

# NEWS

West Pasadena Residents' Association

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

ESTABLISHED 1962

SUMMER 2007

## ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

# Preservation & Prosperity in Pasadena – Striking the Balance

By James Hawkes

On June 14th, the West Pasadena Residents' Association held its Annual Meeting in the Fran Norris Scoble Performing Arts Center at Westridge School, where over 100 residents attended to usher in a new slate of Officers and Directors and to hear the event's guest speaker, Mayor Bill Bogaard.

The evening began with a reception, generously catered by Whole Foods Market, outdoors in the courtyard surrounding the Center. Residents mingled with WPRA Board

members, exhibitors, the Mayor, and District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison. The following exhibitors were present:

- Arlington Gardens
- Habitat for Humanity – Desiderio Project
- Pasadena Department of Transportation – Gold Line & Arts Bus
- Rose Bowl Operating Company

James Hawkes, WPRA Vice President, commenced the evening's formal program with some opening remarks and introductions, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Eagle Scouts Evan Foster and Daniel Huffman.

Next, Fred Zepeda, the WPRA President, was introduced and spoke about the past year's accomplishments, challenges and future endeavors. Most notably, Mr. Zepeda emphasized the need to improve communication between the Board and West Pasadena residents. Given the pace of change, WPRA will be instituting a new web-based communications platform to better inform and solicit comments from members and residents in



addition to its weekly email news and quarterly newsletters. Following the order of business, Mr. Zepeda presented the Slate of Directors and Officers for vote by the membership. The listing of those individuals can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

This evening marked the WPRA's inaugural Community Service Awards, where its first three recipients were Mayor Bill Bogaard, Charles and Betty McKenney, and Carolyn Naber.

Mayor Bill Bogaard topped off the night as guest speaker, addressing WPRA's theme: Preservation & Prosperity in Pasadena – Striking the Balance. He opened with a historical context for the Pasadena we know today, one that began some 30 years ago with the advent of the preservation movement. Pasadena continues to be a vibrant economic center, but still manages to retain its historical character. He noted that the City still faces many challenges in this current development boom such as improving

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## President's Message *By Fred Zepeda*

It has been an interesting year. With your support, the West Pasadena Resident's Association has improved our neighborhood by trying to reduce the size of the Sares Regis project on the Ambassador East Campus, helping with the design of the Ambassador West project, fighting the proposed presence of the NFL in the Rose Bowl, working to influence the Mayfield Senior School Master Plan, defending the Hillside Ordinance, resisting a Continuation School at Allendale, supporting Blair High School, reviewing the Westridge Master Plan, and monitoring the repair of retaining walls in the Arroyo.

We are now putting together a Land Use Committee in preparation for the upcoming revision of the City's General Plan. As most of you know, the General Plan is a policy

guide and works in conjunction with the Zoning Code and various ordinances and laws to determine what gets developed in the City of Pasadena. Currently, our General Plan limits how many dwelling units can be constructed in and around our neighborhood. Given the recent real estate development boom, Pasadena is close to reaching those limits. We are working now with the City to insure that all new construction is properly counted and that the number of allowable units not be raised without citywide review and consensus.

The WPRA is also looking to improve our communication with you, our members. We are installing new software that will allow us to communicate with you better and faster. We hope to improve our weekly Neighborhood Update by allowing you to link up to our

website and learn more about an issue or tell us directly what you think about the issue. This software will also allow us to easily send letters to our entire membership or to a small group of households that might be impacted or interested in a particular issue. This kind of communication would have been a great help in the Desiderio matter. And it will be a great help in all future matters.

The WPRA deals with neighborhood issues both large and small. We monitor City Hall for issues that might impact west Pasadena and we strive to communicate with our members. Please let us know if you would like to help by volunteering.

It is only through your support that the WPRA can continue to work for our neighborhood. Thank you for your support! ■

## Pasadena, Striking the Balance

*Continued from front page*

### **WPRA Community Service Awards**

MAYOR BILL BOGAARD  
FOR

*"Many years of community service and support of WPRA's efforts to preserve our unique neighborhood"*

CHARLES AND BETTY MCKENNEY  
FOR

*"The vision and execution of the Arlington Garden"*

CAROLYN NABER  
FOR

*"Keeping the NFL out of the Rose Bowl, a Pasadena Landmark"*

traffic flow, protecting development caps, and balancing residential and commercial development in its central core just to name a few. Following the conclusion of his speech, he fielded questions from the residents on these very challenges as well as the need for greater open space and grade separations around the Gold Line.

