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WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the residents of the West Pasadena and San Rafael areas about issues of possible concern. It is the hope of W.P.R.A. to publish this newsletter four times a year. The editors wish to keep the newsletter informal and welcome any news articles, suggestions, comments, and help. Do call us.

Annette Serrurier
(799-2556)

Claire Bogaard
(799-9819)

NEWS FROM THE CITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS - William J. Bogaard

...WHAT KIND OF COMMUNITY DO YOU WANT PASADENA TO BE?

A public hearing will be held before the City Board of Directors on Saturday, January 24, at 9:00 A.M. in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium to receive public comment on the City of Pasadena and its future. The hearing was scheduled in the face of strong community controversy about a major program for highrise development presented by the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency.

A Supplemental Environmental Impact Report ("SEIR") was completed in August describing the PRA program for highrise development. It studies various impacts of the development, including traffic burden; the availability and cost of electric service; the need for new capital improvements; other environmental impacts such as air and noise pollution; and the effect on the character of the city.

A public hearing was held before the PRA in mid-November on the SEIR, which was attended by an estimated 500 persons. The majority of comments urged rejection of the PRA program of highrise development and argued for a moderate program for new construction in scale with the existing Pasadena cityscape.

It was suggested that an accelerated program for massive development would make it impossible for the City to incorporate mitigation measures with respect to traffic, parking, energy availability, and other effects which could affect adversely the quality of living and working in Pasadena. A significant amount of new construction, approximating 3,000,000 square feet, is presently underway at various stages of planning through final construction. Such development, together with the presently unknown traffic impact of the Plaza Pasadena, suggest that the City's development guidelines should be reviewed to assure that Pasadena in the future will continue to provide a unique quality of life for its residents.

City residents increasingly recognize that downtown development has a direct impact on the neighborhoods of Pasadena. Neighborhood associations in District 6 located south of the downtown area have expressed concern about the increasing traffic on residential streets from cars which traverse their areas for business downtown. Similar concern has been expressed by neighborhood associations north of the central business district.

A January 24 public hearing will provide an excellent opportunity for the expression of concerns and community goals for the future of Pasadena. It is very important that the neighborhood associations take an active role in offering public comment.

...ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The City Board is considering proposals for restructuring the City's economic development program. The economic development program is intended to attract new buildings and new businesses to the City to provide additional jobs, an increased tax base, and a strengthened local economy.

During the 1970s, this effort was conducted primarily under the leadership of former Assistant City Manager Don Pollard and the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency. Mr. Pollard's resignation and increasing public concern about the PRA have led to the proposed changes.

There is increasing recognition that change is needed. PRA executive director Louis Shepard stated that, "there is a need for a city-wide mechanism to deal with economic development in a more comprehensive manner and with more community input."

Public acceptance of the City's economic development efforts is increasingly recognized as necessary for success, as various neighborhood associations express concern about the impact of heavy traffic on residential streets, increasing electric rates, and limited resources for established city services.

It appears likely that the role of the PRA will be reduced in the future. Mr. Shepard's report acknowledges "overlap and duplication of effort" on the part of the Redevelopment Agency and states that Proposition 13 limits the "feasibility of new development activities without substantial city participation." The restructured economic development program of the city is likely to recognize that Pasadena has needs throughout the community, and not just in the downtown area, that are entitled to the City's attention.

NEWS FROM W.P.R.A.

At the December meeting of the Board of Directors of W.P.R.A., there was discussion about the growing importance of Neighborhood Associations in Pasadena. Board members voted to strive for a broader representation of the many areas which are part of the W.P.R.A. neighborhood.

Board members felt that more neighbors should be encouraged to participate in W.P.R.A. If you are willing to volunteer some time—to serve as a Board member—or offer names of your neighbors who would be interested in getting involved in W.P.R.A., please call Jim Gamb at 799-3556. Jim was appointed Chairman of the Nominating Committee.

NEW ISSUES

... Recently the Board of W.P.R.A. learned that the Salvation Army had purchased a piece of property on West Del Mar between Pasadena Avenue and South Fair Oaks. It is the understanding of the Board that the Salvation Army plans to move its facility at DeLacey and West Colorado Blvd. to this new location on the south side of Del Mar. A spokesman from the Salvation Army indicates that there will be a "work therapy program" for alcoholics on the new site. Because of the proximity of this Salvation Army complex to West Pasadena neighborhoods, the Board of W.P.R.A. is attempting to gather more information and will be following developments closely.

