



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## Your Advocate for Studio City

March 2011

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## WALGREENS THUMBS ITS NOSE AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Despite considerable effort by the community, led by SCRA members Brent and Meg Seltzer, Walgreens will not save the ficus trees located at the corner of Vineland Ave. and Ventura Blvd. In addition to their beauty, these three old trees act as a sound barrier for hillside residents in that area. The work to save the trees began in June 2010 when the SCRA and the Fruitland Drive Neighborhood Watch contacted Walgreens with a plea to halt plans to cut down the trees. According to Brent Seltzer, Fruitland Drive Neighborhood Watch, "For a brand that prides itself on trust, after this experience, it will be hard for our community to trust Walgreens with our business."

Following are excerpts of an e-mail exchange on February 15, 2011 between SCRA member Brent Seltzer and Bob Roscoe from Walgreens Realty Resources Department.



**From:** Bob.Roscoe@walgreens.com  
**To:** Brent Seltzer

*Given the nature of this issue, I am obligated to involve Walgreens Corporate Communications Department as well the Governmental Affairs group.*

*I do not have any significant news to report, but I can assure you that we do take any issues concerning any of our development projects across the country seriously and try and reach a resolution that is best for all concerned.*

**From:** Brent Seltzer  
**To:** Bob.Roscoe@walgreens.com

*I appreciate that you've gotten back to me. Everyone in the area wants to know when you plan to begin construction?*

*What can we do to assist you in the process of saving two of the three trees in question? We understand that the tree closest to Ventura Blvd. must be removed for the same reason you have to move the electrical box located nearby. However, in our last discussion you suggested that there could be a way to save the other two ficus trees. How can we help you do that? Do you want to have Bernie Mermelstein of Village Properties contact us? We've made inroads at the Council District 2 office, and we're ready to take the case to the Los Angeles City Council and the Board of Public Works, but we need to know from you if we are wasting our time.*

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## STUDIO CITY CARES AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED AT MARCH 8 SCRA COMMUNITY MEETING

SCRA members and guests are invited to the March 8 SCRA Community Meeting when four of Studio City's strongest community advocates will be honored with the SCRA's Studio City CARES Awards. These honorees have, for years, worked diligently to preserve the Studio City way of life. They are Francesca Corra for "Excellence in Community Service;" Melanie Winter for "Service in Youth Development;" Michael Espinosa for "Excellence in Government Leadership;" and Marilyn White Sedel, who will receive the "Fran Quigley Award" in recognition of exceptional service. The SCRA encourages everyone to attend this meeting to show appreciation for their service.

The same night, the SCRA will proudly host Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel as guest speaker. Controller Greuel will provide details about recent city audits and will be available to answer questions.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre Room. Light refreshments and an opportunity to meet community members and neighbors begin at 7:00 p.m.

(Walgreens, cont'd)

From: Bob.Roscoe@walgreens.com

To: Brent Seltzer

*To answer your first question, we can start construction almost immediately.*

*Related to the trees, however, we have not been able to cost-justify delaying construction in order to revise the city-approved site and landscaping plans. The delay would be at least 90 days; the cost to redesign is about \$35,000 just for the landscape plan (which assumes no other civil engineering changes). There would be added construction costs in having to work around the trees, and we do not have any certainty that the new plans would be approved by the City.*

*It may be a little strong to say that you wasted your time, but Walgreens' preference is to proceed on the basis as approved by the City of Los Angeles.*

*Please let me know if you would like to discuss this matter further.*

*Thank you for consideration.*

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From: Brent Seltzer

To: 'Bob.Roscoe@walgreens.com'

*Speaking on behalf of the Fruitland Drive Neighborhood Watch and the Studio City Residents Association, we are extremely disappointed at Walgreens' cavalier disregard for candor on this issue. You or Mr. Wagner's office could have easily made clear to us months and months ago that there was no way to save the trees and the integrity of our neighborhood.*

*In the record of my original letter to Mark A. Wagner, and the follow-up emails and phone calls (November of 2010), you indicated to me that there was a possibility that "we might be able to save two of the three trees, but the one closest to Ventura would have to be removed along with the electrical box nearby." However, judging by your lack of response to my inquiries of the last couple of months and now your current email, it would appear that Walgreens never had any intention of working with our community.*

