

SHPOA

Shadow Hills Property Owners Association

Dedicated to Preserving Rural Community

Volume 34, Issue 3

A Neighborhood Where Families Grow



May-June 2011

FARMERS' MARKET OPENS IN SUNLAND!

The Sunland and Tujunga communities now have their own Farmers' Market!

The Sunland-Tujunga Community Open Air Certified Farmers Market celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony on February 13th. Located at the Sunland Mall, 8307 Foothill Blvd. (at Scoville) in Sunland, the market is open every Sunday from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Parking is in the back parking lot (enter off Grenoble St. at Oro Vista).

With over 22 vendors, the market features an assortment of organic and pesticide-free fresh fruits and produce, flowers, bakery goods, antiques, jewelry, crystals, crafts and more! For the kids, there's a kids' zone with a petting zoo, pony rides and jumpers. For those who enjoy swap meets and garage sales or have items to be re-homed, there is a community market.

Owner Manny Hernandez looks forward to more local participation as news about the Farmers' Market spreads. While at the Market, be sure to say 'hi' to Manny. You'll find him cooking up some finger-lickin' good funnel cake and kettle corn. If you would like to get more information about becoming a vendor, or to reserve a spot at the community market, contact Manny at 818-447-5191 or by email: mbc43007@yahoo.com. A 10'x10' space rents for \$25.

Solicitors to Carry Valid ID - Part 1

by Elektra Kruger

Residents have expressed concern that people have posed as individuals engaged in legitimate door-to-door charitable or commercial solicitations while scrutinizing homes with the intent to commit burglaries in the future. The City does have regulations covering door-to-door solicitors, but they relate only to collection of taxes and fees. Powers of enforcement lies only with the Office of Finance.

Although persons engaged in charitable solicitation must carry an Identification Card indicating that the charity they represent is properly registered with the City and State, persons soliciting for commercial purposes are not legally required to carry any paperwork indicating legitimacy of the business they claim to represent. Additionally, while the Identification Card that a person representing a charitable organization is required to show proper registration with the City and State, no person representing a charitable organization or a business need carry any form of valid PERSONAL identification.

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Verdugo Mt. Park - Sunrise to Sunset

by Elektra Kruger

Verdugo Mountain Park is located south of La Tuna Canyon Rd. The Department of Recreation and Parks has requested that the park's operating hours be limited to a "sunrise-to-sunset" policy. To honor this request, in mid-April 2011, Councilmember Paul Krekorian presented a Motion to City Council asking that the hours of operation for Verdugo Mountain Park be restricted to opening one hour before sunrise and closing one hour after sunset. The Motion also proposed that the Department of Recreation and Parks be directed to prominently display park hours and that the Los Angeles Park Rangers enforce the new hours seven days a week.

The Motion was referred straight to Council for a vote. SHPOA will let you know if and when the Motion is approved and when the new hours become effective.

Ease Approvals for Parking Lot Permeable Paving

by Elektra Kruger

Currently, the Zoning Code only allows for permeable paving to be installed in driveways with special approval. Getting permission to use a permeable surface on parking lot areas currently calls for a more involved approval process. There is now a proposed Ordinance on the radar which would streamline approvals for installation of permeable paving in parking lot areas as well as driveways.

This proposed Ordinance has arisen from an increased interest in "green building techniques". So what exactly is "permeable paving"? It is a ground-covering material capable of supporting vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic while still allowing for run-off water to pass through and infiltrate either into the ground eventually recharging the aquifer or infiltrating into a specially designed water capture area to be reused at a future time on-site.

Impervious paving merely causes rain and other sources of water run-off to gather surface pollutants as it flows into the stormwater drainage system eventually carrying those pollutants into our waterways and, ultimately, to the ocean. On April 21, 2011 a hearing was scheduled at City Hall. Following the hearing, the Hearing Officer, along with the assistance of the City's Code Studies staff, will finalize a report and forward a recommendation to be considered by the City Planning Commission at a later date. SHPOA will keep you updated on the progress of this proposal.