The evening concluded with a raffle where tickets were given away for the Americafest 2007 Fourth of July event (generously donated by the Rose Bowl Operating Company) at the Rose Bowl and the Colorado Street Bridge Party sponsored by Pasadena Heritage. ■



*Fran Norris Scoble Performing Arts Center.*



*The WPRA is pleased that newly appointed **Superintendent Edwin Diaz** has focused quickly on Pasadena's educational challenges. Superintendent Diaz has over 30 years of experience in California public schools. In his last position as Superintendent of Gilroy Unified School District he is credited with reversing declining test scores, and substantially improving student performance for a diverse population of students while improving the satisfaction of staff, parents and the community. We hope that after reading his article you will join him and work to create a high quality learning experience for children in the Pasadena Unified School District.*

## Engaging the Community to Create a Shared Vision for the Pasadena Unified School District

*By Superintendent Edwin Diaz*

While talking with a group of Neighborhood Association presidents at a Neighborhood Connections meeting, I heard many people comment about their desire for our neighborhoods and our schools to work together more closely. I was very encouraged by their optimism and believe because of that hope, and the unique resources in our community, that Pasadena Unified School District has tremendous opportunities to work with the community for the betterment of our schools.

During my first few months here, my priority was to listen and learn about the school district and develop a better understanding of the successes and challenges. Based on my observations of the state of our school district, I have developed some ideas of how I think we can move forward.

There is some great teaching going on in our schools. This is evident by the rapid increase in Pasadena Unified's Academic Performance Index scores. Just a few years ago, most of our schools ranked in the 500-600 range, and now, 21 of our schools rank over 700 and three have scores in the 800's. This rate of

growth has exceeded the County and State. We will build on this success by replicating our best teaching strategies so we see more academic progress at more schools and in more classrooms.

We also face many challenges that we must address with a sense of urgency. So, I plan to implement the recommendations from the Management Audit Report and initiate systems to improve our decision-making structure; update our technology to effectively and efficiently support our infrastructure and student performance data; expand communications and community engagement; develop an accountability system; and re-align our central office so more resources go directly to our students.

At the same time I am leading a reform effort, we will begin engaging with the community to create a vision for Pasadena Unified. Once we develop our vision, we can resolve some of the bigger challenges facing our schools such as making education more relevant for all students, school configuration, and creating a master facilities plan. We must be bold in our approach because it will take a consistent effort from our community

and local institutions over a sustained period of time to get the reform we want.

While we are implementing these strategies, I encourage you to visit your local schools because there is a lot of great teaching and learning taking place. Your local elementary schools are San Rafael and McKinley K-8, and your middle and high school is Blair I.B. Magnet.

San Rafael School has increased their student body to over 400 students and has a very active PTA. In addition to focusing on their academic program, San Rafael has many enrichment opportunities including theatre, computer classes, an art program with the Armory, a recycling program, technology-based projects, and science camp to the San Bernardino Mountains for 6th graders. There is a full inclusion program for students with special needs. For more information about San Rafael, contact Principal Alyson Beecher at (626) 793-4189.

McKinley K-8 School is a diverse school that emphasizes academics and the arts. They also have a very active PTA, and offer theatre, band, orchestra, choir, dance and Odyssey

