

Cheviot Hills News

Cheviot Hills Home Owners' Association

www.cheviot hills.org

Spring 2010

Please attend our
General Meeting
Board of Directors' Election
April 6, 2010 - 7:30 pm
We will discuss Light Rail, Traffic
and the Rancho Park
Golf Course Driving Range

Traffic Matters

1. The long awaited expansion of the Overland Avenue bridge over the 10 Freeway by one additional north bound lane has begun. This project has been in the works for over a decade and will hopefully increase traffic capacity over the bridge.
2. The Pico-Olympic traffic project that would make Olympic favor westbound traffic and Pico favor eastbound traffic, and which had been proposed and supported by some of our current

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The CHHA General Meeting and annual Board of Directors' election will be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at 7:30 pm at Vista Del Mar Child and Family Center, 3200 Motor Avenue in the Temple. Doors will be open and refreshments served from 7:00 pm. CD-5 Council member Paul Koretz has been invited as our guest speaker to give us a City Council's eye view of the state of our community and the City.

A slate of eight candidates will be presented for

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Expo Light Rail, "Build it Right, or Don't Build it"

Three years ago Neighbors For Smart Rail was formed by the presidents of the CHHA, Westwood Gardens Civic Association, West of Westwood HOA, and Track 7260, to give a community voice to the neighborhoods most impacted by the Expo Phase 2 Project. Since that time NFSR has been working in the Expo corridor to address the Expo Authority's intention of running the majority of the Expo Line at-grade (street level) through residential neighborhoods regardless of the environmental impacts to

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Rancho Park Golf Course Driving Range Remodel

We are pleased to report that the Department of Recreation and Parks listened to the community's concerns voiced at the Westside Neighborhood Council meeting in January 2009 and went back to the drawing board. The following are features of the new plan to refurbish the Rancho Park Golf Course Driving Range as presented to several members of the board:

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your consideration and election. If you'd like to learn more about the candidates, please read all eight candidate biographies herein. All duly paid members of the CHHA are eligible to vote. You may pay your \$70 membership dues anytime before the meeting or you may pay at the door. Membership lists will be available at the meeting for you to check your status.

It has been a busy year for your tireless CHHA Board of Directors. Various board committee chairs have taken the time to recap their work in articles here in the newsletter. Please take a few moments to read what's going on in the neighborhood. If one of their community efforts appeals to you, think about getting involved. Your participation is always welcome. Additionally, we are still looking for help to revive and implement our Greening of Cheviot tree planting program and we are sorely in need of Block Captains to facilitate better communication and save postage! If you can help, please do.

Looking forward to seeing you all on April 6,

Kevin Hughes
CHHA President

Expo Light Rail... Contd. from Page 1

schools, parks, and homes and with minimal regard to safety, traffic or to quality of life impacts such as noise, vibration and visual blight. **In fact, no impacts to Cheviot Hills streets and homes anywhere east of Northvale Road were even studied in Expo's required California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Environmental Impact Report. That should concern us all!**

Please read below why we urge you to contribute time and money to NFSR to support Cheviot Hills' interests in the Phase 2 Expo train project and why, on **March 5, 2010**, NFSR attorney **Robert Silverstein filed suit in Superior Court, on your behalf, to make Expo re-study the routes, grade crossings and impacts; to correct the CEQA deficiencies in the Expo Environmental Impact Report; and to re-circulate the new study for public review and comment. We have the facts and the law in our side, but we need your help!**

1. Traffic: Light rail at grade isn't a traffic solution,

it is a traffic problem. Running 240 trains a day at street level (at-grade) through our community, 70 feet from Overland School and 20 feet from homes, blocking access to parks and businesses, and grid-locking north/south streets is unacceptable. The wall created when Expo trains sequentially close Overland, Westwood, Military and Sepulveda, for 40-82 seconds every 2 ½ minutes, will block all traffic from Century City, Fox Studio, Beverly Hills, and Westwood from access to the I-10 FWY.