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Proposed Amended Fees for Animal Services - Part 4

by Elektra Kruger

In late March 2009, the Office of the City Attorney submitted a draft Ordinance to City Council related to amending a number of sections in the Los Angeles Municipal Code dealing with fees charged for a variety of services rendered by the Department of Animal Services. Currently, the Code authorizes the Department of Animal Services to establish a clinic at which the public may have dogs and cats spayed or neutered for a \$28 fee.

The new Ordinance, if approved, would increase Department-operated Clinic spay/neuter procedures to \$40 and provide language by which fees may be altered in the future. Also, currently the Code waives spay/neuter fees for cats owned by "very low income" persons aged 62 or older specifying that "very low income" to be those with an annual income less than \$11,500. The new Ordinance, if approved, would delete reference to the \$11,500 and define "very low income" as the annual Housing and Development Department's definition of "very low income" which may change annually.

The Los Angeles Municipal Code makes it illegal to operate a kennel, pet shop, zoo, animal grooming parlor, stable, pony ride, circus, rodeo, pet show, etc. in the City of Los Angeles without first obtaining an annual permit from the Department of Animal Services. The new Ordinance, if approved, would change the fee schedule for each of those permits and would also provide language that would allow for amending those fees in the future.

At its mid-April 2009 meeting, the City Council's Budget and Finance Committee reviewed the City Attorney's Draft Ordinance. The Committee approved the Draft Ordinance as written and forwarded it to the full City Council for their vote recommending approval. No Neighborhood Council citywide commented on the proposed increases in Department of Animal Services' fees or new procedures for "enhanced responsiveness to and regular modifications to fee and permit costs as needed". Opposition to some aspects of the new Draft Ordinance was submitted by the Animal Issues Movement.

To be continued in a future SHPOA newsletter.

Cargo Bikes?

by Elektra Kruger

Although the California Vehicle Code permits use of front-mounted cargo units or front-mounted child seats on bicycles, child seats are still restricted to the rear of the operator in the Los Angeles Municipal Code. Local codes may be more restrictive than State Codes - just not less, so to retain our current code would not be "politically incorrect". However, transportation by bicycle is becoming more popular in the City and the idea of introducing European style front-mounted cargo units or child seats is becoming more popular.

In recognition of this, in mid-March 2011, Councilmember Ed Reyes presented a Motion to City Council requesting that the Council ask the City Attorney to prepare and present a Draft Ordinance repealing the City restriction

continued on page 4

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Banning "Open Carry" of Guns

by Elektra Kruger

In January of 2011, there were a series of incidents in both California and Arizona which once again brought forth the threat to public safety posed by easy access to guns. Currently, California has an "open carry" law permitting state residents to carry a firearm as long as it is holstered and unloaded. This is, however, intimidating to the public, continues to be a threat to public safety as ammunition may be kept on the holster and is a drain on law enforcement resources which must ensure "open carry" guns are indeed unloaded per State law.

Efforts to ban the "open carry" of unloaded handguns are already underway at the State level which would prohibit carrying handguns in public places. In the interest of limiting public exposure to firearms and conserving strained law enforcement resources, in late January 2011, Councilmember Eric Garcetti presented a Motion to City Council asking that the City Attorney be requested to prepare a report on the feasibility and legality of banning the "open carry" of handguns in the City.

The item was referred straight to City Council by-passing the usual review by the Council's Public Safety Committee. The item was first agendized to the January 28, 2011 City Council meeting, however, was continued to March 2, March 23, March 30 and then April 2. This was a "hot-button" issue. SHPOA will keep you abreast of the progress/outcome of this Motion.

Shadow Hills Property Owners Association

SHPOA

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Cargo Bikes?

Continued from pg 2

of - and grant permission for - front-mounted child bicycle seats thereby bringing the City's Code into consistency with the newly revised State Code. The size of the payload would be limited only by the strength of the rider with some European cargo bikes having been known to carry as many as four children. There are some very definite safety advantages to front-mounted child seats: better control of the bike when loading or unloading a child and keeping an eye on what the little monster is up to at all times.

