

Santa Monica Canyon News

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association - Founded 1947

Spring 2011

PCH SEWER PROJECT TO IMPACT TRAFFIC

As part of the LA City Prop "O" clean water initiative a \$8.5 Million sewer project is underway between Potrero Canyon ("Baywatch Beach") and the Annenberg Beach House in Santa Monica.

This 24-month project will increase sewer capacity to handle flow from low-flow stormwater diversion projects upgraded to operate year around, except during rain events, to improve beach water quality. Work has started at the Southern end of the project, between the Beach House and Entrada Dr.

Work hours are 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM and 9:00 PM to 5:00 AM, Monday through Friday and some Saturdays. Construction will impact PCH and adjacent

parking lots. The Southbound [nearest the beach] lanes of the highway will be directly affected. The West Channel Road tunnel will remain open during construction. All construction in the fast lane area will take place at night and the work area will be "coned off". During the day, the trench will be covered with steel plates to continue the three traffic lanes in this location.

K-rails will be placed for about 500 feet in front of the Beach Club and the Will Rogers Beach lot, requiring 24-hour closure of the #3 lane.

The sewer will continue through the beach lot to Chautauqua Dr. and thence beneath the highway.

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New Landmarking Propels Drive to Acquire Marquez Site

The Marquez family cemetery at 635 San Lorenzo St. is considered to be the oldest private cemetery in the city of Los Angeles. Ten years ago it was granted historical cultural monument status #685.

In 2010 the parcel of land in front of the cemetery, between it and San Lorenzo, was sold. Subsequently, the new land owners began development of a two story house on the South portion of that lot.

With Councilman Rosendahl's support, the Marquez family filed an application with the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission to landmark the undisturbed North portion of the lot ("Lot 30") in order to preserve what possible archeological remnants might be there, and allow the public to observe and appreciate this historic property.

On January 13, 2011 the Cultural Heritage Commission voted unanimously to override the recommendations of its staff and landmark the North portion of Lot 30.

The new owners graciously offered to sell this newly landmarked property at a discount. The timing of the landmarking re-

quires completing the purchase by April.

A fundraising group of neighbors, supporters of the Rancho and cemetery, and Rancho settler's descendants have pledged to raise \$55,000 into a segregated fund at the nonprofit La Senora Research Institute to purchase, manage and maintain Lot 30. An independent board similar to the Village Green will manage the parcel. To date, the fund-raising is about half way to its goal. For further information on the cemetery and the fundraising drive, contact Colleen McAndrews at 310.454.2107.



San Lorenzo Statue next to Marquez Cemetery

[Coastal Sewer Project continued from first page]

This highway segment and an adjacent segment nearer Temescal Canyon Road will require 24-hour closure of the #3 lane with K-rails for about 18 months, and should begin soon. The middle lane will be closed at night with cones to allow excavation equipment to “swing” over the lane. .

Safety of bicyclists is a major concern. While bicyclists have the same rights as motorists, the City will set out a suggested detour at Temescal Canyon Road to route cyclists through that parking lot and onto the bike path proper. Access to West Channel Road will remain available through the tunnel. Signs will identify that exit, and the ramp at the East end of the Will Rogers Beach Parking Lot for cyclists who choose to return to PCH [look out for some steel plates] or continue on the bike path toward the Beach Club and the Pier. To improve the safety of night time riders of the path, the City will look into options for lighting the path.

The construction work will require temporary blocking of the existing bike path bridge. A temporary bridge will carry cyclists across the Santa Monica Canyon Channel while a tunnel is dug to carry the sewer under the channel.

Project updates are available on Twitter @pchpartners or at www.pchpartners.org

INCLINE TO GET BIGGER POCKET



At the request of SMCCA, the PCH Taskforce has asked the City of Santa Monica and Cal Trans to increase the size of the left turn pocket for vehicles turning from Southbound PCH up the California Incline. Santa Monica engineer Mark Cuneo is preparing plans for the project in consultation with Cal Trans.