2. Safety: At-grade crossings have the highest incidence of accidents and fatalities. Increased traffic congestion will further delay emergency responders when minutes count. Emergency vehicles can cross traffic signals, but not trains. Budget shortfalls have removed paramedics from fire stations, including Station 92 on Pico, for 9 days every month. You do not want to be the second heart attack if paramedics are stalled on "the other side of the tracks." **Expo did not study traffic on Pico, anywhere east of Overland, where the fire station is!**

3. Overland School Impacts: Constant noise, vibration, and crossing safety impacts of at-grade rail are unacceptable to the safety and learning environment at Overland School. Tail-pipe emissions at rail-blocked intersections degrade air quality and increases respiratory problems.

4. Community Impacts: A planned Westwood at-grade station, crossing and parking lot requires adding two traffic lanes to the street, removing residents' street parking, cutting scenic trees, and taking of private property. Buses on Westwood will be doubled from 7-8/hr now to 15-20/hr. Other impacts are loss of privacy to adjacent homes, overflow parking, cut-through traffic, train wheel noise, propulsion noise, and horn and bell noise 22 hours a day. The station should be eliminated and the transit hub just 4 blocks away at Sepulveda should be expanded. **Underground crossings will eliminate these environmental impacts.**

5. The wrong choice: Expo Phase 2 misses most major Westside job centers from Culver City to Santa Monica since it travels through mostly residential neighborhoods in WLA. Expo benefits Santa Monica development and will be a developer's feast on the Westside.

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Expo Light Rail... Contd. from Page 2

6. No money for safety: Expo is not seeking federal environmental clearance, or federal funding on Phase 2. After the passage of Measure R, Expo pulled out of the federal environmental process. That short-sighted folly was a betrayal of Expo's promise to seek Federal New Starts matching funds and dooms the project to the chronic underfunding Expo uses as an excuse for not grade separating. It also removes important federal oversight of the project.

7. A better option: The fully underground "Subway to the sea" will connect downtown and the valley with the Wilshire Corridor, Korea Town, Museum Row, Hancock Park, Beverly Hills, Century City, Westwood, UCLA, the Veterans Administration, Santa Monica and hundreds of thousands of people and jobs in between. If there is no money to build Expo right, pull the plug on Phase 2. Use the money to grade-separate critical Phase 1 crossings and to expedite the Subway, which has 100% community support and makes Expo obsolete the day it opens. Expo soaks up Measure R money in front of the "Subway to the Sea" and threatens Federal Funding for subway completion west of the 1-405 because Expo and the subway are less than 1 mile apart in LA, and mere blocks apart blocks apart in Santa Monica, and end up at the same place! **The subway could be completed years earlier with Expo money.**

8. LADOT got it right, EXPO got it wrong: The head of LADOT expressed concerns in letters to Expo about safety of Overland students and area traffic saying Expo's faulty traffic counts lead to an under-reporting of traffic impacts in the Phase 2 DEIR. NFSR's independent traffic engineer, Robert Shanteau, agreed. To date, Expo has not changed their traffic methodology.

9. Culver City got it right: After fighting the Expo project for over 15 years, Culver City Planning Department passed Circulation Element 2.N, a resolution prohibiting at-grade light rail crossings anywhere in Culver City, and any elevated alignments adjacent to residential uses. There will be no at-grade crossings in Culver City. **Why should Los Angeles have a lower standard?**

10. Santa Monica sometimes gets it right: In response to residents' concerns near Expo's proposed train maintenance yard, Santa Monica



And Now ... 2009

worked to come up with a "hybrid" proposal which moves the yard to create a 120 foot buffer to minimize quality of life impacts to the community. The Santa Monica Planning Department said the change adds \$100-120 million to the project. Building a subway is generally estimated to cost \$100 million per mile. NFSR and the WLA community are asking Expo to underground the ¾ mile from Overland to Sepulveda. That would solve student/pedestrian/vehicle safety, traffic impacts, and quality of life issues. Seems like a bargain doesn't it? **Where are the bold proposals from LA local politicians that will protect our citizens and communities?**

