



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## Your Advocate for Studio City

September 2011

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## WHO SHOULD PAY TO REPAIR CITY SIDEWALKS?

According to a California State Law enacted in 1911, property owners are responsible for repairing damage to the sidewalks that adjoin their property. In 1974, however, the Los Angeles City Council amended the municipal code to include an exception when the damage is caused by tree roots in the parking strips. This exception is in danger of being deleted at the city level, which will place the responsibility for all repairs on the property owner no matter how the damage was caused.

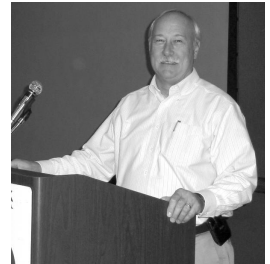
A joint committee of the Public Works and Budget & Finance Departments met on July 20, 2011 to discuss who should pay for sidewalk repairs. Suggestions included: 1) That the committee propose an ordinance changing the code where, upon sale, any repairs would be charged to the owner, typically at close of escrow to fund the repairs; 2) Council members Koretz and Englander each made separate motions to end discussion and call the file as complete, leaving the situation as it is, i.e., that the city is responsible for sidewalk repairs caused by tree roots; 3) Councilmember Rosendahl was in agreement and, joined by Councilmember Alarcon, suggested the Bureau of Street Services (BSS) explore funding sources, such as the federal government and alternative repair methods; 4) Councilmembers Parks and Alarcon spoke in favor of changing the ordinance to require property owners to make sidewalk repairs; 5) Alarcon suggested funding alternatives, including a 50/50 program, which the City discontinued a few years ago due to lack of funds, and requiring mortgage holders to pay one-third of the repairs; 6) Huizar's position was that the City should be responsible for repairs up to the time the code changes come into effect and, thereafter, require property owners to make repairs; and 7) Parks, Alarcon and Huizar urged the committee to take the issue up again in September after the BSS provided more information.

The committee continued its hearings until the next meeting in September; as a result, the exemption will remain for now, meaning tree root damaged sidewalks are a city responsibility. Damage by other causes remains the property owner's responsibility.

(Continued, Page 4)

### TALKING WITH THE ANIMALS AT THE LOS ANGELES ZOO

John Lewis, who has served as director of the Los Angeles Zoo since 2003, spoke at the July 12, 2011 SCRA Community Meeting. Director Lewis described many of the zoo programs, including those done in cooperation with other zoos for conservation of species. He also described the zoo's comprehensive veterinary medical care facility.



In addition to the recently opened "Elephants of Asia" exhibit, the centerpiece of the zoo, other new and exciting exhibits are scheduled for late 2011, such as "Living Amphibians, Invertebrates and Reptiles"(LAIR). The LAIR exhibit will replace the old reptile house that was torn down to make place for "Elephants of Asia." A "Rainforest of the Americas" exhibit will open in 2012 as a multi-tiered, mixed species area featuring animals from the Americas.

The zoo, whose formal name is "Los Angeles Zoo & Botanical Gardens," is home to more than 1,100 mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles representing more than 250 different species, 29 of which are endangered. Highlights of the animal collection include Komodo Dragons, great apes, koalas, giraffes and the California condor. The botanical garden portion of the zoo features ten specialized gardens, including cycads and roses. The zoo's botanical collection has more than 800 different plant species and more than 7,400 individual plants.

More than 70,000 households are zoo members. For more information, log onto [lazoo.org](http://lazoo.org).

## ASHES TO ASHES, TREES TO MULCH

A row of beautiful Ficus trees has lived on the corner of Vineland Avenue and Ventura Blvd. for at least 50 years. As too often happens with new development, the trees were slated for removal to make way for a new Walgreens drug store. A group of neighbors, led by Brent and Meg Seltzer, fought long and hard to save the trees. Ultimately, they lost the battle, and the trees were cut down.

A few blocks away from this area sits Studio City Beautification Association's (SCBA) Oasis project - a landscape of lush California native plants and blue benches, across the street from Marshalls. The Oasis was once a neglected weedy patch of land that was landscaped by the SCBA in fall 2009 and has since transformed into a pretty park-like setting.

Since sustainability is a key principle in the SCBA's designs, it was a natural process to "move" the trees on Vineland just a few blocks down. The SCBA contacted Walgreens and asked if they would provide the mulch when the trees were cut down and shredded. On that sad day, Walgreens delivered two massive piles of mulch to the Oasis.

