

Santa Monica Canyon News

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association - Founded 1947

Winter 2006

Rustic Canyon Park Improvement Project Still Incomplete 14 Months After Delayed Start

On September 8, 2005, the Rustic Canyon Local Volunteer Neighborhood Oversight Committee (LVNOC), chaired by Nelson Willis, met in the Center to review the progress of Prop K renovations to the Park building and grounds. Present in addition to committee members and guests were George Wolfberg of SMCCA, Norman Kulla representing Councilman Rosendahl, and Dave Takata, newly representing the Bureau of Engineering for the project.

During the course of that meeting, under somewhat heated questioning by LVNOC members, several things emerged.

One was that while the City took under consideration LVNOC concerns and suggestions on such matters as priorities, these were in no way binding and the City would proceed based on its own reading of these priorities and its own needs.

Secondly, it was learned that \$250,000 of the allotted \$390,000 for the project already have been spent for two elements: reconstructing the ramp leading down into the Park basin to handicap accessible standards and remodeling the two bathrooms in the clubhouse to to ADA specifications.

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Canyon Charter School to Build Habitat for Humanity House

On Monday, February 13, 150 volunteers will converge on the Canyon Charter School grounds to frame, in one day, a Habitat for Humanity house. Canyon will become the first elementary school in the United States to participate in this international program.

The project grew out of student, staff and parent concern for the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma. The entire school community worked diligently to come up with a project to aid these families. In November, the Governing Board approved a partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

The schedule calls for supplies to be delivered onto campus on Friday, February 10. The platform for the house will be built on Saturday, February 11. Monday is the big day when the house is erected.

The house will be disassembled Tuesday and shipped to the Gulf Coast. All Habitat for Humanity houses sent to the Louisiana and Florida areas are built in the same assemble-disassemble way.



Canyon Charter School is proud to be part of this Herculean effort to provide homes for the victims of the devastating Gulf hurricanes. A curriculum component was developed by Canyon staff including writing and math assignments. Students participated in various activities to collect donations for the house, including creation of note cards featuring the historic Canyon library and selling them for holiday gifts.

To help or obtain more information please call (310) 486-2079 or email CanyonHFH@yahoo.com or go to www.habitat.org

[Park Project - continued from first page]

Thirdly, it was determined that only three of the remaining fifteen or so proposed Prop K improvements could be done with what money remained. These were: repair of the patio area adjacent to the Center; resurfacing of the ball field and installation of a new irrigation system to service the ball field and the grassy area between the tennis courts; and installation of the historically accurate French doors in the clubhouse.

Finally, it was agreed that Mr. Takata would prepare estimates and submit them to LVNOC by the end of October 2005, even though that Committee was officially dissolved with this final meeting. By early December estimates for the three remaining improvements had not been provided by Mr. Takata. The ADA ramp, however, had been completed, turned down as non-conforming by inspectors, and subsequently resurfaced and extended to conform to ADA specifications. As of January 5, 2006, the ADA ramp has been completed and approved, except for minor railing adjustments.

The cost of the re-surfacing was borne by the City's subcontractor, and the extensions turned out to have been in the original plan and had already been paid for.

A December 22nd front-page article in the *Palisadian Post* by Linda Renaud quoted a list of criticisms of Recreation and Parks over these matters made by Mr. Willis in an e-mail to other LVNOC members. These criticisms included the slow progress and high cost of the improvements to date, and the alleged disregard shown for priorities established by the residents of Rustic Canyon as expressed through their LVNOC representatives.

In a January 5th phone conversation, Neil Drucker, Mr. Takata's Supervisor at the Bureau of Engineering, said that additional funds MAY become available to extend the scope of the remaining work. He also said that estimates for this remaining work are being prepared and will be made available for review to the former LVNOV Committee members and other interested parties by way of Mr. Rosendahl's office in a timely manner, along with news about additional funding.

editor's note: SMCCA will be following up with City officials to encourage timely completion of the project envisioned by the LVNOC. Please send your comments to info@smcca.org, or to our P.O. Box.

Dirtiest Beach in Southern California?