Left turns into the parking lot North of the Jonathan Beach Club will be prohibited and the pocket will be extended in length from 333 to 613 feet. Currently the pocket is inadequate for the traffic flow, creating “turbulence” in the fast lane as drivers jockey to squeeze into the turn lane.

THE CANYON-- LOVING IT TO DEATH

I can remember when I first saw this place. It was sometime in 1979. I was a resident in the newly-formed emergency medicine program at UCLA and had a schedule that was hellish by today's standards but that provided a regular day and a half gap between night shifts and day shifts, which I frequently spent at a friend's rented shack in Malibu across the road from Geoffrey's.

Getting there involved driving down San Vicente to 7th, making the right turn onto West Channel, then on to PCH and paradise, or Paradise Cove, anyway. One day I decided to take a detour and turned right at the light by the school. I wound up Amalfi, past a fence made of wooden cows, then down Mesa to Latimer and through Rustic Canyon. I loved it. It was like Mill Valley with better weather and prettier foliage. It was my secret.

A few years, and a series of improbable occurrences later, I had the chance to buy a house on the very street I'd discovered earlier. I begged, borrowed, and practically stole to make it happen. I had the perfect, (crumbling, dry-rot ridden, dilapidated), little Spanish cottage in the best, (lush, quirky, built-to-scale), neighborhood in LA.

Eventually my secret got out and others discovered the Canyon. They loved it, too. So much so that even though the quirky little cottages could never accommodate their lifestyles they were drawn to the place with such force that they were determined to move in. Even if it meant distorting the very place they originally fell in love with.

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CALIFORNIA INCLINE UPDATE

Progress on the Santa Monica project to rebuild the deteriorated California Incline vehicular bridge has been delayed by mandated state and federal environmental studies. Consultants have finished the draft California Environmental Impact Report and is awaiting feedback on the federal Environmental Assessment (which is the responsibility of Cal Trans.)

We expect a combined 1,000-page document. Traffic mitigation and construction work hours will be the first things we look at. Following a 45-day comment period, a consultant will report back on the comments and the document will be transmitted to the Santa Monica city council for hearing and approval. After city council certification, Cal Trans will sign off and design can begin. Best “guestimate” at this point is for construction to start September 2012.

NATIVE GARDEN THRIVES AT CANYON

Two years ago, a Native Garden was planted in front of the Canyon school office. The effort was designed and coordinated by then Canyon parent, Mike Terry. It is easily accessible to the public along Entrada Dr. Last year, the garden was expanded by Canyon parent, landscape designer, Lisa Onodera-Spence.

It features plants that grow wild on sunny slopes in the Santa Monica Mountains such as "Sticky Monkeyflower" and a small shade garden next to the Kindergarten building. Over 50 species are represented in the garden. A "plant map" is located next to the school office. The Native Garden is accessible for public enjoyment and education.



The Native Garden is home to delicate native ferns and over ten different kinds of sage.

Near Entrada Drive you'll spot some bright orange California poppies, our state flower, which grows wild throughout the state.

Grow Native Nursery is the official Native Garden sponsor. This amazing 15-acre garden and nursery is located on the Veteran's Administration grounds near Constitution Avenue and Sepulveda Blvd. in Westwood. The Grow Native Nursery is a branch of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, the largest garden dedicated exclusively to California's native plants. <http://rsabg.org/component/content/article/47-horticulture/499-about-gnn-westwood>

Now, if we only could get the school gardener to stop using his illegal leaf blower every Saturday morning. . .

CITY COUNCIL OK'S NEW HILLSIDE REGS

After over five years of studies, workshops, hearings and committee meetings, this month the City will adopt a new code regulating construction in so-called "hillside" areas. All of Santa Monica Canyon has been defined in the hillside category. Your association has been an active participant throughout and, as you may recall, planner Erick Lopez briefed us at one of our annual meetings. SMCCA advocated for goals expressed by the community in a 2004 survey which included a desire for continued greenscape and a reduction in "out of character" mini-mansions.