Since this situation was quite unforeseen, there was no money in the SCBA budget to pay for spreading the mulch on the approximately 16,000 square feet of the Oasis. Thanks to the efforts of Geoffrey Yazzetta from Councilmember Paul Krekorian's office, Clean and Green - part of Los Angeles Conservation Corp (LACC) - provided free labor. It was only fitting since LACC had donated and planted 16 fifteen-gallon plants on the Oasis in 2009.

About 30 teenagers plus three supervisors lent a hand, a bit of a challenge. Remember how graceful and agile you were at 15 as you were growing into your feet? One boy was horrified as he accidentally stomped on a young Matilija poppy. In the end, the team got the job done in one day and left it looking fabulous.

The neighbors who are sorely missing the Ficus trees can take a small measure of comfort in knowing that the trees "live on," adding to the beauty and healthy soil biology of the Oasis. This is especially true for the Seltzers who have a personal relationship with the Oasis, as they stroll through it on their daily walks, acting as the eyes and ears of the community and keeping the Mutt Mitt boxes full of bags.



## SCRA LAUNCHES MAYORAL CANDIDATE SPEAKERS' SERIES

Please join the SCRA when Jan Perry, city councilmember for the 9th District, addresses members and guests at the September 13, 2011 SCRA Community Meeting. Perry, who represents parts of downtown and South Los Angeles, declared her candidacy for mayor in May of this year. Her appearance marks the launch of SCRA's mayoral candidate speakers' series designed to keep Studio City informed about the plans and perspectives of the candidates.

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

## 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:** Our townhouse backs up to the Tujunga Wash, directly across from the back lot of CBS. While the gravel path that follows the wash behind the driveways of our group of buildings has been kept relatively clear in the past, it is now completely overgrown with weeds and has collected a fair amount of debris (downed tree limbs, branches, etc.). This material has accumulated over the past several months and has become a real eyesore. Can you direct me to the proper resource(s) to see about getting this area cleaned up?

Additionally, when we bought our home in 1999, we were told that CBS had reached an accord with the Studio Village Homeowners Association (SVHA) whereby the studio was going to donate many potted trees (which we could see on the back lot, just sitting in their planters) to the pathway on our side of the wash, in order to create a more pleasing kind of "backdrop" for those of us at that end of the property. This was never done, and then eventually the trees just disappeared. I'm wondering if this might be a fit project for the Studio City Beautification Association since that pathway is used regularly by many dog owners from the surrounding areas.

**SCRA:** The gravel path that follows the Tujunga Wash is County property so you would need to contact Angelia R. George, Santa Monica Bay Watershed Manger, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works. Ms. George can be reached at [ageorge@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:ageorge@dpw.lacounty.gov) 626-458-4341. A possible long-term solution is that the SVHA adopt this stretch of the river. Ms. George can assist with river adoption or getting the weeds removed.

Regarding CBS's offer to plant trees along the wash, the SCRA spoke to Michael Klausman, president, CBS Studio Center, who

**(Continued, Page 3)**

**(Ask SCRA, cont'd)**

provided details about the offer for the trees. CBS was in contact about every six months for about a three-year period with the SVHA. The SVHA board could not decide on a location for the trees nor other aspects of implementation of the CBS offer. The trees on the lot were not the trees that were to be planted on the river. These were stored there for use on the CBS lot. No trees have ever been purchased because no decisions about the trees were made. Mr. Klausman told the SCRA that the offer for the trees is still available. Please contact SVHA to reenergize the tree planting.

**Q:** I'm writing to ask about the legality of the frequent rental of a private property for parties near our home. The address in question is 3726 Laurel Canyon. There's a large parking lot in front of the house suggesting its usage as a public space. On a recent Saturday night, several amplified bands played (sometimes from different parts of the house simultaneously) for hours. The noise coming from this party could be heard at my house (and most others on Reklaw) from 6:30 p.m. until it finally stopped at 11:00 p.m. I'm hoping there's something that can be done beyond calling police for a non-emergency and waiting hours for them to respond on a Saturday night.

