

LINDA VISTA~ANNANDALE ASSOCIATION

Volume 22 Number 1

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2008

Annandale Canyon Area Benefit Assessment District Vote

Roger Wolf & Don Orsi

Many of us in the LVAA neighborhood now have our chance to help acquire the Annandale Canyon Estates property for permanent public parkland in place of the proposed 24 large new homes that includes extensive grading and installation of complex infrastructure.

The Annandale Canyon area is a local treasure of biological resources and natural scenic beauty. Establishing the Canyon as a public natural park is important to preserve Pasadena's remaining natural land as a legacy for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations of Pasadena residents. Further, saving this area from development will have a number of public safety benefits, including avoiding significant emergency and fire access issues.

On Monday evening September 9th, the Pasadena City Council approved a resolution to mail ballots to residents in the San Rafael Hills neighborhoods that fall within the recently formed Annandale Canyon benefit assessment district. The vote will determine whether or not residents are willing to shoulder \$1.4 million of the \$7.0 million cost of acquiring Annandale Canyon Estates property as natural public open space. Other sources of funding for the purchase include a \$2.5 million grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and \$1.5 million in additional funding expected from the City of Pasadena, Los Angeles County and/or the State of California. Ongoing efforts by the City and open space advocates are expected to raise the balance of \$1.6 million needed to close the deal.

Residents may return their ballots by mail or by bringing them in person to the City Clerk's office before October 27, and also by bringing them in person to the public hearing in the City Council chambers on October 27th where the final vote will be tallied.

The LVAA Board of Directors has unanimously approved a resolution supporting the creation of a benefit assessment district to help maintain Annandale Canyon in perpetuity as undeveloped public open space.

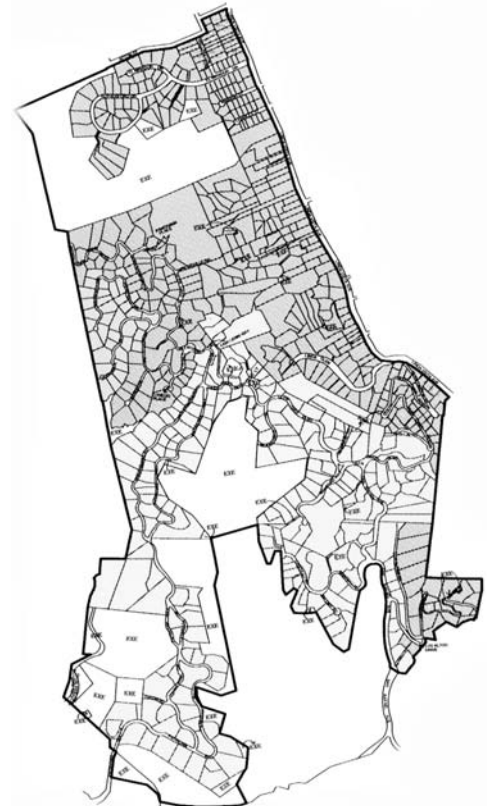
"...the answer to protecting their communities from the damaging impacts of overdevelopment...is to acquire land like Annandale Canyon for permanent public open space."

If the vote is successful, properties in the assessment district will be organized into four zones paying annual assessments ranging from \$70 to \$350 per year for a period of 30 years. Should a Citywide open space and parkland acquisition bond be passed in the future, the City staff is committed to recommending to the City Council that the Annandale Assessment District be rolled over into the City-wide district. If this should happen, then the cost of this assessment will

be spread throughout the City in the same manner as the new funding.

If acquired, the Annandale parkland will be owned and maintained by the City of Pasadena. No additional fee will be charged to the residents by the City to maintain the property.

If the assessment vote fails, development of Annandale Canyon will likely ensue. Residents should not rely upon the City Council to reject the development project. As homeowners have learned nationwide, the answer to protecting their communities from the damaging impacts of overdevelopment to their safety, infrastructure and quality of life, is to acquire land like Annandale Canyon for permanent public open space.



A Message from the President

By Norm Parker

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

If your summer was like ours, there was no lull following a busy winter and spring. Articles in this issue hit many of the highlights from among many activities that made it one of the busiest years ever! The Linda Vista Annandale Association is a constant and diligent representative of your community. A dedicated board of directors, all volunteers, have each made a lengthy commitment to "man the watch towers" on your behalf; watchful of excess building and traffic issues, of safety in your homes and on our streets (see articles).

LVAA is currently working diligently with the Art Center College Design and the City to limit additional traffic and reduce building heights in the proposed Art Center Master Plan. Making our case before the City has been lengthy, challenging, costly and very time consuming (see article).