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# What to do with Desiderio

By Ann Scheid

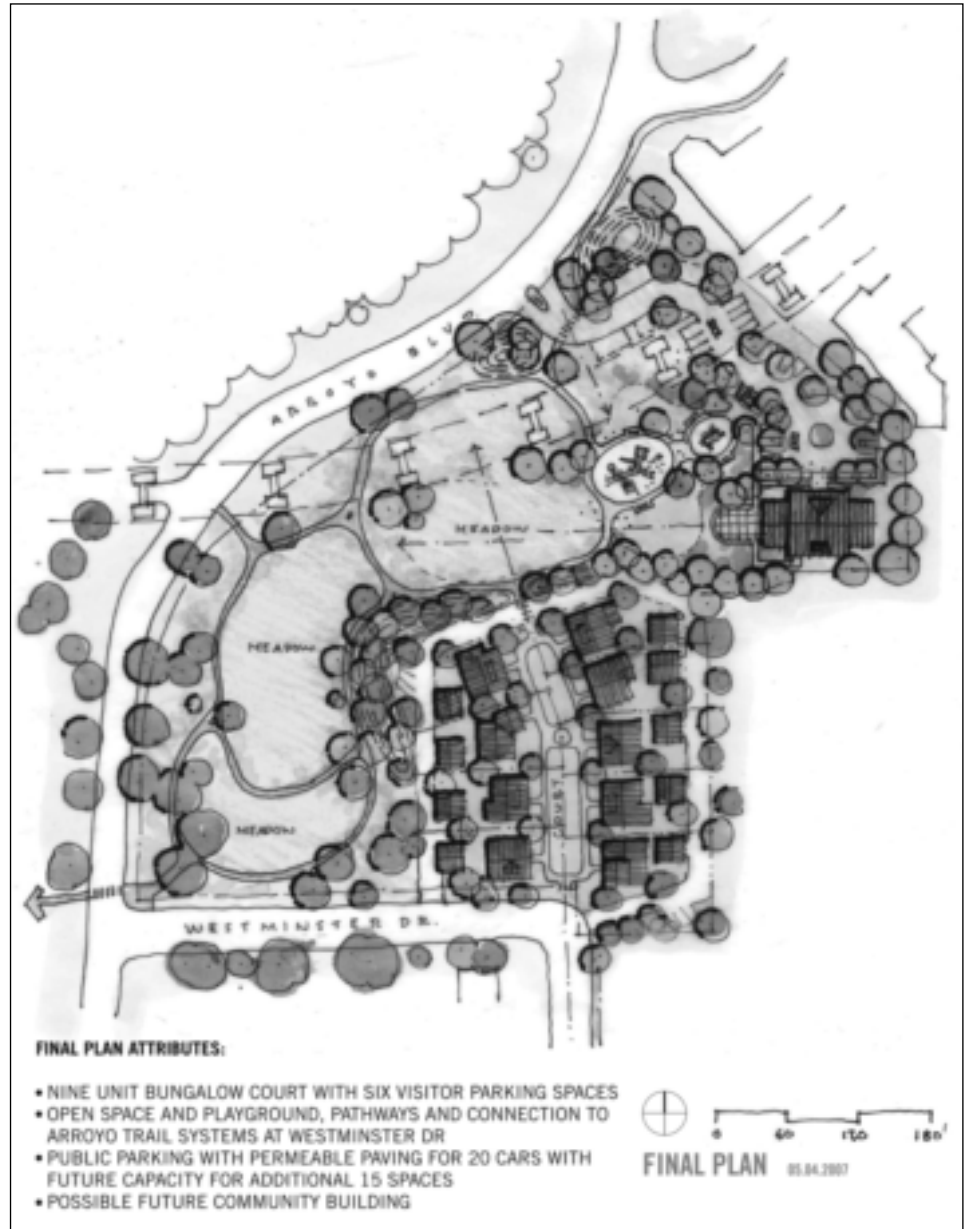
The issue of what to do with the five acre Desiderio Army Reserve Center site under the Colorado Street Bridge has preoccupied the community and public bodies for the past year. The three-way tug of war among housing advocates, the Lower Arroyo Neighborhood Coalition for the Environment, and the California Art Club/Arroyo Seco Foundation partnership (Art/Arroyo Group) has embroiled the community in controversy, which is not surprising given the high dollar value of the land and its sensitive location next to the Arroyo in a residential neighborhood.

The “final,” unanimous decision by the City Council on February 5, approving the Planning Commission’s recommendation for a 9-unit affordable bungalow court to be built by Habitat for Humanity, with 75% of the land devoted to open space and a possible art/environment center, did not remain final for long. It took three additional council meetings with the presentation of alternative plans by the Art/Arroyo Group and extensive public comment, before the Council at its meeting on June 5 unanimously re-affirmed its February decision and staff sent off the appropriate documents to federal government officials for their consideration. Negotiations for conveyance of the land to the City for parkland and to Habitat for housing can now begin. The Army is planning to vacate the land in 2011.

The crux of the matter was the dispute over the demolition of the existing Army buildings. The Planning Commission clearly recommended demolition, each commissioner having stated in the discussion that

the buildings should go, based on their non-conforming nature and their incompatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. For the Art/Arroyo Group, whose vision depended on re-using the buildings, which they expected would be available at little or no cost, this was a bitter blow. They

fought tenaciously over the next six months to reverse that decision, which galvanized the neighborhood to form their own organization, the Lower Arroyo Neighborhood Coalition for the Environment (LANCE) and to circulate a petition urging the demolition of the buildings. In



*This site plan was prepared by the city’s park staff and reflects their idea of a neighborhood park. However, even though labeled “final,” it is not the final design. The idea of reclaiming the land to become part of the Arroyo, linked to it physically by trail systems and ecologically by similar plantings, is realizable. Those who support this should make their desires known.*

*The URL for document submitted to the Federal Government:*

*<http://www.cityofpasadena.net/planninganddevelopment/PlanDev/ArmyBase/HomeArmy.asp>*

# Desiderio, continued

*Continued from page 4*

the end, the council could find no convincing reason to reverse their February decision.

Representatives from both the Art/Arroyo Group and LANCE made presentations to the WPRA board, which voted to support the neighborhood position presented by LANCE. After the endorsement of Scheme A by the WPRA, a new

citizens group, Citizens for Public Use of the Arroyo (CPA), formed to continue to lobby for adaptive reuse of the existing buildings.

