

Santa Monica Canyon News

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association - Founded 1947

Winter 2008

Santa Monica to Repair PCH Bluffs Before Reconstructing California Incline

Responding to input from the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association and other groups, the City of Santa Monica will not attempt simultaneous construction of improvement projects that will impact traffic on Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and in our canyon.

The new timetable will see the Bluffs Improvement Project completed before work starts on the dreaded Santa Monica Incline rebuild. The Bluffs project entails installing pipes to drain water behind the bluffs along PCH from the McClure tunnel to the Los Angeles border, less than two-tenths of a mile from Entrada

Drive. The water build up is believed responsible for landslides onto the highway. The bluffs will then be covered with an earth-toned grout to further protect these fragile formations. The project will require the placement of drilling equipment onto the right-hand lane of the Westbound highway, with closure of successive portions of that lane as the work proceeds Westward from the tunnel. The only good news is that it is likely CalTrans will restrict work to about four hours-a-day, with no work during the Summer.

It is possible that night time work also will be

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Restoring the Historic Eucalyptus Forest in Rustic Canyon

Before Abbott Kinney was a trendy boulevard in Venice and before Kinney created the Venice canals in California, he did something remarkable in Rustic Canyon. Over 125 year's ago, on a portion of the nation's oldest forestry station, Kinney planted a forest of eucalyptus trees. When the "forest" was threatened with development in 1954, SMCCA stepped in to contribute funds to enable the City of L.A. to purchase the wooded grove located between the parking lot and Hilltree Road.

Recreation and Parks took over the care of this property which was officially dedicated as a state historic landmark on August 18, 1971. Since that time the forest has experienced years of neglect and inappropriate care. Some of the trees are dead of old age and some are suffering from insect infestation. Attempts to install an appropriate irrigation system have foundered.

In recently months, nearby residents including Rand Plewak, Beverly Eyre and Betty Lou and Randy Young have

stepped up pressure on the City to improve the forest.



Meetings have been held with the SMCCA Board, Park Advisory Board, and finally with the "powers that be" in Recreation and Parks. Local consulting arborist Carl Mellinger has volunteered to create a plan. Rec and Parks has agreed to follow the community's plan for the grove and the City Engineer will follow up to ensure irrigation of the grove is part of the funded Proposition K work yet to be done..

Several dead trees will be removed on February 20. To get involved, contact us at info@smcca.org.

[Bluffs Project - continued from first page]

necessary to complete work before Summer of 2009. With the expected project start of Labor Day 2008, Santa Monica and its contractor will be hard-pressed to get the job done before the following summer.

Incline Update. The earliest start for the Incline Project is Summer 2009. Meanwhile, their consultants are completing an Environmental Impact Report [EIR] and a traffic study. The EIR consultant has to answer numerous questions posed by SMCCA. These include the inadequate size of the traffic impact study area, the need to remove existing impediments to smooth flow of traffic near the McClure Tunnel, and a summary of contingency plans for addressing gridlock. SMCCA also has demanded that there be expedited construction, 24-hours-a-day and seven days-a-week. Elected officials including Councilman Bill Rosendahl, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and Senator Sheila Kuehl wrote letters in support of the need to be more respectful of the traffic impact the Incline project will have on Santa Monica Canyon. Further details on the SMCCA comments and the various letters are available at our website, www.smcca.org, "Community Pages . . . more." Or, contact us at info@smcca.org.



PCH to Incline traffic que. Moving to our canyon?

The public will have six weeks to review the EIR after it is released in the next few weeks. We will post a link to the document on our website if one is available. Meanwhile, the Santa Monica contact person is Vikki Zale at 310.822.2010.

But wait, there's more. The City of Los Angeles will be expanding a sewer line in PCH near Chautauqua to facilitate all the stormwater diversion projects and also may have to dig up the highway to complete its final work on the SM Channel storm water diversion project (please see update, next page). AND, Water and Power is planning an underground electric line in PCH. These projects are not supposed to conflict with the SM projects.

PARK IMPROVEMENTS SLOWLY APPEAR

The City has made progress on the Rustic Canyon Park Improvements in the past year. Councilman Rosendahl secured \$150,000 in Proposition 12 funds to augment the Prop. K funding. This has financed replacement of a rotted ceramics room floor, unanticipated work not included in the schedule of Prop. K projects.

In addition, the following Prop. K work is being charged to Prop. 12: Replacement of chain link fence along Latimer Road, installation of a new fence adjacent to the tennis court used for lessons, installation of a "sport court" surface for the outdoor basketball area, and refurbishment and repair of the patio adjacent to Latimer Road at the park entrance. This work is complete except for replacement of a pillar damaged by a tree and some corrections suggested by architect Alejandro Ortiz who donated his plan/sketch for the patio. A new engineer has been assigned to complete the project with a meeting pending.

WE GET LETTERS

A Plea for Quieter Saturdays

No one enjoys waking to the sound of nearby pounding or drilling from a neighboring construction project. Still, most of us try to somehow accommodate the noise and parking issues from Monday to Friday. When the intrusion continues on Saturday morning, however, it is nothing short of an imposition.

Though legal, Saturday construction feels unfair. What about those who work at home and/or have small children? Who among us wants a one-day weekend? Many of today's new houses are built setback to setback — which tremendously impacts adjacent neighbors in terms of noise and loss of privacy. While those instigating the construction get a new home, their neighbors get 1-2 years of disruption six days a week.