... The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) of the County of Los Angeles is in need of a new building to serve welfare clients. For a time, a site on South Fair Oaks near Arlington was under consideration. Neighbors in the area indicated concern with increased traffic and related problems and questioned the need for a Welfare Office at that location. At this time, the County of Los Angeles is looking for alternative sites.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Public Hearing - Saturday, January 24, 1981
- 9:00 a.m. at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

Subject: Highrise development plans for downtown Pasadena as proposed by the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency (PRA).
Join your neighbors and offer your comments on future growth in Pasadena.

Should you not be free to attend this important meeting, your thoughts could be expressed in writing to:

Mayor Jo Heckman and
The Board of City Directors
100 North Garfield Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91109

GIFT TO THE CITY...

Special thanks to Tom Seifert and his company Duracast for their generous contribution of two cement picnic tables and benches and an outdoor barbecue complete with grill. Mr. Seifert, at his own cost, delivered and installed this equipment in the Lower Arroyo (at the base of California Blvd. and Arroyo Blvd.). Shortly thereafter all of this park equipment was destroyed by vandals. Upon learning of this loss, Mr. Seifert and Duracast replaced all of the park equipment and again delivered and installed it in the Lower Arroyo. W.P.R.A. warmly thanks Mr. Seifert and Duracast for their most generous gifts to the residents of Pasadena.

UPDATES

... La Solana Inn property continues to be an important agenda item. The old Inn and adjacent buildings on the site were recently demolished. Architect Jim Pulliam and Developer Phillip Lynch have recently moved on two old Pasadena homes to the historic site. Eventually there will be a total of four homes on the site. The area will be landscaped and the homes will be restored and sold as single family dwellings.

... W.P.R.A. is still waiting to learn the date of a public hearing to be scheduled by the General Services Administration (GSA) for purposes of discussing the Environmental Impact Report for the Vista del Arroyo. W.P.R.A. will be certain to notify its members of the hearing date. During the past two months, work has been underway at the "Maxwell House" to repair the roof. As many know, the Maxwell House at the end of Green Street on South Grand Avenue has suffered serious water damage in recent years. It is the hope of W.P.R.A. that the repair work will be completed prior to any heavy rains and that the interior of the fine residential home will be protected from further damage.

WHERE TO CALL IN CITY HALL IN CASE OF:

1. Abandoned or junk vehicles 577-4633
2. Vehicles parked on lawns or vacant lots 577-4149
3. Trash and debris on lawns or vacant lots 577-4087
4. Poorly maintained houses and yards 577-4633
5. Overcrowded dwellings 577-4633
6. Boarded-up houses 577-4633
7. Businesses operated in a home 577-4149
8. Too many garage or yard sales 577-4152
9. Health problems in a home or yard 577-4390
10. Animal problems 792-7151
11. Overgrown street trees or vegetation 577-4158
12. Cracked sidewalks 577-4158
13. Streets that need sweeping 577-4158
14. Problems with garbage pickup 577-4158
15. Errors on utility bills 577-2440
16. Landlord/tenant disagreements 794-7194
17. Need for a low-interest home loan 796-1813
18. Need for assistance in Spanish 792-3148
19. POLICE DEPARTMENT 577-4241
20. FIRE DEPT. and PARAMEDICS 792-4161

NEIGHBORS FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT CIRCULATE INITIATIVE

Neighbors For Open Government, a recently formed group of Pasadena residents, has published notice of intention to circulate an initiative petition relating to the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency. If approved by the voters, the initiative would transfer management responsibility for the PRA from appointed persons to the elected City Directors.

Chairmen of this effort are Tony Thompson (telephone 681-6869) and Margaret Linscott (telephone 681-4295).

They indicate that the premise of the initiative is the redevelopment decisions will be more responsive to the community if they are made by persons who must account for their actions to the voters. Sponsors of the initiative point to the strong negative reaction in the community to the PRA program for highrise development along Los Robles Blvd.

Since its inception, the PRA has been directed in its activities by a group of five appointed persons, whose service is not subject to any time limitation. One member has served for more than 12 years, and others have served for periods of 6 and 8 years. Another member is a law partner of a City Director Don Yokaitis.

Signature gathering got underway officially early this month and is expected to be completed within sixty days.

