



STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Your Advocate for Studio City

July 2017

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ZEV YAROSLAVSKY LOS ANGELES RIVER GREENWAY TRAIL OPENS IN STUDIO CITY

The community joined together on June 3, 2017 to officially open the new Zev Yaroslavsky Los Angeles River greenway, known as the "Greenway Trail," which is located along the river between Whitsett and Coldwater Canyon Avenues. Community Conservation Solutions (CCS) conceived and directed the project and installed a half-mile, unpaved walking trail along the LA River. CCS' work included restoring a native habitat ecosystem and connecting existing segments of the river trail to complete a continuous four-mile trail loop. The Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) has supported the project from its inception six years ago.



The entry point to the trail on Whitsett Avenue features a handcrafted entry gate. This gate leads down from Whitsett Avenue to the river and on to the trail, which, unlike most urban landscaping today, is a combination of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers. It features small, medium and large plants in a natural manner and mimics the way life is in the wild. This mixture of species provides the rich diversity of habitats that birds, butterflies, insects and other wildlife need to survive. Wildlife require diverse places in which to find food, build a home, take a nap and find a mate.

The Greenway Trail features more than 3,000 native trees, plants and shrubs that are planted along the river bank, including Coast Live and Valley Oaks, Western Sycamore, Black Walnut, California Poppy, Arroyo Lupine, California Sagebush and many more. By planting more than 40 native species, CCS has created a natural sanctuary for native wildlife, along with vital foraging and nesting sites for resident and migratory birds that set a new precedent for bringing nature back to the Los Angeles River. Trail visitors can experience a natural environment right in the heart of Studio City.

"We did something that has not been done on the concrete sections of the river," explained Community Conservation Solutions President Esther Feldman. "We used native plants not just as a landscaping tool, but to recreate habitats that were here 100 years ago." CCS' goal was to restore habitats that existed alongside the river before it was channelized.

In addition to adding beauty to the area, this natural forest is good for the climate. The trail's habitat grows both tall and wide. It has long life-spans, which allows it to store a considerable amount of carbon. This leads to a reduction in greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. When fully grown, this part of

(Continued, Page 2)

COMMUNITY SHOWS SUPPORT FOR OPEN SPACE AT WEDDINGTON GOLF AND TENNIS

On September 30, 2016, Weddington Golf and Tennis filed a proposal with the City of Los Angeles Planning Department to build 200 condominiums on Parcel Two of the 16-acre Weddington Golf and Tennis site.

Following the submission of this new proposal, the Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) reached out to the community with a survey to garner support to keep the property as open space and to compare the results to a survey about this issue that the SCRA administered in 2014. The 2017 survey netted more than 2,100 people who are opposed to any development

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(Greenway, cont'd)

the Los Angeles River will store at least 20,000 pounds of carbon per year, which is equal to 80,000 vehicle miles. This will help clean the air and cool the asphalt-dominated city.

This new half-mile stretch of unpaved trail strategically connects existing river segments to create a four-mile loop of continuous river walking trail, the longest in the San Fernando Valley to date. The project integrates engineering and nature to improve water quality in the Los Angeles River. It incorporates a bioswale planted with native grasses, which, when combined with underground pipes and catchment to naturally capture water, will filter and infiltrate urban runoff and storm water.

CCS, a Los Angeles-based non-profit conservation group, secured funding from state and regional public agencies. The money was used to mitigate the destruction of native habitat and air pollution caused by the widening of the 405 freeway in the Sepulveda Pass. Other funding came from foundations and many individuals. The signature entry gate was a generous gift of the Cohn Family, and the river story fence panels highlight the rich human and natural history of the Los Angeles River through interpretive, hand-crafted metal art work, conveying the Los Angeles River's unifying force throughout Los Angeles County. The panels were designed and fabricated by Owen Gabbert, who uses both modern and traditional techniques. The beautiful Hirsh Family Native Habitat Walk, made possible through a generous gift from Anita Hirsh, highlights some of the key species planted along the trail. This shaded river viewing area provides a dramatic view of the Cahuenga mountains and provides a quiet place to relax in the shade, enjoy the river and learn about the restored native habitat.

As Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl said, "Community Conservation Solutions did a fabulous job of restoring this area, bringing a wonderful, green, artistic eye to the work. The Greenway Trail gives us a living model for sustainable river revitalization by restoring native habitat, naturally capturing runoff, storing carbon and reducing greenhouse gases."