The Motion was brought before the City Council's Transportation Committee in mid-March 2011 at which time a representative from the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition testified in favor of the Motion. The Committee did recommend that the City Council request the City Attorney to prepare the Draft Ordinance amending the LAMC to allow for the use of European-style cargo bikes and front-mounted child bicycle seats. The Motion was scheduled to be heard in City Council in late April.

SHPOA will apprise you of whether or not the Motion was approved in Council and, if approved, when it will become effective.



Prevent Roots in your Sewer Lines

by Elektra Kruger

The City of Los Angeles operates the largest wastewater collection system (sewer system) in the United States - more than 6,600 miles of mainline sewers under our streets over a 600 square mile service area serving over 4 million people. In addition to this, there are also approximately 11,000 miles of private lateral sewer lines throughout the City - these are the sewer pipes that carry wastewater from your home to the public sewer in the street.

As a private property owner, you are responsible for maintaining lateral sewer pipes and failing to do so can be costly. The most common cause of major collapse of lateral sewer lines is blockages caused by roots entering the pipes through small cracks or pipe joints which, in time, create a root mass inside the pipe that becomes matted with paper and other solid matter that eventually totally clogs the sewer line. It would be wise to learn where the lateral sewer line runs across your property and to avoid planting trees near the line.

Times to suspect that there may be a sewer blockage is when drains begin to flow slowly, the toilet begins to make gurgling sounds or you notice wet areas around your washing machine floor drain. The most common methods used to remove roots from sewer pipes is to use augers and saws augmented with commercial herbicides to kill roots and inhibit re-growth. Companies performing lateral sewer pipe inspections and root removal can be found in the Yellow Pages under the heading of "Sewer" or "Plumbing". It doesn't hurt to get more than one quote for a root clearing job and ALWAYS hire a licensed plumber - a sewer line damaged by an untrained person can be VERY costly to repair/replace.



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Solicitor Identification Rules *Continued from pg 1*

In recognition of the ease with which this opens the door to criminal activity, in late June 2009, Councilmember Jack Weiss presented a Motion to City Council requesting that door-to-door solicitors be required to carry not only proof of a legitimate business/charitable purpose, but also be required to carry valid personal identification thereby limiting the ability of solicitors to defraud the public and enhancing the ability of the City to prosecute wrongdoers. The Motion called for the City Attorney to prepare and present a Draft Ordinance which would add to our Municipal Code:

- All persons over the age of 16 engaged in door-to-door solicitations must carry a valid, government-issued photo ID.
- Hours of solicitation is to be limited to the hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Require all persons engaging in door-to-door solicitations for commercial purposes to carry a valid Business Tax Registration Certificate and government-issued Identification Card which must be produced upon request by any person being solicited, any police officer or any person employed by an agency dealing with regulatory enforcement of such solicitations.

The Motion was referred to the City Council's Public Safety Committee for their review and recommendations. SHPOA will keep you posted on this Motion's progress.

**Watch That Ficus Tree: Don't Trip! - Part 4**

by Elektra Kruger

In mid-January 2010, the Bureau of Street Services (BSS) provided a report to the City Council's Public Works Committee in response to a Motion introduced by Councilmember Jan Perry in mid-October 2006 regarding conflicts between Ficus trees (the Indian Laurel Fig), sidewalks and other infrastructure.

One part of the Motion was a request to have the Department of Public Works review the feasibility of establishing a pilot program allowing individual Council Districts to issue permits for annual removal of a limited number of Ficus trees. The BSS report stated that tree removal decisions are not to be contingent upon a tree species, but upon the factors precipitating the removal request and evaluating all options short of tree removal.

The urban forest is a key component in ameliorating the negative environmental impacts that come with an ever-increasing human population and typical urban design and, as such, the street tree population should not be taken lightly. Allowing City Council District offices or any other body outside of the LAMC mandated Board of Public Works the discretion of removing Indian Laurel Fig trees would not be in the best interest of the City and should be denied. The

continued on page 14

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Electric Carts for Sidewalk Patrols

by Elektra Kruger

In late February 2010, Chief of Police Charlie Beck sent an interdepartmental correspondence to the Board of Police Commissioners asking that they support a recommendation that the City enact an Ordinance authorizing the use of electric carts on sidewalks by law enforcement officers while on duty. The police department had begun using T3 electric vehicles - a three-wheeled

electric cart - to complement traditional foot-beat patrols, because their elevated design improves visibility. Now, the carts are restricted to roadways, as California Vehicle Code does not permit the operation of electric carts on public sidewalks. However it does permit exemptions if local Ordinances are approved to permit the use of such vehicles by limited and specifically designated persons including State and local government employees.

