



## THE NEWS

LAND USE / PLANNING

EDUCATION

OPEN SPACE / CONSERVATION

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

GOVERNMENT

PARKS / RECREATION

## Housing, planning experts react to state threat to local control

BY JUSTIN CHAPMAN  
SECRETARY, WPRA

*At the May 2 West Pasadena Residents' Association's 56th annual meeting, a panel of local housing and planning experts expressed concern that recent state laws have to a large degree usurped local governments' ability to determine the character of their own communities.*

*"These housing issues are going to be with us for a long, long time," said Mayor Terry Tornek before the panel discussion began. "The difficulties facing us — the escalating rents, the disagreements over appropriate densities, the invasive oppressive state legislation that is being introduced, homelessness, all of this in the face of a tough city financial circumstance — really makes this a fraught subject, one that consumes bigger and bigger chunks of city time."*

*WPRA board member and Land Use/Planning chair, and former Pasadena Planning Commission member Mic Hansen moderated a panel featuring William Huang, director of the city of Pasadena's Housing and Career Services Department; David Reyes, director of the city of Pasadena's Planning and Community*

*Development Department; and Sue Mossman, executive director of Pasadena Heritage.*

*What follows are excerpts from the discussion.*

**Mic Hansen: Many cities, including Pasadena, are concerned about the recent spate of state housing legislation that takes away local control. Why is the state legislature doing this?**

■ **William Huang:** State legislators have determined that there is a severe housing crisis in the state. One of the primary reasons is there's a supply-and-demand imbalance. So the legislature is trying to remove barriers to bring back some balance between supply and demand. One of the perceived barriers has to do with local discretionary approvals, and so many of their housing bills, be it some of the recently passed housing bills or some bills that were proposed but did not pass, tried to either eliminate, bypass, or limit local control and approvals.

■ **David Reyes:** In 2017, 15 housing bills were proposed and passed. I expect more in the future. Some cities in California have quite complex approval processes,

which are impediments to housing. In Pasadena we feel the brunt of that even though we do a great job. We're one of a few cities — and one of the first in the region — to have an inclusionary housing ordinance [which benefits medium- to low-income families]. We plan and zone for multifamily development in the city in appropriate places. The state, however, is looking at it from a statewide issue. What we're also seeing is development standards severely tipped in the favor of developers and property owners who are building multifamily developments that qualify for state density bonus laws that increase density but not for affordable housing.

**Hansen: How do you see these state-mandated bills affecting preservation?**

■ **Sue Mossman:** We have worked so hard in Pasadena to build reasonable, rational plans to accommodate growth, to encourage some affordable housing. In fact, in the region we provide more affordable housing than do many surrounding communities. It feels like we should get credit for that. It feels like we should continue to have some control over where and how that happens. I don't have the solution. I share the angst. Now it feels somehow that we're being punished in a way for having held on to the beauty, the quality and the character of our city.

*Continued on page 10*



**Recognition for a job done well done.**

During the 2018 West Pasadena Residents' Association annual meeting on May 2, former WPRA president and current director Bill Urban, left, presents former WPRA president and long-time director Fred Zepeda with a Community Service Award for his many years of "dedication and service to the WPRA, our neighborhoods and our city. Zepeda will continue to serve the WPRA through the newly formed advisory council (see article on page 2). (Photo by Chuck Hudson)

# Stand up, speak up and get involved

BY DAN BEAL  
PRESIDENT, WPRA

**T**he West Pasadena Residents' Association is made up entirely of volunteers. They are dedicated to bettering Pasadena and, in many cases, are expressing their passion for a specific topic such as land use or education or open space or crime or traffic. The WPRA is at its best and most effective when it harnesses this energy, knowledge and dedication. So, my first message to you, as the new WPRA president, is to encourage you to stand up, speak up, and get involved.

Many of us, of course, share a love for Pasadena's history, architecture, culture and open space. And although some recent changes have been distressing, changes are inevitable. The scope and type of changes, however, are largely within our power to influence.

Several recent examples of this come to mind. The first is the international explosion of short-term rentals through such outfits



Dan Beal

as VRBO and airbnb. As the City grappled with how to regulate them and learned from hundreds of different plans enacted by cities all over the world, the WPRA was engaged throughout this effort and conducted a resident survey garnering an impressive 600 responses. This input — your input — helped shape the outcome and the resulting ordinance, which was tailored for Pasadena.

Another example is the influx of new State laws that are forcing on all cities one-size-fits-all community planning and land-use requirements. Some of these new laws seek to increase the inventory and density of homes and specifically encourage increased affordable housing, often using proximity to transit as a lever. These laws may mean well, and we all recognize the need for more housing, but they also would reduce or even eliminate our ability to shape the nature and quality of our neighborhoods. The WPRA will continue to participate in this difficult and

*Continued on page 12*

## WPRA forms advisory council

The West Pasadena Residents' Association has established an advisory council consisting of past directors and others, as determined by the WPRA Board. The advisory council was formed as a way to continue to tap into the expertise of past directors so the Board can better address neighborhood and city-wide issues.

The council will meet at least twice a year: once as a council and a second time in a joint meeting with the Board. Former WPRA president and current director Vince Farhat will serve as the liaison between the Board and the council, which comprises former WPRA presidents Geoffrey Baum and Fred Zepeda, and former WPRA director Catherine Stringer.

## About us

### 2018 – 2019 officers

- Dan Beal  
(president@wpra.net)
- Avram Gold  
(vp@wpra.net)
- Blaine Cavena  
(treasurer@wpra.net)
- Justin Chapman  
(secretary@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.

### 2018 – 2019 board of directors

- Bill Christian
- Evan Davis
- Vince Farhat, past president
- Sarah Gavitt
- Ken Grobecker
- Mic Hansen (planning@wpra.net)  
*Land use, Planning*
- Joan Hearst
- Chuck Hudson
- Susan Kinney
- Priscilla Taylor
- Bill Urban, past president
- Nancy Walker
- Linda Zinn (membership@wpra.net)  
*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.

Visit our website at [wpra.net](http://wpra.net)

Visit our Facebook page

## BRIEFS

## Marijuana ballot measures pass; now what?

On June 5, Pasadena voters approved ballot measures CC and DD. Measure CC, which received 59.9% of the vote, permits a limited number of cannabis (marijuana) retailers, cultivators and testing labs to operate within specific zoning areas in the City. Measure DD, which received 75.5% of the vote, levies a business license tax on commercial cannabis businesses of up to \$10/canopy square foot (for cultivation) and between 4-6% of gross receipts (for retail sales).