A recent LA Times Article exposed the dirtiest beach between Santa Barbara and the Mexican Border as measured by Heal the Bay's rating system. Unfortunately, it was Santa Monica Canyon Beach. This despite expenditure of nearly a \$1M by the City to install a structure to divert polluted low flow runoff from our flood control channel to the sewer system for treatment at the Hyperion Plant. SMCCA has been monitoring the City's cleanup efforts for several years and advocated 12 month diversion, when it is not raining, instead of "dry season" only to improve water quality at our "F" rated beach.

Why was the diversion system so ineffective? The Bureau of Sanitation operates the diversion and reported that the "filter" between the channel and pumps that send the flow to the sewer line was clogging with debris, reducing capacity. This resulted in polluted water overflowing to the ocean.

Why is the filter clogging and why is the runoff so polluted. To paraphrase a famous politician, Pogo, we are part of the problem. Leaves, particularly pine needles, and other yard waste, clearly are a problem as on site inspection of the diversion structure revealed. Sweeping, blowing and washing green waste down the street into the storm drains are creating the blockage. The City's response was first, to dispatch a vacuum truck to suck the muck off the filter once a week. A second initiative was to increase filter capacity. A one week test in December of the larger filter yielded several days of excellent water quality--until the new filter clogged with debris by the end of the test week. The filter looked like a beaver dam backing up the water.



We have opened a dialogue with the Sanitation Bureau laboratory to search for sources of bacterial contamination. For updates on water quality issues check www.smcca.org

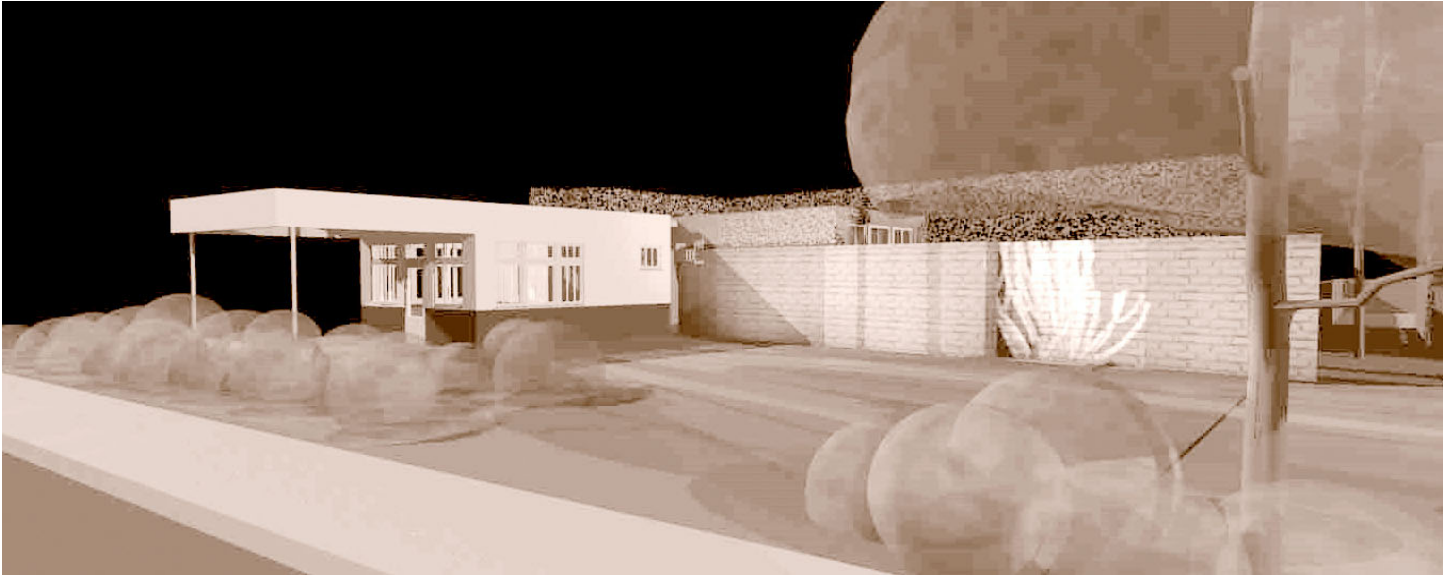
Work Underway to Restore Landmarked Canyon Service Station

After years of legal wrangling, the historic Canyon Gas Station on Entrada has been preserved and is finally expected to reappear in the summer of 2006—in its new incarnation—as the architectural office of new owner and neighbor, Scott Prentice.