Whatever one's views on the redevelopment plan for the Desiderio site, no one can complain that the public did not have enough opportunities to participate in the process. Below is an abbreviated chronology of the planning process. ■

*Editor's Note: Ann has her Master's from Graduate School of Design (GSD) Harvard in History and Theory of Landscape Design. She also worked for the City in Planning as Former Senior Planner: Design and Historic Preservation City of Pasadena. She is a Former Architectural Historian for State of California and has authored three books on Pasadena history and several articles on architecture and planning.*

## Desiderio Planning Process

### 2005

- **November:** Desiderio Army Reserve Center recommended for closure by Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

### 2006

- **May:** City designated by the Dept. of Defense as the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) to prepare plan for the site. Site is expected to be vacated by the DOD in 2011.
- **June 30:** Informational workshop held, attended by more than 75 organizations.
- **September:** Eleven proposals submitted posted City's Desiderio Web site.
- **October 12:** General meeting to inform community about proposals.
- **October:** Pasadena City Council designated Planning Commission as the official advisory body to recommend a conceptual land use plan. Council also directed three advisory commissions, the Community Development Committee, the Recreation and Parks Commission, and the Transportation Advisory Commission, to review proposals.
- **November 1:** First of three meetings by Planning Commission to review proposals and take public testimony.
- **November:** Community Development Committee heard and evaluated the proposals, placing greatest emphasis on housing. Recreation and Parks Commission reviewed the proposals, recommending four.

- **December 6:** Planning Commission reviewed input of other commissions and selected four finalists: Habitat for Humanity, Arroyo Center for Art and the Environment, Moule & Polyzoides market-rate housing, City of Pasadena Police/Fire facility. Finalists encouraged to collaborate with other teams and submit updated plans.

### 2007

- **January 12:** Transportation Advisory Commission reviewed all proposals and concurred with the Planning Commission on the selection of the four finalists.
- **January 18:** WPRA held community meeting at the former Ambassador College campus. Open space advocates gained significant support.
- **January 24:** Planning Commission heard revised proposals from three finalists and voted unanimously to recommend the Habitat for Humanity "Scheme A":
  - Demolition of the existing buildings
  - A 9-unit bungalow court to be built by Habitat
  - Open space as 75% of the site
  - A parking grove
  - A center for art and the environment in a new building
- **February 5:** City Council considered all eleven proposals, recommendations from all four advisory bodies, and took public comment. Council voted unanimously to approve Planning Commission's recommendation "Scheme A."

Encouraged partners to meet and confer with staff to flesh out vision for the site.

- **March 19:** City Council held special hearing at request of Art/Arroyo Group re question of demolition of existing buildings. Staff directed to prepare plan showing how portion of existing buildings could be retained, and return to Council.
- **April 9:** City Council held another special hearing on revised site plan, which proposed retaining 13,000 square feet of the existing buildings. In the discussion, the art/environment group stated that a new building was unacceptable to them for financial reasons. The Council voted unanimously to reaffirm their previous decision of February 5, 2007, to approve Scheme A, modifying it to provide for potential construction of an art/environment center of one story with possible subterranean level.
- **May 21:** Scheduled hearing postponed because of pressing Council business.
- **June 5:** City Council unanimously reaffirmed original decision to approve Scheme A, including a possible art/environment/community building with maximum 8,000 sq ft footprint.
- **June 8:** Final plan forwarded to HUD/DOD/NPS, requesting Public Benefit Conveyances of the land to Habitat and City of Pasadena, respectively.

# Planning in Pasadena – Make Your Voice Heard

## Growth in Pasadena

The Pasadena City Manager has asked that the process for updating the General Plan start soon. Why is this important? It is the plans and processes initiated by the City that determine how and where we grow.

Currently, many Pasadena residents are surprised and troubled by the development boom in our city. After years of painstaking work by city staff, commissions and the City Council:

- Do you believe we are on the road to achieving balanced growth?
- Do you believe our city is noisier, dirtier and more crowded?
- Do you see buildings rising to hide the beautiful mountains once visible from our neighborhoods?
- Is increasing traffic barreling down our streets at increasing rates of speed?
- Is it time, once and for all, to find a solution that will accommodate the disparate factions and factors that play into Pasadena's city planning – developers, property owners, the city and the state – without destroying our enviable Quality of Life?

Development is not always a negative and is necessary to a city's vitality but it must be *balanced and*

*moderated* to ensure that Pasadena's quality of life is not lost. It takes civic will and active participation to chart the right course. Development always must be managed; this is possible.

Here are the things we must address:

- The General Plan (a *policy guideline*; has no binding legal authority)
- The 7 specific plans, which detail development standards for specific areas
- The City of Gardens ordinance
- The Commissions (advisory bodies); City Council (the ultimate decision maker)
- CAPS (central district – residential)
- Infrastructure
- Mobility (vehicles and pedestrians)
- Open and Green space
- Affordable housing (does not factor into density)
- Density bonuses for transit oriented development
- Balancing competing needs and rights
- State mandates
- CEQA and Environmental Impact Standards
- Parking
- Historic preservation
- Design

All of these topics factor into the entirety of the planning process and must be considered individually and collectively to achieve balanced growth. As daunting as this list may appear, residents, neighborhood organizations, city staff, commissions and developers can and need to work together to ensure an equitable, mutually workable solution.