In addition to enhancing sidewalk foot patrols, the T3 carts are well-suited for navigating narrow streets, alleyways, malls, parks, school campuses, facility grounds, transportation platforms and entertainment venues. Current restrictions of the T3's usage diminish their usefulness by reducing mobility, visibility of pedestrian traffic and the ability to apprehend a criminal suspect on foot, as well as increasing safety hazards to officers. By allowing a T3 to operate on sidewalks, courtyards, plazas, etc., officers can then determine if it is safe enough to travel on the roadway or if he/she could travel safely and efficiently on a surface such as a sidewalk.

The recommendation was approved by the Board of Police Commissioners in early March 2010. The City Council's Public Safety Committee considered the recommendation during their late March meeting at which time they requested that the City Attorney prepare a Draft Ordinance to be submitted to the Committee for their review. The Draft Ordinance was prepared by the City Attorney's Office and was reviewed by the Public Safety Committee during their late January 2011 meeting at which time they approved the draft and recommended that the City Council also adopt the Ordinance “amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code to permit law enforcement officers to operate electric vehicles/carts on public sidewalks while in the course of their employment.”



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Farmers' Markets in Residential Zones? - Part 1

by Elektra Kruger

The Public Hearing process to permit Farmers' Markets, like permitting processes for most projects, can be cumbersome - especially for non-profit entities that may not be fully familiar with the land-use application process. In the interest of providing local communities easy access to fresh foods, fruits and vegetables, Councilmember Herb Wesson felt that the City should streamline the Farmers' Market permitting process and allow Farmers' Markets by-right in residential zones for non-profit organizations. He was of the opinion that to do so would allow non-profits to expeditiously provide fresh food, fruits and vegetables to all communities, especially those that are economically "challenged".

In mid-November 2010, he presented a Motion to City Council asking that they request the Planning Department and City Attorney to review the feasibility of allowing non-profits to obtain a permit by-right for Farmers' Markets in Residential Zones without the need for a Zoning Administrator's Hearing or any other discretionary action. In early April 2011, the Planning Department submitted a report to the City Council's Planning and Land-Use Management Committee in which they recommended amending the Los Angeles Municipal Code to incentivize Farmers' Markets throughout the City with some defined land-use controls.

Currently, Farmer's Markets are not permitted by-right in any zone. When approved by a Zoning Administrator in a Public Hearing, Farmers' Markets may be permitted in agricultural zones, commercial zones, manufacturing zones, public parks and in church or school parking lots in residential zones - basically away from neighborhood streets. Though permitted in these areas if approved by a Zoning Administrator, the Determination Process can still be time-consuming and is a barrier to those wishing to establish a Farmers' Market.

Currently, permitting a Farmer's Market outside these allowable zones would require a Variance - an even greater time consuming and expensive process. While permitting Farmers' Markets by-right in residential zones could be incompatible with most neighborhoods due to potential noise, increased traffic, trash, inadequate parking and public safety issues, there may still be some locations within residential zones that work and could be permitted through the Conditional Use process, a process which would require land-use studies, local resident input and defined conditions of operation to assure compatibility.

To be continued in a future issue of the SHPOA Newsletter.

Is Your Pet's Micro-Chip Up-To-Date?

We've had a few 'Found' pets that have had micro-chips, but the chips either had no owner information or the information was outdated. To check if your pet's micro-chip information is current, have your vet scan your chip. Chris Arlington here in Shadow Hills also has a scanner. You can make an appointment to take your pet over for her to scan. Call Chris at 818-421-2854. Help us to reunite you with your pet! Check your chips!