*Loss of building time in foregoing Saturday construction is minimal compared to the goodwill offered. Consider this tradeoff. Or, if you must have intermittent Saturday construction, choose quieter unobtrusive tasks that give your neighbors a break. Sometimes being "neighborly" is in what you choose **not** to do.*

Lisa Citron

Elizabeth Zaillian

NEW PARK DIRECTOR TAKES REINS; EXPANDS PARK PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Because of the hectic pace of the holidays, some of you may have missed Sue Pascoe's excellent Palisadian Post article about the new director at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center. The article was published on 12/26/07 and can be found in the paper's archives at the following url: http://www.palisadespost.com/content/index.cfm?Story_ID=3489.

To highlight and expand upon what was mentioned in the article, the new Director, Dahna Hall, hopes to make improvements in three primary areas: Administration and Compliance; Community Outreach; and Programming.

The city has placed pressure on all parks to be in compliance with expectations for costs, revenues and accounting practices. Ms. Hall is taking steps to achieve those goals so residents might see some changes in accounting practices as well as a greater focus on covering costs. Additionally, she has plans to revive the Park Advisory Board (PAB) to assist with advice and potential fundraising needs.

Ms. Hall has only been on the job for a short while but has already been warmly received by many of our local community groups. She is extremely open to input and welcomes suggestions from any local group and/or individual. She can be contacted by e-mail at Dahna.Hall@lacity.org or by phone at (310) 454-5734.

Rustic Canyon Recreation Center has historically been best known for its youth programming and adult arts classes. Ms. Hall is endeavoring to expand that programming by filling in the gaps. Some examples of her efforts include the recently added Ballroom Dancing by the renowned Kathleen Corey (<http://www.palidance.com>) and Tai-Chi by the accomplished Matt Rand.

Many residents, however, are not yet aware of these wonderful new additions. The schedule of classes can now be seen online at <http://www.laparks.org>. You can also stop by the Rec Center to pick up a brochure or call and ask to be added to the mailing list. Online registration is not yet available so snail-mail and drop-in prevail.

Help sustain our "rustic jewel" by sharing your good ideas, volunteering, signing up for classes and participating!

CRIME PREVENTION TIP

Senior Lead Officer Michael Moore has pointed out on several occasions the importance of each individual taking responsibility for preventing crime, especially crime against you! The most frequent crime in our area involves theft or burglary from motor vehicles. If you leave your car unlocked, even in your own driveway, you are an inviting target. Never mind your car stereo or gps, some miscreant may find your garage door opener and that can lead to a bigger problem. If you leave your cell phone, laptop, ipod or purse in plain view in a locked car, that is an invitation to have a window broken and your valuables taken. Take easy, sensible steps to avoid becoming a crime statistic. More tips are on the next page.

USING YOUR BLUE BIN

Your blue recycling recently became more accommodating. According to the City, you may now place styrofoam blocks, but not peanuts, into your blue bin. Also, plastic bags and hangers from the cleaners. Do your part to save the environment.

UPDATE ON LOCAL CLEAN WATER PROJECTS IMPACTING OUR BEACH

Two major LA City projects are in the pipeline (no pun intended) to improve our beach water quality.

Sewer main expansion. The first is needed to improve sewer capacity for low-flow stormwater diversion. Project design is 40% complete, with construction estimated to start in October 2009. The City's consultant was instructed to prepare a technical project memo to be used for traffic discussions in the Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) initial study. It would focus on expected traffic conditions during the construction phase with emphasis placed on potential traffic impacts along detour routes. Also, the Consultant will be requested to provide traffic management plans as part of the future submittal to Caltrans (PCH).

Santa Monica Canyon Low Flow Diversion Upgrade at Beach Parking Lot. The purpose of this project is to capture street runoff from catch basins between the current diversion structure at the Golden Bull and the beach. Design for this project also is 40% complete, with construction estimated to start in October 2009. Final layout is currently being determined in conjunction with Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors.

The SMCCA Board has asked for a briefing from and an opportunity to give input to the consultant.

To current resident, or

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association
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More Crime Prevention Tips

Lock Doors and windows. From last July through January there were 25 residential burglaries in Pacific Palisades, including our canyon, almost one a week: 18 were via unlocked doors/ windows, one via a dog door, three via ruse or distraction; the remaining were a cut screen, use of garage door opener taken from unlocked car and door pried open.

Activate Alarm Systems.

Know your immediate neighbors and their comings and goings and vice-versa.

Consider a locked Mail Box.

Consider your landscaping—does it protect you or shield an intruder?

Talk to “lost” motorists, let’s people know we are on guard/aware,

Other options include motion sensor lights, CCTV. Newspapers lying in your driveway and UPS boxes piling up can send the wrong message.

Report graffiti anywhere, anytime in the canyon.

Send a digital photo with address or location to:

pacificgraffitisolutions@yahoo.com and to wlatag@yahoo.com. Pacific Graffiti Solutions will remove the graffiti. WLA Tag is a volunteer unit of LAPD, which maintains log books of graffiti tags, so the taggers can be charged with a felony when the damage accumulates.

John Flynn

Dedicated SMCCA Board member John Flynn passed away unexpectedly last April. John was a long-time resident who lived next to and loved Rustic Canyon park. He is greatly missed. The Board voted to install a bench in the park in his memory.

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2008 Dues Now Payable

The SMCCA is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization. Your dues and contributions help keep your association strong. Yearly 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. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

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. Upon your request, we will forward to you LAPD Crime Reports and Alerts. Please let us know if you desire this additional email information.

Our mail and email lists are not available for any commercial purposes. .

Important Phone Numbers--

Graffiti Report	3-1-1
Illegal Leaf Blowers	1.800.996.2489
Illegally Parked Vehicles	1.213.485.4184
Pothole Repair	1.800.996.2489

If you are unable to contact 3-1-1 from your home phone, please let us know so we can notify the City's 3-1-1 coordinator. email: info@smcca.org.

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