



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## Your Advocate for Studio City

January 2017

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## IT REALLY DID SNOW IN STUDIO CITY: SIXTH ANNUAL WINTER FAMILY FESTIVAL

With more than 7,500 people and more than 70 tons of snow, the sixth annual Winter Family Festival was a major success. Presented by the Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) and Studio City Recreation Center, the free event, the largest to-date, featured a wide range of activities for children and their families, with snow and slides, restaurants sampling free food, charities collecting donations and more attendees than ever before. At the center of the excitement was the snow that turned "Beeman Park" into a winter wonderland. Kids and adults alike enjoyed sledding down four slides as well as playing in a snow field. Guests were treated to live music by local schools, community groups and professional bands, including Urban Lotus Music Studio; Walter Reed Middle School Jazz Band A; Campbell Hall World Drumming Ensemble; Harvard Westlake's A Capella Group; Studio City Recreation Center's Youth Program featuring Tai Chi, Piano, Dance and Sewing; and singer Kerri Medders. The Winter Family Festival stage was hosted by The Amazing Kid Company which danced with many of the kids and offered prizes from the stage.

The Festival also featured photos with Santa shot by professional photographer Will Tee Yang; gingerbread-house decorating, courtesy of Bryan Abrams Real Estate; face painting; craft-making; and the opportunity to take a photo against a green screen with a special surprise, courtesy of NBCUniversal.

A highlight of the Winter Family Festival, the on-site "Festival of Giving" provided festival-goers the opportunity to give back to the community by donating canned/packaged food; new, unwrapped toys;

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## STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) annual general meeting for 2017 will be held on January 10, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at Rio Vista Elementary School. The school is located at 4243 Satsuma Avenue, Studio City, CA 91604.

As no further nominations for SCRA board officers have been received by the Nominating Committee, pursuant to the SCRA's by-laws nominations by the Nominating Committee stand. The following will be announced at the meeting: Alan Dymond, president; Bonnie Goodman, executive vice president; Bryan Abrams, treasurer; and Connie Elliot, secretary.

In addition, per the SCRA's by-laws and board motions, the SCRA board made the following appointments: Claudia Freedle, administrative vice president; Barry Johnson, vice president.



## (Festival, cont'd)

baby diapers/bottles/formula; pet food, toys, treats and blankets; new/gently used kids' books (K-12); and new/gently used clothing and blankets to benefit the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry; St. Charles Service Center, the LAPD North Hollywood Division Gift and Food Drive, Aviva Family & Children's Services; Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Best Friends, and Iris Blossom Charities.

In addition, guests were treated to samples from local restaurants that participated in the on-site "A Taste of the Holidays" including Local Ice, Pizza Rev, The Village, Chin Chin, Gangadin, The Front Yard, Lemonade, The Six, Blue Can Water and Hyperion Public.

The SCRA and the Studio City Recreation Center thank all of the sponsors and the many volunteers, including the Los Angeles Police Department North Hollywood Division Cadets and El Camino Real Charter High School NJROTC, without whom this event would not happen. This year, Major Supporters included CBS Studio Center, NBCUniversal and BLVD Hotels. Presenting sponsors included the Studio City Business District, Harvard-Westlake School, Anita Hirsh, Bryan Abrams/Your Source for Studio City Realty, Oakwood School, Veterinary Medical Center of Studio City and Councilmember Paul Krekorian. Event sponsors included the Studio City Chamber of Commerce, the Studio City Farmers Market, Star Parking, Studio City Lifestyle Magazine, the Studio City Neighborhood Council, Shaolin American Self-Defense Academy, Bridges Academy, Sportsmen's Lodge, and Campbell Hall. All funds raised are used for event production with any proceeds donated to support Studio City Recreation Center. For more information, visit [StudioCityResidents.org](http://StudioCityResidents.org).

## AN UPBEAT LOOK AT THE CITY OF L.A.



Councilmember Paul Krekorian addressed Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) members and guests at the SCRA's November 2016 meeting with a positive perspective about the City of Los Angeles. For the next fiscal year, the City has a balanced budget and has eliminated 85 percent of its recession deficit. The City has allocated additional funds to hire in the fire

department, the planning department and the city attorney's office. Councilmember Krekorian is the chair of the Ad Hoc Comprehensive Job Creation Plan Committee, which made 34 recommendations to bring business and jobs to Los Angeles. Those recommendations include a rapid response team to help negotiate the City's bureaucracy; create job and economic development incentive zones with an incentive package that would be available to businesses; create a centralized business unit to improve the City's efforts to hire 5,000 new employees, training and apprenticeships; expand the role and increase the number of business improvement districts; and adopt a citywide economic development strategy.