We are proud to have helped All Saints Children's Center and the Linda Vista Park (see article) occupy the abandoned elementary school grounds and have pledged support to the Annandale Canyon Benefit Assessment District program (see article). We expect to soon undertake a joint effort with the City for traffic studies of Linda Vista, Lida and the Arroyo Seco corridors in the hope of improving traffic controls and mitigation.

Last year, many of you made a special donation in addition to the annual dues to support our neighborhood protection efforts. It is our pleasure to acknowledge that generosity in

this Newsletter. The Annual Membership drive will be coming soon. Your enthusiastic support will again be urgent to carry on all of our operating costs plus large expenses in connection with defending against projects such as the Art Center expansion, Annandale Canyon development and the ominous potential of NFL in the Rose Bowl.

While the current news on the NFL in the Rose Bowl is far from certain, we pledge to be diligent in opposing ten to twelve or more lost weekends in the central arroyo unless there is a thorough environmental review which acknowledges this is a major disruption to the surrounding neighborhoods and traditional activities in the area. Any effort to allow the NFL to use the Rose Bowl, while of potential financial benefit to the Rose Bowl's financial planning, must include adequate controls built into any contract to insure there is one city agency responsible for oversight of all of the funding and enforcement of mitigation measures for every negative impact to the area from traffic congestion and trash in the neighborhoods, to air and noise pollution, to degradation of conditions in the arroyo.

We hope to see you November 1 at the Annual Pancake Breakfast at Fire Station #38.

Please give me a call or an email at any time with your suggestions or concerns.

Norm Parker (626) 795-1065 np7956755@aol.com

Linda Vista Park needs you

Betsy Nathane

The Linda Vista Park had its Grand Opening gala on April 12, 2008 with much fan fare and attendance by many special neighbors and officials, including Mayor Bill Bogaard, Councilmember Steve Madison, Superintendent Edwin Diaz, interim City Manager Bernard Melekian, the Pasadena Police Department, the Armory Center for the Arts, Parks and Natural Resources and the Pasadena Humane Society. We even had the event catered by the Pasadena Fire Fighters Association and Robin's Wood Fire BBQ. What a wonderful day.

The Linda Vista Park was a dream of many people in our neighborhood. The support the neighborhood received in the opening of the Park was tremendous. So why am I worrying about its future?

Our lease will be up a year from now, August 2009. It will need to be renewed as a long-term lease before the City will commit to spending money on improvements to the site. This cannot happen until Pasadena Unified School District completes their Master Plan.

The site's most urgent needs include larger playground equipment (slides, jungle gyms, climbing bars), a drinking

fountain, access from Wellington, walking paths and benches. This would allow our park to be enjoyed by seniors and older children more often and bring it up to the standard of other Pasadena Parks.

I attended the Joint City of Pasadena and Pasadena Unified School District meeting on May 17, 2007, and when I left I knew that the City Council had committed at least \$348,000 to be included in the 2008-09 City budget for Linda Vista Park improvement. We need to remind PUSD that the City is committed to the longevity of the Linda Vista Park and with a long term lease the City would be willing to bring our park facilities up to the standard of other Pasadena parks.

The Friends of Linda Vista Park ask you to join them in voicing the neighborhood's support for the Park and desire to keep it by sending e-mails to the following PUSD School Board members today:

Please email:

Mike Babcock - mbabcock@pusd.us

Ed Honowitz - ehonowitz@pusd.us

Tom Selinske - tselinske@pusd.us

Art Center Environmental Impact Report Raises Concerns

By Norm Parker

The Art Center Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is under continuing review at the Pasadena Planning Department and awaiting resolution of the major issues raised by the Linda Vista-Annandale Association (LVAA) and four city commissions.



Several important negotiating meetings have been held this summer between members of LVAA's "Art Center Master Plan Committee" and Art Center senior executives. The most recent negotiating meeting was facilitated by Pasadena's Director of Planning and Development and attended by Planning Department staff members, as well as Councilmember Madison's Field Representative. As we go to press, an additional meeting of all parties is being scheduled.

LVAA presented its issues to the Planning Department and at hearings by the Historic Preservation, Design Review, Traffic Advisory and Planning Commissions. Each commission generated stern comments, criticism and requests for additional information. The Planning Commissioners asked that the Final EIR, which might be complete by the end of October, return to them for their review before going to the City Council for certification.