11. It's not that special: Expo says it would take "special" engineering to go underground at Overland Ave. as they may have to go down 50 feet to avoid a storm drain. Really? The Eastside Gold Line Extension has two 1.7 mile long light rail tunnels 60 feet below Boyle Heights. The Seattle University Link light rail is boring two 1-mile light rail tunnels 180 feet deep. The

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APS SECURITY REPORT

Vernon Rosado has been the lead patrol officer for APS Security and Patrol going into the third year for the Cheviot Hills Homeowners' Association. He has been available when needed and tries to let us know of unusual or special happenings in our neighborhood. The APS patrol, combined with a high percentage of Cheviot homes with protective alarms, appears to have kept burglaries, car thefts, and break-ins to a lower frequency than surrounding areas.

The CHHA has contracted with APS Security and Patrol for certain basic services. They are:

1. The APS cars patrol the area approximately six times per 24 hours, keeping a watchful eye for anything that does not seem "right" in the neighborhood.
 2. 24 hour Patrol dispatch provided for suspicious happenings in neighborhood reported by members of CHHA- Please be aware that overt acts such as break-ins or robberies in progress should be reported immediately to 911.
 3. The Patrol provides vacation watch to homes of CHHA members for up to two weeks.
 4. CHHA dues paying members receive an identifying APS Patrol sign to display on front lawns.
 5. APS locks and unlocks the gate at the Palms Park bridge on Northvale Rd. morning and night.
 6. APS performs special services such as letting homeowners know if they have left their garage doors open-thereby preventing possible theft.
- APS Patrol and Security is accessible and locally based for quick response to problems that LAPD does not have time to take care of such as loitering at odd times or other non-acute situations. Last year all APS Employees became CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Certified by the LA County Fire Department, and in January APS Employees were Certified by the US Department of Homeland Security (Responses to Terrorism Event). This makes the professionals at APS better service providers and

keeps them up to date on California Mandated training for Security Employees.

If you do not get satisfactory service please let the CHHA know so that we can rectify the situation. Please let us know if the service has been a help to you also!

TO CONTACT APS SECURITY

1. Dial 310-606-272, then press #2. This will take you to Patrol Dispatch. Give the operator your name, address and telephone number, and the reason for your call.
2. For information about burglar alarms or to reach the central office, call 310-606-272, press #5, then press #6. Or go to <http://www.mypatrol.com>
3. For Vernon Rosado- Area Representative for Alarm and Patrol at vrosado@mypatrol.com

Irv Sitcoff
CHHA Board Member

LA's First Subway

Los Angeles' first subway, the Belmont Tunnel, was built in 1925 and completed in 18 months at a cost of \$5-million. For the curious train buff, the Los Angeles Conservancy conducts tours of the tunnel once used by the Red Cars which ran between downtown and Glendale Boulevard near 1st Street. The mile long tunnel, built 60 feet below the street, was closed in 1955 when many Angelenos had fled to the suburbs and preferred driving themselves. As complaints about train-versus-car accidents increased on the lines' street-running portion, ridership declined. The subway was closed in 1955 and its tracks ripped out. The last Red Car on that route carried a destination sign that said, "To Oblivion." (Adapted from the LA Times, 2/8/09 by Steve Harvey.)



Candidate Biographies

Tom Andersen, Glenbarr Avenue

Tom Anderson and his wife Fran have lived in Cheviot Hills for 40 years. They have been fortunate to raise two children in neighborhood public schools. These past three years he has enjoyed being the CHHA Certified treasurer and supporting a board that is responsive, energetic and positive about protecting our community interests. Tom has been in Public Accounting for over 40 years. He was former Managing Partner of one of LA's largest CPA firms with professional experience in not for profit practice and has been treasurer for small and large charities.