Many officials were present for the opening event, including Supervisor Kuehl; Congressman Brad Sherman; Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian; Tribal President Rudy Ortega Jr. of the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians; Colonel Kirk Gibbs of the U.S. Army Corps of



Engineers-L.A. Region; Irma Muñoz, chair of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board; Los Angeles Deputy Mayor Barbara Romero; Joe Edminston, executive director, Mountain Recreation and Conservation Authority; SCRA President Alan Dymond; and former Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky.

For more information, please visit conservationsolutions.org/larivergreenway.

CITY ATTORNEY MIKE FEUER TACKLES ISSUES OF JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY



Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer addressed Studio City Resident Association (SCRA) members and guests at the SCRA's May Community Meeting. Feuer offered an update on the success of the Community Justice Initiative (CJI). CJI offers compelling alternatives to incarceration for appropriate offenders and is aligned with national, state and local efforts to promote new "smart justice" prevention, intervention and diversion approaches. The program, conducted by the City Attorney's office, has a low five percent recidivism rate.

Feuer also discussed the role of the city's neighborhood prosecutors. These individuals serve as local problem solvers who combat the most destructive community crimes, such as drug sales, prostitution, illegal dumping, graffiti and more. By addressing such criminal activity before it mushrooms into more serious offenses, they are making the city safer and improving the quality of life every single day. Studio City's neighborhood prosecutor is Diego Edber. He can be reached at diego.edber@lacity.org or 818-374-6820.

According to Feuer, problems associated with body shaming came to the surface last November when Playboy playmate Dani Mathers, 29, allegedly secretly photographed a 70-year-old woman in the nude while the woman was in the shower area of a local fitness center.

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(Feuer, cont'd)

Mathers allegedly posted the photograph in social media and was charged with one count of invasion of privacy (PC 647(j)(3)(A)). She entered a plea of no contest and will perform 30 days of community service.

Feuer also discussed SB 784—crimes: disorderly conduct: invasion of privacy—which he has sponsored. The bill states that if an individual takes a photo of someone who is nude or partially clothed without that person's permission and then distributes it, the penalty is enhanced by \$1,000. The individual whose photo was taken is entitled to restitution in an amount necessary to get that picture off the Internet and out of public distribution. According to Feuer, this is crucial, since every day the picture lives online is another day of humiliation. "I am optimistic this bill will soon be enacted and further protect Californians from body shaming."

RIVER LA'S JON SWITALSKI TO SPEAK AT JULY SCRA COMMUNITY MEETING



Jon Switalski, executive director of outreach for River LA, will provide Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) members and guests with an overview of River LA's mission at the July 11, 2017 SCRA Community Meeting.

River LA is focused on integrating design and infrastructure to bring people, water and nature together along all 51 miles of the Los Angeles River. The presentation will provide a window into the work being done to equitably create green open space.

The meeting will be held at Rio Vista Elementary School, 4243 Satsuma Avenue, Studio City, CA 91602 on Tuesday, July 11th. Meet and greet the community at 7:00 p.m. with refreshments. The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

ASK THE SCRA

One of the functions of the SCRA is to empower its members, who are the eyes and ears of the community. The SCRA can assist by providing opportunities to make all of Studio City a better place to live. Please send questions to scraboard@studiocityresidents.org.

Q: Many neighbors have voiced their concern about cars speeding on Whitsett Avenue and the numerous accidents that have occurred there. My neighbor totaled her car at Valley Spring Lane and Whitsett Avenue in a two-car accident that led to the fire department having to use the jaws-of-life to extricate the driver whose car had flipped over. I personally try to not cross the street there. The drivers totally ignore pedestrians. Where do we stand with studies and a possible light or stop sign at Valley Spring Lane?



TO THE MARKET

The Studio City Farmers Market welcomed Coco Rico, makers of coconut yogurt, to the market in June. All of Coco Rico's ingredients are organic and fresh with nothing from a can, no fillers and no preservatives. The creamy deliciousness of the yogurt comes in coconut, vanilla bean and lemon flavors, with seasonal fruit flavors available throughout the year. Filled with probiotic goodness, Coco Rico yogurt is a great new addition to the market. They can be found on the north side of the street, near Laurel Canyon Blvd.

