



# STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Your Advocate for Studio City

Aug - Sept 2010

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## MANSIONIZATION UPDATE



On July 22, 2010, the City Planning Commission considered the issue of whether to recommend to City Council the adoption of a Floor Area Ratio for the flatlands of Studio City and, if so, what the extent and scope of such a Floor Area Ratio should be.

This hearing finally occurred after many years of work by the SCRA. Efforts have focused on curtailing and bringing some sense of order to the proliferation of "mansions" being built on lots that are too small to carry such large houses and the impacts on those who live next to these large out-of-scale developments.

In response to the initial Planning Department staff report, the SCRA met with those in opposition under the auspices of Councilmember Kerkorian's office. However, it became readily apparent that a FAR would get no support through the opposition and that the size of buildings would remain up to 0.60 (meaning 60 percent of the size of the lot size would be living space; some are actually built at 64 percent).

Following the initial staff report, the Planning Department held numerous public hearings. In addition, in an attempt to gain resolution on the matter, Councilmember Paul Kerkorian and his staff met on many occasions both with those in favor of the FAR and those opposed to it.

The Planning Department produced a Supplemental Staff Report for the review and action by the commission. The alternate RFA Proposal in the Supplemental Report would allow a FAR of 0.53 on a lot consisting of 5,000 square feet minimum as long as the builder adopted three measures: 1) include three 24-inch box trees together with 20 15-gallon shrubs, 2) Add window trim not less than nine inches deep; and 3) Build with energy-saving applications. Having adopted these measures, the builder could then build to 53 percent living space. The SCRA filed papers in protest to these conditions with the commissioners and with Councilmember Kerkorian, stating none of these measures would do anything to soften or mitigate the size of the house, to say nothing of putting 53 percent living space on small lots. The SCRA also spoke out in protest to other alternate proposals.

Instead, the SCRA proposed a compromise of a FAR of 0.45, provided that certain design elements were part of the FAR so that the massing and bulking were softened and mitigated. These design elements had been applied

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## SEPTEMBER SCRA COMMUNITY MEETING TO FEATURE COUNCILMEMBER PAUL KREKORIAN



The SCRA welcomes Councilmember Paul Kerkorian as guest speaker at the association's September 14, 2010 Community Meeting. Fresh from intense discussions and the development of recommendations on the issues of mansionization facing Studio City, Councilmember Kerkorian will update SCRA members and guests on his perspectives regarding the quality of life and other challenges facing the community.

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

## (Mansionization, cont'd)

quite successfully in other parts of the City in the planning process.

In response to the SCRA's concerns, Councilmember Kerkorian provided recommendations to the Planning Commissioners that incorporated and addressed the issues raised: one in particular was eliminating the use of two 24-inch box trees and 30 shrubs so the builder could qualify for a larger FAR. A bonus for utilizing energy-saving devices remained despite SCRA objection that these devices may provide cost savings to the occupant but would not have any bearing on the bulking and massing. Many other suggestions offered by the SCRA were noted in some form or other and were incorporated into the recommendations. The Councilmember addressed all aspects of the issue of "mansionization" in a comprehensive manner; as a result, the SCRA endorsed the Councilmember's recommendations to the commissioners

The Planning Director from the Councilmember's office made the case that the recommendations be adopted as an equitable resolution of the issues. However, the commissioners did not adopt the Councilmember's recommendations other than to incorporate a provision that balconies that abut houses shall not be permitted, except in certain circumstances. Thereafter, the commissioners adopted the Alternate RFA Proposal by the Planning Department: the matter now passes from the purview of the commissioners and goes forward for consideration to the Planning and Land Use Management Committee of the City Council. Later, it will be presented to the full City Council.

SCRA members who would like to see a copy of the recommendations by Councilmember Kerkorian can contact the SCRA office for a digital version or log onto [www.scnc.info](http://www.scnc.info).

