



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

*Your Advocate for Studio City*

**March 2009**

## **LARGEST DEVELOPMENT EVER: STATUS REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT AT LANKERSHIM MTA STATION**

As most people are aware, the MTA gave NBC/Universal "first right of refusal" to develop the MTA site at Lankershim Boulevard across from Universal Studios (at the Red Line station) in the vicinity of the 101 Freeway and Ventura Boulevard intersection.

NBC/Universal transferred its rights to Thomas Group Properties, which has developed and proposed the following development plan:

- Building a 24-story tower next to Campo de Cahuenga;
- Building an 11-story studio complex overlooking Campo de Cahuenga;
- Taking a section of South Weddington Park;
- Adding a 5,000 car parking garage; and
- Building an 18-story 300-room hotel (at the current bus turnaround area).

While Mayor Villaraigosa has endorsed the development, many in the community believe the proposal is overwhelming and would generate excessive traffic, not only at Cahuenga Pass, but in all the surrounding communities. Councilmember Tom LaBonge, in whose district the development lies, has expressed the need for a scaled back project. Councilmember Wendy Greuel, who represents Council District Two - outside the footprint of the project - has yet to take a public position. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who sits on the MTA Board, has opposed the project as being too big.

A Draft Environmental Report has been issued. The SCRA, Studio City Neighborhood Council, Communities United for Smart Growth, other organizations and individuals have responded. The City of Los Angeles is required to address the thousands of responses filed in opposition to the plan.

Separately, NBC/Universal is planning a massive expansion on its property on the east side of Lankershim Boulevard (opposite the Red Line station). The City of Los Angeles has refused to combine these two projects into a single Environmental Report, despite the fact NBC/Universal will occupy both sites and the impact of each project is cumulative. The City has thus far not offered an explanation for this approach.

NBC/Universal is in the process of developing a separate Draft Environmental Report for the studio side of Lankershim Boulevard, which will be issued in early 2009. The community will then have an opportunity to respond.

The tentative proposal for the NBC/Universal project includes:

- Building 2,900 homes between the 101 Freeway and the City of Burbank at Barham (taking valuable studio property and turning it into residential);
- Building a hotel at Universal City Walk; and
- Building two 15-story office towers on Lankershim Boulevard.

Alternative plans are also in the works. The community can watch this newsletter and SCRA News & Notes for further developments, including the appropriate time to respond.



# BREAKING NEWS

## Golf & Tennis Update

Members of Save LA River-Studio City Open Space (SLAROS) recently met with the Studio City and Valley Village Neighborhood Councils to present their no-development alternative concept design to the development proposed for the property known as Weddington Golf and Tennis. Both Neighborhood Councils offered their support of SLAROS' taking its vision through the feasibility study phase. SLAROS will next present the concept to the Valley Alliance of Neighborhood Councils, seeking their support.

These Studio City and Valley Village Neighborhood Councils join a growing list of supporters of SLAROS' efforts, which already include Congressman Howard Berman, City Councilmember Wendy Greuel, Mayor of San Fernando Nury Martinez, former L.A. County Supervisor Ed Edelman, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Harvard-Westlake School, the Southern California Chapter of the US Tennis Association, Friends of the L.A. River, Urban Semillas, the Endangered Species and Wildlife Committee of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Sierra Club and Pacoima Beautiful.

## Progress at the Riverwalk



A number of delays have occurred, which has slowed completion of the Riverwalk project, which began in October. These delays were a result, in part, of equipment failure and the holiday period slow down. The crew was pulled off the site temporarily for a week when a backhoe failed and a replacement was not

immediately available. In addition, the footing of one of the retaining walls prevented the project from proceeding as planned. A contingency plan was submitted and agreed upon, with a proposal that all eleven dry wells should drain to the river to achieve complete evacuation of any captured water. In the original plan, only six of the eleven wells would discharge to the river; however in a significant rain event, the other five will take on the run-off rather quickly and will need to be pumped. A recent rain period, while not major in volume, was not significant enough to contraindicate wells with no outlets. This change for the additional work is under review. At the time this newsletter went to press, approximately 400 feet of trench needed to be dug and plumbed and about 1500 feet of plastic needed to be installed. This work will proceed as expeditiously as possible.

The decomposed granite for the jogging path is now stockpiled on-site so it will be readily available when needed. The 3/4 mile-long project site has remained neat and safe since the asphalt was removed the first week of October, 2008.

Completion is contemplated by the end of February, weather permitting, and assuming no further unforeseen or unanticipated events occur.

