I'll keep on cruising". But, on second thought, he decided to pull over to the curb and investigate. He couldn't believe his eyes, as \$20 bills were sailing though the air in all directions! He exited his car, wildly scrambling to catch them as he dodged on-coming traffic. One bill eluded him for a block before he finally tackled it. His total take was \$80. in cash, but he figured there might be more, so he continued to look. However, while crossing the street he thought he found another bill, picked it up, and, without looking at it, stuffed it into his pocket and returned to his vehicle. Upon arriving at his destination he emptied his pockets and exclaimed, "Blake, you will not believe this!" and proceeded to explain what happened. He then unfolded the last piece of paper he had crammed into his pocket and discovered that, rather than another \$20 bill, it was a check made out to the North Valley Reporter, from Georgio's Pizza & Sports Bar, in Sun Valley. He then said his first thought at that moment was, "This money is not mine and I am going to give it back to its owner." He picked up the phone and dialed Georgio's Pizza and spoke to owner Tina Cammeron, who said, "Nina, was just here to pick up that check". T.S. told her, "I want to give her money back to her in person." Tina told him she had two phone numbers for Nina and he proceeded to call her.

I (Nina) answered my cell phone and couldn't believe my ears. First of all, because I had just arrived and was just getting situated to start working, I hadn't discovered my loss, which I desperately needed to publish this paper. My brother Peter was also in the office with me and I was too embarrassed to let him to know what happened, once I confirmed it was true. So, I slinked outside to wait for T.S. to arrive. However, much to my chagrin, Tina had called and relayed the phone call from T.S. while I anxiously waited outside in the rain looking for him to arrive with my money! As I watched T.S. walk toward me, I thought, "I have to reward him because, although I could replace my check, my \$80 in cash would have been a total loss." I was not only amazed that he found my money, I was absolutely astounded that he adamantly refused my offer of a reward. I said, "this is incredible, I don't believe you!" His reply was "Thank you, but no thank you. I returned it because I believe it is the right thing to do, not for a reward, but because these are my values" Of course I had to interview T.S. because it is my experience that his attitude is not common here in Los Angeles. I discovered that my new found friend, actor T.S., is a New Mexico University graduate, with a degree in marketing. Also, not only does he resemble "Superman", he has his integrity. I truly hope there is an Academy Award in his not-too-distant future. Most people might find it difficult to ever believe that a "starving actor" would resist the temptation to keep untraceable "found" money. T.S., The North Valley Reporter thanks you and I thank you.

(Editor: To share your incredible experience in "Miracle's Do Happen In L.A." email: InformNVR@aol or write, NVR, P.O. Box 674, Tujunga, Ca 91042-400 words or less.)



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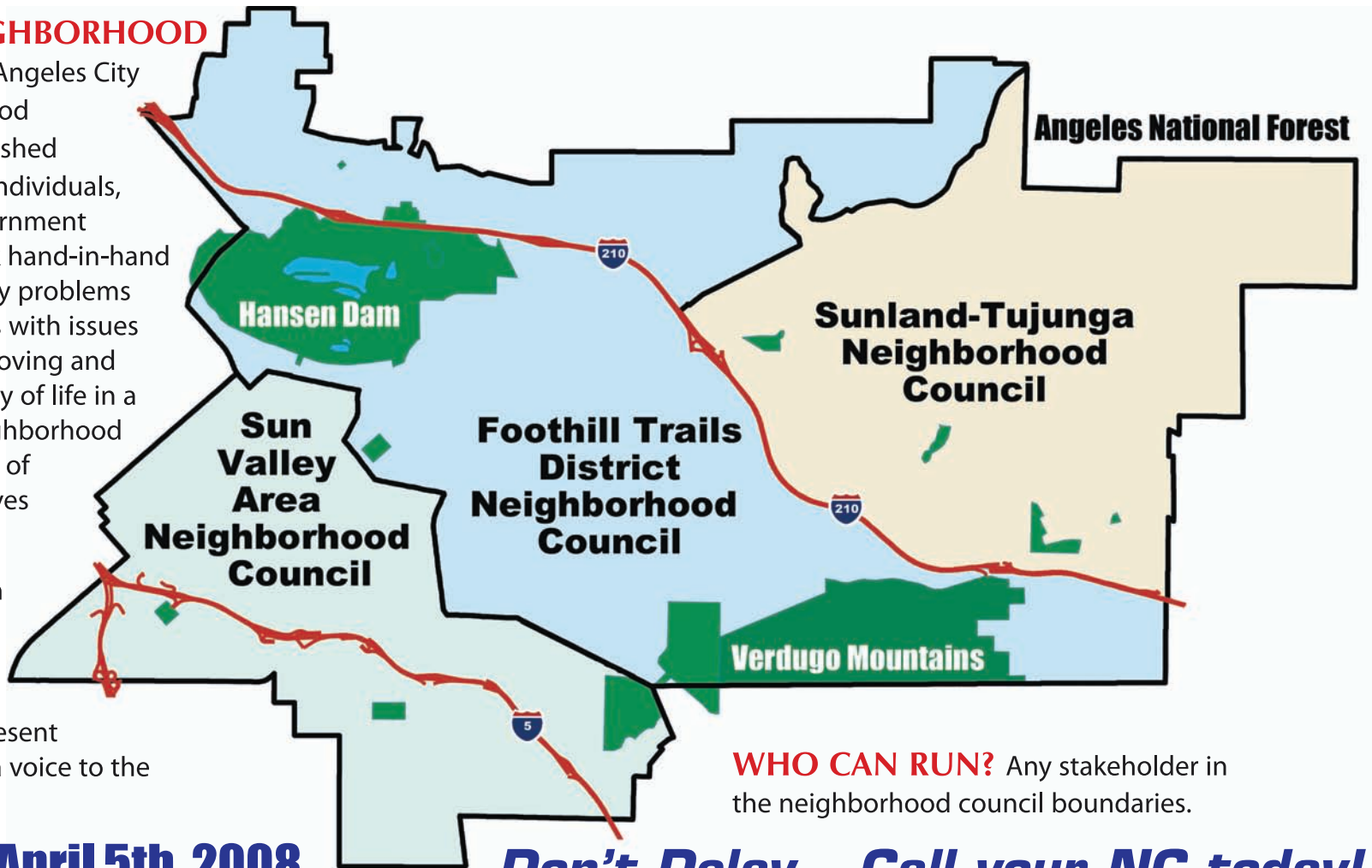
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