

# NEWS

West Pasadena Residents' Association

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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SPRING 2006

## NFL in the Rose Bowl?

By Caroline Naber

Most people think that the prospects of the NFL locating a team in the Rose Bowl are dead, but sadly that is not the case.

The likelihood of the NFL in the Rose Bowl appeared finished last June, when, after a loud and passionate plea by the citizens of Pasadena, the City Council rejected the idea of courting an NFL team to the Rose Bowl. A majority of our City Council Members (Mayor Bogaard, Vice Mayor Madison, Council Members Gordo, Haderlein, Tyler) voted to study a no-NFL "Plan B" for the Rose Bowl. Further, it was recently reported that the Los Angeles Coliseum Commission is close to finalizing the deal-points for a lease contract. (*Los Angeles Business Journal*, January 30, 2006).

However, not willing to adhere to the majority city council vote and not convinced by the on-going reports in

the newspaper, three City Council Members (Chris Holden, Paul Little and Joyce Streater) sponsored a ballot initiative and submitted the text to the Pasadena City Clerk. In September 2005, the NFL proponents published their intent to circulate a petition, with the goal to gather enough signatures to place the initiative on the ballot. The initiative, "Proposal for the National Football League Renovation of the Rose Bowl Stadium for Professional Football Use" (NFL Initiative) wording is almost 100 pages long and can be found on the City of Pasadena website at [www.CityofPasadena.net](http://www.CityofPasadena.net). If passed, it will serve as a contract

*continued on page 2*

## The Sares Regis Westgate Project: The Process Continues

By Fred Zepeda

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) states, "the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is an informational document that informs decision makers and the public of significant environmental effects and identifies possible ways to minimize the significant effects". West Pasadena Residents' Association (WPRa) submitted detailed letters and spoke at both the Traffic Advisory Commission (TAC) and the Planning Commission scoping meetings.

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## WPRa Annual Meeting: "Gridlock and Growing Pains!"

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

Harvest Rock Church Ambassador Auditorium  
131 S. St. John Avenue

Parking at 169 S. St. John Avenue (underground)

5:30pm – Refreshments and Exhibits • 6:30pm – Program

Featured Guest Speaker Panel:  
**Cynthia Kurtz**, City Manager, City of Pasadena • **Richard McDonald**, Planning Commissioner, City of Pasadena • **Vince Farhat**, Traffic Advisory Commissioner, City of Pasadena and WPRa Board Member

• **Sue Mossman**, Executive Director, Pasadena Heritage

For more information on the Annual Meeting, read "Join Us! WPRa Annual Meeting" article by Cheryl Auger in this issue of the newsletter on page 8. ■

## NFL/Rose Bowl

*Continued from front page*

with the NFL and would force the City to enter into a less favorable lease and Rose Bowl construction agreement with the NFL than the City Council, after much debate and public input, rejected last June.

The NFL Initiative will cede control of the Rose Bowl and the Arroyo for up to 55 years to the profit-making enterprise of the NFL and gives the City Manager the power to work out the details of the stadium design, by-passing the City Council and the City Commissions. There are no details in the initiative which spell out financial benefits to other City entities such as schools, parks or recreation facilities. With the NFL in residence, the Central Arroyo will be closed to recreational users for at least 25 large events per year. The NFL also will have the right to host up to 20 additional non-NFL events and the City will have the right for an additional 5 events which will close off large areas of the Arroyo Seco, bringing the total number of Rose Bowl event days to 50! That averages almost one event per week all year long; most of those events occurring on the week-ends when Pasadena residents use the park the most. For the large events, eighteen thousand cars will park in the Arroyo with 72% of those cars parked on the golf course and the

grassy areas in Brookside Park, squeezing out the park users and the other recreational users including Kidspace Children's Museum, AAF Rose Bowl Aquatics Center, Jackie Robinson Stadium and the soccer fields surrounding the Rose Bowl.

On February 21, 2006, the NFL ballot initiative proponents submitted 16,000 signatures. The County Registrar returned the petitions on April 4th and the Pasadena City Clerk certified 10,065 signatures as valid from petitions for the NFL ballot initiative. The NFL ballot initiative was included on the April 10, 2006 City Council agenda.

At that meeting, the City Council discussed the options available to them and directed the City Manager to respond to questions posed by various City Council members including a request for a report from outside legal counsel as to the merits of the lawsuit filed by Pasadena First (see below). Additionally, the City Manager "was directed to prepare a report on the effect of the proposed Initiative and return to Council within 30 days (May 8, 2006). The City Attorney and City Clerk were directed to prepare formal resolutions calling for a special election to be held on November 7, 2006 (consolidated with the State General Election) and present to Council for adoption on May 8; City Clerk to include translation costs and minority

language data for Pasadena under Voting Rights Act requirements."

