



Transforming *the 710 ditch*; making our neighborhoods safer

WPRA sets date for 54th annual meeting

The West Pasadena Residents' Association cordially invites you to its 54th annual meeting on Wednesday, May 18, at Maranatha High School, 169 S. St. John Ave. Parking is free in the Maranatha parking garage on S. St. John Ave.

At 5:30 p.m. the evening starts with a reception, during which attendees will be able to enjoy light refreshments, while visiting with many community organizations that will be exhibiting their services and programs.

As we go to press, the following community organizations have committed to exhibiting: Connecting Pasadena Project, Day One, Friends of the Pasadena Public Library, Kidspace Children's Museum, La Casita del Arroyo, No on 710, Old Pasadena Management District, Pasadena Community Gardens, Pasadena Heritage, Pasadena Museum of History, Pasadena Sister Cities and the Rose Bowl Stadium.

At 6:30 p.m. the main program begins. The key themes for this year's meeting are the ideas citizens and others have developed to repurpose the 710 ditch in Pasadena and the continuing battle against crime in our neighborhood.

- When Metro and Caltrans finally toss in the towel (abandon the idea of SR-710 tunnels between Alhambra and Pasadena), Pasadena will have the rare opportunity to reclaim the northern stub of the 710 freeway and reconnect west Pasadena with Old Pasadena and the rest of the City, and to generate millions of dollars of annual tax revenue as a result. This all can become possible through the Connecting Pasadena Project (CPP).

This citizen-driven project created an alternative to the tunnels. Stefanos Polyzoides, partner with the Pasadena architectural firm Moule & Polyzoides, will describe the CPP land use and transportation alternative to the tunnels and the stub as well as the community process that created it.

- What are the challenges in controlling crime, and how can we help? Pasadena Police Chief Phillip Sanchez will share with us how a well-trained police department and vigilant and communicating citizens can make all the difference.

In March, Chief Sanchez shared with the WPRA Board how AB 109 and Proposition 47 have impacted our community. AB 109 approved early release of prison inmates due to overcrowding in our system. Prop 47 addresses sentencing reform. Forty percent of the crimes committed in

Save the date

What:

WPRA 2016 annual meeting

When:

Wednesday, May 18, 2016
5:30-8:30 p.m.

Where:

Maranatha High School
169 S. St John Ave.

Cost:

Free

Pasadena are completed by criminals who do not live in the city. However, Pasadena has seen a 7% reduction in crime rate at this time last year and there were 57 crimes committed in January. Neighborhood watch programs are effective in helping the PPD solve crimes, but crimes need to be reported.

Last, but certainly not least, the WPRA will formally recognize individuals and organizations whose activities have materially improved the quality of life in west Pasadena, and our members will elect officers and directors for the 2016-2017 WPRA fiscal year.

West Pasadena Residents' Association



1962 - 2016

A picture is worth a thousand words

BY GEOFFREY BAUM
PRESIDENT, WPRA

Have you ever taken a close look at the WPRA logo? It offers a wonderful combination of elements that represent many aspects of our beautiful neighborhoods.



Geoffrey Baum

The silhouette of a Craftsman home represents the distinctive architecture found on nearly every block. The illustration shows the natural beauty of the Arroyo Seco lined with trees

and a stream running through it. Warm sunlight bathes the entire scene, to highlight the weather we enjoy year round. The logo with its traditional fonts and graphic design also speaks to the powerful heritage of the association and notes the founding date in Roman numerals at the bottom.

Next year will mark the 55th anniversary of the founding of the West Pasadena Residents' Association.

Association. For more than half a century, active volunteers have devoted countless hours to ensuring the community we treasure is protected and preserved for generations to come.



In some ways, the tools we use have remained the same. A quarterly printed newsletter, community gatherings and appearances at City Council and other public meetings. But we have modernized the effort as well to include a weekly digital newsletter, a robust website and a topical Facebook page.

The City has also developed tools to better serve our neighborhood. One of my favorites is the Pasadena Citizen Service Center app. I downloaded it from iTunes and have used it several times, most often to report broken

street lights. The City has responded promptly each time; I get an email or text with regular status updates. The app can also be used to report trash or abandoned vehicles, barking dogs, code violations, fallen trees and potholes, among other issues. I encourage you to use it. As one reviewer writes, "This app is only as good as its user base (Pasadena residents). It's great. Let's make it famous."

It has been an honor serving as your WPRA board president these past two years. We have addressed serious issues such as traffic, crime and plans for the Rose Bowl. We have also brought the neighborhood together through public meetings and even with some fun garden receptions.

However, we must continue to work together to address threats, such as the proposed SR-710 tunnel and unchecked overdevelopment. In addition to your membership contribution, please make time to volunteer by serving on a committee, helping with the newsletter or joining the board of directors. You'll make an important difference and have a wonderful time with some great neighbors and friends!

About us

2015 – 2016 officers

- President: Geoffrey Baum (baum@wpra.net)
- Vice President: Sarah Gavit (gavit@wpra.net)
- Treasurer: Blaine Cavena (cavena@wpra.net)
- Secretary: Justin Chapman (chapman@wpra.net)

Mission: Founded in 1962, the West Pasadena Residents' Association is dedicated to maintaining the character of our community and enhancing the quality of life in west Pasadena.

Area: The WPRA service area is bounded on the north by Colorado Boulevard, on the east by Fair Oaks Avenue and on the south and west by the city limits.

Funding: All WPRA activities are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding and has no paid employees. Since the WPRA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation, contributions and donations are fully deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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- Kenyon Harbison (harbison@wpra.net)
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- Chuck Hudson (hudson@wpra.net)
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Membership, Open Space & Conservation



The News is mailed each quarter to nearly 8,000 homes and businesses in the 91105 and 91103 ZIP codes and beyond.