City staff are now developing the application procedure, applicant selection process and general administrative procedures to issue commercial cannabis permits and the collection of taxes on cannabis products. The City anticipates that its commercial cannabis program will roll out toward the end of 2018. Once the application procedure and selection process have been established, the City Manager will announce the initial 30-day application period.

The City will publicize the application period on the web and in email blasts and newsletters. Applications will be accepted only during the initial application period and during any subsequent application period.

Up to six retailers, four cultivation sites and four testing labs will be permitted to operate at any one time in Pasadena. Cultivators and retailers will be permitted to operate in certain zoning districts. Testing labs will be permitted where other medical labs are allowed. Locations will also be subject to minimum separation requirements from other uses such as 600 feet away from K-12 schools and residential zones.

A commercial cannabis permit is required prior to opening any cannabis business in Pasadena. Furthermore, a commercial cannabis license issued by the State is also required prior to opening. The ordinance permitting commercial cannabis activity can be found here: [shorturl.at/tuX01](http://shorturl.at/tuX01).

## 710 tunnel is only 'mostly dead'

By SARAH GAVIT  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

As described by Miracle Max (Billy Crystal) in the movie *The Princess Bride*, there is a difference between being *mostly dead* and *all dead*. Mostly dead is still slightly alive. There's no way better to describe the 710 tunnel project.

Many think the tunnel alternatives were killed when in May of last year LA Metro withdrew funding for them. While lack of immediate funding is a great impediment to tunnel survival, the threat still looms, and the battle is not yet won.

Metro has yet to release the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) or to select the Preferred Alternative. According to Metro staff, this is expected "sometime in 2018." While we expect the Transportation System Management /Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) alternative, which focuses on street improvements and traffic control, to be selected for implementation, language in Caltrans' Record of Decision may ultimately decide if the tunnel alternatives could still be selected at a later time.

This is because an EIR analysis typically has a five-to-eight-year shelf-life. If the EIR tunnel analysis is certified by Caltrans, the tunnel alternatives could still be implemented, assuming funding is found during that shelf-life period.

The WPRA is working with allied organizations to devise a means to prevent this from happening.

Meanwhile, the LA Superior Court rejected a petition brought by the city of Rosemead asking the court to annul the Metro Board's decision to not fund the tunnel alternatives. Rosemead argued that laws were violated when Metro announced the TSM/TDM alternative as the locally preferred alternative and pulled funding from the tunnel(s) before the Final EIR was approved by Caltrans. The key reason for the ruling was that the state's environmental analyses and project funding functions are separate processes.

For now, the WPRA continues to provide responses to recently released supplemental documents that are required for Caltrans to close out the EIR. These include the Findings of Adverse Effects and Supplemental Draft

EIR, which provide further analysis of the impacts to historical properties. These documents finally acknowledge that the tunnel alternative will result in adverse effects to historic properties — some very large effects to such properties as the Sequoyah School, Ambassador Auditorium and Markham Place Historic District. Unfortunately, these analyses are still grossly deficient in addressing major concerns such as soil subsidence, breakdowns of tunnel boring machines, vibration impacts, blasting and noise.

We can only conclude that *mostly dead* remains an unsatisfactory state of being.

## Briefly: Local results of June 5 primary election

**Measure AA:** "Shall the Pasadena City Charter be amended consistent with state law with regards to election cycles."

■ Yes: 82.29% (13,590 votes)

■ No: 17.71% (2,925 votes)

**Measure BB:** "Shall the Pasadena City Charter be amended consistent with state voting cycles."

■ Yes: 84.28% (21,865 votes)

■ No: 15.72% (4,078 votes)

**Measure CC:** "Shall an ordinance be adopted to allow a limited number of commercial cannabis businesses to operate in the City?"

■ Yes: 59.90% (10,134 votes)

■ No: 40.10% (6,784 votes)

**Measure DD:** "Shall the City tax cannabis (marijuana) businesses"

■ Yes: 75.49% (12,529 votes)

■ No: 24.51% (4,067 votes)

**Pasadena Area Community College District Governing Board Member, Trustee Area No. 1**

■ Sandra Chen Lau: 59.05% (5,290 votes)

■ Ross S. Selvidge: 40.95% (3,669 votes)

**Pasadena Area Community College District Governing Board Member, Trustee Area No. 3**

■ Berlinda J. Brown: 82.15% (3,351 votes)

■ Roger Eric Martinez: 17.85% (728 votes)



## BRIEFS

## Town hall focuses on traffic, crime

BY NANCY WALKER  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

South Orange Grove/District 6-area neighbors gathered at the Tournament House on April 26 for District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison's Town Hall meeting. The City's Senior Department of Transportation planner Rich Dilluvio opened the meeting with a report on potential Orange Grove traffic improvements, which include the following recommendations for intersections with South Orange Grove Boulevard and:

- W. California Boulevard: remove the pedestrian island for crossing and construct a "bulb-out" to slow the cars down when turning onto California
- W. Bellevue and Congress Place: square off the gutter pan (move existing curb) to increase visibility of pedestrians
- W. Green Street: restripe (at no cost to the City)

Dilluvio reminded those attending that these ideas came from meetings with residents of Orange Grove who participated in the Complete Streets process, which involves eight steps: involve the community, identify problems, collect data, develop and analyze options, develop solutions, survey residents, implement actions, and monitor and, if needed, adjust effects.

Following the report on traffic, Interim Police Chief John Perez and Police Lt. Pete Hetteema made a brief presentation on crime in the area. They strongly stressed accountability on their part and working with the neighborhoods. In light of our recent crime problems, the following observations were especially relevant:

- Crime rates are down across the city, except in our area, where there has been a 22% increase from 2016-2017
- From January to March of this year, there have been 258 alarm calls and 8 burglaries in our area

## The Bridge Party tradition continues; join the fun

By Sue Mossman  
Executive Director  
Pasadena Heritage

Our signature bi-annual outdoor party and fundraiser on the historic Colorado Street Bridge will be held on Saturday, July 14. Everyone's invited to come out for an evening of live music, dancing, food and drinks, children's activities, vintage cars and more. Old favorites will return, but the party will also feature new musical talent, some new restaurant offerings and new activities in the kids' zone.

For tickets and more information, visit the Pasadena Heritage website ([pasadenaheritage.org](http://pasadenaheritage.org)) or call (626) 441-6333 for a special invitation featuring artwork by Kenton Nelson. We encourage you to support historic preservation and have a wonderful summer night with us.