If the NFL ballot initiative passes, the NFL will be offered the right to dominate the Arroyo for up to 55 years! Pasadena will also lose control of its prized National Historic Landmark, the Rose Bowl Stadium.

The WPRA opposes the NFL in the Rose Bowl and supports Pasadena First, an organization that has been formed to challenge the proposed NFL Initiative. Pasadena First is a not-for-profit corporation and it has filed a lawsuit in the Superior Court challenging the proposed initiative. "The NFL Initiative is blatantly unconstitutional and invalid, violating at least five separate, fundamental precepts of initiative law." (from the text of the lawsuit filed on October 21, 2005.)

Pasadena First is also supported by the Linda Vista Annandale Association, Bungalow Heaven Neighborhood Association, Pasadena Heritage and many individuals from across Pasadena. The Pasadena First Board includes many former and current City of Pasadena Planning Commissioners.

For more information about Pasadena First, please check out their website at [www.PasadenaFirst.com](http://www.PasadenaFirst.com) or contact Carolyn Naber via email at [info@PasadenaFirst.com](mailto:info@PasadenaFirst.com) or call at (626) 795-2595. ■

## Sares Regis Project

*Continued from front page*

The City sets the scope of the EIR. In preparing the scope the City asks other agencies, City Commissions and the public for their input as to what elements, issues and alternatives to the project should be analyzed in the EIR.

- *26 Buildings from Three to Five Stories High*
- *Twice the Size of The Del Mar Station*
- *65 Dwelling Units per Acre*
- *820 Residential Units*
- *5851 Daily Trips*

The Draft of the Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) must be circulated for comments. That process requires that the document be reviewed by TAC and the Planning Commission at public meetings.

WPRA reviewed the DEIR and found that for the most part the thoughtful and responsible requests made by Commissioners, WPRA

*continued on page 7*

## President's Message *By Dorothy Lindsey*

More than anything else, Pasadena is defined by the quality of life of our neighborhoods. We are truly fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful, historic and diverse communities in Southern California.

The WPRA supports thoughtful development that is consistent with the density and scale of our historic neighborhoods. And we support the goal of expanding public transit so residents can get around town without cars.

But, our quality of life is threatened by the negative aspects of Pasadena's recent building boom. Every block you pass seems to have some sort of construction on it. And with density comes traffic.

Traffic is significant but so is the fact that the quality of education is so poor that families are spending up to a third of their income to educate their children. The city population is expected to grow, housing prices are at their highest, income is barely keeping up with inflation and the PUSD is responding by closing Pasadena schools.

What happens when there are more children and fewer options? I guess if we have the NFL at the Rose Bowl we'll be so elated that we won't notice how long it takes to get places or how we focused on sports rather than a quality education system. And where are all of the parks that were promised from the City's development fees?

What can residents do to preserve and protect our quality of life?

As individuals acting alone, not much. Working together, however, we can send a loud message to City Hall that we want balanced and thoughtful development that will honor our past while building a better future.

The WPRA is your voice. With your active involvement, WPRA can and will make a positive difference for Pasadena.

Please join WPRA and lend your time and talents for the betterment of our community. Call (626) 441-1388 or visit [www.wpra.net](http://www.wpra.net) today! ■



## WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



### At the Annual Meeting Vote for the Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate of Officers and Directors for 2006-2007:

#### Officers:

Fred Zepeda, *President*

James Hawkes, *Vice President*

Blaine Cavena, *Treasurer*

Cathy Morrison, *Secretary*

Cheryl Auger, *Director of Communications*

Joan Hearst, *Director of Membership*

Dorothy Lindsey, *Immediate Past President*

#### Directors:

Larry Abelson, Geoffrey Baum, Vince Farhat, Mic Hansen, Bill Jernigan,

Judith Klump, John Martin, Carolyn Naber, Audrey O'Kelley,

Marilyn Randolph, David Romney, Mary Dee Romney, Priscilla Taylor,

John Van de Kamp, Michael Vogler

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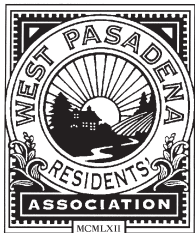


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All membership dues are tax-deductible, and donations of \$75 or more are acknowledged in this newsletter. Please take a moment to complete this form and mail it with your check today!