# IT'S HAPPENING IN STUDIO CITY

## Studio City Branch Library

**Suspenseful Saturday Cinema:** Saturday, March 2, 2009, 3:30-5:30 p.m., "Carnival of Souls, 1962 cult horror flick directed by Herk Harvey

**Resumé and Interviewing Workshop:** Saturday, March 14, 2009, 3:00-5:00 p.m., presented by Susan Neaves, senior human resources generalist

**Friends of the Studio City Library Present Sisters In Crime novelists, Robert Fate and Bruce Cook:** Monday, March 16, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

**Book Sale:** March 28, 2009, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Please bring your own bags or boxes for purchases

**Book Donations:** Every Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

## Studio City Recreation Center

**Senior Exercise Class:** Mondays and Wednesdays beginning March 30 for eight weeks  
Standing, chair exercises and other body-friendly exercises will be taught. \$1.25 per class.  
Accepting registration now: 818 769-4415

## SCRA Committee Meetings

Studio City Beautification Association  
Planning meeting: Saturday, March 21, 2009, 10:00 a.m.  
Room 45, Campbell Hall  
Agenda includes discussion of projects for 2010  
Contact: Bill Harmond, [elhombre@delosangeles.com](mailto:elhombre@delosangeles.com)

# ASK THE SCRA

**Editor's Note:** Email your community questions to [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org)

**Q:** I keep calling about getting my street repaired but nothing happens. What can I do?

**SCRA:** Log onto the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works at <http://www.lacity.org/dpw/dpwhome.htm>. There you will find a schedule of repairs. Look for the particular street in which you are interested. You should be able to find out what type of repair is scheduled - there are about five types - and the estimated date for the repair.

**Q:** What is being done about the new parking meters on Ventura Boulevard? And how many complaints have been received?

**SCRA:** The SCRA office has received numerous complains of many types. The SCRA has joined the Studio City Neighborhood Council, Studio City Chamber of Commerce and the Studio City Business Improvement District to seek a meeting with Councilmember Wendy Greuel to express the concern of all and to explore possible solutions.

## WITH OUR THANKS

All of us at the Studio City Beautification Association thank you for your contributions in 2008. We received \$11,400 from 224 donors!

One hundred percent of donations go to improvements. You will see the fruit of your generosity soon as work begins this year on the Oasis - along Ventura Boulevard across from Marshall's - and Moorpark Parkway opposite Moorpark Park.

## COMMUNITY CRIME REPORT

By Studio City Lead Officer Mike Lewis

In January 2009, the crime numbers in Studio City were the lowest in three years.

Burglary	21	(someone breaks into a house or business and takes property)
BTMV	31	(burglary/theft from motor vehicle)
GTA	10	(grand theft auto - someone steals a car)
Robbery	2	(Property taken by force or fear)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>64</b>	

For the four types of crimes listed above, the Studio City area usually averages 85-100 in one month.

On Wednesday, February 11, 2009, at 1:15 a.m., there was a shooting in the parking lot of Ralph's supermarket at Coldwater Canyon and Ventura. The victim was approached by the suspects who produced a handgun and demanded his money. The victim attempted to fight them off when he was shot in the forearm. It appears this was a bad drug deal, and the victim knows the suspects.

Ron Dresher, who is part of a neighborhood watch group, put these recommendations together to help the community prevent burglaries.

1. Write down ALL suspicious license plates and call the information in to Officer Lewis.
2. Know your neighbors.
3. Create and use a phone tree.
4. Do not keep jewelry in the bedroom.
5. Get the LOUDEST siren available for the home alarm system.
6. Cameras are a great deterrent, including a dummy camera or even a sign saying you have a camera.
7. Put a pair of size 12- boots at your front door to suggest you have a man in or around the house.
8. Put lawn signs and stickers on windows stating the property is protected by an alarm company.
9. Use a broom handle or stick inside a glass sliding door to prevent it from opening.
10. Lock the side gates to your yard.
11. Carry pepper spray.
12. Keep e-mailing the neighbors to alert everyone about everything.
13. Do not put outgoing mail in a home mailbox for pickup.
14. Shred all identity information before putting it in the trash.
15. Shred all credit card offers. Do not just throw them away.
16. Do not leave packages visible in a car, especially over night. Lock items in the trunk. The portable GPS is the number one item stolen from a car.
17. Leave a television or radio on when leaving the house.
18. When away on vacation, stop the newspaper and mail. Tell the neighbors you are gone. Use timers for the lights.

## PREVENT FORGERY AND IDENTITY THEFT WITH TIPS AT SCRA MARCH COMMUNITY MEETING

The SCRA March Community Meeting features Lieutenant Loren Farrell, head of the Forgery and Identity Theft Division of the Van Nuys precinct of the Los Angeles Police Department. With the current state of the economy, identity theft and forgeries are on the rise. Farrell will offer an overview of these crimes and tips about how to spot them and prevent oneself and/or one's business from becoming victimized. In 1994, Officer Farrell, then a nine-year veteran, and his partner Officer Martin Perello, who had served for 18 months, made the initial observation of the infamous North Hollywood Bank of America robbery while on patrol.