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If you have concerns, please contact Walgreens at the address here:

**Bob Roscoe**  
**Walgreens Realty Resources**  
**106 Wilmot Road**  
**MS 1640**  
**Deerfield, IL 60015**  
  
**847-315-4688**  
**847-368-6565 (Fax)**  
**Bob.Roscoe@walgreens.com**

## SCRA SPONSORS STUDIO CITY BASEBALL OPENING DAY



On Saturday, April 9, 2011, for the first time, the SCRA will proudly sponsor the opening day ceremonies of the youth baseball program at Studio City Recreation Center (aka Beeman Park). The ceremony is scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m.

This always highly anticipated event celebrates the start of the season for the park's baseball program, which is the second largest baseball program within the Los Angeles' Recreation and Parks system. Approximately 350 youth athletes between the ages of 5 - 12, both boys and girls, are expected to participate, representing 31 different teams. Scheduled highlights include an appearance by Councilmember Paul Krekorian, the ceremonial first pitch and appearances by former Major League Baseball greats. Refreshments will be served.

In addition to sponsoring the event, the SCRA will be staffing an informational table to answer any questions about issues in the community and membership in the association.

SCRA President Alan Dymond shared the following thoughts about the SCRA's new relationship with Beeman Park's sports programs, "In a time of budget cutbacks throughout the City and deep slashes in the Rec and Parks budget, I am pleased the SCRA has the ability to step up and sponsor this event. The baseball program is so important for the families in Studio City and our kids. "Character Counts" sport programs play a major role in building our spirit of community and developing the citizens of tomorrow. I look forward to seeing everyone out at Beeman Park on Saturday, April 9. Let's play ball!"

## COMMUNITY CRIME REPORT

By Studio City Lead Officer Mike Lewis

I was recently contacted by an 88-year-old woman who said that on Saturday, February 19, 2011, she answered the door, thinking she was greeting her handyman, but quickly realized that was not the case. Instead, she saw a Male/Hispanic in his late 40s, who told her he was a roofer. He asked if he could come inside to get some hot water to fix the roof. Then an additional suspect appeared, a Female/Hispanic, also in her late 40s, and both tried to enter the house. The victim said she immediately knew they were burglars because she remembered reading an article I wrote for the SCRA newsletter. I want to acknowledge this newsletter and the SCRA for giving us (the LAPD) the outlet to inform the community regarding illegal activities. Thank you. This is one of the many things that make Studio City so special.

Please be aware of a large increase in crimes that use Craigslist and other websites. If a deal is "too good to be true," more than likely it is. If you use Craigslist or other websites where you must meet a person to make a purchase, please do so in a public area. Good places to meet are local police stations or

(Continued, Page 3)

## (Crime Report, cont'd)

malls. Criminals are less likely to conduct crimes or illegal activity in public areas where lots of people are present. Many times the items turn out to be fake or stolen. Many potential buyers, who come with large amounts of cash, are robbed. Craigslist has turned out to be a mecca for criminal activity.

Since members of our community have been so supportive of our efforts - from sharing information with us to supporting our holiday toy and food drives - the SCRA gave me the okay to share this story with you and ask, one more time, for your help. We have a young police officer who works patrol and who lives 90 miles away from the station. He finds it difficult, if not impossible, to drive two hours to get home, only to return and drive back two hours for his next twelve-hour shift. He often sleeps in his car or in the makeshift cot in the North Hollywood station. If you or anyone you know are interested in renting a room/guest quarters to an officer on a part-time basis, please email me, and I will forward the information to this officer. We both thank you.

## IT'S HAPPENING IN STUDIO CITY

### **Unitarian Universalist Church of Studio City** **12355 Moorpark Street**

**Musical Revue and Dinner:** March 12, 2011, 6:00 p.m.  
"Spring is in the Air." Performances by the choir and several talented guests. For more information, call 818-769-5911.