### Bridge fencing update

City Council approved the recommendations of the Colorado Street Bridge Task Force and allocated funds to hire a consulting firm to design new fencing options, the only solution that is likely to truly reduce suicide attempts from the bridge. In the meantime the temporary barriers around the seating bays will stay in place. Design options will be presented to the public for review and comment when available later this year.

### First draft anti-mansionization guidelines revealed

The City's Planning Department has drafted new standards for new single-family homes and major additions that are not in Landmark



Districts or subject to the Hillside Ordinance or special Hastings Ranch guidelines. The first draft of these anti-mansionization guidelines were presented to the Planning Commission in May, and Pasadena Heritage agreed with much of the document. We offered some comments we think would improve and strengthen the policies. We look forward to reviewing an updated draft this summer. New construction and major remodels will receive more thorough staff review, and design guidelines are designed to make them more compatible with existing neighborhood character.

### Caltech bungalow court saved

The seven-building bungalow court at the corner of Wilson Avenue and E. Del Mar Boulevard has survived its move to another location within the Caltech Campus, at Catalina Avenue and San Pasqual Street, to make way for a new classroom and laboratory building. We appreciate the careful planning and design work that has saved the court and spells out its restoration on its new site.



It's party time on the bridge once more. This image recalls a past bridge party and suggests how much fun in the sun (and into the evening) you can have on the bridge. *For tickets and more information, visit the Pasadena Heritage website ([pasadenaheritage.org](http://pasadenaheritage.org)) or call (626) 441-6333.*





Following 13 years of hearings, meetings, hope and hard work, the new Habitat for Humanity Desiderio Project, on the eastern floor of the Arroyo Seco immediately south of the Colorado Street Bridge, held its official grand opening on Saturday, June 9. The weekend dedication ceremony marked the end of a long journey for San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity and the City of Pasadena and the beginning of new ones for nine fortunate families who have moved into craftsman-style-inspired homes they themselves helped to build. Each of the families invested about 500 hours of sweat equity toward the purchase price of their new homes. Three of the nine affordable bungalow courtyard residences will now be home to military veterans and their families. Work on the project started in April 2016 after the City and the U.S. Army demolished most of the structures on the property that used to be the Desiderio Army Reserve Center at Westminster Drive. (Source: *Pasadena Now*) (Photo by Chuck Hudson)

## Swirl over Desiderio restroom continues, but is unfunded for FY 2019

BY AVRAM GOLD  
VICE PRESIDENT, WPRA

*[Editor's Note: On June 18, City Council approved a balanced \$815 million budget for fiscal year 2019. The restroom continues to be an unfunded capital improvement.]*

**O**n May 8, 2018, at a public hearing at Pasadena City Hall, the Design Commission reviewed a call for review for construction of a new restroom and storage building for the Desiderio Neighborhood Park at 10 N. Arroyo Blvd. The Commission approved the future construction of the restroom/storage building, with six additional design conditions and changes.

That decision was appealed by the Vista Del Arroyo Bungalows Home Owner's Association. The appeal, which hopes to block the restroom construction, addressed and restated the concerns that had been brought up in neighborhood meetings and commission hearings ever since an affordable housing option became the selected development project for Habitat for Humanity.

Initially, the open space adjacent to the recently completed Habitat craftsman bungalows was planned as a passive park, an extension of the natural arroyo with no need for a restroom/storage facility. However, through the course of planning the concept changed from a natural setting to a neighborhood park and playground. Consequently, a public restroom could be included within that space, and on October 27, 2014, the City Council approved the development of the Desiderio Neighborhood Park and included provisions for the future construction of a restroom building.

The appeal points out the project's original intention was changed, that the design of the restroom/storage facility is not compatible with surrounding historic resources and neighborhoods including the historic Colorado Street Bridge, the facility is too large in size and footprint and is located in the wrong place on the site, and that the facility will attract criminal activity and create possible safety issues for the park visitors and

surrounding neighborhoods including the Habitat for Humanity homes.

At the June 4 City Council meeting, Steve Madison, District 6 council member, moved for another review of the restroom project with the intention of deferring the design and planning process for the park's public restroom. Council member Victor Gordo seconded the motion. Seven speakers spoke before the council asking that, at the very least, the facility be scaled down and moved away from Arroyo Boulevard to an area less conspicuous. Gordo specifically advised Staff to address those issues. The planners will return to the City Council with new recommendations.



Artist's rendering of a public restroom that some are pressing to be built in the Desiderio Neighborhood Park.



# Pasadena honors recipients of 2018 preservation awards

BY PHYLLIS MUELLER  
MEMBER, HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**O**n May 24, the City of Pasadena's Historic Preservation Commission, as part of National Trust Preservation Month, held a well-attended celebration at the Fowler Garden (on the Ambassador Garden campus) to honor nine projects that benefitted the city's historic preservation efforts. The six winning properties located in west Pasadena are:

- **Rose Bowl Stadium** – built in 1922 and on the National Register; renovated over six years
- **294 South Grand Ave.** – home restoration and preservation; a 30 year work of love, both interior and exterior, including a new roof, copper gutters, and replacement wood shutters
- **414 Mooresque Dr.** – restoration and preservation of 1955 home, including a new roof and deck
- **781 Prospect Blvd.** – restoration of the cultural landscape in front of this landmark house



Under the home restoration and preservation category, this home at 294 S. Grand Ave. (Tudor-style 1907) won a 2018 Historic Preservation award.

- **Tempietto Temple, 300 West Green St.** – relocation and reconstruction (within the Ambassador Gardens' campus) of a replica of Rome's Tempietto, a commemorative martyrium on the site where St. Peter is said to have been crucified. The replica was built by EDAW, an international landscape architecture, urban and

environmental design firm, now owned by engineering conglomerate AECOM.

- **John K. Van de Kamp (formerly La Loma) Bridge** – first built in 1898 and again in 1913, a City-funded seismic retrofit and reconstruction, which preserved its historic nature on the National Register.

## City on brink of solving 'mansionization challenge

BY AVRAM GOLD  
VICE PRESIDENT, WPRA

**I**n 2015, City Council adopted a General Plan that included Policy # 22.1: "Discourage mansionization by requiring building scale and massing that is compatible with existing development in single-family residential neighborhoods."

Since then we've seen a number of new houses and significant remodels that have motivated Pasadena residents to voice greater concerns about the size, scale, massing, on-site location, design and/or style of houses.