**SCRA:** The SCRA contacted Senior Lead Officer Mike Lewis and received the following response. "I contacted the new owner of the property at 3726 Laurel Canyon. It's an entertainment company who just rented the house (two-year lease) a few months ago. To the rear of the main house is a large sound stage (which is enclosed and soundproof) that they use for their business. The owners were very open and honest and said they have had two large parties since they moved in. Both parties were filmed for a television show. I told them I think they just had their last one. They agreed and told me there would be no more parties. And frankly, I believe them."

## COMMUNITY CRIME REPORT

*by Studio City Lead Officer Mike Lewis*

There has been an increase in car thefts along with burglary from motor vehicles but with some good news. Officers began tracking a stolen signal from a BMW that was driving around Studio City and located the car on a side street near Moorpark and Coldwater Canyon. The driver and passenger were detained, and officers verified the car had been stolen from a condo complex on the 4600 block of Coldwater Canyon. In the end, forty-one items of evidence were booked, including methamphetamine, stolen credit cards, jewelry, iPod's, gate openers, flashlights and other items. The suspect would find cars that were unlocked; after entering them, he would find a valet key inside the owner's manual. After stealing the car, he would remove the license plate and replace it with a dealer's paper plate from a parked car. He would often park the stolen car in the residential area where he would commit other crimes and then steal another car to leave the area. He would regularly drive by the neighborhood to see if his stolen cars were still there. Officers were able to locate two additional stolen cars the suspect admitted to taking.



## BREAKING NEWS LOS ANGELES RIVER IMPROVEMENTS

The SCRA has learned that planning for bike path and pedestrian improvements for the south side of the river bank between Whitsett Avenue and Coldwater Canyon are complete. Funding is in place; design work is complete. This part of the river bank is part of the flood control district. As a result, Los Angeles County has jurisdiction that will involve the County in a review and as party to an agreement to carry out improvements. This work will complete the bike path from Laurel Canyon to Coldwater Canyon.

### Update from Save LA River Open Space

The L.A. River Natural Park, located on Whitsett, is currently being considered by the Advisory Committee for allocation of state Prop. O funds. Councilmember Krekorian made a strong case to the Advisory Committee to obtain these funds to acquire the property known as Weddington Golf and Tennis. The review is underway by the Committee with a decision expected later this year.

The Save LA River Open Space web site has recently been updated to include new concept renderings for the park, the proposed bicycle hub at the Studio City parking structure and much more information on how to get involved. Log onto [www.savelariveropenspace.org](http://www.savelariveropenspace.org). Feel free to contact Save LA River Open Space at [saveopenspace@slaros.org](mailto:saveopenspace@slaros.org).

## SCRA STOPS ALL THE "BAH HUMBUG" WITH FREE HOLIDAY CELEBRATION EVENT

In order to address the many requests from Studio City families for a free, fun holiday event, the Studio City Residents Association has teamed with the Studio City Recreation Center to bring the community the first-ever Studio City Winter Family Festival

on December, 4, 2011 from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. This celebration will bring snow to Studio City in a winter

The Studio City Residents Association & The Studio City Recreation Center present

PLUS A TASTE OF THE HOLIDAYS

**WINTER FAMILY FESTIVAL**

**BEEMAN PARK STUDIO CITY, CA**

December 4th, 2011 1:30p - 5:30p

**(Continued, Page 4)**

## (Holiday Event, cont'd)

wonderland filled with enjoyable and entertaining activities for all. While the SCRA had rescued the Studio City holiday parade two years ago, both the costs for the parade and manpower needs became prohibitive. At the same time, residents were repeatedly asking for an event that would last longer than the parade had, giving their families the opportunity to spend an afternoon together as the holiday season approached.

From there, the Studio City Winter Family Festival was born. In addition to a snowfield, the event will feature entertainment from many past parade participants, ranging from school bands and choirs to carolers to rock musicians. While plans are currently underway, the organizers are considering a special "Taste of the Holidays" during the afternoon, featuring favorite food samples from area restaurants; arts and crafts for the kids; face painting; an antique car display and more. This year, the event will also feature a special food drive, in which event attendees are asked to bring cans of food as their entry "ticket." Food will be donated to families and food pantries in the area.

Volunteers are welcomed; contact the SCRA office at 818-509-0230. Prospective performers and sponsors are invited to contact Ann Husvar at [annhusvar@keynoteeventsinc.com](mailto:annhusvar@keynoteeventsinc.com) for more information.