Stacy Antler, Rossbury Road

Stacy Antler came to Cheviot Hills as a young child, grew up here, then left to attend college. Her parents continued living in Cheviot, and Stacy returned home twelve 12 years ago to care for her ailing father. She still lives with her mother in the house on Rossbury where she was raised, and considers herself very fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful areas of the city. Stacy is an annual participant in the Aids Walk LA and is an ardent animal rights activist. She previously served on the CHHA board and has represented Cheviot Hills as a member of the Westside Neighborhood Council since its inception in 2000. Stacy is pleased to return to the board to help the community face the challenges the future will bring. She is determined to help maintain Cheviot Hills and preserve the qualities that make us all so grateful to live here. "The community must participate and get involved. None of us can sit back and expect others to do this work for us."

Stan Arcader, Motor Avenue

Stan has lived in Cheviot Hills for over 30 years and has served on the CHHA Board for 17 of those years. He represents our

community on the Community Police Action Board and is interested in continuing his role to strengthen our relationship with the Police Department.

Carol Bahoric, McConnell Drive

Carol Bahoric and her family have lived in Cheviot Hills since 1995. She has been on and off the CHHA Board (mostly on) for the past 15 years. Both of her daughters went to Overland Ave. Elementary and Palms Jr. High School. While on the Board she enjoyed working with our local schools, on traffic issues, on supporting light rail built right, and on zoning issues, especially pertaining to the successfully resolved fencing controversy surrounding the Rancho Park Golf course. Carol says, "We are so lucky to live in such a beautiful neighborhood, but we all have to pitch in to keep it that way. I look forward to working with the Board again to keep Cheviot Hills a wonderful place to live."

Jim Gilbert, Motor Avenue

James Gilbert has lived in Cheviot Hills together with his wife and two daughters (ages 8 and 12) for over ten years. He is a lawyer practicing real estate litigation. If elected to the Cheviot Hills Homeowners Association, he will work hard to improve the quality of life for the residents of Cheviot Hills and enhance our property values. He will also work with City officials to make sure Cheviot Hills receives its fair share of City services, such as police, fire, schools, roads and sidewalk repairs, and tree trimming and that our City leaders timely respond to the concerns of our residents. Cheviot Hills is one of the finest neighborhoods in Los Angeles. He will use his position on the Board of Directors to maintain and improve our neighborhood.

Kathy Griffis, Patricia Avenue

Kathy has lived in Cheviot Hills for 15 years while teaching high school science at the Buckley School. She has served on the board

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Traffic Matters Contd. from Page 1

and former elected City officials, is currently still the subject of an environmental analysis. But our new Councilmember, Paul Koretz, has stated that he is not in favor of this project and I am advised that he is taking steps to discourage the City from proceeding with it.



3. Recent economic conditions have caused a slowdown in construction of Century City development projects. However, there are projects working through the development review process which are worth our watching and the expression of our concerns. For example, though the developer of the Century Plaza Hotel site has agreed to retain the historic Hotel building, there is a proposal to add additional buildings on that site in behind the Hotel. Westfield's Century City mall redevelopment project will also no doubt become more active as economic conditions improve.

4. The EXPO light rail project will undoubtedly be used by developers to design and build new construction projects for business, commercial and high density residential use around planned stations. A good example of this approach is the so-called "Casden" apartment and commercial complex proposed and currently being designed for the cement works site in West Los Angeles on Exposition Boulevard near Pico and Sepulveda. This project, if approved, will likely generate considerable traffic pressure on local residential streets in neighborhoods adjacent to Cheviot Hills. Please inform yourself about this project and make City officials, elected and administrative, aware of your concerns.

5. The City has been developing a bicycle plan intended to facilitate increased bicycle use and bicycle safety throughout the City, including in and around Cheviot Hills. This Plan has been subject to public comment and will be considered by the City Council in due course. Formalizing new bicycle lanes or dedicated rights of way in our area may have impacts on some of our streets and neighbors, so please be aware of this plan as it evolves and give our City elected officials and City staff your input and concerns about what is being proposed. Cars and bicycles share our

roads. It is important that accommodation for both be implemented thoughtfully, responsibly and with due regard for the concerns of all users of our public ways.