The Councilmember created a "homeless connect day," gathering the homeless in one location to connect them with services such as replacement of medical and other documents, housing and other sustainable solutions. The homeless in Studio City are not concentrated in one area; they live throughout the community, including sleeping in campers.

Councilmember Krekorian spoke emphatically about his desire to see an entity purchase Weddington Golf and Tennis. He has worked on this issue for 10 years, starting in Sacramento. The new proposed plan for this space, which includes 200 condominiums, must work its way through the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning. Councilmember Krekorian confirmed his commitment that this property should remain as open space.

Addressing the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) currently working its way through City Hall, Councilmember Krekorian suggested that if the city-wide ordinance is a better ordinance than the current Studio City RFA, he will require that the Studio City RFA match the BMO.

## THE SAGA OF MANSIONIZATION IN STUDIO CITY

Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) Vice President Barry Johnson, who has been very active on the matter of mansionization in Studio City, has grown increasingly concerned that houses being built in Studio City have the appearance of "McMansions" and may not be in compliance with the Studio City Floor Area Ordinance." This ordinance was passed in 2012 to curtail building "McMansions." It mandated that a clearance sheet be posted at the building site so the public can check that the clearance sheet matches what is being built. Johnson recently checked a project on Farndale Avenue, but no clearance sheet was posted. That led him to check the entire Studio City RFA\* area. He discovered 40 building sites where no clearance sheet had been posted; as a result, he contacted the general manager and superintendent of the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety about non-compliance with the ordinance.

Residential Inspection Regional Area Manager Preston Meyer responded to Johnson with plans to direct all inspection staff under his control for the Studio City RFA area to check that clearance sheets are being posted on jobsites as part of their routine inspections. Meyer can be contacted at (818) 374-1155. A clearance sheet must identify the following: Property address, applicant's name, emergency phone number, whether the work is new construction or an addition to an existing home, the percentage of the existing house being altered, lot size, proposed home square footage, proposed height, floor area ratio, and how the floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.53 was achieved. Permitting information can also be checked on the city's website at Property Activity Report. Johnson found this information was not being posted on the city's website as it should be.

To check an address, first make sure to determine if the property is in the Studio City RFA District by checking the map

(Continued, Page 3)

## (Mansionization, cont'd)

on the SCRA website. Go to: [StudioCityResidents.org](http://StudioCityResidents.org) and click on the "Our Community" tab; click on "Overdevelopment" and then click on the link to Ordinance/Residential Floor Area RFA. The properties subject to the RFA are shaded on the map.

Next check for the filing with the Department of Building and Safety at [ladbs.org](http://ladbs.org). Open the "Services" tab and go to "Check Service Status & Records." Click on "Permit & Inspection Report (Property Activity Report)" and follow the instructions by entering the address.

By unanimous vote on December 7, 2016, the City Council requested the city attorney to draft an amendment to the BMO to reduce the FAR citywide to 0.45; that amendment also put new limits on hillside properties. The City Attorney will forward the amendment to the City of Los Angeles Planning and Land Use Management Committee; from there it will be sent to the full city council for action. Presently, Studio City has its own 0.53 FAR; however, the SCRA will insist the Studio City FAR be reduced to the FAR of 0.45.

Until this change is made, the Studio City ordinance remains in full force and effect. If a clearance sheet is not posted on a site, then one should file a complaint with the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Department and advise the council office. Before doing so, make sure the property is in the Studio City RFA District by checking the map on the SCRA website. The SCRA thanks its members for attending the City Council meeting to support the 0.45 FAR plus other amendments.

\*Note: RFA means the ratio between the lot size and the livable floor area. In Studio City, this ratio is set at 0.53. The building must incorporate certain features such as articulation and set-backs.

## OP-ED: HELP PRESERVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

*By Jill Stewart, campaign manager, Neighborhood Integrity Initiative, and Jay Beeber, outreach coordinator, Neighborhood Integrity Initiative*

In the fall of 2016, powerful special interests spent \$14 million to lobby City Hall, buy influence and corrupt our city politics. As if to put an exclamation point on that, the Los Angeles Times published details about the ugly Sea Breeze scandal, detailing L.A. elected officials who backed a wildly inappropriate luxury housing complex on a street of warehouses. Each elected official had accepted huge sums of money from scads of "contributors," who all gave the same address in a single tiny home.