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Simplification of Your DWP Bill - Part 3

by Elektra Kruger

In early October 2010, the Department of Water and Power submitted a report to the City Council's Energy and Environment Committee relative to Motions presented to the Council having to do with requesting a simplification of the format of our DWP bills to help improve customer understanding of the bill's terminology and charges and to request changing to a one-bill system for customers who own sub-meters and are currently receiving two separate bills.

In 1997, the DWP allowed customers to segregate water consumption used for irrigation purposes from home-use (i.e. installation of sub-meters) - this to more accurately measure water that would enter the sewer system and sewer charges would be based only on waters released from in-home use. As of October 2010, there were about 9,000 customers enrolled in the sub-meter program.

For those of us with larger properties, a sub-meter will greatly reduce sewer charges. Because there were so few customers initially enrolled in this program and because it would require a lot of effort to automate their billing calculation (in these days of computers, give me a break!) their billing was done manually.

As the number of sub-meter customers has increased over the years, this has resulted in delays in sub-meter billing with initial billing for electricity and home-use water consumption followed at some variable point in time with a billing for irrigation water consumption. Some customers actually receive three separate bills per billing period. Try figuring that mess out.

In October 2009, the DWP began initiating the process of automating the calculations required for sub-meters which will allow billing for these meters to take place concurrently with regular water meter billing. The process was completed in March 2010. The final step in improving and simplifying the DWP bill is to consolidate water and electricity billing in one merged bill being issued to the customer. Combining electric and water accounts was scheduled to be completed by November 2010. The Energy and Environment Committee waived consideration of the item in mid-December 2010 and the item was scheduled to be heard in City Council on December 17, 2010 at which time Council adopted the proposed new format.



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Solar Panels on Public Buildings

by Elektra Kruger

In early February 2011, Councilmember Tom LaBonge presented a Motion to City Council asking that they request the Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of Cultural Affairs and the Library Department along with input from the Department of Water and Power to report to the City Council's Arts, Parks, Health and Aging Committee on the feasibility of creating a Solar Power program in which solar panels would be installed on recreation and parks facilities, art centers, libraries, etc., in order to reduce overhead costs of providing electrical power allowing these facilities to remain open to the public for more hours. (If only that were the limiting factor in "open-door" hours).

The Motion was referred to both the Arts, Parks, Health and Aging Committee and the Energy and Environment Committee for their review and recommendations. SHPOA will keep you abreast of the progress of this Motion.



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Bringing Molly Home

by Jessica Easley

Sunlight reached through the lacy pink curtains to warm Gracie's face. Her eyes slowly blinked open and then grew wide with delight as she remembered what day it was. It was today. Today was the day, the day she never thought would come. It was finally here. And Gracie was ready. She had taken lessons, read every book, and soaked up all the information she could. And it was finally going to all be worth it because today was the day.

Gracie jumped out of bed, almost hitting her head on her canopy, and pulled off her nightgown. She slipped into her brand-new riding pants and pulled on her favorite purple plaid shirt, buttoning it as fast as her little fingers would let her. Grabbing her socks and boots, she turned off her light and slid down the banister then raced to the kitchen.

"Gracie! Slow down. How many times have I told you to not slide down the banister or run in the house?" asked Gracie's mom as she set down a plate of scrambled eggs and toast. "Here, you need to eat something. You're going to need energy today."

"But I'm really not hungry. Can we please just go?" said Gracie as she finished tying her boots. "Honey, I know you're excited but I still need to get ready so you might as well eat while you wait for me." "Fine fine. Just hurry, please." Gracie, using her fork more like a shovel than something you use to eat, quickly downed her eggs and toast. "Mom. Mom! MOM! Are you ready yet?!"

"Gracie, how many times have I told you to not yell inside? People would think you were raised in a barn with all your running and yelling." "Well, I wish I did live in barn so I wouldn't have to leave Molly every day." Laughing, Gracie's mom followed her to the bright blue mini-van parked on the curb. As Gracie's mom woke up the engine and merged onto the road, the sun reached through the window to warm Gracie's face. It was going to be a beautiful day. A perfect day. A day just right to pick up Molly.

As they neared the barn, Gracie's mom slowed the mini-van to keep the dust to a minimum. Gracie rolled down her window and took a deep breath. The crisp smell of grass mixed with the stale smell of dirt mixed with the pungent smell of manure mixed with the sweet smell of lavender was the perfect smell. The best smell. A wonderful smell. At least Gracie thought so.