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- Associate \$25-\$49     Patron \$75-\$99     Neighborhood Protection Fund  
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*Please mail to:*

**West Pasadena Residents' Association**  
Post Office Box 50252  
Pasadena, California 91115

# Thank You

## Arroyo & Neighborhood Protection Funds

May 2005 - April 2006

*The WPRA Board of Directors thanks the following very generous donors for their quick action and generous support of the Arroyo Protection Fund. These monies have been used to fund our opposition to the NFL at the Rose Bowl and to advocate on behalf of the Arroyo Seco. Over 30% of the checks for the Arroyo Protection Fund came from Pasadena citizens outside of the 91105 area. We thank you from the bottom of our heart. The response to our requests for funds from Pasadena residents was beyond our expectations and shows the tremendous interest that our neighborhoods have in preserving the historic Rose Bowl and the surrounding parkland for future generations. We can all be proud of this achievement. Each person who donated and supported WPRA in this effort deserves our heartfelt thanks.* —Dorothy Lindsey, President

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625 S. Orange Grove HOA

# Sares Regis Project

Continued from page 2

and others had been ignored. Here are some, but not all of the requests that were not addressed:

- The traffic study must be thorough and transparent. Any and all assumptions and assertions should be fully supported with empirical data.
- Provide data that quantifies the effectiveness of any traffic mitigation efforts.
- Study a smart growth mixed-use alternative.
- Study a 50% less dense alternative.
- Provide a pedestrian master plan.



By not providing this kind of data and information, they limit the ability of the public and ultimately decision makers to evaluate the project. Limiting data can mask the flaws in their project and mask the benefits of possible modifications to their project.

This project, as currently proposed, is not the Urban Village envisioned in the General Plan. It is not the pedestrian friendly mixed use that was envisioned in the Central District Specific Plan. It is a 26 building, 1,000,000 square foot housing project. If approved as proposed this will be a lost opportunity to bring a real and vibrant Urban Village to Pasadena.

The TAC found the Transportation and Circulation section of the DEIR to be deficient and inadequate. They asked that the DEIR be revised and the traffic study peer-reviewed.

The Planning Commission commented on the DEIR but did not vote on its merit.

The Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) must respond to the comments and criticisms raised in the review of the DEIR. The process now moves to a Hearing Officer who will review the FEIR for adequacy and consistency. He/She may or may not certify the FEIR. The decision of the Hearing Officer can be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals, which is comprised of five members of the Planning Commission. The decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals can further be appealed to the City Council.

You can rest assured that WPRA will stay involved through the entire process. ■





# Join us! WPRAs Annual Meeting

By Cheryl Auger

A neighbor emailed me the other day, in response to a note I had sent on an unrelated topic. The unsolicited response was quite a surprise. "What's with all the development?" he asked. "Tell them to stop building all of these ugly stucco boxes!" My first thought was that he overestimated my influence in the city. My second thought was that he obviously isn't the only person who thinks that our city is becoming too dense, or who dislikes the design of the new buildings. My neighbor, who just had a baby a couple of months ago and doesn't really keep up with city events, has only caught a slight glimpse of the issues that will face all of us over the next several years.

It seems that every block you pass has some sort of construction taking place on it. And with density comes traffic. Many people I speak with are concerned about the current traffic congestion, and how much worse it will be when the buildings that are under construction are occupied.

Traffic is significant, but so is the state of Public Education. The quality of education in Pasadena is so poor that another friend is spending a third of her income to educate her two junior high school children at private schools. She's very concerned about sending them to high school. The city population is expected to grow, housing prices are at their highest, income is barely keeping up with inflation and the PUSD is closing Pasadena schools. What will happen when there are more children and fewer options? And where will they play? The parks that we were promised from the development fees have yet to materialize.



## WPRAs Annual Meeting: "Gridlock and Growing Pains!"

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

Harvest Rock Church Ambassador Auditorium  
131 S. St. John Avenue

Parking at 169 S. St. John Avenue (underground)

5:30pm – Refreshments and Exhibits • 6:30pm – Program

We have also seen the resurgence of the proposal to host the NFL at the Rose Bowl. A ballot measure threatens to sidestep the decision made by the City Council to drop the NFL. If the proposal succeeds, it promises to greatly exacerbate the traffic problem, add noise to the neighborhood, stretch our emergency response crews as well as limit the recreation opportunities most of us currently enjoy in the arroyo.

Which brings me to our Annual Meeting, "Gridlock and Growing Pains". This meeting promises to be an exciting event. Our panel will include Cynthia Kurtz, our City Manager, Richard McDonald, a Planning Commissioner, Vince Farhat, a Traffic Advisory Commissioner and WPRAs Board member, and Sue

Mossman, Executive Director of Pasadena Heritage. It will be a chance to ask your questions relating to the issues that confront us in Pasadena, gain some insight into what is planned for our future, and to help shape what the future brings.