6. Cheviot Hills and neighboring communities always feel the pressure of north-south traffic to and from Century City, Beverly Hills, Westwood and other business districts. Let CHHA know should you have specific concerns about traffic in our neighborhood and in adjoining areas.

Gregory Pulis
CHHA Vice President

Rancho Golf Course... Contd. from Page 1

❖ The newly proposed maximum fence height is 80 feet (reduced from the previously proposed height of 130 feet). This means that the new fence will not be more than 10 feet taller than the tallest portion of existing fence. Poles will be a maximum of 30 inches in diameter at the base and taper toward the top and spaced 50 feet apart.

❖ The new range is approximately the same size as the existing; however, it will be shifted 40 feet to the south. The tee line will be double-deck with the lower level below ground level and the upper deck at grade. The total number of tee stations will be 64 (the existing is 45).

❖ The existing specimen coastal redwood, located south of the current driving range, will be integrated into design of the new range and protected by an interior fence.

❖ A minimum of 24 new trees (48" box or larger) will be planted to replace 14 trees removed when the range shifts to the south. The 14 trees to be removed are: 8 eucalyptuses; 1 holly oak; 5 pines. The new trees will include several palm trees planted along the west driving range fence to complement the existing palms. Additional mature trees will be planted along the south driving range fence and along Patricia Avenue.

❖ A lighting study was conducted and is now available for review. The lighting plan includes two fixtures per post along the Patricia Ave side focused to shine toward the east. None of the new lighting exceeds the maximum luminance of the existing. The new plan also addresses and improves the harsh lighting currently seen along Lorenzo Ave.

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Rancho Golf Course. Contd. from Page 6

❖ The new range will be covered with green artificial turf and patches of light colored turf to give the appearance of sand traps.

❖ Construction is anticipated to last 4 to 6 months, starting November 2010 to minimize loss of peak driving range usage. Residents will be advised of construction hours and schedules which will be planned to minimize disruption to neighbors and commuters.

The Cheviot Hills HOA has requested that the Department of Recreation and Parks provide specific details of the project that are of interest to neighbors, and we are eagerly awaiting their response. We have asked for a further description of the project including a landscaping diagram, lighting mitigation plan, operating hours (currently 6 am to 9 pm), and more. We will be scheduling a presentation of the complete proposal at an upcoming CHHA board meeting. Please watch for our e-mail announcement.

We applaud the City's community outreach efforts and look forward to working with the Department of Recreation and Parks to carry out a project that makes sense for both golfers and the residents living in the surrounding neighborhood.

Kathy Griffis
CHHA Secretary

Candidate Biographies ... Contd. from Page 1

as Secretary for the past three years, and would like to continue to support the board and homeowners in their efforts to protect our community against pressing issues such as light rail, increased traffic, and over-development. She is currently communicating the concerns of neighbors to the Department of Recreation and Parks as the Rancho Park Golf Course re-visits their plans for renovation of the driving range.

Colleen Mason Heller, Patricia Avenue

Colleen Mason Heller has been a Cheviot Hills resident since 1987. She and her husband Larry have raised two daughters in the neighborhood both of whom are graduates

of Overland School. She joined the CHHA board in 2007. Her tenure on the board has been spent as CHHA Light Rail Chair, although she has worked on various other committees as well. For Colleen, creating a sense of community in Cheviot Hills is one of the most important functions of the homeowners' board. She supports that philosophy by working to preserve the residential quality of life in our neighborhood, to protect the safety and security of our residents, and to increase communications.

Steve Moyer, Haddington Drive

Steve and his family have been residents of Cheviot Hills for 35 years. He currently chairs the CHHA Neighborhood Preservation Committee. Steve is an experienced Civil Litigation Attorney. He hopes to continue as a member of the CHHA board working to preserve and protect our neighborhood through open communication with our members and neighbors.