### **A Day of Service on the La River**

Join the community for a citywide day of service on Saturday, April 30, 2011, from 8:00 a.m.- noon, to bring community awareness to the Los Angeles River and watershed issues. "A Day of Service on the LA River" will consist of an array of service projects, community education, and fun-filled activities along the River (from the Valley to South Los Angeles).

Anyone interested in participating and/or those who wish to register a project should contact Angelica Ayala - East Valley/Tujunga Wash Area - [Angelica.Ayala@lacity.org](mailto:Angelica.Ayala@lacity.org) (818) 778-4990 or Lidia Manzanares - citywide activities and general inquiries - [Lidia.Manzanares@lacity.org](mailto:Lidia.Manzanares@lacity.org) (213)-978-0645.

### **Studio City Library** **12511 Moorpark Street.**

### **Friends of the Studio City Branch Library Present screenwriter Matt Lopez, Thursday, March 3, 2011, 7:00 p.m.**

Lopez will discuss his screenwriting career and the path that led him to screenwriting. His screenwriting credits include "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," produced by Jerry Bruckheimer; "Bedtime Stories," starring Adam Sandler; and the sci-fi action adventure "Race to Witch Mountain." The event is free and refreshments will be served; seating is limited.

## TO THE MARKET

With winter's end, the Studio City Farmers Market readies itself for a new crop of spring produce, such as asparagus, artichokes and peas. Zuckerman's award-winning asparagus and Suncoast Farms baby artichokes are some of the Market's springtime stars. Coming soon are apricots and cherries. Brandon of Inner Gardens is now carrying a line of heirloom vegetable seeds and seedlings for those with a green thumb (or not) to plant and grow. Be sure to check out last month's new vendors, Homeboy Bakery and Bolani (East West Gourmet). Both are a huge success.

The Studio City Farmers Market is presented jointly by the Studio City Residents Association and the Studio City Chamber of Commerce Foundation. Free parking is available at the CBS lot on Radford.



## REPORT FROM THE FEDERATION OF HILLSIDE AND CANYON ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

The SCRA is a board member of the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc. At this association's February 2, 2011 meeting, President Marion Dodge updated members about the widening of the 405 Freeway, which necessitates the destruction, relocation and much wider reconstruction of the historic Mulholland Bridge. The Federation Board voted to oppose this action and asked for more studies to be done. In addition, the board discussed the Universal Studios project, and members were asked to submit their comments and concerns to Jon Foreman, Los Angeles City senior planner.

Gerry Hans and Sarah Napier, founders of the new non-profit group Friends of Griffith Park, made a presentation at the meeting. This organization's mission is to promote the enlightened stewardship of Griffith Park, enabling it to survive and thrive in the 21st century. To learn more and become a member, go to [friendsofgriffithpark.org](http://friendsofgriffithpark.org).



# HILLSIDE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE UPDATE

The Los Angeles City Attorney's office has completed its draft of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance and has transmitted its report to the City Council. To download a copy of the City Attorney Report go to the following link:

[http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2010/10-1001\\_RPT\\_ATT\\_02-11-11.pdf](http://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2010/10-1001_RPT_ATT_02-11-11.pdf). The object of the proposed Hillside Ordinance is to attempt to bring reasonable controls to development on properties in the hillsides.

For those who would like to see the final draft of the new regulations, the City Attorney's report contains a draft of the ordinance as it will go into the zoning code.

The next step is for the City Council to schedule the Baseline Hillside Ordinance for one of its upcoming meetings and take final action on it.

There are still at least two steps left to go before the Ordinance is officially adopted:

- 1) Adoption of the proposed Ordinance by the City Council;
- and 2) The signature of the Mayor. This is when a specific effective date is usually provided. Once these steps have been taken, the City Clerk's office will post the adopted ordinance for a period of 10 days, and a 30-day effective date will begin after that.

## FROM YOUR SCRA BOARD

### First Board Meeting of 2011

**Studio City Beautification Association (SCBA):** The SCRA as the sole member of the SCBA appointed the Board of Directors of the SCBA, and SCBA elected the officers: Bill Harmond, president, Francesca Corra, vice president, Laura McKinzie, treasurer, Connie Elliot, secretary, as well as board members Claudia Freedle, Beth Dymond, Michael Klausman, Lorena Parker and Alan Dymond.