The mini-van had barely come to a complete stop before Gracie was shoving the door open and jogging to the barn, slowing to a walk as she entered. Although she could never remember to not run in the house, Gracie knew better than to run in the barn because it would spook the horses. Stepping into the barn, Gracie spotted Molly's brown nose as it poked through her stall door. Molly whinnied a greeting.

"Hey girl, guess what?" Gracie slid open the door to Molly's stall just enough for her to fit through. "Today is the day. You get to come home with me today. I don't have to leave you here," Gracie told Molly as she fed her carrots. Gracie never forgot to bring carrots for Molly. Molly's ears twitched back and forth and a loud Crunnchhh! came from her mouth. Feeding her the last carrot, Gracie stroked

Molly's short, soft brown hair, stirring up the wonderful horse smell. Another smell Gracie thought was one of the best.

"Hey Gracie. Are you excited for today? I know Molly is," said Elizabeth, Gracie's riding instructor, as she came out of the barn office. "Yes I am. I can hardly believe today is finally here. I got her new stall all ready last night with lots of fluffy wood shavings and a full bucket of water." "Oh that sounds perfect. I'm sure she'll love it. It looks like Dan is pulling up with the trailer. Why don't you bring Molly out into the aisle so Dan can load her into the trailer?" "Okay. I'll go get her halter." Gracie went to the tack room and grabbed Molly's bright pink halter and lead rope.

"Here Molly, come here." Gracie slipped on the halter and led Molly into the aisle. "Okay, you be a good girl for Dan and go into the trailer nice and easy." Gracie handed Dan the lead rope and stood out of the way. Just like the good horse she was, Molly walked into the trailer without a problem.

"Alrighty, we'll see you at the barn." Dan waved and got into the driver's seat of the big red diesel truck. Gracie still could hardly believe she was really going to get to have Molly live at her house. Ever since she could remember she wanted a horse and wanted it to live in her backyard.

"Gracie honey, you need to go to bed now. You can't sleep out here with Molly. She'll be okay," Gracie's mom said as she walked into the barn and found Gracie sitting in Molly's stall. "Yeah, I guess I am a little tired. Can I keep my window open so I can hear her if she gets upset?" "Sure honey but I think she'll be just fine. She seems to really like it here." "Yeah, I hope she does. I'm so glad she's finally here. Thanks, Mom." "You're welcome sweetie."

"Goodnight, Molly. See you in the morning," Gracie said as her and her Mom walked hand in hand towards the house.

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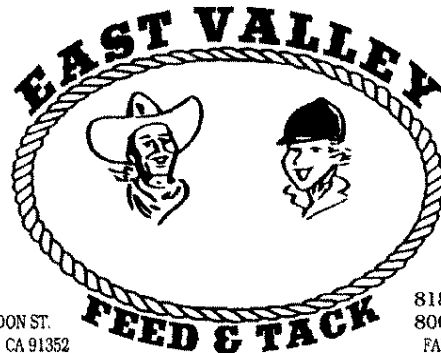
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Re-Instatement of LAMC 63.44.B3 Related to Business in City Parks - Part 1

Elektra Kruger

At one point in time, our Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 63.44.B3 stated that no person would be permitted to conduct any business within our City Parks without the express permission of the Board of Recreation and Parks. No hot dog vendors, no taco vendors, no ice cream vendors, no pony rides in Hansen Dam, etc. This section of the Code was suspended on October 1, 2005 following a court case arguing that to prohibit one from engaging in sales on Park grounds was a violation of First Amendment rights.

While it could be argued that it would be a violation of First Amendment Rights to interfere with a persons free expression of political, ideological, philosophical or religious beliefs or to sell personally created items related thereto, this was never intended to permit retail sales of commercial products or any activity that might be classified as conducting "private business" such as dog training classes or pony rides for a fee. When 63.44.B3 was suspended, it became impossible to enforce shutting down private business activities being run on public park grounds without the express permission of the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners.