Only when every stakeholder actively participates in the process shall we achieve growth while maintaining Pasadena's character, family neighborhoods, infrastructure, green spaces, environment, and all the other components necessary for a healthy and livable city.

If you feel that your voice hasn't been heard in the past, you have an opportunity to be heard now. We encourage you to engage in the process and voice concerns to your City Council, commissions and the WPRA.

Be assured that as your neighborhood organization, we aim to work with you to maintain and enhance the beauty and integrity of our city. A positive aspect of initiating the update process now rather than later, is that, hopefully, we will have time to figure out what brought us to where we are and institute the necessary changes. Let's get started! ■

## ***Zoning – an Important Piece of the Planning Puzzle***

If you go to the City's Website and click on <http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/zoning/P-1.html> you will find the Zoning Code (Title 17) the purpose of which is, "... to protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare, and to implement the policies of the General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the City of Pasadena in a manner consistent with the General Plan."

That is a tall order. And difficult to fulfill; partly because the regulations enumerated in this lengthy document may not be applicable in every situation but selectively, as they

must be integrated and combined with other plans, regulations and ordinances.

While zoning codes are important, we must be cognizant of their limitations in managing development in the City of Pasadena. For example, the City of Gardens codes are a series of zoning regulations adopted in 1989 for residential multi-family housing to integrate successfully with low-density, green, characteristics of neighborhoods. This requirement was designed to encourage courtyards, setbacks, and incorporation of general "garden" ambiance/design to multi-family (three units and

more) development. However, to the best of our knowledge, areas of the Central District that are zoned for high-density housing, such as transit villages and the proposed Westgate development adjacent to Old Pasadena are excluded. You see the challenges here.

Certain community activists are alerting neighborhoods to pay careful attention to the city manager's recent call to accelerate the General Plan update process; they are calling for a strengthening of the city's zoning laws to reflect the identity and character of our city as laid out in the General Plan.

## ***Central District Development Caps Are They Effective? Are They Here to Stay?***

It is always instructive to review past events while looking forward to the update of Pasadena's General Plan. Back in 2004, at the height of that General Plan update, the City wanted to remove the residential development caps that were instituted in 1994 to limit growth in the Central District.

However, this was a contentious issue with various city factions (commissioners, community organizations, even some City Council representatives) objecting to the removal.

The fear was that the general plan might not get approved if the City fought for eliminating caps. So, in order to assure approval of the 2004 General

Plan, the City announced they would retain the development caps.

Many in the community thought this was a concession by staff to activists favoring slow and moderate growth. Interestingly, at that time, the city was saying that residential caps might not be reached for ten more years. But others in the community felt that it just would be a matter of time before the city would be looking to either remove or raise the caps.

Now, a scant three years later, with the city manager calling to begin the General Plan update, development caps will be high on the agenda. And some neighbors and community leaders are rightfully concerned that

the city manager and the City Council might be willing to raise development caps. This is because developers who are currently in the "pipeline" are voicing concern that they may not be able to develop property before the caps are reached.

How close are we to reaching the development caps? Are development caps good planning? What mechanisms would the city put into place if the caps were removed? How do caps and Floor Area Ratios (FAR's) work together—or do they? What can we learn from other cities with similar issues? ■

# West Pasadena Transportation Update

By Vince Farhat

## Traffic Mitigation Projects Move Forward

The State Route 710 Mitigation Project represents eight individual transportation projects that are designed to reduce traffic congestion caused by the gap in the 710 Freeway. These projects were selected by the federally mandated Design Advisory Group (DAG) working together with City staff. The DAG projects are intended to move traffic away from neighborhoods and onto major commercial traffic corridors, and to improve mobility within those major commercial corridors.

The City recently completed improvements to the Raymond Avenue connection to the 110 Freeway. These improvements include: widening Glenarm Street between Fair Oaks Avenue and the 110 Freeway; constructing an at-grade on-ramp from eastbound Glenarm Street to the southbound 110; and widening the 110 to provide a merging lane. These improvements are designed to encourage the use of

Raymond Avenue, which is currently underutilized by commuters.

The next phase of the 710 Mitigation Project will focus on Arroyo Parkway. Improvements planned for Arroyo Parkway include rebuilt medians, parkway improvements, decorative crosswalk paving, and rubberized roadway surfaces. Construction is expected to take place in two phases beginning in September 2007 with final completion in Fall 2008. For more information, please visit the City's website at [www.cityofpasadena.net](http://www.cityofpasadena.net) or call Assistant City Engineer Steven L. Wright at (626) 744-4695.