The meeting will also feature representatives from North East Trees, a not-for-profit organization founded nearly twenty years ago by Scott Wilson, educator, landscape architect and community activist. This organization has been responsible for planting more than 30,000 trees, creating 35 parks across Los Angeles County and restoring habitat along the Los Angeles River.

North East Trees will be presenting the latest improvements contemplated for the two median strips opposite the park on Moorpark. The proposed project includes tree planting and other improvements. They will also demonstrate why a survey of the streets precludes the installation of a "green street" once under consideration.

The meeting will be held at Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre, 4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City. Members and guests are invited for refreshments at 7:00 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7:30 p.m.



## TO THE MARKET

With March comes a crop of locally grown spring vegetables, including asparagus, artichokes and beautiful spring onions, just to mention a few. Strawberries were

hit hard with the heavy rain, but they are back and better than ever. Kelly Farms is once again at the Studio City Farmers Market; their strawberries are always a hit with customers. New vendors include Sugar Juice, offering pure cane juice in an array of flavors as a healthy alternative to soda. John from a Sharper Edge (knife sharpening) will be at the market every two weeks.

The Studio City Farmers Market is presented jointly by the Studio City Residents Association and the Studio City Chamber of Commerce. Parking is available in the structure at CBS Studios on Radford.

## CALLING ALL SENIORS! HAVE A PROJECT FOR THE SCRA?

This year, on May 3, 2009 - known as Big Sunday - the SCRA will take on a pilot social action program to help Studio City seniors, ages 70+, with much-needed "clean-up" type projects. The SCRA is looking for approximately 10-15 projects in such areas as:

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

A team of hard-working, enthusiastic volunteer teenagers, supervised by adults, will provide the labor on that day. Email the SCRA with projects or to volunteer at [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org) or call the SCRA at 818-509-0230.



## VILLAGE GARDENERS SEEKS PERFORMING ARTISTS

The Village Gardeners seeks local performing artists of all types for Saturday afternoon performances at the Richard Lillard Outdoor Classroom. This setting features an amphitheater hidden alongside the Los Angeles River in Studio City. Contact: Rick Rabins at 818-788-8531 or [info@thevillagegardeners.org](mailto:info@thevillagegardeners.org).

## SCRA WATCH: WORKING FOR A BETTER STUDIO CITY

**Editor's Note:** In this space, we will report about things broken or problems in our community, including information about who is responsible, what has been repaired and who in the City made it happen.



**STILL BROKEN:** 45 days and counting

Studio City tipster Mrs. K. S. reported this broken street light at the corner of Sarah St. and Goodland Ave. to us last month. The SCRA reported it to the Bureau of Street Lighting on 1-20-09. We were told the light would be repaired "...within five to seven business days." That has yet to happen.

Who is in charge: Bureau of Street Lighting, Department of Public Works  
Stan Horwitz, Manager: 311 or 213 847-1476 email: [stan.horwitz@lacity.org](mailto:stan.horwitz@lacity.org)

**BROKEN:** For a long time

SCRA member B.W. reports about the constant pool of standing water at the corner of Whipple Street and Satsuma Avenue, immediately across the street from Rio Vista Elementary School. The pooling water exists rain or shine and is a result of the improper grading of the street from a few years ago. It is a mosquito breeding ground, in addition to being a safety hazard for both pedestrians and students.

This pool of water is in the frequently ignored section of Studio City situated in Councilmember Tom LaBonge's CD-4 district. Despite repeat calls from residents to LaBonge's office, no repairs have been made to date.

Who is responsible: Bureau of Street Services, Department of Public Works  
John Sapone, Acting Division Manager: 311 or 213 847-2999 email: [john.sapone@lacity.org](mailto:john.sapone@lacity.org)  
Alice Roth, CD-4 Deputy District Director, North Hollywood/Toluca Lake email: [alice.roth@lacity.org](mailto:alice.roth@lacity.org)

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**PLEASE BE OUR EYES AND EARS. Is something broken in your neighborhood and not being repaired?**  
Call the SCRA at 818-509-0230 or email: [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org)

## FROM THE SCRA BOARD

The Studio City Chamber of Commerce has voted not to join the SCRA for the December Holiday Parade. The SCRA Board has formed an ad hoc committee to explore the feasibility of the SCRA's carrying on the tradition of the parade by itself.

The Communities United for Smart Growth - a coalition of residents groups that surround MTA/Universal - presented the SCRA Board with an alternative plan to Thomas Properties Group's mammoth proposed development on the MTA/Universal site. This alternative plan will be revised when the second development's Draft Environmental Report is completed on the Universal City Vision Plan.