The new code will reduce grading in hillside areas and also the square footage (floor area ratio) permitted to be constructed on hillside lots (most houses are smaller than the proposed floor area ratio). The ordinance also will give designers more flexibility for the configuration of hillside houses. The new code is expected to become effective by early May.

RESTAURANT ROW RIGHT IN OUR CANYON

You would be hard-pressed to find another area that has so many wonderful restaurants in such close proximity to every resident in our canyon. What could be better than strolling down W. Channel on a crisp evening and duck into one of our fabulous restaurants for the meal of your life? Sam's By The Beach, Café Delfini or Il Restorante di Giorgio Baldi will earn the praises of even the most critical foodie. Or, taking a morning walk and ending it with coffee and breakfast overlooking the Pacific Ocean at Patrick's Roadhouse. Check out the Historic Golden Bull for early bird dinner or Sunday brunch. Looking to enjoy a leisurely lunch with friends? Marix Tex Mex Playa has a table waiting for you. Need to reward yourself with a fun evening out? We've got that too!

Whether it is for a special occasion or just a wonderful night out, please remember our fine canyon restaurants:

Sam's By The Beach
108 W. Channel Rd.
310.230.9100

Café Delfini
147 W. Channel Rd.
310.459.8823

The Golden Bull
170 W. Channel Rd.
310.230.0402

The Hideout
112 W. Channel Rd.
310.429.1851

Il Restorante di Giorgio Baldi
114 W. Channel Rd.
310.573.1660

Marix Tex Mex Playa
118 Entrada Dr.
310.459.8596

Patrick's Roadhouse
106 Entrada Dr.
310.459.4544

To current resident, or

Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association
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LOVING THE CANYON, Continued

They remodeled. With a vengeance. You know the story. But the Canyon was resilient and its topography protected itself from some of the most egregious development. Some things just couldn't be built. Until they could.

The combination of dubious taste, a bit of arrogance, and sophisticated technology is truly formidable. The once unbuildable hillside is now the site of an architecturally acclaimed residence cantilevered over thin air, which, from my perspective, looks more like the unfortunate accident of a dyspeptic cement truck. Similar incongruities have sprung up on many other streets, either towering over their neighbors, sprawling from lot line to lot line, displacing ancient sycamores, or in the occasional 'special' case, doing all three at once.

The culmination of all this, at least for now, has to be the new Argyle House, the quintessence of insensitivity and garishness. Oh, goody! Our own little Guggenheim of the Grotesque

Killing the thing you love is an old cliché and though the Canyon is far from dead it would be good if the ones who love it so much would stop trying so hard.

While I'm at it, it IS possible to jog and ride a bicycle without shouting back and forth at 7 AM on weekend mornings, "no parking" signs are there for a reason, and asking your gardener not to use a leaf blower doesn't make you a racist.

James V. Pagano, MD

Newsletter Staff--

Norman Cowie	Marilyn Wexler
Isabelle Mizrahi	George Wolfberg
James Pagano	

2011 Dues Now Payable

SMCCA is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt all volunteer 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 payment to SMCCA at PO Box 3441, Santa Monica, CA 90408-3441, or Pay Pal through our web site, www.smcca.org

Additional contributions are welcome and greatly appreciated. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience; please give us your email address and let us know if you want to receive our weekly crime report. We do not share your personal information..

If you would like to participate on the board or in any other capacity or have areas of interest, please tell us in your reply. The Board meets on the second Tuesday of most months and **our Annual Meeting is May 10**--please save the date and come hear a stimulating discussion on "Creating Tomorrow's Architectural Heritage in Santa Monica Canyon."

EARTHQUAKE!! FIRE!! FLOOD!! BE PREPARED

Comprehensive information will be available at our annual meeting on May 10 (starts 7:00 PM at Rustic Canyon Park). You can download your Survival Guide at www.PalisadesPost.com. Click "Helpful Links."

Important Phone Numbers-- Call 3-1-1, or

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.