## BOB HOPE AIRPORT UPDATE

The Bob Hope Airport has submitted an application to the City of Burbank for a three-year extension of the 2005 Development Agreement between the airport and the city from its current expiration date of June 2012 to 2015. This extension would extend the outreach process and engage members of the community as well as airlines and the Federal Aviation Administration in the process of defining the airport's future.

The vision for the airport includes a variety of issues: meaningful night time noise protection, consideration of public safety improvements to the airport, land use related to airport and airport-adjacent areas, reduction of negative traffic impacts, the need and desire to replace the existing 81-year-old terminal building and similar matters.

The purpose of the outreach is to develop a set of shared goals that can help the airport and the city decide what specific steps and actions they should take in the future with respect to actions and development at the airport. Those steps may or may not involve development of a replacement airport terminal.

Studio City is impacted by the activities and development at Burbank; therefore, the SCRA will give its input on any future dialogue on expansion. The SCRA Airport Committee, with support from Congressman Berman's office, is addressing the possibility of a night time curfew. Helicopter noise is also a

## (Repairs, cont'd)

The SCRA spoke at the hearing, given concerns that the BSS interim director's "final draft" was delivered to the committee members that day. This "final draft" was not part of the file, had not been incorporated into the agenda and, therefore, was not made available for public scrutiny within the time required by The Brown Act. When the joint committee inquired about the SCRA concern, the city attorney said a discussion would be in order. This last-minute action did not give the SCRA time to review the report before the hearing. A copy of the BSS director's report is posted on the SCRA website.

Community Impact Statements (CIS) opposing the proposed code changes have been filed by the Studio City Neighborhood Council and other neighborhood councils.

The SCRA will continue to actively monitor and report on the situation. Any decision by the joint committee will be passed onto the full city council for action.

problem. Congressman Berman has introduced a bill specifically addressing this issue in Los Angeles. For additional information, log on to <http://bobhopeairport.com/august-2011-newsletter>

In a recently released citizen survey conducted on behalf of the City of Burbank, residents were asked, "What would you say is the most important issue facing the City of Burbank?" In 2001, 34 percent responded "airport expansion;" in 2010, that figure dropped to three percent. The 2001 survey identified "airport expansion" as the number-one issue facing the City; last year it was tied for seventh.

## FROM YOUR SCRA BOARD

### Zone Overlay

The SCRA Board reviewed a presentation of the Zone Overlay compromise (or RFA) that will be heard at the City Council Planning and Land Use Committee in September. The SCRA will send a News & Notes update when the Planning and Land Use Management Committee schedules the exact hearing date. The board unanimously voted to accept the compromise. A complete copy of the draft is posted on the SCRA web site on the "Hot Topics" page.

### Board Expansion

As part of the revitalization of the SCRA, the board voted to consider adding a non-voting junior member for the SCRA board. Eligibility rules will be determined and voted on.

### Mayoral Candidate Speaker Series

The SCRA will start its 2013 mayoral candidate speaker series at the September 13, 2011 SCRA Community Meeting with Jan Perry as the first guest. The SCRA will continue to invite all of the candidates to speak to members throughout the year.

# UPDATE AND MODIFICATION TO THE BASELINE MANSIONIZATION ORDINANCE

Los Angeles has been undergoing a remodeling and building boom where the maximum lot coverage for single family residences led to the construction of many "McMansions." In response, the SCRA worked with other organizations and members of the community to develop a "Baseline Mansionization Ordinance" (BMO), limiting the lot coverage to 50 percent and presented it to the City.

During a City Council meeting, without a hearing or input from the public, an amendment passed, increasing the percentage to 60 percent by using a minor design element. The effect was to allow a similar lot coverage and corresponding size of house as before, which was the catalyst for the original BMO. One saving grace was the BMO permitted an "Overlay" that could be applied to modify the requirement of the BMO. The SCRA started the process to have an Overlay applied in the flat land areas of Studio City.

After much discussion and negotiations, the community reached a compromise offered by City Council District 2. The SCRA board and Studio City Against RFA both endorsed the compromise, which is posted on the SCRA website under "Draft Studio City Recommended Ordinance Provisions."