For the sake of preventing private, commercial activities from taking place on public park land that should be reserved for public recreational use under the management and control of the City's Department of Recreation and Parks, in mid-September 2010, Councilmember Bernard Parks presented a Motion to City Council asking that a portion of LAMC 63.44.B3 be reinstated to prevent any trade, occupation, business or profession from taking place on park land except by express contract with the Recreation and Parks Board.

At its October 6, 2010 session, City Council adopted a Motion that the City Attorney be requested to prepare and present a Draft Ordinance reinstating a portion of LAMC 63.44.B3 which was submitted to the Council in mid-January 2011. If approved, the Ordinance would reinstate Section 63.44.B3 to prohibit conducting any trade, occupation, business or profession within a City Park without a concession contract with - or permit issued by - the City while recognizing that expressive items may be sold in City Parks without a concession contract or permit if they are "the seller's own expression or are inextricably intertwined with the seller's religious, political, philosophical, or ideological message".

To be continued in future issues of the SHPOA newsletter.



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Our White Elephant Museum - Part 5

by Elektra Kruger

The Los Angeles Children's Museum claimed to be nearing completion of its construction phase and claimed to have sufficient exhibits from the old museum to comply with the State requirement of 50% of exhibits installed to allow them to open their doors to the public at the scheduled Project completion date of March 31, 2009. It is a shame the Museum must fall back on its old inventory of exhibits when the original plans were to fabricate far more high-tech, sophisticated and "hands-on" exhibits.

While City Staff feels confident the Museum will complete construction, open its doors and be able to generate enough private annual donation revenues to maintain ongoing operational expenses, Staff continued to hold monthly meetings with Museum representatives to be sure there would be no need to develop alternative plans to keep Museum doors open as recommended by the City Controller as part of their audit of the Museum.

The third finding of the Controller was that, as a condition for using Prop. K funds for the Hansen Dam location, the Los Angeles Children's Museum would be required to build a second Museum with privately donated funds within five years of opening the Hansen Dam site. Given the difficulty that the Museum has had opening even this first Museum site, the Controller felt this requirement needed to be revisited by City Officials and the City Attorney. This Controller recommendation was rated as "necessary" but not immediately "urgent".

The Los Angeles for Kids Steering Committee responded to this finding noting that while the grant agreement states that "The Los Angeles Children's Museum shall commit to work in good faith to plan, design, construct and operate a Children's Museum in the central part of the City within five years once the Museum at Hansen Dam is open", the intended second site is merely a "goal" and that there is no "requirement" for a second Museum as part of the Grant Agreement. Well, at least the Controller will not have to run another audit and have another finding like their fourth for the Hansen Dam site that "Lack of effective leadership contributed to the Museum's inability to raise private funds."

Finding number 5 of the Controller's audit determined that even before construction began, the Museum did not provide evidence to demonstrate that it had the financial resources to fabricate exhibits and run ongoing programs once construction was complete and that is actually a requirement for obtaining Prop K funding. Saga to continue in our next issue.

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Ficus Trees

Continued from pg 5

Indian Laurel Fig tree is one of the most adaptable trees for the harsh urban street tree environment.

It is ensuring proper management of all street trees in general, including the Ficus that would maximize these benefits. Tree complaints of the Indian Laurel Fig should be reviewed and considered in the same manner as any tree species complaint. Any number of approaches to deal with off-grade sidewalks resulting from the roots of a Ficus, as well as any large stature tree, could include:

- Increasing the size of tree wells
- Root pruning
- Incorporating meandering sidewalk designs to further distance sidewalks from the larger roots and trunk flare
- Utilizing alternative sidewalk materials such as rubber sidewalks adjacent to tree wells

Public testimony at the April 2010 Public Works Committee meeting leaned toward denial of the Motion's proposals as well. The Committee recommended the City Council review and file (away) the BSS report. Nothing suggested in the Motion was recommended to be actually acted upon, nothing proactive was recommended to solve the ongoing conflicts not only between the Ficus and other City infrastructure, but between any and all trees and other City infrastructure.