Editor: Chuck Hudson
(editor@wpra.net)

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The West Pasadena Residents' Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation.

The WPRA is grateful to Castle Press for design and printing services.

Visit our website at wpra.net

Visit our Facebook page

BRIEFS

Mermell is named interim City Manager

City Council has appointed Steve Mermell to serve as Interim City Manager, effective February 15, to replace outgoing City Manager Michael J. Beck. Mermell earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in public administration from California State University-Northridge. He has been a Pasadena city employee since 1989, working his way up the ranks from an administrative analyst at Pasadena Water and Power. In the Finance Department, Mermell served as purchasing administrator, budget administrator and deputy director of finance before reaching his most recent position of assistant city manager. He enjoys golf in his spare time, lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Rachel, and their two sons, Jacob and Ethan. City Council's Ad Hoc Search Committee is now focusing on recruiting a new, permanent replacement.

Insurance policy pays off for embezzlement

The City has received a \$5 million payment from its insurance carrier to settle a claim regarding the theft of public money from the Utility Underground Program fund. In addition, the City has undergone a comprehensive internal financial and personnel audit; changed or increased oversight for many of its financial processes and initiated most of the recommendations announced last year by a citizen advisory task force on financial administration and internal controls, posted at cityofpasadena.net/invoiceinvestigation. The payment represents the maximum amount that could be paid on the insurance claim. It is also about 85% of the nearly \$6 million allegedly embezzled by a former City employee who is now currently facing both criminal charges and a civil lawsuit in connection to the theft. A portion of the settlement money will be deposited into the City's General Fund to offset the cost of investigating the embezzlement, and the rest will be deposited into the Utility Underground fund that was impacted by the theft.

Monitoring is not mitigation

SR-710 tunnel project DEIR is a dry hole for water data

BY GARY HACKNEY
CIVIL ENGINEER

As a retired civil engineer with more than 35 years of experience in water-resource management and a volunteer on the WPRA team that helped review, analyze and comment on the LA Metro/Caltrans SR-710 draft environmental impact report/statement (DEIR/DEIS), I am concerned about the lack of attention that has been given to a critical issue in the proposal to connect the 710 Freeway between El Sereno and Pasadena with two nearly five-mile tunnels: water.

We've heard quite a bit about this megaproject's likely sky-high cost, its likely potential to degrade, not improve, air quality (See front page story in the Winter 2016 issue of *The WPRA News*) and the high likelihood that it will increase — not reduce — regional traffic congestion. We've also heard repeated and warranted references to the less-challenging, on-going large-bore tunneling project in Seattle, which continues to be plagued by disastrous budget-busting failures.

The water story is no less disturbing.

A dry information hole

Consider that the proposed freeway tunnel path cuts through an area that is still in the grip of a four-year (and counting) drought. Consider also that the area has experienced a significant deterioration of water-quality from intense industrial and, especially in Pasadena, past scientific activities. In spite of these serious concerns, we still don't know:

1. What the project's total water demand will be?
2. What portion of total water demand will be supplied by local groundwater?
3. At what rate groundwater will be extracted and disposed of to support tunneling operations?

Astonishingly, none of this information is in the draft EIR/EIS. And yet the draft predicts a "less-than-significant impact" or "no impact" on water supplies. Further, it indefinitely

defers addressing the issue or defers impact analysis to other agencies.

Water is a critical project resource

The tunnel project could require a significant amount of water for a number of reasons — chief among them are to create a slurry for excavation conveyance, to continually cool and clean the giant grinding heads of the five-story tunnel-boring machine, to clean the wheels of the up to 850 trucks a day that will haul the dirt out of the tunnel, and to control dust on the construction site. The project may also require that significant amounts of groundwater be removed to facilitate construction near the water table (a process called 'dewatering').

A severe drought of water and data

The DEIR/DEIS does not specify a protocol that will address a water supply shortfall. This begs the question: In the event of a water shortage how will project water demands be met? For example, if water usage must be cut back, will the tunnel's water delivery be cut off first? Or will current water users be impacted? And what impact will the project have on the State's mandatory 25% water-use-reduction target if it continues or if it is re-instituted?

More specifically, the availability of imported water supplies from the State Water Project and the Colorado River is not at all certain, especially in the current drought, which has already resulted in cut-backs and even cut-offs of some water supplies. Local supplies are also under stress. Some cities have found it necessary to supplement local sources with imported water from the Metropolitan Water District. If the drought continues, one must wonder if there will be sufficient water available for this project.

Potential further dispersal of existing groundwater contamination

Some analysts have also requested a thorough review of the impact of tunneling through the Raymond Fault, which could result in contaminated water in the Raymond Basin migrating into the Main San Gabriel Basin.

Continued on page 10

BRIEFS

**Q&A's about the PWP's
Glenarm Repowering Project****Q: Will the fuel source change for the
Glenarm Power Plant?**

A: The fuel won't change – it's natural gas – but the technology will. Pasadena Water and Power is now replacing an aging steam generator, called B-3 (Broadway 3), that was placed into service in 1965. B-3 relies on clean-burning natural gas to heat water to produce steam that spins a steam turbine to generate electricity. During this project, B-3 will be replaced with an efficient new 71-megawatt combined-cycle plant, GT-5 (Gas Turbine 5). This makes the combined cycle plant about 30% more fuel-efficient than B-3, and helps reduce combustion and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Q: Should neighbors expect more noise
once the new power plant opens?**

A: Neighbors should notice no significant impact from the new plant, which is on track to open in 2016, because GT-5 is replacing B-3. The plant will only be run when needed to meet high customer demand to provide back-up for intermittent sources like solar or wind or to generate extra power. This means the plant may not run at all for days. Rather, it may run continuously over several days or weeks or during daylight hours only and shut down at night. For more, visit pwpweb.com/PowerPlant.