## 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:** Can residential properties be used for commercial purposes? Recently, I saw an advertisement for a party at a house where there was an entry fee and a cash-only bar.

**SCRA:** Residential properties can be used for commercial purposes on a very limited basis, for example, for limited office use. Check with the local zoning office for any anticipated business activity. A permit may have been obtained for the party from the Alcoholic Beverage Control and other authorities with appropriate jurisdiction.

**Q:** What can be done about the abandoned construction at 11448 Canton Drive? The property has been vacant since December 2008. The fence is down, lumber is being removed by those who have no right to it, and the debris is piling up, creating a fire hazard.

**SCRA:** The SCRA understands the builder's funding was terminated



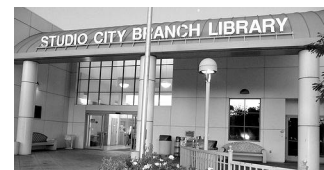
as a result of a bank buy out, and the property taken over by a bank. We advised our member who asked this question to contact Councilmember Paul Kerkorian's office to report the problem. She was told on July 1, 2010 that they would refer the matter to the proper department. In a follow-up call on July 15, 2010, she was told it takes time to get an inspector to the property. On July 24, 2010, our member called the Los Angeles Fire Department to report the hazard. She was informed the Fire Department would be out to look at the site the same day. They did visit the site and referred the matter to the Department of Building and Safety for action. Councilmember Kerkorian's office continues to investigate actions the City can undertake to correct the problem.

## CITY BUDGET CONSTRAINTS IMPACT STUDIO CITY LIBRARY HOURS

Effective July 18, 2010, the Studio City Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library has new hours:

Monday:	CLOSED
Tuesday :	12:30-8:00 p.m.
Wednesday :	10 a.m.-5:30 pm
Thursday:	12:30-8:00 p.m.
Friday:	10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Saturday:	10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Closed Sundays and Holidays	

The library is located at:  
12511 Moorpark St.  
Studio City, CA 01604  
818-755-7873



## MEDICAL MARIJUANA UPDATE

Many collectives selling medical marijuana have opened in the City of Los Angeles without permits. The Medical Marijuana Collective ordinance (effective June 7, 2010) limits the growing and distribution of marijuana to members of a collective who have a doctor's order for marijuana to be used for pain relief. It prohibits the sale of marijuana for profit, and restricts distribution to members of the collective. The collectives are prohibited from operating in proximity to a park, house of worship or a school: they have to be at least 1,000 feet from these locations.

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## TO THE MARKET

A trip to the Studio City Farmers Market offers fresh air, a fabulous kids section and lots of sun-ripened fruits and vegetables, including

gourmet popsicles made with ingredients from featured farmers. The Studio City Farmers Market introduced new vendor "Chill" Frozen Yogurt, a local company with the best frozen yogurt around. Stone fruits are here, and their sweet flavors reflect an exceptional season. Tennerelli Farms is back; and the quality of their fruit never disappoints. Look for the colorful peppers, which have just arrived, along with melons; figs, and cantaloupes.

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.

### (Marijuana, cont'd)

The City is not certain that all collectives, which must close their doors pursuant to the Medical Marijuana Collective ordinance, have been notified.

SCRA members who believe a collective or other outlet is operating in violation of the ordinance should email the location information to [atty.medicalmarijuana@lacity.org](mailto:atty.medicalmarijuana@lacity.org).

## PROGRESS AT SPORTSMEN'S LODGE

The Sportsmen's Lodge has presented a new proposal to the SCRA for a gym totaling 30 thousand square feet that would be located at the southeast corner of the lot fronting Ventura Blvd. This gym, which would be operated by Equinox would extend partway towards the back of the lot and exists on two floors, the top floor being larger so as to provide access to the rear parking lot under an overhang of the floor above. The height of the building at Ventura Blvd is 28 ft. 6 inches, which is well within the height limitation of 30 feet imposed by the Cahuenga Pass/Ventura Blvd. Specific Plan. However, the rear of the building will be 33 feet. This increase in height at the rear is permitted under the Specific Plan as an "allowable adjustment" given the slope of the lot. No mechanical equipment will be visible on the roof as it will be hidden in a well set below roof level.