The Marquez estate sold the historic property to adjoining neighbor, Chris Hoffman, in June 2005.

with Scott Prentice to include neighbor input and city staff support.

As part of the deal, the underground fuel tanks were removed and the City of Los Angeles Fire Department verified the property as a clean site. In addition approvals were obtained from City Cultural Heritage Commission on the proposed historic preservation.



Architect's rendering Canyon Service Station Historical restoration

Mr. Hoffman originally planned to donate the historic building to the Peterson Automotive Museum.

To avoid dismantling of the station, the Santa Monica Civic Association and the Santa Monica Conservancy filed an application with the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission to obtain Historic-Cultural Monument status for the station.

To assure the application met all City criteria, the SMCCA hired a consultant to prepare the application. City Council approval protects the station building from being torn down or moved, and any restoration/rehabilitation is required to meet certain standards.

Another adjoining neighbor of the station, architect Scott Prentice, contacted Mr. Hoffman with a solution for historic preservation and adaptive reuse of the station. Mr. Prentice proposed to buy a portion of the property containing the historic building, restore the station as closely as possible to its original 1924 state, and to use it as the new home for his architecture practice. He also proposed to build a 400 square foot office behind the station for additional office space, as well as a 6-ft. by 30-ft. lap pool for his family's use.

Chris Hoffman was immediately enthusiastic and supportive of the proposed project and worked directly

Mr. Prentice also obtained necessary approvals of variance and lot line adjustment as a condition of transfer. Escrow closed in early December 2005.

The new owner has now begun the process of re-adapting the station as his new office. Prentice's goals include LEED certification for the project by the US Green Building Council for a sustainable, high performance green development. To that end he has started removing the station's concrete paving which is being stockpiled to reuse as site walls for the project. Also proposed are solar energy panels, radiant floor heating and drought tolerant landscaping.

Mesa Neighbors Look to one-way Traffic Solution

Neighborhood reps will canvass homeowners on Mesa, Upper Mesa and lower Amalfi about the viability of a one-way street loop to reduce traffic, mitigate stoppage, and enhance parking and pedestrian safety. Basically, the plan envisions a clockwise, one-way direction from Mesa at Sycamore, through Upper Mesa to Amalfi, down Amalfi to East Channel.

For more information, contact Tim Johnson, Mike Deasy or Steve Richards.

Telling the Truth About Leaf Blowers

It is illegal to operate a gas powered leaf blowers within 500 feet of any residence. Contrary to what you may have been told or have seen, the LA City ordinance, LAMC § 112.04 (c) prohibiting such use of blowers is still in effect.

The reasons for this ordinance are still valid; air pollution, noise pollution, health considerations (yours and your gardener's), and general erosion of a neighborhood's quality of life.

Please instruct your gardener to obey the law. Disregard of the law may result in a fine of \$270.00 for both the user of the blower as well as the individual who contracted for the services of the user.

To report a violation call 1-800.996.2489 or, preferably, e-mail Senior Lead Officer Christopher Ragsdale at 26690@lapd.lacity.org State the date, time of day, license plate and the address.

For more information check out www.zapla.org.

Report Graffiti Electronically

Pacific Graffiti Solutions, a City Graffiti Removal Contractor, recently briefed the SMCCA Board. Send the address with photo, if possible, to pacificgraffitisolutions@yahoo.com. Expect clean up within a couple of days.

Annual Meeting to be Held May 2

The Association Annual Meeting will be held May 2, 2006 at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center. Please save the date.

2006 Dues Now Payable

The SMCCA is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization. Your dues and contributions help keep your association strong. Membership is only \$10 per person, a modest price for supporting your community. Please send your payment to SMCCA at PO Box 3441, Santa Monica, CA 90408-3441. Additional contributions are welcome and greatly appreciated.

If you would like to participate on the board or in any other capacity or if you have areas of interest, please tell us in your reply. Also, please include an email address so we can send you notices and electronic newsletters. You also have the option of receiving LAPD Crime Reports and Alerts. Please let us know if you desire this additional email information.

We do not share our mailing or email lists with anyone.

Important Phone Numbers--

Call 3-1-1, or:

Graffiti Hotline	1.800.611.2489, ext. 1
Illegal Leaf Blowers	1.213.485.3711
	1.800.996.2489
Illegally Parked Vehicles	1.213.485.4184
Pothole Repair	1.800.966.2489

Newsletter Staff--

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