Selvidge elected VP of PCC board

At its December 9, 2015 meeting, Dr. Ross Selvidge was unanimously elected Vice President of the Board of Trustees of the Pasadena Area Community College District. Elected to the Board of Trustees in November 2013, Selvidge represents Area 1 which consists of west Pasadena, the western portion of Altadena, and the City of La Canada Flintridge. Selvidge, a former instructor at USC, also serves as a Commissioner of the Burbank Glendale Pasadena Airport Authority.

CPP presses forward in grassroots effort to *redesign the 710 ditch*

BY AUDREY O'KELLEY
PAST PRESIDENT, WPRA
FOUNDER, CO-CHAIR, CPP

In early 2014 the Connecting Pasadena Project (CPP) was formed to find a more positive way to fight the Metro SR-710 tunnel proposal. Instead of simply opposing the tunnel option, the CPP mission centered on reimagining the ugly stub that divides our neighborhoods.

are promoting the tunnel option as a way to reduce car and truck traffic congestion on other freeways. That is, Metro itself predicts that each day 180,000 cars and trucks would travel from the Port of Los Angeles through the tunnels to connect to the I-210, CA-134 and I-5 and beyond.

Many of us believe this would be a disaster for our city and the region. Rather than supporting Pasadena's mission to serve as a regional destination, the tunnels and the



After meeting with stakeholders, who agreed it was worth the effort to "redesign the ditch," CPP leaders presented the concept at the West Pasadena Residents' Association's 2014 annual meeting, formed a steering committee, and continued outreach efforts in the community, while developing the concept.

What would CPP accomplish?

First and foremost, CPP is a transportation solution. It will calm existing traffic, but without inducing additional traffic, unlike the tunnel proposal.

Second, and equally important, CPP is a neighborhood repair solution. CPP would reclaim the land that was taken from us by Caltrans many decades ago to revitalize that barren strip of land and dead space. It would create an economically viable, sustainable and beautiful new space that would benefit Pasadena and the region.

Why re-invent the north stub?

First, right now the stub is a *de facto* work yard for Caltrans. It serves as the base for piles of sand, concrete and rebar that will ultimately be used on roads and highways in the region.

Second, the tunnel option provides no advantages to any of the communities along the SR-710 corridor. Metro and Caltrans

resulting freeway congestion could actually discourage area residents and businesses from visiting Pasadena.

Also, consider the tunnels from a motorist's point of view. The tunnel option proposes to charge a toll to repay the public-private partnership investors and would only have two entry/exit points – the south portal in Alhambra and the north portal in Pasadena.

One can safely assume that many motorists who are either unwilling to pay a toll or unwilling to risk the 4.5 mile journey through a congested tunnel will seek ways to avoid the tunnel. These auto and truck motorists will likely seek a path through surface streets and our neighborhoods.

Want to get involved? Get informed?

Be sure to attend the WPRA 2016 annual meeting on Wednesday, May 18, at Maranatha High School to see how far the concept has come.

Pasadena citizens, with information and guidance from experts, created CPP. CPP was incorporated into the Pasadena Preferred Alternative, which was adopted in 2015 by City Council when it formally opposed the tunnel.

Pasadena Heritage continues to shape, comment and celebrate

BY SUE MOSSMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
PASADENA HERITAGE

YWCA/Kimpton Hotel project DEIR comments

Three hearings have been held in recent weeks to take comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the YWCA/Kimpton project proposed for the Civic Center. Pasadena Heritage is completing its review of the documents and provided comments at all three hearings. Our considerations include potential impacts on the historic YWCA building, designed by noted architect Julia Morgan, as well as impacts on the Civic Center as a whole.

This highly visible location presents a unique set of challenges – repurposing the historic property to serve as a hotel and reflecting the civic nature of the larger site and compliments City Hall, across the street. We believe both challenges can be met. We remain hopeful that the right approach will emerge. City Council will decide, most likely in June, when the EIR process is complete. *(For more background and our views on this project, please visit pasadenaheritage.org.)*

Lincoln Properties project design is a work in progress

Phase One of the approved Lincoln Properties project received Concept Design approval during the March Design Commission meeting. The Commission, however, imposed a condition that the development team find ways to open up more access for the public into and within this huge complex.

One of the largest developments in Pasadena, the Parsons' property is bordered by Pasadena Avenue, Walnut Street, Fair Oaks Avenue and Union Street. Pasadena Heritage's comments and consultations focused most directly on the design of the new buildings along Fair Oaks, where they will interface with historic Old Pasadena buildings across the street, which are of a much smaller scale. We were pleased to support the newest design approach for the Fair Oaks buildings, which is much more responsive to the context.

Seeking resolution for 710 properties

As the saga of the SR-710 Freeway extension continues to wend its way through miles of red tape and process, Pasadena Heritage is working



to protect and ensure the proper disposition of the many historic houses owned by Caltrans along the route. In collaboration with the City of South Pasadena, the Los Angeles Conservancy, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other interested parties, we continue to seek resolution of these issues.

As of this writing, Pasadena Heritage is encouraged by the progress being made toward securing historic designations and protection for historic houses that will be sold back into private hands in our community and others.

Caltrans is anxious to complete a set of regulations and begin the process to release properties for sale as soon as all the pieces of this complex puzzle can be put in place. *Stay tuned for more specific information as plans are finalized in the months ahead.*

Celebrate National Historic Preservation month in May

Pasadena Heritage will sponsor several events in May in honor of National Historic Preservation Month.

- Our Old Pasadena Walking Tour will be held Saturday, May 7, starting at 9 a.m. This two-hour walk through

Pasadena's original downtown encourages participants to look at the buildings and details with fresh eyes while learning the history and hearing the stories of its evolution over the past 150 years.