Parking will be on a shared basis with the other facilities, subject to review and approval by the city authorities. This "shared parking" is based on an analysis of the staggered hours of use by different categories of visitors, e.g.,

parking by those visiting the gym, which differs from parking by those attending hotel functions.

The Lodge Banquet facility and the hotel are staying open and will remain so under the present proposal. Ground-breaking for the project is anticipated for the second quarter of 2011. Further design considerations may take place. The SCRA will monitor activities and will report any further developments to its members.

## LOS ANGELES RIVER STATUS PROVIDES SUPPORT TO SAVE WEDDINGTON PROPERTY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently declared the Los Angeles River channel as "traditional navigable waters." This designation, although seemingly a bit esoteric given the current condition of the river, is highly relevant to the ongoing efforts to preserve the Weddington Golf and Tennis property from development.

The Los Angeles River is under the jurisdiction of the Army Corp of Engineers; however, the EPA invoked its authority to decide which lead agency would determine whether the Los Angeles River was navigable. The EPA, pursuant to its authority, decided the EPA would be the lead agency to make this decision, and, thereafter, it determined the Los Angeles River was navigable. With that classification, the River and all the streams, channels and creeks that drain into it would have to adhere to and comply with the provisions of the Clean Water Act.

The decision that mandates the River and its tributaries comply with the Clean Water Act ties in with the proposal for this site developed by SCRA sister association, Save Los Angeles River Open Space. That proposal, in part, captures surface water runoff in excess of 160 acres, cleans it before it empties into the river and then stores any excess runoff in the San Fernando Valley aquifer for future use: all of these aspects of the proposal are significant elements in the efforts to keep this space as a valley wide resource for all. The decision by the EPA and the mandated adherence to the Clean Water Act confirms this proposal is truly viable. It is a positive step in plans that call for creating Los Angeles River Natural Park on the golf and tennis site, preserving recreational uses and augmenting them with an approach to improve water quality and, ultimately, preserve the quality of life in Studio City.

## SCRA SAYS FAREWELL TO LONG-TIME SCRA VOLUNTEER, BETTY SCHMALHAUSEN

Regrettably, Bette Schmalhausen, a dedicated SCRA member and office volunteer, will be leaving the SCRA on September 1, 2010. Many SCRA members have known and worked with Bette

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**(Bette, cont'd)**

over the years and will miss her. She was one of the association's hardest-working team members. For many years, Bette handled the membership database, keeping the SCRA's records up-to-date and accurate and ensuring all members received the SCRA newsletter and News & Notes e-blast. Bette made sure all paid dues were accurately recorded, and also revamped and maintained the office filing system. The SCRA Board wishes Bette all the best and thanks her for her many years of service to the community.

## IT'S HAPPENING IN STUDIO CITY

**North Hollywood Park**  
**NW corner of Magnolia Street & Cahuenga Avenue near**  
**Amelia Earhart Statue**

**North Hollywood Historic Walking Tour:** Saturday, August 7, 2010 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. A two and one-half hour walking tour of historic sites, including the Amelia Earhart statue, 1927 Library, 1896 Southern Pacific Depot, El Portal Theatre and more. To RSVP or for more information, call 818-347-9665 or email: [TheMuseumSFV@gmail.com](mailto:TheMuseumSFV@gmail.com).

**River Center**  
**570 W Ave. 26, Los Angeles 90065 (near the**  
**intersection of the 5 and 100 freeways)**

**HiddenLA LA River Tour:** Two Sundays: August 22 & August 29, 2010, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (can leave midday). Meet at 8:00 a.m. sharp for 8:30 a.m. departure with carpools formed. Walk and drive along the River and learn about its central role in the City's history and the necessity of the ambitious revitalization for the future of Los Angeles. \$25 adults/\$20 students, \$5 kids. Group rate available. Space is limited; advance sign-up is required. For more info or to sign up, visit <http://hiddenlosangeles.com>.