The event will take place Tuesday, May 9, at the Harvest Rock Church Ambassador Auditorium at 131 St. John Avenue. Free Parking is available at 169 St. John Avenue. The Panel Discussion will start at 7:00pm but the business meeting will start at 6:30pm.

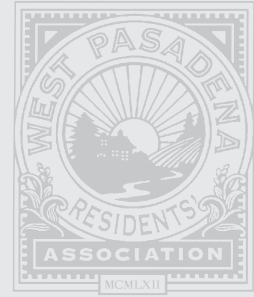
At 5:30pm, invited exhibitors will be present in the lobby of the auditorium and outside. Exhibitors include Sares-Regis and Whole Foods as well as the Rose Bowl and Sunrise Senior Living Center. ■





# West Pasadena Transportation Update

By Vince Farhat



## TAC Approves New Pedestrian Master Plan

Last year, the Transportation Advisory Commission (“TAC”) participated in a special joint meeting with the Planning Commission to discuss the development of a new pedestrian plan for Pasadena. The goals of such a plan are to preserve the walkability of pedestrian areas, better design and development of pedestrian-friendly projects, better integration of pedestrian improvements into street maintenance and traffic management programs, and promotion of walking for improved public health.

On April 6, TAC reviewed a draft Pasadena Pedestrian Plan. A major task in developing the Plan was to document much of the City’s pedestrian infrastructure, population characteristics, and travel characteristics in graphical information system (GIS) format. The purpose of using GIS formatted data is to improve project development and interagency coordination for ongoing as well as future pedestrian-related improvements.

At its April 6 meeting, TAC voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the Plan. TAC also voted unanimously to recommend that all future development projects discuss and demonstrate compliance with the Plan. On a going forward basis, after the Plan is approved, TAC wants to explore additional pedestrian-oriented programs and projects for the City.

The Planning Commission is expected to review the Plan on April 26. Then the City Council will review and (hopefully) approve the Plan in May or June.

## TAC Rejects Ambassador East EIR

In February, TAC reviewed a draft environmental impact report (EIR) for the Westgate Project. The Project site consists of three contiguous blocks located on the former east campus of Ambassador College in the City of Pasadena. The developer, Sares-Regis Group, wants to build 820 residential units and 22,154 square feet of ground floor retail.

TAC believes the Project site represents an exciting chance to implement a large-scale infill project based on “smart growth” development principles. After reviewing the EIR, however, TAC unanimously rejected the current proposal as a missed opportunity.

TAC determined that the transportation and circulation portion of the EIR, together with the underlying traffic study, are inadequate. For example, the EIR does not study a full range of Project alternatives, including mixed-use and reduced-density alternatives. The EIR also fails to adequately study parking measures designed to reduce car trips and promote public transit, walking and biking. Moreover, the traffic study

itself simply is not credible. The study concludes that traffic conditions will actually improve at certain intersections in 2015 with the Project — despite the fact that the Project is expected to generate about 6,060 net weekday daily car trips.

A guiding principle of Pasadena’s General Plan is protecting neighborhoods from traffic intruding on neighborhood quality of life. But the EIR fails to study any neighborhood protection measures. Indeed, TAC concluded the EIR doesn’t adequately describe traffic mitigation measures and does not focus on reducing car trips to a “net zero” impact. For these reasons, TAC recommended that the City revise the EIR and have an independent consultant peer-review the traffic study.

City staff is in the process of responding to comments to the draft EIR. When the responses are ready, the final EIR will be available for further public comment for a period of 45 days. Then the EIR will be reviewed by a City hearing officer and, in all likelihood, by the Board of Zoning Appeals and City Council. ■

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*Editor’s Note: Vince Farhat is Chairman of the Transportation Advisory Commission. Vince has been on the WPRA Board of Directors since 1997, and served as President from 2001 to 2003. He can be contacted at [vince.farhat@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vince.farhat@sbcglobal.net).*

# RBOC Plan "B" Update

By Cheryl Auger

The Rose Bowl Operating Company was asked by City Council last year to identify alternatives to the NFL proposal after it was rejected. A meeting with the main stakeholders, UCLA and the Tournament of Roses, as well as Pasadena residents was held in early April to generate ideas for the possible alternatives. The meeting primarily focused on potential improvements to the stadium.