Currently, single-family residential projects are reviewed through the plan-check process, which is ministerial; meaning the projects are reviewed by City Staff for compliance with the City Municipal Zoning Codes. No public notification process, hearing, or discretionary action can be taken as long as the project is in compliance with all adopted standards. Furthermore, there are no architectural design standards currently applied to single-family houses located outside

of a Hillside Overlay District, the Lower Hastings Ranch neighborhood or a Landmark District. This current process has allowed neighborhood-incompatible single-family houses to be built which don't fit in and are examples of mansionization.

Consequently, City Council directed Planning Staff to develop a strategy to address mansionization in three phases that correspond to three geographic areas: Lower Hastings Ranch, the Hillside Overlay districts, and all other single-family residential zones.

Eight citywide meetings were held throughout Pasadena in 2015, with approximately 400 residents attending one or more meetings. The majority of the comments generally focused on design guidelines and style incompatibility, which also included scale, privacy and view obstruction, parking and neighborhood notification through the plan-check process.

The City then contracted the design firm, John Kaliski Architects, to assist in the development of appropriate design guidelines

for single-family residences. These guidelines were presented in May of this year to the Planning Commission with the proviso that City staff would consider a zoning code amendment that would create an expanded design-review process for new single-family homes, second-floor editions of any size, and substantial alterations or remodeling of the existing single-family houses.

These projects would be subject to discretionary review before a Hearing Officer with public notification. Hearing Officer decisions are appealable to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Moreover, these projects would be reviewed for their compatibility with the adopted design guidelines and development standards similar to the existing Certificate of Appropriateness process.

Upon receiving the Planning Commission's comments and recommendations, Planning Staff will compose the final draft of the design guidelines and present them to the Planning Commission.

## City strengthens tree protection ordinances

City Council recently unanimously approved modifications to the City's Tree Ordinance that will increase penalties for developers, building owners or residents who remove protected trees from their properties. The ordinance's wording was also modified to reflect a higher misdemeanor fine. The ordinance also authorized the City Manager to prepare and update its tree protection guidelines and tree replacement matrix, the formula for the replacement of illegally removed trees.

At least one community member, Nina Chomsky, president of the Linda Vista-Allendale Association, thought the penalties were still not stiff enough. "If speculative realtors or developers are not deterred or punished, they will just pay the fines," said Chomsky, "because they're going to make much more money from what they have put up in place of those trees. The fines, \$250, \$5,000, are meaningless. Why aren't we getting three times the replaced value of those trees? I don't see punishment here, and I don't see deterrence here."

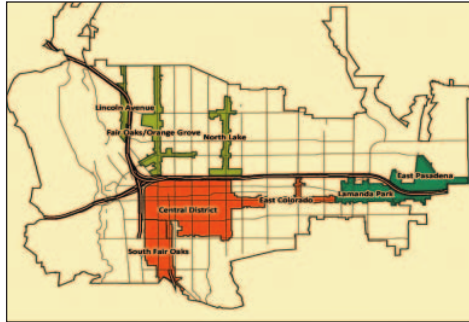
City Attorney Michele Bagneris noted that tree removal could be prosecuted as a criminal misdemeanor, as well as be slapped with civil and administrative violations. Fines have been increased to \$5,000, said Bagneris, or the full amount of the replacement value of the removed tree or trees, whichever amount is greater.

The ordinance states, in part, that "Any permit or approval which will result in injury to or removal of a mature, landmark, landmark-eligible, native or specimen tree protected under this chapter shall be denied unless there is a public benefit, or a public health, safety or welfare benefit, to the injury or removal that outweighs the protection of the specific tree

According to the ordinance, developers may request to pay a fee instead of planting on site up to 50% of the required number of replacement trees. The fee would be 100 percent of the appraised value of the tree that cannot be replaced.

Source: *Pasadena Now*

## On the WPRA land-use watch list



### Update of specific plans

Revising and updating the eight specific plans to be in conformance and consistent with the General Plan adopted in 2015. Specific plans of interest to residents of the WPRA service area include: S. Fair Oaks and Central District specific plans. For more: <https://bit.ly/2twlbyq>



### Civic Center

The Task Force presented its final report to City Council in June. To view its recommendations: <https://bit.ly/2lutB5W>. City Council, however, found it lacking and referred it to City staff for alternative recommendations, since the Task Force was unable to arrive at a consensus. The WPRA published a special Neighborhood Update featuring its point of view, which expressed disappointment in the Task Force's conclusions, such as they were.



### Mansionization

Public workshops were conducted in the spring in preparation to craft the last phase of anti-mansionization for non-hillside and non-landmark/historic district protected residential areas. A consultant has been retained by the City's Planning Dept. to devise standards for neighborhood compatibility. Proposed design guidelines and design review process were presented to Planning Commission on May 23.



### Desiderio Neighborhood Park public restroom

After a hearing at the Design Commission, neighbors appealed the decision to City Council. Council unanimously approved a consolidated design review of the disputed public restroom at 10 N. Arroyo Blvd. Over the recent course of events, the design for the restroom has been modified to reflect a more "arts and crafts" design sensibility.



### New homes adjacent to Desiderio Park

The new Habitat for Humanity homes are complete and the nine families — three of who are veterans — are now moving into the homes. The dedication occurred June 9 for the 13-year long project, built on the land upon which the Army Reserve Center once stood. The homes are adjacent to the new Desiderio Neighborhood Park (please see above).



### Reducing allowable building capacity

City Council heard in June continued a potential ordinance that would have limited building heights, a response to State ordinances that have become challenging for local jurisdictions. As developments have become larger due to concessions, it has become more difficult to find ways to preserve Pasadena's scale and context.



# Meeting, greeting, eating and housing take center stage

STORY BY JUSTIN CHAPMAN,  
SECRETARY, WPRA

PHOTOS BY CHUCK HUDSON,  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

The West Pasadena Residents' Association (WPRA) held its 56th annual membership meeting on May 2 at Westridge School. About 200 people attended the event, entitled "Housing the Character of Our Neighborhoods."

During the opening reception, WPRA members enjoyed food and refreshments from Los Tacos. More than a dozen local organizations set up exhibits, including Arlington Garden, Arroyo Seco Foundation, Arroyo & Foothills Conservancy, ArtCenter College of Design, Day One, Kidspace Children's Museum, La Casita Foundation, No 710 Freeway Fighters, Old Pasadena Management District, Pasadena Heritage, Pasadena Fire Department, Pasadena Museum of History and the Pasadena Police Department.