**Monthly Book Sale:** Saturday, July 31, 2010, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Varied selection of books, DVD's, videos, CD's and more. Please bring bags or boxes for purchases.

**St. Michael's Church**  
**3646 Coldwater Canyon Ave. in Studio City**

**Fundraiser for Art in Local Schools:** Saturday, August 21, 2010, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Performances by musicians, helping local schools raise money to purchase art supplies and musical instruments. Presented by Hike It Up, which is a nonprofit 501c3. Voluntary tax-deductible donation at the door; checks and cash only. Credit card donations can be made via [www.hikeitup.org](http://www.hikeitup.org). Contact Haig Mkhoian at [hikeitup@live.com](mailto:hikeitup@live.com).

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

**Book Donations:** Every Saturday, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. Accepting used books in "good enough condition for resale,"

as well as videos, CDs, DVD's and books on tape. No textbooks please.

**Monthly Book Sale:** Saturday, August 28, 2010 and Saturday, September 25, 2010, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Varied selection of books, DVD's, videos, CD's and more. Please bring bags or boxes for purchases.

**Studio City/ Beeman Park**  
**12621 Rye Street (on Rye St & Beeman)**

**Senior Exercise Class:** Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9:00-10:00 a.m. for all seniors, 55 to 95. Join this fun class and exercise the whole body. Includes chair exercises. The class meets outdoors by the basketball courts in August and continues inside the gym in September. For more information, call the park at 818-769-4415 or Marge at 818-763-6779.



## STUDIO CITY SALUTES REPUBLIC PICTURES' 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The Cultural Affairs Committee of the Studio City Neighborhood Council and the Museum of the San Fernando Valley – a 503 (c) 3 – are presenting to the public, free of charge, a 75th anniversary celebration of Republic Pictures on Saturday, September 25, 2010, from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at the former Republic Studios lot, CBS Studio Center, 4204 Radford Avenue, Studio City CA 91604. Stars such as Adrian Booth, Anne Jeffreys, Peggy Stewart and Hugh O'Brian are slated to attend. Leonard Maltin, the famed film critic, will moderate one of the star panels.

Festivities include screenings of Republic films, serials and trailers; live performances of swing and western music; entertainment by gun spinners, rope twirlers, trick horses and cowboy poets; and a diverse collection of memorabilia. In addition, the event will include a speakers forum with prominent industry experts and Republic celebrities, who will discuss a range of topics, from creating sci-fi special effects to tales of working at Republic Pictures. Attendees will also enjoy a special Republic Pictures stamp cancellation ceremony of the U.S. Postal Service's Cowboys of the Silver Screen postage stamps, which will be available for sale.

Two other events will celebrate the Republic Pictures 75th Anniversary. On September 15, 2010, the Egyptian Theatre will present a double-feature of Republic Pictures films, starting at 7:30 p.m. Check [www.americancinematheque.com/indexegyptian.html](http://www.americancinematheque.com/indexegyptian.html) for ticket prices. On September 21, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., the Studio City Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library welcomes Marc Wanamaker as he speaks to guests on the history of Studio City and Republic Pictures; there is no charge for attendance.

For the latest updates go to [www.republicpictures75th.com](http://www.republicpictures75th.com) and the Republic Pictures' 75th Anniversary Event page on Facebook.



## STUDIO CITY DASH REMAINS

Thanks to SCRA members Mildred & Joe Higgins, Barbara Monahan Burke and Barry Johnson, among others, Studio City will continue to be served by the Studio City/Van Nuys Dash bus. This team was successful in persuading the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) not to eliminate this popular means of local transportation. Instead, LADOT reduced service by 33 percent on August 2, which means buses will operate every 30 minutes instead of every 20 minutes. This is the actual compromise offered up by SCRA members. These SCRA members, along with hundreds from all over Los Angeles, were also successful in reducing the fare increase on August 2 from 25 to 35 cents this year, with an increase to 50 cents in the next fiscal year. The LADOT had wanted to increase the fare from 25 cents fare to 50 cents this year and to 75 cents in the next fiscal year.

