

SANTA MONICA CANYON CIVIC ASSOCIATION President's Report of 2007-2008 Activities

A reputed Chinese Proverb, or curse, states, "May you live in interesting times." Whatever the case, the past year has been an interesting one indeed for our canyon. Of greatest interest are the projects that will impact traffic on Pacific Coast Highway. Cal Trans manages this state highway and has the last word on days/hours of construction, but we have a better picture of current project status.

California Incline. A year ago we worked with the Pacific Palisades Community Council to craft a response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the California Incline reconstruction project. We attended a public hearing at the Santa Monica Public Library and gave additional input. After nearly one year, Santa Monica has yet to respond. They recently informed us that a revised Draft EIR can be expected at the "end of summer." Santa Monica's date for construction of this project has been pushed forward nearly a year to late summer of 2009. Part of the delay results from the need to prepare a new traffic study to more clearly identify construction impacts. We will let you know when the Draft EIR is released.

Bluffs Improvement Project. We have urged Santa Monica to stagger its projects impacting PCH and they will complete the Bluffs stabilization project prior to beginning work on the Incline. City says they will start work in the Fall.

Pier Ramp Project. Santa Monica also is planning to widen the ramp from Ocean Avenue to the pier. Minimal traffic impact is expected.

Santa Monica and the other agencies with projects impacting the highway have formed a working group, PCH Partners, with a website, www.pchpartners.org. We have on display tonight three boards prepared by Santa Monica on their planned projects. We are pleased that the Santa Monica City Engineer has been very cooperative in providing updates as we await the new Draft EIR.

Cleaning up the bay. The LA City Engineer is designing a complex and expensive project to finally implement year around dry weather diversion of the Santa Monica channel. This runoff will be transported to the Hyperion Sewage Plant for treatment. We have been advocating this for several years and the State has ordered the City to make this improvement. This two-part project, about 50% designed, will capture polluted runoff from the areas between the Golden Bull parking lot and the sand. This the third update to this system. Since several other diversion projects also are being improved in the Pacific Palisades area, larger sewer capacity is required. This will be accomplished by construction of a 6,000-foot long Coastal Interceptor Sewer, 36 to 48" in diameter, connecting to the existing Santa Monica sewer adjacent to 415 PCH the site of ongoing construction at the new public beach club. About 1500' will run through the beach parking lots. This leaves approximately 4500' to be constructed in three segments within the PCH right-of-way. A traffic study is under way. We have urged the City construct all three segments simultaneously, to reduce the number of days one lane will be lost on PCH. Tentative construction is from October 2009 to December 2010 to meet the state clean water deadline.

Emergency Preparedness Table. Most people don't think about preparing for the "big one:" the flood, the fire. Fortunately, dedicated volunteers including Joan Graves and Isabelle Mizrahi of your board take seriously the need for such advance planning. Not a matter of "if," but a matter of "when." Joan and Isabelle have done all the work for you. They coordinate with Palisades' volunteers like Karen Miller and Flo Elfant. Please stop by the Emergency Preparedness Table and get the info. If you want to get all the neighbors together from your block, they will come and help you get organized.

More, over

Saving our State Parks. In response to the Governor's proposal to close 48 State Parks as an economy measure, park advocates throughout the state have rallied. Locally, former SMCCA board member Lucinda Mittleman brought the issue to the attention of your board, which unanimously endorsed the Save the Parks campaign and sent resolutions of support to the Governor and to all of our local public officials. If you wish to sign a petition, a table is available tonight.

Eucalyptus Forest. The Eucalyptus Forest was the brainchild of Abbot Kinney, the man who built the Venice (California) canals. The forest was purchased with a major contribution from SMCCA and community donations. It is an historic landmark. The forest has fallen on hard times in recent years. Trees have been incorrectly trimmed and suffer from insects and poor watering practices. Persons whose vehicles get locked into the parking lot at night have been observed driving through the forest. Water systems have been damaged by cars. Trees have been knocked over. Betty Lou Young and a Rustic Canyon Park Advisory Board subcommittee are riding to the rescue and after a forest plan is developed, community

Park Improvements. The City obtained funding from State Proposition 12 to augment the Prop. K funding. These funds were used to erect the new fence along Latimer Road, resurface the playcourt next to the picnic area, repair the floor in the ceramics rooms and rehabilitate the corner patio. We keep asking when the remaining project elements will be brought to the community to prioritize, but so far have only gotten excuses.

3-1-1 Problems. The LA City "One Call to City Hall," has not been available to some Canyon residents. The City is working on fixing the problem. If the 3-1-1 number does not work for you, please provide information on the 3-1-1 Sheet and we will add you to the list.

John Flynn Memorial Bench. Your board has purchased a park bench as a memorial to former board member John Flynn. Recreation and Parks has prepared a pedestal on which to mount the bench. The contractor has constructed two benches. Unfortunately, both were damaged by the trucking company. We are hoping the third time will be the charm.

Westside Transportation Corridor Hearings. Will we have a subway to the sea, and if so where and when? Will they return the Red Cars? Put bus lanes on Wilshire? To hear the ideas and be heard, attend the meeting this Thursday in Santa Monica.

Location:
Santa Monica Public Library
Multipurpose Room, 2nd Floor
601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica
6:00 – 8:00pm, Thursday, May 8th
Take the number 9 bus or validated vehicle and free bike parking is available.

If you want to contact any of the agencies mentioned in this report and do not know how, send us an email and we will help: info.smcca@verizon.net.

Membership update. As of this morning your association had 348 paid/voting members, our largest membership total on record. We have earned the respect of our local officials as we continually work for a better canyon community. Thank you for your support.