Steve Pompan, Club Drive

Steve Pompan, his wife Lisa and two college aged daughters have lived on Club Drive since 1987. The Pompan family has taken an active role in the community. Lisa is past PTA President at Overland and the girls attended Overland, Palms and Hamilton and now are studying at U.C. Santa Barbara. Steve is a past President of the Rancho Golf Club and has put on community Junior Golf events at the Par 3. Steve has been an advocate for improved tennis facility maintenance and is working to ensure that planned golf driving range improvements fit with the community, including maintaining the new fence height similar to the existing height. Now, Steve and his committee are fighting the elimination of our valuable parks and recreation services which help define our community. Steve is a First Vice President at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney and is proud of the Cheviot Hills community.

Cop and Robbers WLA Police Update



Who is winning the cops versus robbers' battle? According to the latest statistics for the Westside of Los Angeles, the police are winning the battle against the robbers. Our community is winning because we have great leadership at the Butler Police Station with Captain Nathanson and Captain De La Rosa serving the station. They are doing a great job considering the few police officers that are available for duty in their division, which covers an area of sixty-four square miles. Those, of course, who deserve the highest praise, are the line police officers who always go the extra mile for our community.

We do have crime, but fortunately violent crimes are declining. The most common incidents are cars broken into because someone has left an enticing valuable in plain sight; a briefcase, a lap top or cell phone. Please be vigilant while you are out and about and carefully inventory your car before leaving and locking it, to make sure you haven't left valuables exposed. Additionally, there is a recorded increase in our area of auto accidents apparently caused by someone being on the phone illegally or sending text messages while driving. That is easily prevented by all of us!

We as a community need to support the men and women at our police station. They are always in need of equipment of one sort or another. A program called P.A.C.T. has been set up for citizens who would like to personally contribute funds to their local police station. If you would like to do so a check made out to P.A.C.T. can be sent to the CHHA and we will see that it is delivered.

Finally, for you information, the phone number for the Butler Police Station is 310-444-0701, however, in a true emergency call 911 immediately. The average response time for our area is about 7-9 minutes which is very good. The additional security oversight of the APS patrol, although they are not an armed response, is strong deterrent to the bad guys. Your \$70 annual membership in the Cheviot Hills Homeowners' Association supports the additional security patrol, so now would be a great time for you to become a member and help support this valuable neighborhood service.

Stan Arcader
CHHA Board Member

Expo Light Rail... Contd. from Page 3

"Subway-to-the-Sea" is tunneling through methane fields and pre-historic tar pools! Grade separation is not about money or transit benefits, and it sure isn't about safety or solving traffic congestion. It's about priorities and politics.

12. It goes like this: The Metro Grade Crossing Policy (GCP) short changes LA communities on safety. It is predisposed to putting all rail crossings at grade. It is not sanctioned by the FTA. MTA's policy looks at traffic volume per lane and train frequency first. If the traffic count is low enough the train crossing goes at grade regardless of proximity to schools, homes, hospitals or parks. Any safety considerations are simply refinements to an already at-grade crossing. Expo designed extra lanes at the crossings at Overland, Westwood and Sepulveda to reduce traffic volumes so the crossings would then qualify for at-grade crossings. That is a violation of CEQA and will create traffic bottlenecks when the traffic merges into fewer lanes beyond the crossings. By MTA's policy, grade separations evidently occur only when public agencies or politicians intervene.

13. Build Expo right or don't build it! An underground alignment would not impact traffic on our north/south streets, endanger pedestrians, or create immitigable noise, vibration and privacy impacts in our neighborhoods. **No amount of landscaping, sound walls or dual glazed windows can adequately mitigate the 22-hour-a-day adverse impacts of at-grade running 240 trans a day through a residential neighborhood.** LA needs mass transit but not so desperately that we are required, as Santa Monica is asking, to "lean in and take one for the team."

Our community is worth preserving and defending and your help is needed to write letters and e-mails to our elected officials so they can't say they didn't hear from the community. NFSR is also asking for your **tax deductible donations** to continue outreach, education, and to support our CEQA legal challenge to get Expo to correct their Phase 2 environmental review. For a list of politicians to contact or to donate online, please go to smartrail.org. Thank you for your continued commitment to our community.

Colleen Mason Heller
CHHA Light Rail Chair