The meeting was called to order by outgoing WPRA President Kenyon Harbison, who introduced special guests in attendance, including Teresa Lamb-Simpson, field representative for U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff; Terry Tornek, mayor of Pasadena; Steve Mermell, city manager of Pasadena; Catherine Del Rosario, district director for State Assemblymember Chris Holden; and Dominick Correy, district representative for State Sen. Anthony Portantino.





Harbison also led the business portion of the meeting: the election of the new WPRA officers and board directors for the 2018-19 year. Members in attendance unanimously approved the proposed slate, which included Dan Beal as president, Avram Gold as vice president, Justin Chapman as secretary, Blaine Cavena as treasurer, and Bill Christian, Evan Davis, Vince Farhat, Sarah Gavit, Ken Grobecker, Mic Hansen, Kenyon Harbison, Joan Hearst, Chuck Hudson, Susan Kinney, Audrey O'Kelley, Priscilla Taylor, Bill Urban, Nancy Walker and Linda Zinn as board directors.

Harbison then invited incoming WPRA President Dan Beal to the podium.

"The WPRA is at its best when it harnesses the energy, knowledge, and dedication not only our board but of our members," said Beal. "We can't demand that nothing change. Change is inevitable and change is coming. But the scope and type of changes we can make are within our power to influence. What we all call 'the Pasadena Way,' the tradition of civil civic engagement, is increasingly being forced into one-size-fits-all molds. There are many upcoming challenges as we strive to preserve, protect, and enhance the character and quality of life in west Pasadena."

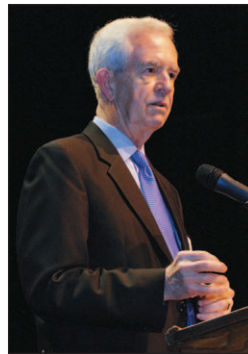
Mayor Terry Tornek then delivered his remarks, reminding Pasadena residents to vote on four city ballot initiatives in the June 5 election covering marijuana, election schedules, and other issues. He also provided an update on the One Arroyo project.

"Last year when I attended this meeting, I introduced a presentation by the Arroyo Advisory Group," he said. "Next month, the City Council will receive its final report, and it's our hope that by next year there will be recommended demonstration projects that will be funded and underway. If you measure that in city time, that's operating at warp speed."

Bill Urban then presented a community service award and commemorative gift to outgoing WPRA President Kenyon Harbison. Urban also presented a community service award to former WPRA president and Advisory Council member Fred Zepeda.



Top: Outgoing President Kenyon Harbison shows proper respect as the colors are presented by the Blair High School JROTC Color Guard, and, to the left, Kenyon receives from Bill Urban a symbolic gavel and gift for his two years of service as president.



Far left: Kenyon Harbison served as master of ceremonies and introduced (near left) incoming President Dan Beal.

Bottom left: Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek reminded all to vote in the approaching city election. Below, WPRA Land Use chair Mic Hansen chats with City Manager, center, Steve Mermell and Mayor Terry Tornek.



# Housing, planning experts react to state threat to local control

*Continued from page 1*

**Hansen: Do you think these bills will favorably affect affordable housing supply?**

■ **Huang:** The bills are not targeted toward affordable housing; rather, they're targeted toward building more housing of all income levels. But in Pasadena, we have an inclusionary housing ordinance that requires 15% of units in a multifamily development of 10 units or more to be set aside for affordable. So, indirectly, more housing that's subject to our inclusionary ordinance would produce more affordable housing.

**Hansen: What are your thoughts on this one-size-fits-all position that the state has taken, especially for cities like Pasadena?**

■ **Reyes:** I think City Council has done a good job. On April 9, Council gave direct staff to start working in a different way. Previously, as we looked at (state) bills coming forward, we would write opposition letters (to the state legislature) if we felt that the bills weren't in keeping with Pasadena's policies. Now, we will try to work with legislators to encourage carve-outs for cities like Pasadena.

■ **Huang:** These statewide laws definitely tend to be applied evenly across the entire state. It's similar to when redevelopment was dissolved. Although Pasadena was a very effective redevelopment agency, when the state ended redevelopment, all of the redevelopment agencies were shut down.

**Hansen: Do you think our historic neighborhoods are in jeopardy because of all that is coming our way?**

■ **Mossman:** Absolutely. I think we've seen it in the growing number of mansionization questions and issues that have come up, where people are buying smaller or more modest houses and enlarging them, flipping them, looking to make a quick profit, because that's the way things work. If we look at the development along Walnut, for example, where 15 years ago there was a vision that we'd have some commercial development, maybe a little bit of housing, and today we have a canyon of mega housing projects in a range of design and quality. It's worth nothing, however, that the LA Conservancy is doing an economic benefits study throughout Los Angeles to measure the benefits of historic preservation on economic vitality of communities. I'm hoping Pasadena can be included. It would allow us to demonstrate the value of being an economic generator; not a detractor from economic development, but a contributor to economic development. Maybe in the broad scheme of things, it's not going to produce one single housing unit, but it could be a balance that preservation is a good thing and benefits communities and benefits the state's economics on a different measuring stick.

**Hansen: Has the development we've seeing over the last five or so improved Pasadena's affordable housing situation? Has the inclusionary housing ordinance added to the inventory of affordable housing?**

■ **Huang:** The way it [inclusionary housing ordinance] works is if developers are going to build a multifamily building — either apartments or condominiums with 10 units or more — they need to set aside 15% of the units as affordable. The developers have an option to pay a fee in lieu of building those units on- or off-site. The fee is significant. The inclusionary ordinance during this recent building up-cycle has been producing about 40 to 60 units of affordable housing every year. Since the ordinance was adopted in 2006, developers have created about 540 affordable units and paid [to the City] about \$20 million in lieu of creating affordable units. However, there is a misconception that the inclusionary housing ordinance provides additional benefits to the developer in of itself. In fact, it doesn't permit more height or density or reduced parking. However, it can, when coupled with the state's density bonus, provide development benefits such as additional height and density or reduced parking.