- On Wednesday, May 11, leading local realtors at Podley Properties will sponsor a free evening lecture, presented by Pasadena Heritage, on the history of the San Gabriel Valley at the Pasadena Central Library. Following the theme, Pasadena Heritage will host walking tours of the City of San Gabriel on Saturday, May 14, including some of the oldest buildings in our region. Visit the San Gabriel Mission, the Mission Playhouse, and early residents with us and co-hosts from San Gabriel!

For more information about these events and more, visit pasadenaheritage.org.

It's the year of the Bridge Party

Held every other year, Pasadena Heritage's most popular outdoor event is set for Saturday, July 16, on the historic Colorado Street Bridge. Enjoy an evening of live music, dancing, children's activities, vintage cars and lots of festive food and beverage offerings on the world-famous bridge! Sponsor opportunities are now available, and invitations will be sent in early June. It's the biggest and best block party in town!



Pasadena Heritage's famous Colorado Street Bridge Party returns on July 16.

ETCO Homes takes over construction of the “Sunrise” portion

City Ventures nears completion at Ambassador Gardens

Once home to several landmark mansions along Millionaire’s Row, and then later repurposed by radio evangelist Herbert W. Armstrong for his Worldwide Church of God’s Ambassador College, this distinguished and historic property on South Orange Grove Boulevard, between Green Street and Del Mar Boulevard, is now nearing completion. Developer City Ventures has created a “... residential enclave of new townhomes and flats in a sprawling, historic and gracious Pasadena garden setting.”

The Ambassador Gardens development includes:

- **Phase 1: The Bungalows** – Ten townhomes on W. Del Mar Boulevard completed in 2014.
- **Phase 2: The Grove** – 19 townhomes in the central part of the campus completed in 2015.
- **Phases 3 and 4: Jamieson Place** – 19 townhomes and flats nearing completion and 20 more townhomes and flats that will be completed by the end of this year.
- **Phase 5: The Villas and The Terraces:** ETCO Homes has started construction on the remaining 78 units, once referred to as the “Sunrise” property, which will complete the Ambassador Gardens development.

Sales are brisk

Pricing for the first phase was \$1.2 to \$2.2 million and, for phase 2, \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million. As this publication goes to press, City Ventures reports that only 13 of the 39 units in the final two phases are still available for \$2 to \$2.7 million.

The final fixer-uppers

City Ventures’ final effort at Ambassador Gardens will be the refurbishing and sale of the Merritt and Terrace Villa mansions as single-family homes over the next 12 months.

City Ventures sells “Sunrise” property with permitted drawings

Another element of the Ambassador Gardens story has taken a surprising turn. In 2012

Continued on page 10



The Hall of Administration, above photo, designed by Peter J. Holdstock, was built by the Worldwide Church of God in 1967 on the Ambassador College property. The four-story building, which was demolished, below photo, earlier this month to make way for 78 new townhomes, housed the offices for the various managers and ministers who oversaw operations of the church in several countries and in several languages, as well as campus security and dispatch. The campus already contained a number of grand mansions from the early twentieth century, but Worldwide Church of God founder and leader Herbert W. Armstrong wanted a more modern, yet timelessly classic, feel for his campus. He hired Daniel, Mann, Johnson, and Mendenhall (DMJM) in 1963 to come up with a master plan and dream up new modern buildings to fit his vision. Architect Peter J. Holdstock, of the O. K. Earl Corporation, designed most of the new campus buildings, including the Hall of Administration, using bold sculptural elements such as perforated concrete screens to add visual interest to the clean Late Modern lines. Armstrong also commissioned distinguished landscape architect Garrett Eckbo to design a unified campus landscape. *Source: Los Angeles Conservancy (Photos by Chuck Hudson)*



BRIEFS

710 Tunnel makes national list of highway boondoggles

A new study by the United States Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG) Education Fund and Frontier Group identifies 12 of the most wasteful highway expansion projects across the country, slated to collectively cost at least \$24 billion. Making the list of national highway boondoggles is the proposed 710 Tunnel Project, which officials estimate would cost \$5.6 billion.

“California is considering prioritizing the most expensive, most polluting, and least effective option for addressing the area’s transportation problems, a single or double bore tunnel,” said Emily Rusch, Executive Director at the California PIRG. “This project would cause more pollution than any of the alternative projects by increasing car and truck traffic in the area – and would actually make congestion worse,” she noted.

“America’s long-term travel needs are changing, especially among Millennials, who are driving fewer miles, getting driver licenses in fewer numbers, and expressing greater preferences to live in areas where they do not need to use a car often,” said Tony Dutzik, Senior Policy Analyst at Frontier Group.

The study recommends that states:

1. Adopt fix-it-first policies that reorient transportation funding away from highway expansion and toward repair of existing roads and bridges;
2. Invest in transportation solutions that reduce the need for costly and disruptive highway expansion projects by improving and expanding public transit, biking, and walking options;
3. Give priority to funding transportation projects that reduce the number of vehicle-miles people travel each year, thereby also reducing air pollution, carbon emissions, and future road repair and maintenance needs;
4. Include future maintenance costs, a range of potential future housing and

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Once the La Loma Bridge piers and abutments are completed, the bridge itself will begin to reappear, with new columns, decking, railing and lamps, returning a new, stronger bridge to something close to its graceful original appearance. The bridge should re-open in December. (Photo by Chuck Hudson)

La Loma Bridge work continues

BY BLAINE CAVENA
TREASURER, WPRA

If you’ve seen the bridge lately, you haven’t seen the bridge!

All that’s left are the primary arches; nothing on top, nothing on the either end. Both ends of the bridge, the abutments, are being completely rebuilt. New steel piles have been driven on the west end to support the new structure at that end. Down in the Arroyo the bridge supports, or piers, are being strengthened and extended on both sides of the concrete channel.