## ARTS Bus Ridership Increases 19 Percent

The Department of Transportation (DOT) recently announced a 19-percent annual increase in ridership on the Pasadena Area Rapid Transit System (ARTS). In the last 12 months, Pasadena residents have taken approximately 270,000 new trips using the ARTS bus system. Approximately 1.7 million passengers

through June 2007, up from 1.43 million the previous year.

"It takes more than wishing to have people try alternatives to solo driving," said ARTS manager Cathi Cole in a DOT news release. Her department has intensified promotion of multimodal transportation options, including bicycling, walking, carpooling, Metro and local transit. Among the efforts is new bus stop signage that lists bus schedules and route maps, making it easier for people to use ARTS. "Another factor, dependable service provided by First Transit drivers, has allowed people to rely on the public transit system," said Cole. For more information, please call (626) 744-3725.

## City to Buy Parking at Gold Line Station

In June, the Pasadena City Council approved a proposal to purchase 600 parking spaces at the Del Mar Gold Line station located at Del Mar Blvd and Arroyo Parkway. The City will pay approximately \$2.4 million for the parking spaces. The new parking spaces are intended to increase parking availability for Old Pasadena employees and shoppers, and reduce traffic congestion in the area.

The demand for parking from Gold Line commuters and shoppers comes at different times. Many Gold

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## Vision for Pasadena Unified School District

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of the Mind, a world-wide creative problem solving program. Principal Marisa Sarian can be reached at (626) 844-7880.

Blair International Baccalaureate Magnet School offers an integrated, holistic approach to thinking, teaching and learning that emphasizes international mindedness and responsible citizenship. They are a

smaller learning community with very active parents and community partners. In addition to the academically rigorous IB Programme, Blair offers many enrichment and athletic programs. You can contact Principal Rich Boccia, who was honored last year as Principal of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators, at (626) 441-2201.

As residents of one of the most influential areas of Pasadena, I ask you to join us in creating a high quality learning environment for all students. ■

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*Editor's Note: The Superintendent may be contacted at: [Ediaz@pusd.us](mailto:Ediaz@pusd.us) or (626) 568-4501.*



## Transportation Update

*Continued from page 8*

Line parking spaces are empty while Old Pasadena experiences traffic congestion. In purchasing the parking spaces, the City's goal is to shift use by employees and other monthly users from Old Pasadena parking structures to the Del Mar Station, thereby opening up more space for visitors and shoppers.

### La Loma Bridge Update

The La Loma Bridge, which has spanned the lower Arroyo Seco for almost 90 years, is in need of repairs to meet current seismic standards. The bridge is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places due to its historical significance.

After the Loma Prieta Earthquake, all the bridges in Pasadena were analyzed to determine whether they could withstand a probable earthquake event. The analysis concluded that the La Loma Bridge is deficient in strength and is deteriorating. As a result, the City has approved the retrofit and rehabilitation of the existing La Loma Bridge to meet current seismic standards.

In September 2006, the City Council approved a final environmental impact report for the La Loma Bridge project. The Rehabilitation Alternative was determined to be consistent with historic preservation goals of local land use plans, and was recommended by the Pasadena

Design Commission and Historic Preservation Commission.

According to the Department of Public Works, the final design of the La Loma Bridge project should be completed by September 2007. The scheduled start date for construction is Summer 2008, with project completion by Spring 2010. For more information, please contact Project Manager Roubik Mardirosian at (626) 744-7456. ■


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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).*

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## San Rafael Library Associates Dedicate the Library Gardens

*By Augusta Parrington*

 In a warm spring evening in early May, the San Rafael Library Associates dedicated the refurbished gardens and honored Robert Takata, of Takata Associates, Michael Monroe of the City of Pasadena and his crew, and Mrs. Laura Heaton, widow of the architect of the San Rafael Library.

A wine and cheese reception was held in the library and attended by many of the neighbors. The gardens, filled with magnolias, azaleas, and cherry trees from our sister city in Japan, as well as kangaroo paws in full bloom, presented a lovely ambience and improvement over what had been there since 1956 when the library was erected.

A plaque of appreciation was given to Michael Monroe of the City Parks and Recreation Department for his work and the work of his crew in replanting the front yard with new sod, putting in new mow-curbs and

installing all the new plants and a trashcan and benches.

Mrs. Laura Heaton, who still lives in the area, attended the reception and was able to remember stories about the construction of the library and help the Associates identify the original colors used on the exterior and interior of the library.

This summer Leonard Lane, the Branch Librarian, has planned many activities for both children and adults.