LVAA is seeking mitigation of several major issues presented below:

Land Use, Planning and Aesthetics: LVAA's argument – the proposed project is inconsistent with General Plan principles concerning Character, Scale, Urban Design Form and Historic Preservation. With a proposed 98 foot height (including a 38 foot illuminated, reflective atrium) for the Design Research Center (DRC), a 52 foot high addition to the Tyler building and a five story parking structure, the proposed project would not be consistent with the horizontal nature of the surrounding campus, adjacent low rise residential neighborhoods and the special character of the hillsides. The proposed DRC would loom over existing buildings and be visible from the local, central Arroyo and east Arroyo neighborhoods.

Update: We have been advised that Frank Gehry, the architect, who designed the original publicized concept of the DRC, will not design the final structure. It appears that Art Center is willing to agree that the DRC will be less tall and more functionally designed. The parking structure could be less than five levels high, although the number of additional parking spaces is still being discussed.

Transportation and Traffic: LVAA's argument – the DEIR fails to: 1) adequately characterize the existing traffic conditions in the LVAA neighborhood; 2) conduct a thorough construction-related traffic impact analysis; 3) consider the Rose Bowl Stadium Renovation Project, the All Saint's Children's

Project and other Arroyo Seco activity in the traffic cumulative impact analysis; and 4) provide mitigation measures that reduce traffic impacts to residents in the surrounding community.

Update: We are advised that measures proposed by the City and in the DEIR suggest that "only" up to 291 net new

trips per day might be allowed and that alternatives to auto traffic be investigated, such as shuttle services and ride sharing. This net new trip number, while less than originally proposed by Art Center, would be added on to current traffic. As of now, the Art Center sees no reason to reduce the large parking structure originally proposed, even though the Art Center is considering reducing the number of originally proposed net new trips per day. Studies are being completed of these ideas and of the "necessary" parking spaces. A professional study commissioned by LVAA of Art Center traffic and related safety issues is also being evaluated.

Air Quality: LVAA's argument – Adding approximately 400 full-time students and ten instructors to the 1,500 students and 350 instructors currently authorized at this site (unless reduced by traffic and/or parking mitigation), results in Air Quality impacts from Greenhouse Gas Emissions that are inconsistent with City, regional and state statutory and regulatory requirements. Pursuant to California AB 32 and SB 97 (and, other recently enacted State legislation), CEQA Guidelines and its implementing regulations, Pasadena's Green City Action Plan, and the State Attorney General's office advice and rulings, LVAA and its EIR expert consultants assert that the DEIR has not addressed the cumulative impacts on resulting Air Quality of the proposed Art Center Project. Letters have been sent to the California Attorney General's office notifying them of these concerns.

Change is apparent at Art Center: witness the departure of its president, a change of architects, opposition to the project by student government and some staff members, and fund raising challenges. As a result, there has been a willingness to negotiate our issues. LVAA is hopeful that its determined efforts, participation by involved residents and concerned commissioners, and an engaged Planning Department will bring about significant reductions in the impact of the proposed Art Center's Master Plan.

LVAA will notify the community of progress on all these issues and of Planning Commission and City Council hearing dates as they are set. **Your most important role is to participate!** Write letters to city council members and attend the hearings. As community members, you can be heard and you can make a difference.

City Puts the Breaks on Speed Limit Increases

Excerpted from a report by Vince Farhat

A controversial proposal to raise speed limits on certain residential streets is on hold pending further review and possible legislative action.

City staff originally wanted to increase speed limits on approximately 50 segments of residential streets throughout the City, including among others Lida Street in Linda Vista from 30 mph to 35 mph.

At the time of the original proposal, staff believed it was required by State law to raise speed limits in order to avoid so-called “speed traps.” In particular, staff was concerned that the Police Department would not be permitted to use radar enforcement unless speed limits were re-certified under a State law procedure that required an increase in the limit where a certain percentage of drivers already were exceeding the limit.

Staff’s proposal to raise speed limits sparked widespread community opposition, including concerns raised at a variety of meetings attended by LVAA representatives. Our efforts led the City’s staff to recommend withdrawing the Lida Street proposed change due to a reevaluation of the method the City uses to calculate appropriate speeds. Hence, Lida Street has been withdrawn from the discussion at this time.

We are also following developments in the following area. Late last year, the Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) rejected the citywide change proposal. Instead of raising speed limits, TAC voted to recommend that the City Council direct staff to investigate and implement traffic calming and safety measures aimed at reducing speeds on neighborhood streets with the goal of keeping speeds at the posted speed limits.