Now it’s time to work on the east end. Unlike the west side, which has room to work, the east side has very little room. To provide adequate space for construction, Arroyo Boulevard has been “squeezed” with new

striping – and no parking – in the area near the bridge. While still providing two lanes of traffic each way, the lanes will be narrower so extra caution is needed, especially so for cyclists.

Once the piers and abutments are completed, the bridge itself will begin to reappear, with new columns, decking, railing and lamps, returning a new, stronger bridge to something close to its graceful original appearance.

The Arroyo Boulevard lane squeeze will last into the fall. The bridge should re-open in December.

For more photos of construction, project updates, information on detours, and Lower Arroyo access below the bridge visit cityofpasadena.net/PublicWorks/La_Loma_Bridge_Project/

A thank-you to our donor-members!

The WPRA appreciates the above-and-beyond financial support of all those who join or contribute to our effort. The membership donations listed below include the names of all those who contributed \$100 or more between February 1, 2015 and February 29, 2016. If your name is not listed or is not listed correctly, please contact me. We thank you for your support. *Linda Zinn, Membership chair, zinn@wpra.net*

NOTE: To make it easier to help fund the WPRA services and efforts, we have enclosed an envelope within this issue. Just insert (1) the completed form on the envelope flap and (2) a check (made out to WPRA) into the pre-addressed envelope, add a stamp and mail it. You may also donate using your credit card by visiting wpra.net and clicking on EZ Donate in the upper left corner of our home page.

West Pasadena Residents' Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation. Memberships and donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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SR-710 tunnel project DEIR is a dry hole for water data

Continued from page 3

Furthermore, high rates of groundwater extraction to meet project water demands or to meet dewatering requirements could cause existing contaminated areas to migrate toward areas of non-contaminated groundwater.

In addition, it's important to evaluate the impact of plume movements of groundwater contaminants that may impact existing groundwater recovery treatment systems.

Also, groundwater remediation efforts are underway in the vicinity of the project to remove groundwater contamination. The impact of the Freeway Tunnel project on these remediation facilities needs to be analyzed.

Monitoring is not mitigation

The draft EIR/EIS deceptively specifies that a monitoring program will be provided as a "mitigation measure" for groundwater quality impacts. However, a monitoring program is not, in and of itself, a mitigation measure. Rather it is a way to measure changes. The draft EIR/EIS needs to clarify what changes would be considered significant and what, if encountered, would be done to mitigate them.

Details about the monitoring program are currently deferred to a future "...comprehensive investigation by the Project Geotechnical Engineer and/or the Project Geologist..." This comprehensive investigation should take place now, not at some future undetermined date so that true and robust mitigation measures can be incorporated.

Impacts on regional water resources would be crucial anytime, but they are especially important during this critical period of limited water supplies. Detailed analysis of water quality and water quantity impacts should be assessed and included in a re-circulated DEIR/DEIS.

City Ventures nears completion at Ambassador Gardens

Continued from page 6

City Ventures purchased the northeastern portion of the campus from Sunrise Senior Living. Last year the Design Commission approved the final design — reduced in size and scale to 78 units from Sunrise's original 248 units — for this portion of the campus, and building permits were ready to issue in September of 2015.

Since then City Ventures has sold this portion of the property to Beverly Hills-based boutique homebuilder ETCO Homes. Bound by the terms of the entitlement awarded to City Ventures, ETCO has already demolished the structure formerly known as the Hall of Administration on the corner of S. St. John and W. Green streets, just north of Harvest Rock Church.

Founded in 1989 by the Etebar family, Southern California-based ETCO Homes describes itself as independent and privately owned company that builds a wide range of residential and commercial properties from contemporary townhomes and luxury custom homes to mixed-use office, retail and industrial properties. ETCO is currently building other luxury residential projects in Beverly Hills, Marina del Rey and Pacific Palisades.

Briefs

Continued from page 7

transportation trends, and the availability of new transportation options such as car-sharing, bike-sharing, ride-sharing, and transit in transportation project selection decisions;

5. Invest in research and data collection to better track, and more aptly react, to ongoing shifts in how people travel.

An overview of the proposed Arroyo Seco festival

Continued from page 14

the Brookside Golf Course to include displacement events with amplified sound. Each day of the festival would count as one displacement event.

- Four musical stages would be used for amplified musical performances. The main stage (Stage A) would host up to four acts each day, while the remaining three musical stages would each host from four to 12 acts each day.
- The festival site would open at 10 a.m. on Friday and at 9 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Performances would not start until about Noon on all three days. All amplified musical performances would end by 11 p.m. on each event day and patrons of the festival would be required to vacate the festival site by midnight.
- Food and beverage concession stands, including five food courts and a beverage garden that would highlight local restaurants, chefs, breweries, wineries, and farmers markets, would be placed throughout the festival site. Eleven existing Rose Bowl Stadium concessions stands would also be open.
- Art exhibits highlighting local and international art would be placed throughout the festival grounds. One or two iconic carnival rides, such as a carousel, could also be provided. In addition, merchandise sales areas, one main boutique and several satellite boutique locations, as well as lounge/VIP areas would be placed throughout the festival area.
- The festival would not permit overnight camping, but for logistical and security reasons may include accommodations for up to 10 festival employees in temporary RV trailers.
- The Pasadena Police Department would also provide law enforcement both within the site and throughout the larger project vicinity. Approximately 1,500 private security personnel would provide security services during the festival.

Update

San Rafael Elementary issues and outlook

BY KENYON HARBISON
DIRECTOR, WPRA

While the threat of a closure of San Rafael Elementary School has now passed, both the school and its impact on the community will remain a focus of the WPRA.

First, as reported in the WPRA's online newsletter in February, San Rafael Elementary was recently named a 2016 Gold Ribbon School by the California Department of Education. This biennial recognition program is the successor to the old "Distinguished Schools" program, and the award is great news. On the challenge front, San Rafael Elementary is extremely over-subscribed, meaning that there are significant waiting lists every year now. This demand is both good and bad news.