**Kindermusik** started June 28 and continues on Mondays and Saturdays until the end of August. There is a charge for these classes, so if you are interested please contact Dr. Sanya Henderson by telephone: (323) 550-1486, or by email: [artofmusicstudio@yahoo.com](mailto:artofmusicstudio@yahoo.com).

**The Summer Reading Club** began June 16th and will continue through August 12th. For more information please see the information at the

San Rafael Branch Library. Anyone joining the Summer Reading Club will receive a book bag and a reading record to keep track of books read over the summer.

**Flights of Fantasy Story Theatre** will present stories from around the world on August 7th, at 3 PM.

**Tuesday movies** will be held throughout the summer. Bring your popcorn for movies such as "Spy Kids1", "Harriet the Spy" and "How to Eat Fried Worms."

**Infant & Toddler Story time** continues at 10:30 AM for 0-3 year olds on Wednesdays throughout the summer.

It looks like it is going to be a busy summer at San Rafael Branch Library. We hope you will join us. For information on activities, contact Leonard Lane at the San Rafael Branch phone number (626) 744-7271. ■

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*Editor's Note: Augusta is a long time resident of West Pasadena, she is the District 6 Library Commissioner and founding member and President of the San Rafael Library Associates.*

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# Biodiversity and Our Sense of Place

## Preserving Pasadena's Environment and Natural Beauty

By Thomas Juhasz

We make sense of our environs through an unending series of experiential moments. As our life spans are relatively short compared to the natural processes occurring around us, we rationalize that what we are subjected to through these experiential moments is normal. Unless otherwise highlighted through intellectual channels, we do not know what is supposed to be natural. How we experience Pasadena today is certainly not how the inhabitants of the city rationalized it a century ago. Just like the environment shifts and changes in response to human actions, so has our natural environment. The spread of infrastructure as well as the grandiose flood control projects of the first half of the past century altered the streams, pools, and rivers which were an important formative element of the identity of Pasadena as an earthly paradise. With this loss of the natural environment, our sense of place has shifted with subsequent generations.

### A Unique Sense of Place

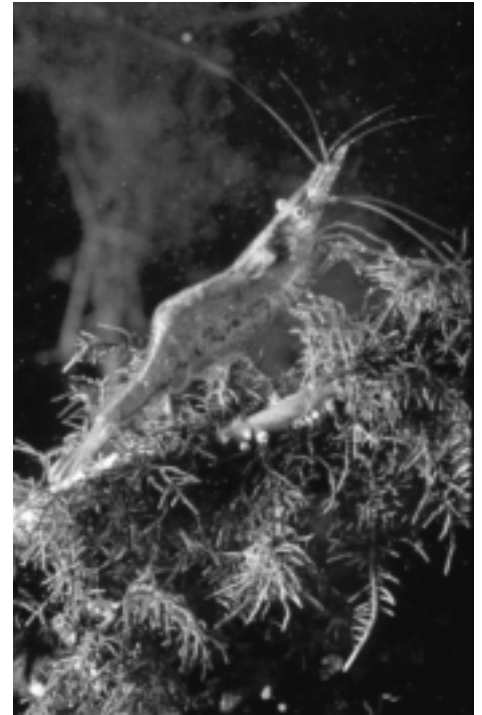
A sense of place can be considered as a continuity of our past within a dynamic future. This sense of place is a unique quality which delineates our location from the rest of the world. An important element in a sense of place is the flora and fauna which is native to the area. Pasadena historically was known for its grand arroyo filled with lush vegetation as well as the mesas filled with Engelmann, Coast Live, and Valley Oaks of enormous proportions. One can still see historic

postcards of visitors picking blooms of poppies and other native wildflowers on the foothills. This natural beauty made Pasadena a very attractive place in which to live. As more people came to live within this earthly paradise, we began to lose significant elements of our environment.

Pasadena once had a namesake in the Pasadena Shrimp (*Syncaris pasadenae*), a one time abundant resident of the streams and rivers in the area. Having survived for millions of years of shifting climates and raging torrents within its present location, the shrimp disappeared after the last remaining wetlands it was found in were paved over in the 1930s for rose bowl parking. Though only a shrimp, it still played a significant role in our freshwater ecology as well as having the notoriety of existing solely within our specific part of Southern California. With its loss, we have lost a connection to our collective past.

### Taking Action to Preserve Pasadena's Quality of Life

How can we help ensure that Pasadena continues to foster a unique sense of place which will transfer the full set of our collective values/aesthetics to the next generation? Pasadena should be not only a city which prides itself on its cultural history but become an ecological city. Each one of us can champion Pasadena as an ecological city by focusing on creating interconnected green spaces which promote native habitats, support the restoration of our streams and their associated forests, and attract native species to



*The Pasadena Shrimp was found nowhere else but disappeared after its last pools were paved in the reclamation projects of the 1930s. (Related California Shrimp pictured, photo by Larry Serpa)*

our own backyards through native landscaping. Pasadena is world class city which can and should continue to prosper without losing the natural environment which still continues to define our collective sense of place. ■

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*Editor's Note: Thomas is a Pasadena native currently completing an internship with the California Condor recovery project and actively assists in the creation of Pasadena's Arlington Garden.*

## Membership Donations

The support that WPRA receives from its donors every year is greatly appreciated. It has allowed your Board of Directors to continue to publish quarterly newsletters, to use the internet for weekly updates and to provide public forums regarding the issues that affect our neighborhood and quality of life.