The representative from UCLA said their main objective is to make improvements that will delight UCLA fans and provide a broader game experience. Suggestions included larger seats and shuttles to get students to and from the game. Additional requests made for UCLA, but not by UCLA, include improvement of the concession stands, restrooms, and press box area. One resident requested a place to store UCLA equipment since the Bruins have to



lug their equipment back and forth for each game. The addition of signs to indicate that the Rose Bowl is the home stadium of the UCLA Bruins was also requested. The Tournament of Roses requested improvements to the ingress and egress of the stadium to be prepared in the event that it needed to be evacuated.

The issue of cost was not ignored. A resident brought up the fact that the Rose Bowl has been operating at a net loss, and that bonds are still outstanding from past improvements. They asked how future improvements

would be paid. No one has that answer at this point but people discussed using money generated by the green space fees (from developers) as one option to subsidize the rose bowl. They will also review the possibility of using historic grants (which can only be used for historic features), getting philanthropic donations, selling naming rights to the field, as well as using green space fees from developers. In addition, reconfiguring the press box will be reviewed to determine if more revenue can be generated from corporate and other similar events.

The RBOC expects to spend the next 6-8 months developing a plan. Then they will prioritize improvements based on cost, need etc. The RBOC plans to update the City Council on their progress within the next several weeks. ■

## Do Arroyo Stones Around the Trunk Help Oaks?

By Randy Finch, Finch Tree Surgery, Inc.



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Often you will see arroyo stones around the base of oak trees, usually in a single layer carefully arranged, but occasionally just as they fell from the wheelbarrow. Why are they there? Is this an ancient therapy for ailing trees learned from the native Indians when we started to occupy their oak woodlands in Southern California? This is not likely because oaks survived better, despite our intervention, in the natural dry summer

environment that existed before we planted our lush water hungry gardens.

Rocks are decorative and fit the arroyo look particularly if your architecture or landscape incorporates similar stones. Everyone should know it is not good to plant flowers or water a lawn under oaks. But, bare dirt is considered by some to be unattractive in a garden or a waste of good planting opportunities. Rocks

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# What's Happening at San Rafael Library

By Augusta Parrington & Pat Smith

After little less than two years of fund raising the San Rafael Library Associates have enough money to begin the planting and redesign of the gardens of the library. Working from the designs by landscape architect, Robert Takata of Takata Associates, the north and east gardens will be dug up, the soil amended and then planted with new plants. The work is expected to begin in April.

The City of Pasadena will be providing the labor and some plants such as cherry trees, which will be planted in front of the library. They come from Pasadena's sister city in Japan, and should look beautiful when they bloom in the spring. The color scheme which Bob Takata has chosen for the plants – whites, pinks and purples – with some additional accent colors will look attractive against the building.

San Rafael Branch is now home to two new book clubs. Just Desserts – A Different Kind of Book Club meets at 6:30 p.m. the third Tuesday

of each month, people are invited to come for dessert and to discuss books they have read or are reading. In May, they'll be sharing a recently-read romance novel and in June, they'll be discussing historical fiction—and enjoying a delightful dessert!

The newest book club at the Branch debuted on Monday, May 1, at 7 p.m. "Into the West: Books of the Western Experience" will focus on a different fiction or non-fiction, contemporary or classic book each month. May's meeting will discuss **Gunman's Rhapsody**, by Robert Parker, a tense, riveting novel about Wyatt Earp and his brothers. On June 5, Larry



McMurtry's classic **Lonesome Dove** is on tap. Please call Pat Smith, Branch Librarian, at 626-744-7270, for more information. ■

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## Do Arroyo Stones Help?

*Continued from page 10*

give texture. They provide a hard surface that can be blown leaf free for that fastidiously neat gardener. And they certainly don't need water, which is good for gardens in a naturally arid environment like ours.

An oak tree doesn't care what material is placed on the surface around it as long as it is porous and well drained. What it doesn't like is water retained in the soil around the roots in the warmer months. Rocks, which function as mulch, help to

retain moisture in the soil because they inhibit evaporation. This moist soil in the summer then encourages oak root fungus, indigenous to our soils, to spread faster than the tree can resist. But the cause of disease is not the rock; it is the water. Keep the area absolutely dry after winter rains and the rocks cause no harm. Allow overspray or runoff in a landscape environment to accumulate under the rocks and conditions are right for oak root fungus.

A better condition for oaks is dry, uncultivated space, with a light natural accumulation of oak leaf mulch as far away from the trunk as you can aesthetically tolerate. If you must plant, put in a few drought and shade tolerant plants to jazz it up. Spot water sparingly to get them established in the soil or even in pots above grade. ■





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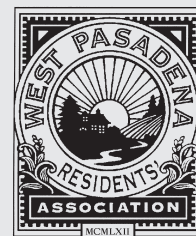
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