**City measures:** The board discussed the upcoming City measures, details of which are incorporated in the President's Message in this newsletter.

**DEIR Response To Universal Development:** Responses to the DEIR were due to the City by February 4, 2011. The SCRA filed a timely response by Alan Dymond, president, and several of the SCRA Board members filed as individuals. The City's Planning Department must take into consideration all comments made about the project prior to issuing the final Environmental Impact Report. See the President's Message in this newsletter for further details.

**CERT Training:** The emergency response training organized by board member Connie Elliot is filling up rapidly. Call the office at 818-509-0230 to sign up.

# STUDIO CITY BEAUTIFICATION'S MAINTENANCE PROS HIT THE BOULEVARD



Crews working for the Studio City Beautification Association (SCBA) trimmed nearly two hundred palms and pistache trees on Ventura Boulevard from Fulton to Lankersheim Boulevard this month.

This annual tree trimming is part of regular maintenance performed by professional crews managed by the SCBA, which also maintains large spaces on Ventura Blvd. such as the Oasis



*The Studio City Welcome Sign is Restored (Ralphs at Vineland/Ventura)*

(across from Ralphs at Vineland and Ventura), medians on Laurel Canyon Blvd., Coldwater Canyon Blvd., Ventura Place, Moorpark and Vineland, together with other significant public spaces such as the grounds of the Studio City Branch Library.

The SCBA, an affiliate of the SCRA, is funded by grants and tax-deductible donations. If you would like to donate or volunteer to help with this work, please contact the SCBA at [SCRABOARD@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:SCRABOARD@studiocityresidents.org).

## UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LOS ANGELES RIVER: SLAROS INVITED TO SPEAK

Councilmember Dennis Zine recently held a meeting to review the status of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan. Councilmember Zine, along with Councilmember Ed Reyes and representatives from many City departments, spoke about the progress of the plan. They were joined by State Senator Alex Padilla and a representative from State Senator Fran Pavley's office.

Save LA River  
Open Space



The River Plan calls for new parks, trails and bikeways and efforts to restore native landscapes and habitats along the banks of the Los Angeles River. The City's River Revitalization Master Plan (LA River RMP), adopted in May 2007, employs a gradual, phased approach, with 64 miles of connecting paths along each side of the 32 miles of the River within the City of Los Angeles that will join connecting paths all the way to the mouth of the River at Long Beach Harbor.

Save Los Angeles River Open Space (SLAROS), an SCRA sister organization, was invited to give a presentation of the progress of the plans for a Los Angeles River Natural Park located at Whitsett Ave. and Ventura Blvd. The park fronts directly onto the River and would tie into the overall concept and be part of the LA River RMP.

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## **(SLAROS, cont'd)**

SLAROS presented an overview of the park proposal and advised those present that its consultants and engineers are completing a Hydrology Technical Feasibility Study and a study about regional LA River public access. The studies will address such elements as access to river trails, cleaning water from two hundred acres along with trash removal, water-saving devices and other elements beneficial to the surrounding communities. The reports from the consultants and engineers will be issued in March of this year.

The City departments and agencies working on the plan include the Department of City Planning, Corp. of Engineers, Bureau of Sanitation, Department of Water and Power, Urban Water Management Plan, Department of Transportation, Bike Plan and LA River Greenway Projects, Department of Recreation and Parks, Los Angeles County Flood Control District and Trust for Public Land.

## **ASK THE SCRA**

*One of the functions of the SCRA is to empower its members, who are the eyes and ears of the community. The SCRA can assist by providing opportunities to make all of Studio City a better place to live. Please send questions to [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org).*

**Q:** We are concerned about the house being built quickly on 13057 Woodbridge St. at Ethel. There will be five bedrooms and six baths for this two-story "mansion." We can see the second story of the house from our backyard. It means less privacy for us because we have a swimming pool by the concrete wall. What can we do?

**SCRA:** The SCRA Overlay Committee along with other local organizations, e.g., the SCNC, supported the Studio City RFA Ordinance, which would limit home square footage to 40 percent of the lot size. Unfortunately this ordinance has yet to pass. The overlay ordinance is awaiting a hearing at the Los Angeles City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM). The SCRA has requested Studio City Councilmember Paul Krekorian agendaize his compromise solution and bring it before PLUM.