Our group, the Coalition to Preserve LA, has called on the U.S. Attorney's anti-public corruption unit to investigate City Hall's out of control practice of "spot zoning," in which the City Council tosses out local zoning to please a developer such as Sea Breeze, which has showered the City Council with money.

As Zev Yaroslavsky said at a UCLA forum this year, L.A. residents believe the system "is rigged." We agree. On March 7, 2017,



## TO THE MARKET

The Studio City Farmers Market has seen a rise in the number of people bringing dogs to the Market and would like to remind shoppers that dogs (and other animals) are not allowed. This is not an arbitrary decision made by the Market board of directors or staff. Rather, having animals at the Market is a health code violation. If a health inspector is at the Market and sees a dog, the Market will be written up for it. Multiple violations could result in the Market's having its health permit revoked, which, in turn, would result in the entire Market being shut down. The only animals that are allowed at the Market are service dogs. If a Market staff member sees a dog, he or she will approach the dog owner and inform him or her that dogs are not allowed at the Market. If the staff member is told that the animal is a service dog, the staff member is allowed by law to ask the animal's purpose. The Market staff asks for the public's cooperation in enforcing the health department code of no animals on the premises.

voters have an historic opportunity to take back power from City Hall and chart a new course for the Valley, Westside, Hollywood and every community facing greedy, rule-breaking developers. Voters will do this by approving the Neighborhood Integrity Initiative. This citizen initiative - which gathered 104,000 signatures - fixes L.A.'s badly broken planning system, fights mounting traffic, protects neighborhood character and fights displacement of people and small businesses. It does this by having land-use rules that mean something and zoning that is more than a mere suggestion.

When voters approve the March 7 ballot measure, they will enact four key changes:

- A narrowly crafted and limited two-year moratorium on "spot zoning" that stops the City Council from ignoring zoning and makes them follow the rules. This timeout stops five percent of development in L.A. - projects still on the drawing boards or in a developer's head that break our zoning rules. The other 95 percent of development will not be slowed since the moratorium does not seek to toss out the protective zoning by greasing palms at City Hall. To encourage what we need, the initiative exempts from the timeout most 100 percent affordable housing projects and zone changes to allow long-promised parks.
- Voters will permanently restrict the most radical "spot zoning" called a General Plan Amendment. Favored developers are repeatedly and quietly granted the go-ahead by City Council members to pursue projects that are flatly banned, or are wildly oversized, beyond what zoning allows. Deals for General Plan Amendments are cut behind closed doors months before the public hears about them.

(Continued, Page 4)

**(Op-Ed, cont'd)**

- Voters will require City Hall to be adult, making the Council write a General Plan for L.A.'s immediate future. The City Council has repeatedly refused to update the General Plan since the 1990s; it relies on seat-of-the-pants decisions and has no clue about the cumulative effects of its votes. The City Council is currently approving endless luxury developments, creating a massive luxury housing glut; meanwhile, 22,000 rent-stabilized units were destroyed. This incredible failure by City Hall is clearly fueling the homelessness we see in Studio City.
- Finally, voters in March will forever ban developers from choosing the people who write the Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) that detail a development's negative effects on our neighborhoods. Today, most EIRs seriously downplay, or flatly lie about, their traffic impacts, and they paper over the vast destruction of our crucial urban canopy of trees to enrich developers who increasingly refuse to preserve shade and green belts.

Every community is in this growing battle together. Studio City faces the current proposal by national business interests to "spot zone" the treasured Weddington Golf & Tennis property to build condominiums. If that occurs, it would eliminate the largest privately-owned open space adjacent to the Los Angeles River. Developers and city officials call this "progress" and "river revitalization." We call it shameful.

Studio City residents have been playing by the rules for a generation, only to see massive new street traffic, threats to longtime neighborhoods and plans to further overdevelop "luxury housing." Studio City deserves better, as does all of Los Angeles. Please support the preservation of our neighborhood character and open space by voting for the Neighborhood Integrity Initiative in March.

## STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION HONORS THOSE WHO TRULY CARE



Rita Villa of the Studio City Neighborhood Council for "Excellence in Government Leadership;"

Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) members and guests are invited to the January 10, 2017 SCRA Annual General Meeting where three of Studio City's strongest community advocates will be honored with the Studio City CARES awards. These honorees have, for years, worked diligently to preserve the Studio City way of life, contributing to the wellbeing of all who live in the community. This year's recipients are Rita Villa of the Studio City

Neighborhood Council for "Excellence in Government Leadership;"

Frank Leon proprietor of The Village for Excellence in Community Service;" and Pia Sadaqatmal, principal of Rio Vista Elementary School, for "Excellence in Service to Youth Development."