*Continued on page 11*



More than 200 area residents attended the May 2 WPRA annual meeting. While the event provided ample time to meet, greet and eat, center stage went to a panel of housing and planning experts who, led by panel moderator, Mic Hansen, explored how significant recent state legislation is impacting local planning initiatives. (Photo by Chuck Hudson)



**Hansen: There's so much multi-family housing going up. What is the effect on single-family neighborhoods, especially historic ones?**

- **Mossman:** The proliferation of multi-family housing is probably not directly impacting our single-family neighborhoods as much as it would have 25 or 30 years ago. But there's still a clash of high- and low-density housing. We could have done a better job of buffering, transitioning and creating a balance them in single-family neighborhoods.

**Hansen: What are we doing to address the secondary effects of all this development, such as traffic and increased strain on city services, infrastructure, and open space?**

- **Reyes:** Since the growth initiative in the late 80s, our policies have been to protect and preserve single-family neighborhoods. One popular idea that's starting to catch on is to encourage people to get out of their cars. Our plan was to permit new higher density development in and around Gold Line Metro Rail stations, but with fewer parking spaces. This idea, which was included in the General Plan, is that fewer parking spaces should translate into fewer cars, which should translate into less traffic. One twist on this idea is to unbundle parking, which permits the property owner or developer to sell the parking spaces separately. Where this is being done in Los Angeles, the market is dictating value of the parking spaces. Some parking spaces have become somewhat expensive. However, many folks simply don't want to pay for parking. Many millennials, for example, seem quite happy without a car, deferring to Uber, Lyft, Zipcars, you name it, or the increasingly feasible option of living in and around a Gold Line station or other high-density public transportation hub. However, we're not expecting current residents to get out of their cars. From where many of us live today, we're probably going to need to drive to the grocery store, to entertainment or to run errands.
- **Huang:** Also, when developers pay for their building permits, they also have to pay impact fees to cover things like parks and schools and arts and sewers and those kinds of secondary effects.
- **Reyes:** One of the many complaints we get is those fees are much higher than in most surrounding communities, but it's necessary. Our city has an aging infrastructure, and those fees are necessary.
- **Hansen:** Are you satisfied with the Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance (ADUs or "granny flats") ordinance and the proposed mansionization rules?
- **Reyes:** At least from a staff perspective, we are very happy with what has been passed and proposed because it preserves, as much as is possible given the state laws, local control.
- **Hansen:** What effect do you think the new ADU ordinance is going to have on the historic districts?
- **Mossman:** The ADU ordinance that Pasadena passed — although it's a compromise — is much, much stronger than when it started out. Again, if the state laws don't preclude all local control of ADUs, we shouldn't see an enormous proliferation of ADUs, at least immediately. After all, they are going to be costly to build. Also, property owners will need to consider carefully whether they can recoup that investment, assuming the unit will become a rental property. But I fear that the gradual erosion of the look and feel of our single-family neighborhoods will be a consequence.
- **Hansen:** Do you think ADUs will materially ease the affordable housing shortage?
- **Huang:** Theoretically, they can make a meaningful contribution. The reality is the cost. An ADU could cost from between \$50,000 to \$150,000 to build. Los Angeles County estimates it has as many as 50,000 illegal garage conversions. How many illegal garage conversions are there in Pasadena? Nobody knows, but we do know they exist. This is a very difficult problem, especially because some of them create a life-safety issue. From time to time, residents of these illegal units are injured or perish because of electrical fires, structural failures or carbon monoxide poisoning. We hope state laws and our ordinance will provide a means to bring these illegal garage conversions to code. Also, let's not forget that Pasadena has dozens and dozens of pre-existing, legal, non-conforming ADUs.

- **Hansen:** What can the community do to participate in the process and make their voices heard?
- **Reyes:** We can't underestimate the influence and power of a well-respected group, such as the WPRA, to stand up at City Council or the Planning Commission meeting or even meet with staff and say, "We represent this many people, and this is our position." This idea of community participation is not found in many cities. In Pasadena, however, public participation is valued and important in creating policy. That is something we continually remind our staff.
- **Hansen:** If you could predict one trend in your area for the next five years in terms of housing and community character, what would that be?
- **Huang:** Unless there is some significant improvement to the housing crisis, we're going to continue to see more bills coming down from the state and ballot measures to address this issue. Unfortunately, these are often blunt instruments. On the other hand, if we don't solve the affordably housing situation, I think we'll continue to see increasing homelessness, decreasing school population, more families moving away, and less cultural and racial diversity.
- **Mossman:** My concern is that what we, as preservationists, have fought to preserve will continually be nibbled at from around the edges to the point where the magic that is Pasadena is threatened. It's like being nibbled to death by ducks. It's not necessarily one catastrophic earthquake. It's consistent erosion of community character that gradually approaches a breaking point. It's hard to see it, it's hard to stop it. It's incremental, and it's something that's happening every day in some place.
- **Reyes:** First, the retail market is changing. After all, every spot in Old Pasadena can't be a restaurant. We have to figure out what the brick-and-mortar environment needs to continue to attract more businesses to the city. Second, has to do with commercial office space. Very little commercial office space is being built in many cities. Instead, we're seeing growth of creative (open) office space or telecommuting space, but folks are no longer building the office space and then building the housing for those employees.

## BRIEFS

## Holden nominates Seifert to represent LA River/Arroyo Seco working group

State Assemblymember Chris Holden (D-41) has nominated Thomas D. Seifert to represent the Arroyo Seco tributary on the newly established Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group. The nomination was sent after California State Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon and the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy expanded the nomination process for the working group to include the 41st Assembly District, even though the Arroyo Seco Tributary was left out of the original legislation that created it.

## Stand up, speak up

*Continued from page 2*

important conversation. And, as always, we'll keep you informed along the way.

These examples, of course, are just two of many challenges. Others include pulling the life-support system on the not-quite-dead 710 tunnel proposal, and crafting what to do instead; better managing the potentially disruptive trends of mansionization and auxiliary dwelling units; rationalizing the number of major displacement events at and around the Rose Bowl Stadium; deflecting threats and exploring opportunities in the Arroyo Seco; cracking the fiscal code to right the City's and Pasadena Unified School District's upside down budgets; finding ways to reduce homelessness, crime and traffic; and ending Caltrans' abysmal record as property manager.

To navigate through this maze of critical issues, we need sound ideas and widespread collaboration. And if I've left out an issue that's near and dear to you, speak up. Come to our monthly meetings. Email works too. Help us understand that issue and how we might address it. We encourage your questions, your input and your opinions, and we will do our best to respond to and represent them.