At the last Farmers Market board meeting, the board of directors approved the following donations: \$500 to Walter Reed Middle School; \$500 to Alex's Lemonade Stand, to support the fight against childhood cancer; and \$2000 to the Rock 'n Roll Camp for Girls. The Board also provided the Studio City Library with \$3,820 to fund a number of programs, including Friday movie screenings; refreshments for the monthly Children's Book Club, the monthly Teen Council Meeting and the Teen and Children Annual Summer Reading Program; supplies for processing library materials, for library displays and for various teen and children's programs; and the purchase of popular items for the library's collection.

SCRA: Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) Board Member Barry Johnson followed up with Brian Gallagher of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation. Johnson's understanding is that there is a plan for the Whitsett Avenue/Valley Spring intersection. He has requested the status of the plan and details of its implementation. The SCRA will keep you informed.

Q: The SCRA has received many inquiries from members asking for help to get rid of the very tall weeds under the oak trees on the south side of Ventura Blvd. at the western entrance to Studio City.

SCRA: The SCRA contacted the Urban Forestry Division - City of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Services. Urban Forestry responded by sending a crew within a month. They cleared the spring growth of weeds in a four-block area from Fulton Avenue to Van Noord Avenue.

Q: Does the Great Street planned on Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood affect Studio City residents?

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(Ask SCRA, cont'd)

SCRA: Two SCRA board members attended the public meeting on the Great Street proposal. The proposal would eliminate two lanes on Lankershim Blvd. through the NoHo district, which would impact the north/south arteries into and out of Studio City. As a result of input at this public hearing, Councilmember Paul Krekorian has sent the proposal back to the drawing board for further review.

Q: Does anyone know why two seemingly healthy 60+ year-old mature Liquid Amber Trees (with green leaves) were removed from the median on the city designated scenic highway - Vineland Avenue - between Aqua Vista Street and the 101 Freeway across the street from the Garland Hotel? I think they may have been illegally removed. I can't believe these two trees would have been tagged for removal by the city.

SCRA: The Studio City Beautification Association (SCBA), which is a sister organization of the SCRA, is in the planning stages for improvements on the Vineland Avenue medians. The first step is to conduct a site visit with an arborist. The SCBA was told that many of the trees on the medians were infested with a beetle that bores into the trees and then kills them. There is no remedy for the trees once the beetle attaches. The trees must be removed so the bugs do not migrate to other healthy trees.

Q: There is a huge homeless camp on the 11200 block of Ventura Blvd., across from Marshalls. Can anyone do anything about this?



SCRA: Within a day of Studio City's new Senior Lead Officer Shawn Smith taking the helm, he issued three citations and contacted the HOPE team along with the City of Los Angeles Department of Sanitation about this issue. The camp was removed, and the site has been cleaned. This area, which is called the Oasis, has recently been redesigned and replanted and is monitored by the SCBA.

NEW SENIOR LEAD OFFICER FOR STUDIO CITY

The Los Angeles Police Department's North Hollywood Division has named Shawn Smith as Studio City's new senior lead officer. Officer Smith replaces Mike Lewis who retired in June. Officer Smith can be reached at: (818) 634-2593 or by email at 33751@lapdonline.org.

(Open Space, cont'd)



confirming the results of the 2014 survey. This time, many businesses, other non-profits and government organizations joined with the SCRA in support of this position.

The SCRA asked people to sign and mail a postcard to Councilmember Paul Krekorian, thanking him for his leadership in the effort to keep Weddington Golf and Tennis as open space. Nearly 2,200 individuals sent postcards. The top three zip codes were 91604, 91607 and 91423. The responses included other areas in the San Fernando Valley along with the hillside neighborhoods. Significantly, more than 1,755 people submitted the survey for the first time.

The SCRA also sent a separate letter to Councilman Krekorian, requesting him to redouble his effort to purchase the property and asking him to deny a zone change and to ask other councilmembers to do the same. The SCRA sister organization, Save LA River Open Space (SLAROS), asked businesses, nonprofits, homeowners associations and neighborhood councils to sign this letter.