Frank Leon



Pia Sadaqatmal

The SCRA encourages everyone to attend this meeting to show appreciation for their service. The meeting will be held at Rio Vista Elementary School, 4243 Satsuma Avenue, Studio City, CA 91602. Meet and greet the community at 7:00 p.m. with refreshments. The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

## ANNUAL CELEBRATION AT CAMPO DE CAHUENGA



The Campo de Cahuenga Historical Memorial Association invites the community to the January 15, 2017 annual celebration and re-enactment of the signing of the Capitulation in 1847. The event and parking are free. Campo de Cahuenga is located at 3919 Lankershim Blvd, Studio City, CA 91604, next to the Metro Red Line station. The grounds will open at 11:00 a.m. with the ceremony beginning at 1:00. The event will include fiesta dancing, a firing of the cannon, light refreshments, a food truck and other activities. More information can be found at [campodecahuenga.com](http://campodecahuenga.com).

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## BEAUTIFUL STUDIO CITY

The last summer was harsh because of the high temperatures and no earlier winter rains. Fortunately, many of Studio City Beautification Association's (SCBA) sites have been planted with drought-tolerant shrubs, trees and grasses and came through well. Fall has been the time for remediation work. The SCBA has also undertaken corrective work at the pocket park across from Marshall's on Ventura Blvd (the Oasis). The rear fence was pushed out due to hillside erosion and had to be repaired. The fence has been re-configured at the bottom near the center so that any soil can erode naturally underneath the fence and bring in fresh topsoil and other nutrients. An additional problem at the Oasis was a cloth weed barrier that had been laid originally when it was first landscaped to prevent invasive weeds and grasses taking hold. (The SCBA will not use chemicals at these sites to kill or prevent weeds and grasses). The barrier has prevented these invaders so the cloth is no longer needed; however, because the cloth barrier did not allow water to seep into the soil, the dirt underneath became hard and impenetrable. Thus, the plants could not spread their roots to seek moisture beyond the planting hole. The weed barrier has now been removed and replaced with a deep layer of mulch: weeds cannot grow effectively as they do not get sunshine. Overall, that offered the SCBA opportunity to re-evaluate the site for plant survival and introduce, where appropriate, new plants. Now and then, gophers visit from the hillside above to find food sources. The SCBA employs humane methodology to keep the gophers at bay and remain in the hillside above where they have built their elaborate network of tunnels.

The SCBA allocates its funds and resources so that proper species are planted and best landscaping practices followed. To that end, after seeking out sources for advice, the SCBA was offered a private tour of the Huntington Library (Huntington) gardens. Scott Kleinbeck of the Huntington

**(Continued, Page 5)**

## (Beautification, cont'd)

conducted the tour sharing his expertise; he indicated ongoing trials at the Huntington for what works best in a drought, what species are best suited to the Los Angeles climate and the impacts imposed by local conditions such as proximity to a main thoroughfare. Kleinbeck recommended a broad range of well performing dry-climate plants from California, including natives and specimens from other areas such as Texas, Arizona and Mexico that are compatible with California natives. He will continue to contribute his advice and recommendations to the SCBA, which the organization very much appreciates.

Here are some species recommended for Los Angeles: Red Yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*), a Texan desert plant with

intense, red flowers that hummingbirds find irresistible; Pink Muhlygrass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), a warm season perennial grass with pink summer foliage and a spectacular clouds of fall flowers that are excellent when clumped together; Blonde Ambition (*Bouteloua gracilis*), a California native grass with long, narrow yellow-green flowers on top of three-foot stems, which can be seen in the pocket park at Oakdell/Laurel Canyon Blvd.; and Desert Mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), a two foot native desert perennial with vibrant apricot-colored, cup-shaped flowers.