In March, the City Council’s Legislative Policy Committee considered staff’s proposal to raise speed limits. Mayor Bill Bogaard and Councilmembers Sid Tyler and Margaret McAustin serve on the Committee. The Committee expressed its appreciation for staff’s work, but ultimately concurred with TAC’s recommendations and rejected the proposal to raise speed limits.

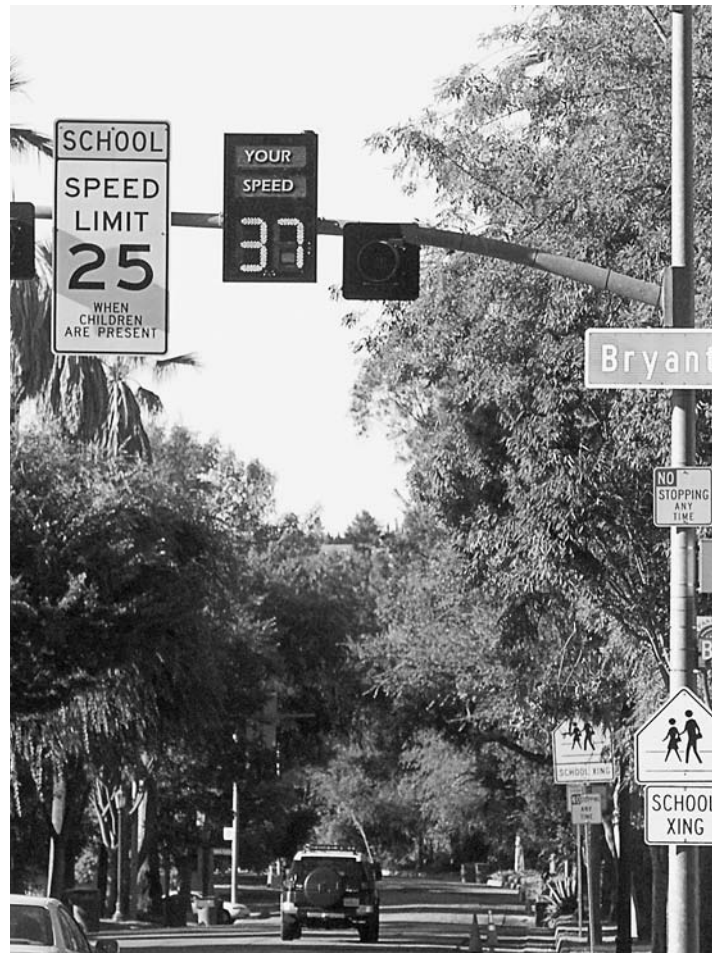
In April, the full City Council deferred consideration of the speed limit proposal. The Council also directed staff to investigate additional legal issues raised by Councilmembers Victor Gordo and Steve Madison. Ultimately, City staff has concluded that provisions of California Vehicle Code (CVC) section 40802 undermine local control in cities like Pasadena with regard to setting speed limits.

“Instead of raising speed limits, TAC voted to recommend that the City Council...investigate and implement traffic calming ...aimed at reducing speeds on neighborhood streets.”

In May, TAC joined the City Council’s Legislative Policy Committee in supporting certain technical amendments to CVC 40802 aimed at restoring local control over speed limits on residential streets. If adopted by the State, the proposed amendments would give cities like Pasadena more control over local streets and avoid State mandates to raise

speed limits. The City is working with its legislative lobbyist to identify sponsors of a bill that would include the CVC language change and to assemble a coalition of affected cities to support the bill.

The LVAA appreciates the efforts of the City Council, TAC, and City staff to work towards a legislative solution that would restore local control over speed limits in Pasadena. For more information, please contact the Pasadena Department of Transportation at (626) 744-TRIP.

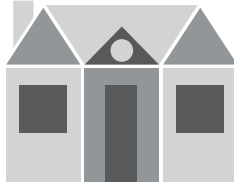


CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

from the Pasadena Police Department

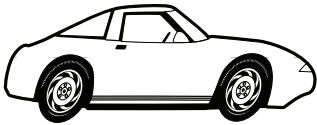
Protect your homes ~

Remember to lock your doors and windows when leaving your homes (even second floor windows), and make sure your homes are secure upon retiring for the night.



Here are two examples where precautions could have prevented burglaries. During August there was a burglary in the 100 Block of South Arroyo Boulevard; men were observed at the guest house by the housekeeper and were frightened away. Also, there was a hot prowler (entering while someone is home) burglary in the 300 block of South San Rafael Avenue. In this case, the burglar removed a screen and got in through the kitchen window while the victim was asleep in the bedroom! Both of these events took place during daylight hours.