Twenty-eight businesses and organizations, including the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Mountains Recreation and Conservancy Authority, Friends of Los Angeles River, The Nature Conservancy, neighborhood councils and homeowner organizations along with such prominent individuals as Former State Senator Fran Pavley and actor Ed Begley, signed the letter, which was presented to Councilmember Krekorian. SLAROS continues to gather support and will add new endorsements as it secures them. The SCRA presented the survey and the letter to Councilmember Krekorian at the June 7, 2017 ceremony in City Hall that celebrated progress on revitalizing the Los Angeles River. Organizations such as the SCRA were recognized at the meeting.

CORRECTION TO "A FOND FAREWELL TO ANN UDELL" MAY 2017 SCRA NEWSLETTER

The article incorrectly stated The Sherman Oaks Women's Club was absorbed by the Studio City Residents Association (SCRA). The article should have stated that the Studio City Civic Committee was absorbed by the SCRA.

JOIN THE SCRA OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) annual membership drive is well on its way. At the end of May, SCRA members received their June annual renewal notice. There are two ways to renew. Complete and mail the 2017-2018 membership form, or renew online at StudioCityResidents.org. People can easily check their membership status by looking at the address printed on this newsletter. If the date above your name is 6/17, your membership has expired. The SCRA membership year is from June 2017-June 2018.

Please provide your current email address if you would like to receive periodic updates about important community issues. The SCRA's database system can include two email addresses per household.

Thank you for your continued support of this all-volunteer organization.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Alan Dymond*

The official opening ceremony for the Greenway Trail, which runs from Whitsett Avenue to Coldwater Canyon Avenue along the north bank of the Los Angeles River, was held on June 3, 2017. The Studio City Residents Association (SCRA) was invited to speak at the event. Following are excerpts of the comments made by me and separately by Joe Edminston, executive director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (MRCA):

"Studio City is one of the key elements to the revitalization of the Los Angeles River. With other projects planned for the Studio City area, Studio City will be a center for access to the river, a link connecting our neighborhoods and a benefit to local business by the increase in foot traffic. Further, the Greenway Trail will benefit hikers, dog walkers or people who just like to take an occasional stroll, whether they are from here in Studio City or from across the Valley. It will be jealously guarded and, in this spirit, the SCRA is inviting the formation of a group to watch, report and protect the Greenway Trail. This group would assist other entities such as the MRCA and other city and county agencies as needed," said Alan Dymond, SCRA president.

According to Joe Edminston, the loss of the open space adjacent to the Greenway Trail would be devastating to the community. He said the Weddington Golf and Tennis property must remain an open space and not have 200 condominiums built on this property. Edminston's remarks echo the position taken by SCRA and its sister organization, Save L.A. River Open Space (SLAROS). This position has not changed for the past 16 years; each of these organizations is opposed to any form of development that takes this recreational open space away from the public.

As an update, the present status of the property will not change until the owners decide how they want to proceed. Scenarios include: 1) Nothing will change as the SCRA will not give up or modify its position; 2) The owner may continue with the application for a zone change so that condos can be built; or 3) Discussions will commence for a negotiated buy/sell agreement with the property sold to a public entity, which is the best scenario.

If the owners choose to proceed with the proposal to build 200 condos and apply for the necessary zone change, the Draft Environmental Report (DEIR) on file must be reissued. The DEIR on file will not apply since this is a new project. A suggestion was made that the DEIR on file plus elements of the present proposal would suffice. This was rejected out of hand as there must be one definitive document for a project from which all can work. In fact, in this discussion, the owner's representative agreed a new DEIR would be issued. The next move is with the owners.



In the meantime, the SCRA will continue its work to keep this property as open space, accessible to the public for recreational use as agreed to during the 1970s. The owners agreed to this so they could secure a reduction in their property taxes. While times may have changed, keeping the property open to the public as a parklike facility right next to the Los Angeles River remains the "highest and best use" in this park-starved city.

Alan Dymond

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JULY 2017

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SCRA COMMUNITY MEETING

Tuesday, July 11, 2017

AGENDA

7:00 p.m. Refreshments/meet your neighbors.

7:30 p.m. Presentation by River LA's Joe Switalski

MEETING LOCATION:

**Rio Vista Elementary School
4243 Satsuma Avenue
Studio City, CA 91602**

Located on the corner of Whipple Street and Satsuma Avenue.

The SCRA Community Meetings have moved to Rio Vista Elementary School, 4243 Satsuma Avenue, Studio City, CA 91602. Free parking is available in the school parking lot along with street parking. Do not park opposite the school. Follow the signs to the meeting.