## Arroyo Seco tributary finally getting its long over-due attention

By TOM SEIFERT, MEMBER,  
UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AND  
TRIBUTARIES WORKING GROUP  
AND  
TIMOTHY BRICK, CHAIR AND  
MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
ARROYO SECO FOUNDATION

The past few years have seen increased attention paid to our Arroyo Seco due in large part to Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek's formation of the Arroyo Advisory Group in late 2016. This group, along with its consultants, has looked at all aspects of Pasadena's One Arroyo and plans to deliver its final report to City Council in the next few months.

Another major development, which involves all of the Arroyo from the head waters to the confluence, is SB-1126, which was introduced in June by State Sen. Anthony Portantino (D-25). For far too long, the Arroyo Seco has been excluded from the planning and legislation supporting the Los Angeles River and its major tributaries.

This legislation will ensure that the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group, established by legislation last year, will truly encompass all of the major tributaries in the upper Los Angeles River by including the Arroyo Seco tributary.

The Arroyo Seco, which has been called the "most celebrated canyon in Southern California," flows from the Angeles National Forest through the communities of Pasadena, Altadena, La Cañada Flintridge, South Pasadena and northeast Los Angeles to join the LA River near downtown Los Angeles.

Historically, it has been one of the gems of the Upper LA River system because it is the first connecting link between the San Gabriel Mountains and the LA River. This is the stream whose occasional flooding determined the siting of the original pueblo Los Angeles in 1781. The Arroyo Seco, which contains the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Rose Bowl Stadium and other historic sites, has played an important role in water resources, flood management, history and culture in Southern California.

The California Watershed Protection and Restoration Act (aka the Wayne Watershed

Act) designated the Arroyo Seco one of 10 model watersheds 15 years ago. The urban portion of the Arroyo from the mountains to downtown Los Angeles is currently the subject of an ongoing U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ecosystem Restoration Study. The Arroyo Seco Watershed has also been the beneficiary of a State of California-supported watershed management plan that should serve as the basis for future planning in the Arroyo Seco region of the Upper Los Angeles River.

To leave the Arroyo Seco out of the "Upper LA River and Tributaries Working Group" would create a serious gap in Los Angeles River planning and ignore the critical importance of the Arroyo Seco. Furthermore it would undermine the collaborative watershed-wide planning process that the Upper LA River and Tributaries Working Group should engage in.

We are pleased that this important legislation would remedy that.

## City replacing 100-year old water main

The City has begun installation of a new 8-inch diameter water mainline on Avenue 64 between Colorado Boulevard and Church Street. It should be completed by the end of August.

The work includes replacing all the fire hydrants and connecting individual water services to the new water main. The pipeline will increase the overall reliability and quality of water service. The current water main, which is being replaced, was initially installed in 1921 and then updated in 1926. Each property owner along the route will be kept informed if their water must be shut off as the project progresses.

*Comments, questions or concerns should be addressed to the PWP Project Manager Adolfo Vargas at (626) 744-4331 or [avargas@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:avargas@cityofpasadena.net)*



# Japanese Garden nears completion of final phase

**M**ore than 80 years ago Japanese immigrant Kinzuchi Fujii created a Japanese-style garden in Pasadena for his wealthy clients, Ellamae and Charles Storrier Stearns. The unique stroll garden took almost seven years to complete. Just several months later, World War II broke out and Fujii was sent to an internment camp. In the next seven years Ellamae and Charles both died.

In 1950 local art and antique dealer, Gamelia Haddad Poulsen, acquired the entire Storrier Stearns estate at a probate auction. Two years later her newly married son Jim, and his wife Connie, took up residence on the property “roughing it” for three months living in the exquisite, but unimproved teahouse.

They lived in other quarters on the property for three years — time to etch the garden’s design into their memories: its pathways, its ponds, its trees and plants. During that time Poulsen sold off most of the estate, keeping only the Japanese garden and space to build a house for herself, where she lived until her death in 1985. Tragically, Caltrans used eminent domain to seize part of the property in 1976 for the ill-fated extension of the 710 freeway. Expecting the garden to be destroyed, Mrs. Poulsen ceased its maintenance.

The property that Jim and Connie inherited had suffered a serious decline. Its restoration began in 2005, under the direction of landscape designer, Takeo Uesugi, FASLA.

All the major projects were completed at the time of Uesugi’s death in 2016.

But one project remained: the restoration of the path that once crossed over the hill above the waterfall. Today, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, that project is almost completed. The path not only reconnects two sides of the garden, but revives those memories for its present residents of the garden they knew over 50 years ago.

The Storrier-Stearns Japanese Garden is located at 270 Arlington Dr., directly across the street from Arlington Garden.

**Deanie Nyman Photography**





BRIEFS

# What do Jackie, Keith and Brandi have in common?

BY BILL URBAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

Rose Bowl Legacy Foundation has plans for two more commemorative statues, in addition to the Jackie Robinson statue, which was dedicated late last year.

The statues are part of the foundation's effort to commemorate Rose Bowl's historical heritage, while raising private funds for stadium improvements.

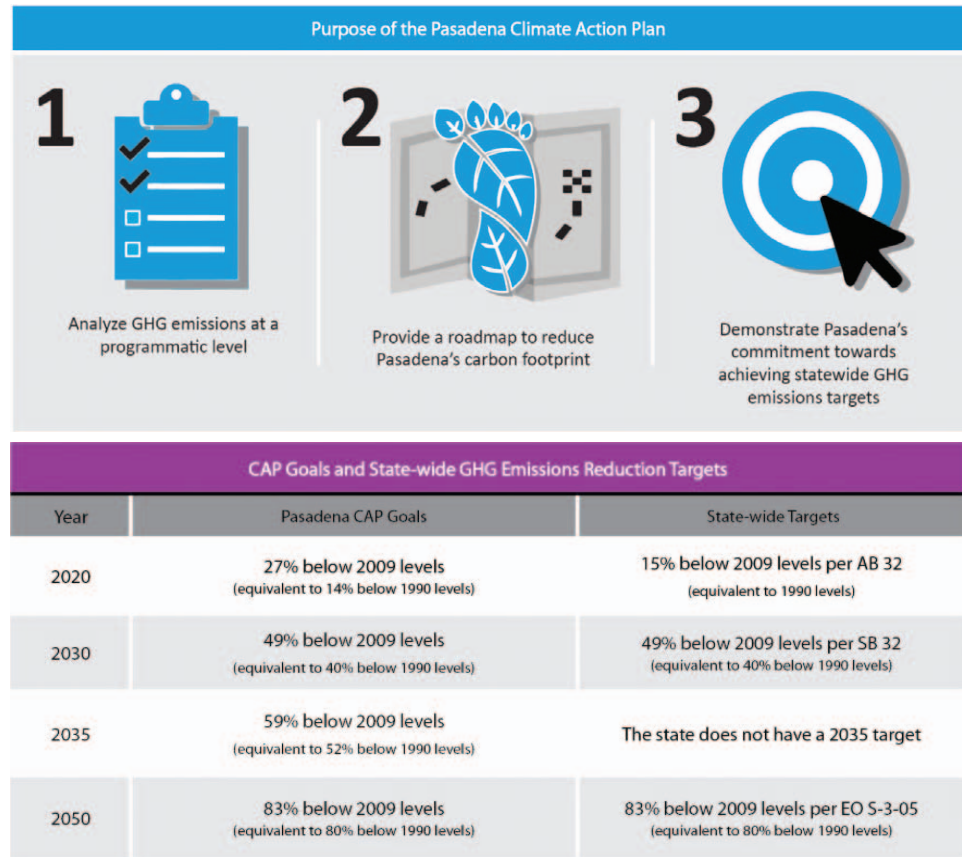
One of the planned statues will depict Keith Jackson, the sportscaster who was the author of the "Granddaddy of Them All" nickname. Jackson was commentator for many of the biggest events held at the Rose Bowl, the Olympic Games, Wide World of Sports, the first season of Monday Night Football and more. Over the course of 50 years, Keith called more Rose Bowl games than any broadcaster in history.