Under the present ordinance, your neighbors can build up to 60 percent of their lot size, or up to 5570 square feet, not including the garage.

The only solution presently available until the ordinance is changed is to attempt mitigation by planting high-growing bamboo or ficus (the ficus variety without harmful huge roots) to screen your pool and backyard.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*by Alan Dymond*

### **Charter Amendments and Propositions**

*At the January 11, 2001 SCRA Community Meeting, Councilmembers LaBonge, Koretz and Krekorian addressed SCRA members and guests about the upcoming charter amendments and propositions and answered questions from the audience. Those present will recall that all three councilmembers supported the amendments and propositions, with the exception of Charter Amendment L, Public Library Funding, and Proposition M, the tax on the sale of medical marijuana. The SCRA asked five of its board members to review all the amendments and propositions and make recommendations to the board. The SCRA also posted the amendments and propositions on its web site and invited members' comments. After review of the report by the board members and a discussion, the full board voted to support all amendments and propositions with three exceptions: library funding, Charter Amendment L; the tax on medical marijuana, Proposition M; and the Fire and Police Pension Plan, Charter Amendment G.*

*As there was no consensus by the board on these last three issues, the board decided not to make a recommendation. However, each side of the argument is ably laid out in the voter pamphlet. The amendments to the City Charter and propositions are very important to the future wellbeing of our city; therefore, our members are urged to read and consider their positions and take time to vote.*

### **NBC Universal Development**

*In other news, the SCRA filed opposition to the proposed development at NBC/Universal. Many local organizations also filed in opposition, including the Studio City Neighborhood Council (SCNC) and Citizens United for Smart Growth (CUSG). The SCRA reviewed the responses by the SCNC and CUSG, and, therefore, joined their responses. The SCRA position is taken from a December 2010 court ruling from the appellate level. That ruling raises a serious question whether the Draft Environmental Report (DEIR) complies with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act: if not, as the recent case suggests, the DEIR is legally inadequate and should be disregarded.*

### **Weddington Golf and Tennis**

*Save Los Angeles River Open Space (SLAROS) is moving forward in its endeavors to establish the LA River Natural Park at Whitsett Ave. and Ventura Blvd. Consultants and engineers have advised the group that the Hydrology Technical Feasibility Study is complete and the Regional LA River Public Access Feasibility Study will be published in March. Further good news is that the City Council decided not to lease the city garages, which means the Studio City garage will be part of a starting point to the bike trails. Check out the garage. There is already access from the rear of the garage to the river walk that runs from Whitsett Ave. to Laurel Canyon Blvd.*

*Alan Dymond*



**COMMUNITY MEETING**

**Tuesday, March 8, 2011**

**7:00 p.m. Refreshments**

**7:30 p.m. City Controller  
Wendy Greuel**

**SCRA Presents  
Studio City Cares  
Awards**

**Meeting Location**

**Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre  
4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City**

*When entering the hotel driveway, turn left and go through the parking turnstile. Drive to the end and turn right. Go to the large back lot. The handicap entrance is from this lot. Walk to the southwest corner of the lot, and signs will direct you to the Beverly Garland Theatre. **PARKING WILL BE VALIDATED** at the sign-in-table.*



**CALLING ALL SENIORS! HAVE A CLEAN-UP PROJECT THAT CAN USE AN HELPING HAND?**

On May 1, 2011, in conjunction with this May's Big Sunday, students and adult volunteers from Campbell Hall, supported by the Studio City Beautification Association and the SCRA, will continue the good work done the last two years to help our seniors. They want to make a difference for you!

The SCRA is looking for approximately 15-20 projects in such areas as:

- General yard work, including turning over the garden and fertilizing lawns and plants
- Hazardous waste or old paint pickup
- Garage clean-up
- Fence and wall painting
- Outdoor window cleaning

A team of hard-working, enthusiastic volunteer teenagers, supervised by adults, will provide the supplies and labor, and give seniors a helping hand. Email the project details to [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org) or call the SCRA office at 818-509-0230.

**Officers**

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