For more information - or - for an opportunity to sign the Initiative, call West Pasadena residents:

Jill Polsby (799-6125)
Ginny Moore (795-9135)
Sue Colborn (799-3600)
Peg Stewart (449-6148)
Karen Cutts (681-4607)

NEWS FROM THE ARROYO SECO

WPRA Finances Arroyo Oaks

Going north on Arroyo Blvd. near the Colorado St. Bridge, the over hanging coast live oaks suddenly give out and the parkway becomes dry and barren. In this post-Prop 13 era, the City has limited funds to plant new street trees. Friends of the Arroyo, a private Arroyo support group, approached WPRA with a proposal to plant nine, new 15-gallon oak trees if WPRA would pay the wholesale cost of the trees. WPRA's Board agreed to put up the \$360 to cover the tree cost, and Friends of the Arroyo, working with the City, will start planting as soon as the winter rains begin.

Lower Arroyo Restoration

Dr. Roland Ross and numerous volunteer friends and neighbors have been making visible improvements in the Lower Arroyo the past couple months. In December, erosion control projects were completed on the west edge of Arroyo Blvd. Earlier, 1000 feet of wildflowers were planted along the flood control channel south from the parking lot. Various other projects will be undertaken in the months ahead. If you are interested in working with Dr. Ross in the Arroyo (and learning about native plants, animals and the geological processes that shaped the Arroyo), volunteers are welcome. Feel free to approach Dr. Ross to offer your help, or call George McQuilkin (793-7733) who is co-ordinating volunteers.

REFORM OF FIRE AND POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The City Board is expected to take final action in early February on a proposal to reduce an uncapped cost-of-living benefit for retired persons in the fire and police retirement system. A motion to place the recommendation on the March 1981 Municipal Ballot introduced by Director Bogaard and, seconded by Director Jones failed to gain City

Board approval after the City Manager pleaded for additional time to consider the proposal.

The Charter Study Committee had studied the proposal for more than two years before presenting its findings to the City Board on December 9. The Committee found the uncapped cost-of-living benefit, which is available to only 200 of the City's approximately 1,300 employees, to be beyond the City's ability to pay.

In 1980, the cost-of-living increase for this Retirement system exceeded 10%. Other city workers, including 110 Pasadena police and firemen, participate in the state administered public employees retirement system, which grants a cost of living benefit of up to 2% per year. Retirement programs in private industry normally have no cost-of-living adjustment.

Recognizing the discrepancy, the Charter Study Committee's proposal would introduce a 2% maximum annual cost-of-living adjustment under the fire and police retirement system applicable to services rendered after the date of change by approximately 200 workers. The uncapped cost-of-living benefit is legally protected as to services rendered by such persons for all prior service through the date of the proposed change. The proposal would also limit to 2% future increases for approximately 40 persons who had already retired in 1969 when the uncapped cost-of-living benefit was first adopted and who, therefore, never worked for the City with the expectation that their pension benefit would be adjusted for inflation.

The Charter Study Proposal would also require the City to make annual supplemental payments to the Retirement System to correct a \$1,000,000 shortfall in funding for the cost-of-living benefit which has accrued to date and for funding deficiencies in the future. Such payments are designed to avoid if possible a bankruptcy of the System in future years.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE ...

SEPTEMBER 1980 was our Membership Drive Month. If you have *not* sent in your dues, or are new to the West Pasadena neighborhood, please fill in the necessary information and return the enclosed envelope and mail to W.P.R.A. Dues will remain at \$5 for a family membership. This issue of the newsletter will be mailed to each household in West Pasadena. Future issues will be mailed only to paid members of the West Pasadena Residents Association.

A QUOTE FROM YESTERYEAR ...

"Something must be said too about the name, Pasadena. For about a year after the first settlement was made, it had no other name than the Indiana Colony. Los Angeles was the post office, and under the stress of their many duties, the colonists did not give attention to the matter of a different and permanent name. Pe-qu-a-de-na (changed to Pasadena) is an Indian word and was borrowed from the Chippewa language and means literally Hill of the Valley, more euphoniously translated, Crown of the Valley. It was chosen at a meeting of the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association, April 22, 1875. Some of the colonists preferred Indianola, as suggesting the origin of the colony; and others wanted Granada, the three names having apparently been the only ones seriously considered. That the name Pasadena, rather than either of the others, was chosen is as eminently satisfactory now, as it seems to have been—once the colonists became accustomed to the new title—way back in 1875."

Taken from: THIRTY YEARS IN PASADENA, written by Lon F. Chapin in 1929.