## TIME TO UPDATE THE SCRA WEB SITE

The SCRA web site will be down from August 30-September 10, 2010 for a refresh. The new site will be more user-friendly and be a more frequently updated and convenient source of information for members about matters in Studio City. The updated site will respond to suggestions from the SCRA Board and SCRA committees as well as input from SCRA members. The SCRA Board thanks members for their patience as it does just a bit of "construction" to improve the web site.

## STUDIO CITY HELPS "RESCUE" THE FIRE FIGHTERS

Thank you to the SCRA members who responded to the request for treadmills for the fire fighters at the Whitsett fire station. Although they had requested "industrial strength" treadmills given anticipated heavy use, the fire fighters were able to trade in those that were donated and apply their value to the cost of an "industrial treadmill," similar to the ones used in gyms.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Alan Dymond

*The proposed overlay for Studio City, whose purpose is to control Mansionization, has moved into the next phase as is reported elsewhere in this newsletter. In addition to recognizing and appreciating the efforts of Councilmember Kerkorian who worked to formulate a resolution, the SCRA would like to thank all those SCRA members who put in countless hours and funded at personal cost the dollars needed to produce and present the SCRA position to the City Commissioners and the Council District 2 office. Four members get special mention: Barry Johnson, Lisa Sarkin, Rita Villa and Barbara Monahan Burke. All spent countless hours in research and meetings in addition to their other volunteer duties and commitments. It is thanks to these four individuals, along with other members who took time to give encouragement and make follow-up calls, that the SCRA remains a positive force in maintaining Studio City for what it is today.*

*There is some other exciting news to report: the designation of the Los Angeles River as a navigable river. The impact of this decision will be felt for many generations to come. Now, development has to be responsible, more than an eye to the bottom line, and the River will once again become a vital force for Los Angeles, not just a concrete lined conduit to transport storm water and trash to the ocean.*

*The SCRA must be doing something right. To date, membership renewal drive is experiencing record number of renewals. Usually the renewals come in over a few months. However, within four weeks of commencement of the renewal period, there was a 50 percent response, with increased donations over and above the regular membership fees. And the rate of renewal is not showing any sign of slowing down. Thank you to all who have renewed their membership. Welcome aboard any first-time members.*

*The SCRA board and its committees will be back and refreshed from their summer vacations with a Community Meeting on September 14, 2010 featuring City Councilmember Paul Kerkorian. Members will continue to be notified of breaking news in our great community via the SCRA's News & Notes eblast as well as future editions of this newsletter.*

*Alan Dymond*



**MONTHLY  
COMMUNITY MEETING**

**Tuesday, Sept. 14, 2010**

- 7:00 p.m.** Light refreshments.  
Meet your neighbors  
and friends.
- 7:30 p.m.** Presentation + Q&A  
with City Councilmember  
Paul Kerkorian.

**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.*



**HELP WANTED:  
VOLUNTEER FOR SCRA  
OFFICE VOLUNTEER**

The SCRA is looking for an office volunteer who can work in its Studio City office on Ventura Place on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 a.m.-noon. (The actual hours can be adjusted as needed.) The job includes answering the phone, forwarding messages and some light computer work. The volunteer should be familiar with Microsoft Word and have a basic knowledge of computer functions; Internet knowledge is not necessary. The computer work will involve updating membership status and making changes to members' addresses. The current volunteer is available to train the new volunteer and will be available for any follow-up questions. Interested persons should email the SCRA at [scraboard@studiocityresidents.org](mailto:scraboard@studiocityresidents.org) or call the office at 818-509-0230.

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