The good news is that there is a "neighborhood preference" that exists for San Rafael Elementary enrollment, despite the fact that, among other things, the District's school locator webpage lists McKinley Elementary School as our neighborhood's sole local school. The bad news is that there has been significant confusion in the past year – including some generated by the District (see above) – about the geographic scope of that preference area.

A full discussion of all of the demand/preference issues relating to SRES would be too long for this update, but rest assured that a longer article is coming. For now, questions should be directed to WPRA Directors Kenyon Harbison (harbison@wpra.net) and Catherine Stringer (stringer@wpra.net).

Additionally, now that San Rafael Elementary is no longer slated for closure, the District is moving forward with plans to renovate it. At press time, new details relating to these plans were not available, however, a school site meeting involving the PUSD's Chief Facilities Officer is imminent and our sources suggest that renovation will not likely begin until after the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

Finally, traffic in and around the immediate area of the school continues to be a major concern for some residents and for parents at the school. The WPRA continues to work

with the school, and with parent groups, to implement improvements.

Among other things, this has led to a significant increase in the staffing of the drop-off lanes on Nithsdale and San Miguel

roads. Also, a new version of the report from the District's traffic consultant includes more significant recommendations, which we will be analyzing over future weeks.



SAN RAFAEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A letter from San Rafael Elementary

Editor's note: The WPRA has "adopted" San Rafael Elementary School, 1090 Nithsdale Rd., which is the last public elementary school in west Pasadena, through the WPRA-sponsored Student Enrichment Program.

BY RUDY RAMIREZ
PRINCIPAL,
SAN RAFAEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As a school principal, I am often asked, "What do you like to see when you visit a classroom? How can you tell if students are learning?" To this complex question, I simply respond, "It's not what I see that interests me most; it's what I hear." That is, when I walk into a classroom or any learning environment, I want to hear a buzz. I want to hear students negotiating and clearly articulating new learning. I want to hear students say "So, that's how you do that!" It's what I hear from students that lets me know if they are engaged and actively learning.

I tell you this to because I want all to understand what defines San Rafael Elementary School as an educational community and makes us such a special place for students and staff to learn and grow together. At San Rafael, there's always a buzz in the air. Every school day our campus is humming with the collective voices of staff, parents and volunteers engaging our students, ensuring we meet the range of their academic, social and physical needs.

For example, it's not uncommon to see John Favre or Quincy Hocutt, both WPRA members, working with a small group of students and providing them with much

needed additional support, guidance and practice in math or reading. And in keeping with the theme of what we hear, I want to acknowledge that it was through a generous grant from the WPRA that



we placed instruments in the hands of students who otherwise could not have benefited from the joy of learning to play music. It is this type of support and mentorship that the WPRA brings to San Rafael and helps make us such an amazing school.

In the past few months, we have been working with our parent community, neighbors, the City of Pasadena and PUSD leadership to further mitigate traffic flow issues around our campus. For example, we continuously work to improve and enhance our drop-off and pick-up "valet" lines on Nithsdale and San Miguel, which are staffed by 8-10 employees every morning and have helped to create a very efficient system. Parents simply pull forward along the curb, where a staff member opens the car door and helps the student quickly and safely exit the vehicle – and parents are on their way in moments.

And soon, PUSD will move forward with the modernization plans for San Rafael, which will serve as a perfect opportunity to address additional parking and traffic improvements.

Finally, our motto is that "the best is yet to come" for San Rafael ... stay tuned!

BRIEFS

City Council approves non-potable water project

In February, City Council approved staff recommendations and directed City staff to return to the Council with analysis of alternative routes prior to awarding any contracts for a project that envisions construction and operation of a new non-potable water distribution system to deliver recycled water. When completed, the project could result in as much as a 9% reduction in potable water demand for non-potable water needs. The only major concerns, voiced by several Councilmembers and the public, related to potential damage to street trees and the root systems along the proposed construction work routes.

Mayor focuses on economics in State of the City address

Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek on January 20 devoted his entire (and relatively brief) State of the City speech to City finances for three reasons: "The City Charter," said Tornek, "requires the mayor in January of each year to present a budget message expressly to receive and consider public suggestions and comments on the City budget prior to its preparation and ultimate approval by the City Council; the Citizen Task Force on the embezzlement emphasized that we must upgrade citizen awareness and oversight of our finances; and everything that the City undertakes depends upon our available resources." Mayor Tornek concluded with questions, rather than answers:

1. Can we develop significant new revenue sources without sacrificing our quality of life?
2. Is 53% of the Operating Budget an appropriate allocation to Public Safety? Should there be a limit? What should we cut if there isn't enough to go around?
3. Is \$130 per person/month a reasonable cost for City services? Would residents be willing to pay more for enhanced services? Should we consider eliminating some services?
4. What more can we do to control City employee retirement costs, while still being fair to our employees?
5. What is an appropriate level of annual funding for Capital Improvements?

A priceless resource for Pasadena and region

Haha co-op nursery thrives

BY TIM BRICK

Just a year ago it was an overgrown weed patch on the back of the former US Forest Service Ranger Station near JPL in Hahamongna Watershed Park. Today Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery is a fully functioning native plant nursery with more than 7,000 plants representing 85 distinct species.

Under the leadership of the dynamic nursery manager, Nicholas Hummingbird, scores of local residents have participated in numerous work days and workshops to transform the site. Hummingbird, who was recently featured in the *Pasadena Weekly*, has crafted a remarkable educational program about habitat and plant propagation that is the first component of the future environmental education center featured in the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan. He has brought a depth of experience to the newly blossoming nursery, having previously worked with the National Park Service on Channel Islands habitat restoration projects. A young indigenous person of Chumash and Cahuilla descent, he also brings a respect for native ways, very much in keeping with the spirit of Hahamongna. He is an excellent teacher and has built a solid corps of volunteers to care for the nursery.