Monies received last year provided the funding for WPRA to purchase web-based membership and communication software that we

anticipate will enhance our processes of accepting & acknowledging contributions along with improving the way we communicate with our supporters.

We have been engaged in the installation and testing process for the new software, which delayed our annual renewal drive. We appreciate that some of you already sent in contributions in April and May and have yet to receive your acknowledgment letters; we thank you for that, and for being patient.

Since we are unable to provide a list of our 2007 – 2008 contributors in this issue, all contributions of \$100 or more that have been received by WPRA from April, 2007 on will be acknowledged in our next edition.

Again, a big thank you to all members and donors; you are very much appreciated. ■

**Joan Hearst**  
**Director of Membership**  
membership@wpra.net

## Planning in Pasadena – Getting Started

### *What you need to know about planning in Pasadena*

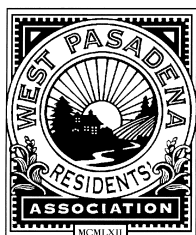
Be sure to look for the special autumn WPRA newsletter devoted to Pasadena's General Plan update.

Pasadena's planning documents are many and ambitious. There are layers of specific plans, overlay districts, zoning and other ordinances that ideally should work together to realize the goals or guiding principles

of our general plan. Unfortunately, sometimes inconsistent or non-complimentary regulations within these may complicate the process.

Our goal will be to present information that will help WPRA members to become informed participants in the process. This is an ambitious undertaking. But so is the Pasadena planning process ambitious

and difficult to navigate for many community members. At the end of the day, through participation, we will know and be prepared to put our best efforts to manage growth and maintain our city's beauty and the public's health, safety and general welfare. —*The Editor* ■



## Join the WPRA Today

All membership dues are tax-deductible, and donations of \$100 or more are acknowledged in this newsletter. Please take a moment to complete this form and mail it with your check today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

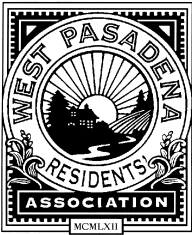
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership:** ☐ \$25-\$49 Associate ☐ \$50-\$99 Friend ☐ \$100-\$249 Patron

☐ \$250-\$499 Benefactor ☐ \$500 or more Platinum

*Please mail to: West Pasadena Residents' Association, Post Office Box 50252 • Pasadena, California 91115*



**WEST PASADENA  
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**  
Post Office Box 50252  
Pasadena, CA 91115-0252  
WPRA Message Line: (626) 441-1388  
**Visit our website @ [www.wpra.net](http://www.wpra.net)**

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## Join the WPRA Today

Your generous support will help the WPRA publish its newsletter and keep you informed of issues affecting our neighborhood. So, please take a moment to join us and stand behind the WPRA. Please contact Joan Hearst at [membership@wpra.net](mailto:membership@wpra.net)

### Board of Directors 2007 - 2008

#### Officers:

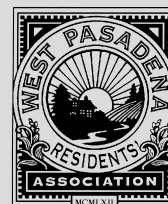
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<b>Director of Communications</b>	Audrey O'Kelley	626-441-3783
<b>Director of Membership</b>	Joan Hearst	626-796-4057
<b>Treasurer</b>	Blaine Cavena	626-799-3358
<b>Secretary</b>	Dorothy Lindsey	323-256-4972
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Dorothy Lindsey	323-256-4972

#### *For more information about our committees, please contact:*

<b>Newsletter &amp; Advertising:</b>	Audrey O'Kelley	626-441-3783
<b>Membership:</b>	Joan Hearst	626-796-4057
<b>Traffic &amp; Transportation:</b>	Vince Farhat	626-375-6619
<b>Ambassador Campus Projects:</b>	Mic Hansen	626-799-1910
<b>Arroyo Seco:</b>	Joan Hearst	626-796-4057
<b>Rose Bowl:</b>	Cheryl Auger	626-799-6465
<b>Education:</b>	Mary Dee Romney	626-403-0242
<b>Neighborhood Email Update:</b>	Judith S. Klump	626-403-7022

#### Board Members:

Cheryl Auger	Judith S. Klump	Priscilla Taylor
Geoffrey Baum	John Martin	John Van de Kamp
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#### **WEST PASADENA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

Post Office Box 50252  
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