Sanitation to Take Over Street Cleaning?

by Elektra Kruger

Clean streets are essential to maintaining a clean environment when it comes to storm water run-off and water quality. Currently, the Bureau of Street Services is responsible for the City's streets, while the Bureau of Sanitation is responsible for, among other things, urban run-off water quality in the City's storm drain system. Given the synergy that exists between street cleaning as a means of improving water run-off quality and the City's Sanitation Bureau's stormwater programs, in mid-February 2011, Councilmember Tom LaBonge presented a Motion to City Council recommending that the City review the possible efficiency gains by transferring street sweeping services to the Bureau of Sanitation.

The Motion was referred to the City Council's Public Works Committee for their review and recommendations. SHPOA will keep you abreast of the progress of this Motion.

Fixing Sidewalks - Part 1

by Elektra Kruger

In 2005, the Bureau of Street Services (BSS) was budgeted to replace 52 of the City's 6,500 miles of sidewalks. A customer requesting to have a sidewalk repaired could expect to have the job done in 83 years. And that was when the Bureau still had a budget and still had a workforce. 98% of sidewalks in need of repair would remain unfixed in 2005.

There had been a long-term advocacy for a "point-of-sale" plan similar to that currently already in place in LA for such things as assuring the safety of water heaters or the proper functioning of toilets. A "point-of-sale" plan not only acknowledges that it is the property owner's responsibility to repair and maintain the sidewalk fronting their property, but offers them a more acceptable way of getting those sidewalks fixed. With the point-of-sale plan, the City inspects the sidewalk at the time of sale. If the sidewalk is in good condition, the current owner would not be required to do anything. If the sidewalk is damaged, the current owner would be required to have it fixed prior to completion of sale.

Supposedly, the advantage to this plan would be that the sale would provide the funds needed to pay for the required repairs. Those trying to sell this proposed Plan also argued that it would lead to overall economic benefit: it was estimated that in the first year of the Plan an additional 460 miles of sidewalks would be repaired, local wages would be increased by \$102 million, and 2,600 new jobs would be created with average annual benefits of \$39,000.

Supposedly this "pay-as-you-go" program would fix an otherwise unfixable sidewalk problem and create good jobs. This would pump millions of dollars into the local economy and enhance property/neighborhood values with no expense of public funds. Sort of forgot the funds that would have to be expended by John Q. Public for the repair costs!

Why the City does not open its books, calculate the monies paid out for sidewalk "trip-and-fall" lawsuits, and budget those monies to the BSS to repair that many more sidewalks I do not know. At any rate, in early September 2005, Councilmember Bernard Parks presented a Motion to City Council asking that they request the BSS, the City's Administrative Officer, and the City Attorney, in consultation with stakeholders such as realtor associations, apartment associations, homeowners groups, etc., to report with recommendations relative to a "point-of-sale" plan for fixing the City's sidewalks. In such a plan, property sellers would be assessed the cost of fixing the sidewalks in front of their property.

While I was of the opinion that this was long ago an established regulation of LA City Codes, I just recently found this issue to be an active issue on the current radar.

SHPOA will keep you abreast of what is happening with this "Plan".

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 • Albertson's/Starbucks, 6240 Foothill Blvd.

FTDNC Land-Use Committee meeting

1st Tuesday, Every Month
 • 7 p.m.
 • 9749 Wheatland Ave.

Neighborhood Watch

3rd Tuesday, Every Month
 • 7 p.m.
 • East Valley Municipal Bldg.

"Prime Timers 60+"

3rd Wednesday, Every Month
 • Shadow Hills Presbyterian Church
 • Call church 818-352-2500

Hansen Dam Park Advisory Board

4th Tuesday, Every Month
 • 7 p.m.
 • Lakeview Terrace Recreation Center

Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council

3rd Thursday, Every Month
 • 7 p.m.
 • Location variable, check website for location
 • www.ftdnc.org

ETI C20

4th Wednesday, Every Month
 • Call Becky Borquez, 818.352.3634

IMPORTANT CITY NUMBERS

Dial 311 – Info on all City Services
 L.A. Dept. of Water & Power (800) 342-5397
 Street Service..... (800) 996-2489
 Large Item Pickup..... (800) 773-2489
 Abandoned Car (800) 222-6366