The nursery began as part of the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project (ASCP), a partnership between the Arroyo Seco Foundation (ASF) and the Pasadena Water & Power Department (PWP), to improve local water resources and environmental conditions along the Arroyo Seco stream as it flows out of the San Gabriel Mountains. ASF developed the original conceptual plan and obtained a \$3.27 million grant from the CA Department of Water Resources to help fund the improvements, which include extensive riparian habitat restoration. In addition to providing planning and outreach services for the project, ASF proposed maximizing community participation by growing the thousands of plants that will be needed and planting them with community volunteers. We suggested using the long-neglected nursery facility in Hahamongna Watershed Park.



Since February 2015, when ASF was first granted full access to the site, Nick Hummingbird and the volunteers have transformed the abandoned planting beds into a thriving native plant nursery that has prepared all the plants needed for the project. ASCP was approved by the Pasadena City Council last June, but an environmental lawsuit has delayed its completion and created some uncertainty about the care and disposition of the plants.

Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery is a community-generated treasure that displays the spectacular beauty and functionality of native plants. It is and can be an invaluable asset to the City of Pasadena and our region by providing low-cost plants for restoration, conservation and park uses. Native plants are best adapted to deal with local climate variability as well as climate change.

California's long drought has underscored the sustainability benefits of these plants for Southern California. River restoration efforts in the Arroyo Seco and along the Los Angeles River have accentuated the largely unmet need for native plants that are regionally sourced and genetically appropriate. It is also now imperative that Pasadenans and Southern Californians focus on transforming the landscaping of our homes, parks and businesses to meet the challenges of drought and climate change. Native plants are the most appropriate solution, and Hahamongna

Continued on next page



Hahamongna Nursery Manager Nick Hummingbird, right, an expert trained in habitat restoration by the National Park Service, identifies native plants for inquisitive local residents.

Cooperative Nursery can be a priceless resource and educational hub to promote and disseminate these plants.

Native plants from Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery can be used for:

- Arroyo Seco habitat restoration programs such as ASCP and Berkshire Creek Restoration
- Drought response and conservation education for PWP
- Oak grove restoration in Hahamongna Watershed Park
- Park improvements throughout Pasadena and our region
- Model landscaping of city facilities, such as fire stations and libraries,
- Ecosystem restoration programs that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is now

planning for the Arroyo Seco and Los Angeles River, and

- Transforming the landscape ethic of Pasadena and our region with a renewed respect for the benefits of native plants and sustainability.

To ensure that Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery will be financially self-sustaining, ASF will work to develop agreements and partnerships with Pasadena agencies as well as other governmental agencies and organizations involved in conservation, habitat restoration and native plant programs. We will develop contracts and seek grants and sponsorships to provide a solid and sustainable financial base to make the nursery a lasting asset for Pasadena and our region. We also plan to make plants available to the general public.

We are now working with Pasadena city staff to develop an agreement to allow Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery to develop its rich potential and benefits for our region. If you would like to know more about the nursery, please check arroyoseco.org/nursery.htm or send an email to nursery@arroyoseco.org.

Tim Brick, the Managing Director of the Arroyo Seco Foundation, is the former chairman of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the former executive director of the Hahamongna Operating Company.

WPRA pleased, disappointed by festival's final EIR

BY BILL URBAN

DIRECTOR, FORMER PRESIDENT, WPRA

Late last December, the City of Pasadena released a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) detailing projected impacts and proposed mitigations for an annual 3-day Arroyo Seco Music and Arts Festival at the Rose Bowl.

The WPRA enlisted members who are experts in the various subjects covered in the DEIR to analyze the draft, and then sent the City a letter indicating support for the overall concept of the festival. The WPRA, however, also expressed concern about “the severe impacts of such a large event on the surrounding neighborhoods” and urged the City to seriously consider “vigorous and effective measures to mitigate and minimize the impacts.”

WPRA's main concerns about the DEIR are the lack of detail about specific impacts on air quality, noise, public services and traffic or how proposed mitigation actions will be monitored and enforced. The complete letter is available on our website at wpra.net

The City, in the Final EIR (FEIR), which was released on March 21, responded to all comments. WPRA is both pleased and disappointed by the FEIR.

We are pleased that the FEIR ...

- Promises community involvement in planning and evaluating each event.



Update

Pasadena City Council on Monday, April 4, provided all approvals for the proposed Arroyo Seco Music & Arts Festival at the Rose Bowl and Brookside Golf Course. Council certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), adopted a mitigation-monitoring and -reporting program, and approved a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the festival. Council also authorized the Rose Bowl Operating Company to enter into a license agreement with concert-promoter Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) and approved an amendment to the Arroyo Seco Public Lands ordinance to permit the City to increase the number of displacement events from 12 to 15 each year (without requiring further approval of Council) and to permit amplified sound and increased use on the Brookside Golf Course.

- Requires festival contracts to include mitigation efforts to minimize adverse festival impacts, including noise, traffic, air quality and public safety.

We are disappointed that the FEIR ...

- Relies so heavily on future contracts and voluntary actions for mitigating the festival's adverse impacts, rather than specifying minimum requirements in the FEIR itself.
- Insists on keeping open the possibility of hosting a National Football League team at the Rose Bowl, just not in the same year as a festival.

Keys to the success of the festival, from our perspective, will be ...

- Open communications with neighborhood representatives and residents, and a promise to act on concerns.
- Vigorous efforts to continuously measure and reduce the festival's inherent negative impacts on the surrounding areas.