The SCBA would like to thank the Huntington Library for the tour and Scott Kleinbeck for continuing to offer his help and advice. The SCBA thanks SCBA Board Member Diana Zogran for arranging the tour and the introduction to Kleinbeck.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** by Alan Dymond

*The Studio City Neighborhood Council's Land Use Committee considered a "Studio City Golf and Tennis Preservation Project" this past November. The proposal was presented on behalf of the owners of Weddington Golf and Tennis by Aaron Green of Afriat Consulting Group. The Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) is concerned about the plan to build 200 condominiums on this open space. These units will be located on the site of the 16 existing tennis courts. Later, eight tennis courts and two pickle ball courts will be built elsewhere on the site. The owners claim the condominium development is necessary for them to subsidize the present recreational operations. Green stated that this is not the first step in development of the whole property; he suggested this is the only phase of development so long as it is sustainable to subsidize the operations. Green did not directly answer the question about what would happen if the project proves unsustainable at later time. The response was "no further development on property for now." The condos are slated to be built on lot two, while lot one indicates future development on the plan.*

*After Green's presentation, the SCRA made the following points:*

- *The SCRA is the preeminent advocacy organization for Studio City. It is strongly opposed to having 200 condominiums built on this site.*
- *The objective of the new proposal is different from that of the previous one, which addressed the "Studio City Senior Living Center." The latest proposal calls for a new environmental report (EIR). A suggestion to work from the previous EIR had been rejected. A new EIR would eliminate the burden of sorting through the scope and details of the previous EIR, adjusting for later amendments and responses made to objections. Therefore, the SCRA believes it is necessary that a new EIR should issue and act as the definitive document from which all can work. After further discussion, Green agreed the owners will issue a new EIR in about a year that will include updated studies (traffic, etc.) and have a public comment period.*

*Approximately 70 attendees spoke in opposition to the project. Here are highlights of questions asked by attendees:*

- *The applicant has requested a General Plan Amendment. Would this be a change in zoning for the whole site? Response: This will be answered later.*
- *The owners took the last two years to review the opposition comments to the first DEIR and tried to address it in this plan with minimal development. It is not easy for the owners to keep it open. Question: Should they then sell to the community? What is the price? Response: That will be answered later.*
- *The number of parking spaces are excessive. The expense of subterranean parking is not justified. This appears to be extra parking for future developments. Response: No response.*
- *How does this impact the river and deal with storm water runoff, capture and reuse? Response: This has not yet been addressed.*
- *Why are they referred to as apartments when the application says condominiums? Response: This has to do with the tract map; we can get better financing for the units if we apply as condominiums.*
- *What is the frontage on Whitsett Avenue? Response: This will be answered later.*
- *Councilmember Paul Krekorian is committed to keeping the area as open space. Response: No response.*
- *You are not being honest with community. This is not a "Preservation Plan." The bottom line is that it is about a zone change. Response: No response.*
- *Will the public have open space access in perpetuity? Response: As long as we can afford it.*

*Note: This meeting was held for informational purposes only so no motion was agendized, and no formal action taken. The next step may be a return to the committee with a possible motion by the committee; to-date, the SCRA has not been advised on how the applicant will proceed.*

*Alan Dymond*

### SCRA Committees

Burbank Airport, Chair: Chris Barnes  
Crime and Safety  
Los Angeles River Committee  
Membership  
Planning and Land Use

### Officers

Alan Dymond, President  
Bonnie Goodman, Exec. Vice President  
Barry Johnson, Vice President  
Claudia Freedle, Admin. Vice President  
Connie Elliot, Secretary  
Bryan Abrams, Treasurer

### Board Members

Beth Dymond  
Andy Epstein  
Martha Hanrahan  
Steve Hirsh

Art Howard  
Robin Seidel  
Barry Weiss  
Karen Younce  
Sophie Oberstein, junior board member

### Immediate Past President

Art Howard

### Beautification Association

Barry Weiss, President  
Karen Younce, Admin. Vice President  
Connie Elliot, Secretary  
Bryan Abrams, Treasurer  
Diana Zogran

### Save L.A. River Studio City Open Space

Co-Directors  
Laurie Cohn, Alan Dymond, Steve Hirsh,  
Art Howard, Patty Kirby, Chip Meehan,  
saveopenspace@SLAROS.org

### School Liaisons

Carpenter - Bonnie Goodman  
Rio Vista - Barry Weiss

### Studio City Farmers Market

(818) 655-7744  
www.studiocityfarmersmarket.com

### Newsletter

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## STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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# SCRA ANNNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017

### MEETING LOCATION:

Rio Vista Elementary School  
4243 Satsuma Avenue  
Studio City, CA 91602

*Located on the corner of Whipple  
Street and Satsuma Avenue.*

### AGENDA

**7:00 p.m.** Refreshments/meet your neighbors.

**7:30 p.m.** Presentation of Studio City CARES Awards

*The SCRA Community Meetings have moved to Rio Vista Elementary School, 4243 Satsuma Avenue, Studio City, CA 91602. Free parking is available in the school parking lot along with street parking. Do not park opposite the school. Follow the signs to the meeting.*