Although placement is still under review, the current proposal is to install the Jackson statue inside of the Rose Plaza, just outside of stadium Gate A.

A third statue will depict Brandi Chastain in a moment of elation at the Rose Bowl Stadium. She was caught by the camera as she dropped to her knees and ripped off her jersey following her successful game-winning penalty kick that capped the 1999 USA Women's National Soccer Team effort to win the World Cup.

The Rose Bowl Operating Company has strict guidelines about commemorative statue subject, design, and placement.

Each statue must have an association with the Rose Bowl Stadium, and thus Pasadena.



## City acts to meet state climate goal

BY BILL CHRISTIAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

Reaching California's statewide aspirational goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to levels 80% below those prevailing in 1990 by 2050 will be difficult. Even the interim goal of Pasadena's Climate Action Plan (CAP), adopted by City Council in March, relies on a comprehensive array of local measures to meet the City's goal of reducing greenhouse gases 59% below 1990 levels by 2035. The 100-page CAP includes, among five core strategies and 27 detailed measures, reduced energy use in the transportation and building sectors, water conservation, urban greening and waste reduction.

Building on Pasadena's existing climate policies and investments across multiple departments, the plan also relies on instituting expanded or new City programs and on private voluntary actions -- rather than regulatory mandates -- to reach its goals. As Mayor Terry Tornek has noted, meeting the plan goal will be challenging:

"I think [the CAP is] very ambitious, particularly since right now the biggest reductions are attributable to existing

building inventories and making them more efficient and also significantly boosting transit ridership," Tornek said. "I think both of those are somewhat unpredictable, and I think they should be ambitious, and I think it's appropriately ambitious."

The Plan calls for stringent energy use standards for new construction, retrofits of existing structures, and significant reductions in single occupant vehicle use, with greater attention to transit, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. The CAP also calls for planting more trees, the use of recycled water, and collaboration with the non-profit sector to help achieve goals.

Most of the strategies are configured to produce results that are measurable, and the City's Environmental Advisory Commission will be tasked to monitor and report on performance of activities under the CAP.

Electricity is the one significant sector that is not expressly addressed in the Plan. However, Pasadena Water and Power is expected to produce an updated Integrated Resource Plan that will define how the utility will reduce dependence on fossil fuel generation and contribute to the City's climate change goals.



# Zoning in on South Orange Grove avenue

BY KIRK MYERS  
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST  
PASADENA MUSEUM OF HISTORY

**P**asadena asks no better name than that of The City of Homes.” That sentiment, expressed in a book about the 1907 Tournament of Roses, characterized how Pasadena promoted itself early in the 20th century.

The identity of Pasadena as primarily a city of single-family homes was a factor in the contentious struggle in the 1940s to rezone South Orange Grove for apartments. The *Los Angeles Herald Express* described the battle as a “civil war,” and heated rhetoric was reported in the newspapers.

Eugene Rouse, president of the Town Hall discussion group, addressed the Pasadena Planning Commission early in 1942:

“This is a city of homes,” Rouse exclaimed, his voice rising emotionally. “We who live on Orange Grove avenue don’t want them jammed in. I left Chicago because there were too many people there. Let’s not kid ourselves

that putting in apartment houses is going to beautify Orange Grove avenue or take us back to the good old days.” (*Los Angeles Herald Express*, January 15, 1942)

“Leet Bissell, speaking for the South Orange Grove Avenue Association, said that any poll would reveal that the majority of property owners living on the street opposed any change in zoning which would permit what he terms ‘three story monstrosities for the benefit of greedy developers.’” (*Pasadena Star-News*, February 5, 1948)

On April 6, 1948 the *Pasadena Star-News* reported on remarks made by Caryl Sheldon, attorney for the South Orange Grove Avenue Association:

“I do not mean to condemn good old American enterprise nor deny anyone the

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right to earn an honest dollar, but I do not believe that an organized handful of property speculators should be permitted

to sabotage the homes of the single-family property owners in the area.”

The controversy was finally settled a month later, when the City Planning Commission approved “an entirely new type of zone for South Orange Grove - R-R – to bring about the slow, smooth conversion of a fine old street. It permitted ‘garden-type’ apartments, but insisted they be large and expensive, and have plenty of space for lawns and garages.” (*Fortnight*, January 5, 1955)

The Pasadena Museum of History is located at the corner of Orange Grove Boulevard and Walnut Street (470 W. Walnut, Pasadena 91103); free parking in the Museum lot. The Research Library & Archives are open to the public free of charge Thursdays-Sundays from 1:00-4:00 pm. For additional information, please visit the Museum’s website, [www.pasadenahistory.org](http://www.pasadenahistory.org), or call 626-577-1660, ext. 10.

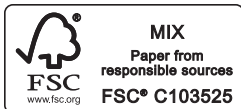


Orange Grove Manor, at 160-184 South Orange Grove, was the first luxury apartment construction on South Orange Grove Avenue after the zoning change in May 1948. Approval to build five multiple-unit buildings was given in March, 1949.



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