We are encouraged by past experience with Rose Bowl management and by the promise of detailed plans and communications made in the FEIR. However, we will remain vigilant throughout the planning, execution and debriefing of each event. If we are not, even the “best laid plans” could go awry.

When asked to comment for this article, Darryl Dunn, Rose Bowl CEO/General Manager, said, “The Arroyo Seco Music & Arts Festival is an exciting opportunity for music and the arts to intertwine with the Pasadena community and help provide economic

stability for the Rose Bowl for years to come. Working with neighborhoods adjacent to the Rose Bowl is critical for the long-term success of the festival and both the RBOC and AEG are looking forward to continuing the dialogue with our neighbors.”

An overview of the proposed Arroyo Seco festival

The Rose Bowl Operating Committee (RBOC) is considering entering into an agreement with an event operator, Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), to host a three-day Arroyo Seco Music and Arts Festival each year at the Rose Bowl Stadium complex and portions of the Brookside Golf Course. The agreement would extend over 10 years, with two five-year renewal options and an option for either party to terminate after the third festival event. The following points are excerpts from the environmental impact statement:

- The annual festival would run Friday through Sunday, likely in June, with a capacity of up to 93,000 daily attendees, including 3,400 employees to support the festival. The first year of the festival would be a two-day (Saturday and Sunday) event with a capacity of 75,000 attendees.
- The festival would require amending the Arroyo Seco Public Lands Ordinance to increase the number of displacement events from 12 to 15 per year without further approval by City Council, and to increase the allowed uses of

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Gone (almost), but not forgotten

The Italian Sunken Garden of Hulett C. Merritt

[Editor's note: The Pasadena Museum of History graciously provides WPRA News readers with historical vignettes to relive our past and inform our future.]

BY KIRK MYERS
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST
PASADENA MUSEUM OF HISTORY

In 1907, when Hulett C. Merritt was constructing his home at 99 Terrace Drive, work on the extensive garden he was creating on the west side of his property attracted attention.

On March 16 of that year, the *Pasadena Star* observed that "The formal garden is coming more and more into popularity and some examples of it are being introduced into Pasadena. ...one of the most extensive of these formal Italian gardens is being laid out for Hulett Merritt on the Orange Grove end of his West side place."

On June 29, the *Star* reported on "The Sunken Gardens of Pasadena," an article that had just been printed in a publication of the California Promotion Committee, about the Busch and Merritt gardens.

"Hulett Merritt is completing another sunken garden of an entirely different type. ...it is unique, constructed on conventional lines, something after the old Roman or Grecian gardens. There are other smaller sunken gardens in and about the city, but none in any way as pretentious as either the Busch or the Merritt gardens."

In the booklet *PASADENA – The Modern Garden of Eden*, Elbert Hubbard wrote "... the palatial homes of the wealthy are surrounded by gardens of indescribable beauty. Millions have been spent in the layout of these flower-gardens, and in their care, maintenance and extension. The sunken garden of Adolphus Busch, the Saint Louis millionaire, is known the world over. ... The stately Italian gardens of Hulett C. Merritt, those of Doctor Rudolph Shiffman, the Japanese garden of H.E. Huntington, and a score of others are notable examples of the highest in the art of landscape-gardening – harmonious, pleasing, altogether delightful."



A view of the Merritt grounds in the early 1960s. In 1915 Porter Garnett wrote in *Stately Homes of California* "...the extent of the grounds in which the mansion is set gives it much of the character of a country place. The gardens immediately surrounding the residence comprise about seven and one-half acres. This terrain is enclosed by a wall and is bounded on three sides by streets, one of them Orange Grove avenue which, with its fine lawns and meticulous palms, may be said to be the most beautiful street in the West."

For more than a century, the sunken garden of Hulett C. Merritt was evidence of a time when spacious lawns and gardens lined South Orange Grove Avenue and made it one of the most beautiful residential streets in the world.

The west side of the Merritt estate is now occupied by Jamieson Place, with townhomes flanking the sunken garden at the center, and what was in 1907 called a "small lake" with water lilies has now been redefined as a swimming pool.

The Pasadena Museum of History is located at the corner of Orange Grove Boulevard and Walnut Street (470 W. Walnut); free parking in the museum lot. The Research Library & Archives are open to the public free of charge Thursdays-Sundays from 1-4 p.m. For additional information, please visit the Museum's website, pasadenahistory.org or call (626) 577-1660, ext. 10.



**WEST PASADENA
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**
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Pasadena Crime Stoppers (800) 222-8477
Non-Emergency (626) 744-4241

Services

Bulky trash items (626) 744-4158
Missed trash pickup..... (626) 744-4087
Missed residential recycling pickup (626) 744-4087
New trash container..... (626) 744-4087
New street light (626) 744-4191
Pothole (626) 744-4158
Recycling..... (626) 744-4087
Sewer problem (626) 744-4158
Shopping cart pickup (626) 744-8227
Street light not working (626) 744-4158
Storm drain blockage..... (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal malfunction..... (626) 744-4158
Traffic signal timing problems (626) 744-4191

Frequently called numbers

City information operator (626) 744-4000
Abandoned vehicles (626) 744-7627
Alarm permits (626) 744-4166
Animal control (626) 792-7151
ARTS bus (626) 744-4055
Code enforcement (626) 744-4633
Dog licenses (626) 792-7151
Graffiti (626) 744-7622
Historic preservation (626) 744-4009
Neighborhood Watch (626) 744-4550
Park/picnic reservations (626) 744-7275
Parking permits/exemptions (626) 744-6440
Parking tickets (626) 744-4360
Street tree maintenance (626) 744-4321
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Water/power billing inquiries (626) 744-4005
Yard sale permits (626) 744-4200

**The West Pasadena Residents' Association is a
501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation.**

Make your own motion!

Our representatives need to hear from you. Take a few minutes to make your voice heard, and make your own motion.

Pasadena

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