One major achievement was the reduction of the 60 percent lot coverage down to a maximum of 53 percent. In order to get to 53 percent, many design elements have to be complied with that reduce the overall appearance of massing and bulking, limiting the area of flat roof and providing privacy to next door neighbors. The starting point of lot coverage is 33 percent. If a larger house is required, then any incremental

increase can only be achieved by using "bonus options" and complying with other requirements.

The consensus of the majority who worked on the compromise is that it protects those who wish to live in modest sized homes and those who wish to have additional living space. The guiding focus was on limiting the massing and bulking of houses that not only loom over the neighbors, but also impact the look of the street. The SCRA understands other provisions will be added that will provide for posting of the property to describe exactly what is going to be built or remodeled and the basis of that work. The SCRA will keep members informed of this development.

## DON'T MISS OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER/RENEW YOUR SCRA MEMBERSHIP TODAY

SCRA volunteers very much appreciate your support; they put a great deal of time and effort into making Studio City a great place to live. If you have not renewed your SCRA membership, you will not continue to receive the SCRA newsletter. Check the front label: If it still says 6/11, then the SCRA has not received your renewal. You can renew by calling the SCRA office at 818-509-0230 or online at [www.studiocityresidents.org](http://www.studiocityresidents.org). Regular memberships are \$25 per household; seniors are \$10.

The SCRA membership committee sends a welcome package to new Studio City residents with information about the SCRA, the Studio City Beautification Association, Save LA River Open Space and the Farmers Market. If you have a new neighbor who would appreciate receiving this information, leave a message for Carol in the SCRA office at 818-509-0230 with the name and address of your neighbor and your phone number in case the message is unclear.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Alan Dymond

*The SCRA board decided the more SCRA brings articles and information to our members with the facts and not the spin, the better we will serve our members. For example, we recently ran an article on the upcoming redistricting; an op/ed about why filming locally is so important, not only to the industry as a whole but also to those who live, work and run businesses in Studio City; and an op/ed opposing Prop. 23, which would have the effect of gutting California's clean energy bill (AB32) if passed.*

*We also strive to have speakers at our community meetings who can explain the reasons behind actions taken by our elected officials and why certain actions should not be undertaken.*

*To that end, the SCRA board believes it is time to invite mayoral candidates to speak with our members about their candidacy, the direction Los Angeles should be taking and any policy decisions they propose or support. The first mayoral candidate to speak, selected at random, will be Councilmember Jan Perry, who accepted our invitation for September: other candidates will be invited as we get further into the mayor's race. On the federal level, Congressman Howard Berman who presently represents Studio City, will be the speaker for November. Given the proposed redrawing of congressional districts, the SCRA has also extended an invitation to Congressman Brad Sherman as he and Congressman Berman may be in a primary race for the same district.*

*Thank you to all of our members who answered the call to file comments with the Redistricting Commission and copied the SCRA.*

*The SCRA will be keeping a critical eye on whether the City Charter should be changed, making the office of the City Attorney an appointed office by the mayor and the City Council as well as a proposal that would allow advertising in parks. As always, we look forward to hearing from our members as it keeps our organization on its collective toes.*

*Alan Dymond*



# MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEETING

## Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2011

### Agenda

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

**7:30 p.m.** Jan Perry, City  
Councilmember,

**9th District and  
candidate for mayor of  
Los Angeles**

*The SCRA thanks Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn  
for continued support of the monthly  
SCRA Community Meetings*

### 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.*



#### **SCRA Committees**

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

#### **Officers**

Alan Dymond, President  
Mark Batterman, Exec. Vice President  
Bonnie Goodman, Exec. Vice President  
Claudia Freedle, Admin. Vice President  
Connie Elliot, Secretary  
Laura McKinzie, Treasurer

#### **Board Members**

Barry Johnson  
Beth Dymond

Martha Hanrahan  
Steve Hirsh  
Art Howard  
Todd Royal  
Robin Seidel

#### **Immediate Past President**

Art Howard

#### **Beautification Association**

Bill Harmond, Executive Director  
Francesca Corra, Director  
Michael Klausman, Director

#### **Park Advisory Board Liaison**

Mark Batterman

#### **Director of Animal Welfare**

Robin Seidel

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

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

#### **School Liaisons**

Carpenter - Bonnie Goodman  
Oakwood - Tammy Lundgren  
Walter Reed - Bonnie Kalaf

#### **Studio City Farmers Market**

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