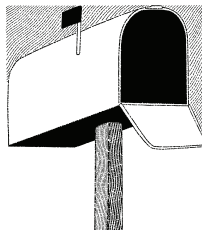
Protect your autos ~



There have also been burglaries of vehicles in the area of the Rose Bowl and the Eaton Canyon Nature Center. Often, thieves watch a resident park their car and stow their belongings under the seat, in the trunk, etc. and when the resident leaves the vehicle, the thieves break in and remove what they saw the resident hide. Pasadena's friendly and helpful Auto Burglary detective wants to remind residents that GPS systems are very popular with thieves; the thieves look for the docking station belonging to the GPS. Also popular are iPods, laptops and anything that a thief can sell, so please remember to place any objects of value out of sight before you get to your destination, preferably prior to leaving your residence.

Protect your mail box ~

During the summer there was a spate of mail theft and vandalism to mailboxes, some of which had not been reported to Postal Authorities or the Police Department. Unfortunately, one of the victimized families had unauthorized charges of several hundred dollars on their current credit card statements. These particular incidents had occurred in the somewhat secluded area of Pasadena west of the Rose Bowl, but police have been informed of mail theft on the east side of Pasadena as well. As always, if suspicious



persons or activities are observed, please contact the Pasadena Police Department Communications on the non emergency telephone number, (626) 744-4241, and officers will respond to assess the situation and/or individuals concerned.

Neighborhood Watch ~

Pasadena residents should be safe and secure in their homes. So, be watchful and take precautions to secure your family's safety.

One of the most successful measures in crime prevention is the Neighborhood Watch Program, in effect for over thirty years in towns, cities and rural areas across the country. Neighborhood Watch Programs help

reduce residential crime when the citizens join local police departments and work with them to observe and report crime. By taking an active role in the protection of their families and possessions, residents are better able to discourage criminal activity and keep their neighborhoods safe.

Starting a Neighborhood Watch program is a relatively simple process. Here in Pasadena you can do so by contacting Police Specialist Cynthia Murphy, Neighborhood Services Unit/ Neighborhood Watch. She can let you know what is required to form a successful Neighborhood Watch group. You can reach Officer Murphy at (626) 744-7657 or email her cmurphy@cityofpasadena.net



~ We Appreciate Your Support ~

Many dues paying members of the LVAA became Supporting, Patron and Benefactor supporters during the 2007-2008 membership drive. We wish to acknowledge their generosity.

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Zeronian, Joseph & Marilyn

The Linda Vistans

The Linda Vistans was founded in 1945 as an organization to promote friendship among the women of the Linda Vista neighborhood.

The Linda Vistans generally meet on the fourth Friday of the month from October through May each year. Please plan to join us for future programs which include:

- Decorating Ideas for the Holidays and The Rest of the Year with Sue Slattery (October 24, 2008)
- Personal and Residential Safety with Cynthia Murphy of the Pasadena Police Department (November 21, 2008)
- Holiday luncheon at the Annandale Golf Club (December 12, 2008)
- The Arroyo Seco, Past, Present and Future with Tim Brick of the Arroyo Seco Foundation (January 23, 2009)
- How Not to Fall Out of Your Family Tree and Other Interesting Information with a representative of the Southern California Genealogical Society (February 27, 2009)
- Professional Make-Up Tips and Secrets with Robin Eccles (March 27, 2009)
- A Child's Garden with Fran Shellgren (April 24, 2009)
- A Docent Tour of the Chinese Garden at The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens (May 22, 2009)

For information on becoming a member or attending these events, please contact:

Norma Danyo

phone: 792-0126 • email: ndanyo@earthlink.net

Jaine Urban

phone: 577-7982 • email: jaine.urban@gmail.com



Pasadena ARTS Can Help You Save Money!

While gas prices seem to be dropping, overall costs continue to increase and public transportation is one way to cut expenses. Visit the ARTS web page and click on a link that will take you to the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) travel calculator. This calculator will help you compare the price of using public transportation with the price of paying at the pump and then parking your car in town. This calculator has been set with default values based on national averages for June, 2008; however, you may set variables such as the price of gas and the length of the round trip to match the price of gas in your area and the length of your round trip. You can access route and schedule information for the ARTS system; you can also find links to other transit providers, visit www.cityofpasadena.net/artsbus and see what's new!



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LINDA VISTA-ANNANDALE ASSOCIATION

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**Please call us for information about our committees
 and activities or to volunteer your time, and
 visit us at www.lvaa.net.**

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

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