The Board heard a report on the status of the mature trees on Whitsett Avenue in front of the new Fire Station. Barbara Monahan-Burke and Barry Johnson attended a hearing to argue the mature trees should remain, there are other means

of developing a safe exit from the station that should be explored. The South Valley Area Planning Commission delayed the hearing for 30 days to allow the SCNC to weigh in on the decision. When the Commission takes this item up in 30 days, the public will again have an opportunity to be heard. The tentative date for the new hearing is March 12th, 2009.

The Studio City Overlay is moving through the Los Angeles City Planning Department, which will soon be in a position to hold a required town hall meeting on the issue.

The SCRA Board made the following appointments to the board of the Studio City Beautification Association: Alan Dymond, President; Bill Harmond, Executive Vice President and Executive Director; Laura McKenzie, Treasurer; Connie Elliot, Secretary; Beth Dymond, Director at Large; Claudia Freedle, Director at Large; Francesca Corra, Director at Large; and Rick Rabin, Director at Large. One vacancy remains.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*by Alan Dymond*

"If you build it, they will come." How about, "If you have a forum for the City Attorney's office, they will come?" Our members and guests came at over 100 strong, including FOX News, with their questions and concerns at the recent SCRA City Attorney's Forum held at the February SCRA Community Meeting. All candidates for the seat, with the exception of City Councilmember Jack Weiss, participated. As this message goes to press, the results of the election were not known to the SCRA editorial team. However, the questions offered by SCRA members and guests at the forum remain and require answers and action, not only by the successful candidate, but by all our other elected officials.

On the subject of billboard blight, one candidate suggested having Google provide enhanced satellite images of the City in order to identify all billboards. A cross check could then be made against the records of the Department of Building and Safety, which would identify billboards built pursuant to a permit being issued and those installed without a permit. The engineers and inspectors at Building and Safety know these large billboards have tremendous wind loads, to say nothing of loads imposed by seismic activity. Billboards built without a permit have not had the benefit of an engineering review as is mandated by the City of Los Angeles building codes.

But is the public aware of this? Is the City Council aware of this fact? Doesn't public safety demand each billboard be checked independently by a city engineer in accordance with city ordinances to ensure the billboard complies with city building codes? The Department of Building and Safety must be given the wherewithal and political support to do its job.

SCRA supports the suggestion of using Google or something similar: this approach puts to rest the idea of inspectors walking the streets with pencils and pads looking for and identifying the sites of billboards. And why not ask the Land Use and Planning committees of the Neighborhood Councils, under the guidance of Building and Safety, to see if they would be amenable to conducting a preliminary review of a Google type survey and act as a preliminary filter?

There are many ways solve the problem. We should demand action from our elected representatives, whomever they may be, to put together a task force and start to clean up this mess. One cannot help but notice in driving through the cities adjacent to Los Angeles that there are no forests of billboards. If these cities can do it, why is it so difficult for Los Angeles to get it done?

Members of SCRA reside in three council districts. Councilmember Tom LaBonge, Council District Four, remains in office. There will be a new council member for Council District Five (Jack Weiss' prior seat), and by March 3, it will be known if Wendy Greuel from Council District Two is the new City Controller. So, if you like this idea, please call your respective council member, present and future.

Finally, the SCRA committee that put on the City Attorney's Forum has retained all the questions and has noted the answers and positions conveyed as a basis for future dialogue with our elected officials and to address the concerns and frustrations of our members.

And one big P.S. According to a report in LA Weekly (January 30, 2009 edition), there are 10,000 billboards on Los Angeles' streets, 4,000 of which are illegal. To me that reads "without a permit" and without engineering review and inspection by our Building and Safety folks.

*Alan Dymond*



# MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEETING

## Tuesday, Mar. 10, 2009

Meeting Starts at 7:30 p.m.

### Agenda

**7:00 p.m.** Light refreshments

**7:30 p.m.** - How to Prevent Identity Theft  
and Forgery, Lt. Loren Farrell,  
LAPD

- North East Trees presentation  
about Moorpark median  
improvements

### 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**

Civic  
Crime and Safety  
Membership  
Overlay  
Planning and Land Use  
Studio City History Project

#### **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**

Beth Dymond  
Bill Harmond

Steve Hirsh  
Bonnie Kalaf  
Andrea Neumann  
Tiffany Petroc  
Robin Seidel

#### **Immediate Past President**

Art Howard

#### **Beautification Association**

Bill Harmond, Executive Director  
Francesca Corra, Director  
Rick Rabins, Director

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

Mark Batterman

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

Robin Seidel

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

Co-Chairs  
David Burg, Laurie Cohn, Alan Dymond,  
Kathy Hassett, Steve Hirsh, Art Howard  
SaveLARiverOpenSpace@studiocityresidents.org

#### **School Liaisons**

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

#### **Studio City Farmer's Market**

Manager: Carol Gallegos (818) 656-7744  
studiocityfarmersmarket@yahoo.com

#### **Newsletter**

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