

# Cheviot Hills News

Cheviot Hills Homeowners Association

Summer 2006

## Traffic Edition

As you can see from the article below, the Cheviot Hills Homeowners Association was formed to "cope with problems created by the high rise urban development of nearby Century City." The traffic came (as did the Santa Monica Freeway in 1965) and, as our summer survey shows, opinions vary on dealing with it. Some favor redevelopment, more do not. Some want fewer traffic obstacles (mitigations), most want more. So – as we all cope with the predicted traffic from Century City – you may wonder: what has your Association done about traffic lately? Read on.

## Cheviot Hills Residents to Form Property Unit

**CHEVIOT HILLS** — A Cheviot Hills property owners association will be formed at a meeting at 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 29, at the Cheviot Playground Auditorium.

A main function of the group will be to cope with problems created by the high rise urban development of nearby Century City, according to Mrs. Harry M. Templeton, a spokesman for the faction seeking to organize the residents.

"The need for a property owners association was made very apparent during a recent community-wide collection drive to raise \$4,000 for the installation of underground utilities on Motor Ave.," Mrs. Templeton said.

"We hope to come up with constructive solutions to problems. We'll try to avoid the pitfall of being anti-everything like a great many property owners associations."

She said that it was inevitable that Century City traffic would spill over into Cheviot Hills and this would require changes in the traffic system.

"We intend to have representation at all municipal hearings concerning our area," she added.

Los Angeles Times  
May 26, 1963

## Committee Report

Following is a brief rundown of traffic-related issues that your Board has been working on this summer. All of these will require the continued attention of the CHHA Board and yours too, because they will encourage additional congestion. In a City where developers seem to get what they want without serious regard to the impact on City services, like roads, for instance, or police or fire, one wonders when City residents will one by one stand up and say enough is enough. And be listened to by their elected representatives and the workers who work for them (yes, City employees in theory work for you the citizen).

### St. Regis Hotel condo conversion (2055 Avenue of the Stars)

CHHA, along with other Westside homeowners associations (the Coalition), has negotiated a settlement agreement with the developer. It is hoped that additional community funding will be drawn from proposed new Century Woods townhouses. The money is to flow into a separate (Cont'd. on p. 2.)

### Inside this Issue

E-mail	Page 3
Survey	Page 4
Castle Heights Robbery	Page 4
Golf Course	Page 5
Since 1963	Page 5
New Bylaws	Page 7

account and is to be spent for community purposes at the direction of the homeowners associations, who will form a separate corporation for the purpose of managing the funds. This results from a remarkable cooperative effort of a group of associations and suggests a template for future discussions with developers and elected officials, where communities act together for their best interests.

### **Constellation Park Condo Project (Constellation Boulevard and Avenue of the Stars)**

The Coalition is negotiating with the developer of this large twin tower condo project to reduce the size of the project and to address community needs. These negotiations are in progress. As the time to appeal this project was going to expire, the Tract 7260 homeowners association filed an appeal to this project on behalf of itself and the other homeowners associations in the Coalition, including CHHA.

### **Beverly Hilton Condo Project and Robinsons-May condo (10100 Santa Monica Boulevard adjacent to the Beverly Hilton)**

Projects are in the works at these three sites.

### **Century City mall area redevelopment**

Westfield owns the Century City Mall and surrounding office buildings. It intends to blend three properties together to expand the size and parking capacity of the Century City Mall and to build a new office-condo tower at Avenue of the Stars

and Little Santa Monica. This would mean tearing down both office buildings, new construction, and more traffic to and from the Mall area. CHHA has written a letter of concern to the City Planning Department, raising issues that must be addressed by an Environmental Impact Report. CHHA also signed a joint letter from the Coalition.

### **Palms - Motor Mixed Use Development**

Recently, the City Planning Department has encouraged building mixed retail and residential buildings around the City to create increased population density. The City's theory is that building "up" will create adequate housing, reduce long distance commuting, and encourage public transportation use. The City is doing this with an ordinance whereby a developer can build a mixed use building that is substantially larger (maybe double) the existing zoning for the lot permits. Some projects are good; some are not so good. These projects should require an Environmental Impact Report to show how they will impact traffic, parking, schools, etc., but the standard of review of these projects does not appear to be that stringent. What this means to Cheviot residents is that Motor Avenue south of our neighborhood is subject to redevelopment at the hands of individual developers who may try to "max out" what they can do financially with a project rather than deal with what the local community needs. There is no local master plan to develop the street in a consistent way to manage parking, traffic, etc.

*(Cont'd. on p. 3.)*

### *Palms (cont'd)*

The first project to take advantage of this hole in civic thinking and planning is the one proposed for the northeast corner of Palms and Motor. Your Board has sent written opposition to the Planning Department, and Board and other Association members have attended numerous meetings and hearings to express register our concern with the Planning Department, the Council District (Jack Weiss), the developer and our brethren on the Palms Neighborhood Council. It appears that this project is moving forward without any commitments to reduce its size or mitigate it other problems. Any Cheviot resident concerned about this trend in Palms (we are told of another project across Motor) and elsewhere should be aware of and look at this project. There is a Planning Department hearing on this project scheduled we believe in early September. Attend it. Write to the City with your concerns.

### **Pico Boulevard Widening**

In order to redevelop its lot, the City required Fox Studios to pay to widen Pico Boulevard where it passes the lot. The widening project would not add another traffic lane on Pico, it would require tearing down a lot of trees, and it would cause unnecessary traffic inconvenience during months of construction. CHHA has written a letter to the City requesting that the Department of Transportation *not* go forward with widening, and instead put the money into an account where the homeowners associations, the Council Office and DOT can pay for traffic

mitigations. Hopefully the City and DOT will listen. Feel free to call the Council Office (Jack Weiss), DOT and the Mayor's office to let them know that this change in plans has your support.

### **Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan Phase 2 Implementation**

After long delay, the second half on the NTMP will start shortly. It will consist of traffic islands on Manning Avenue and on Motor Avenue (more details are at <http://cheviot hills.org/NTMP.htm>.) As the CHHA Board signed off on the Plan several years ago, our task now is to monitor just what the improvements will look like as they are finally designed and implemented. We hope they turn out to be attractive and useful additions to our streetscape. Because the costs of construction are higher than when the agreement was made, additional funding will need to be provided to pay for fully implementing the Plan as promised to us.

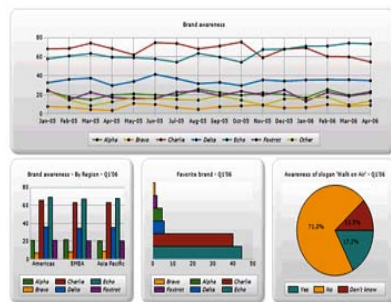
□ by *Greg Pulis* and *Robert Simon*

### ❖ *E-mail* ❖

We are now using e-mail to inform and mobilize. Members with e-mail received immediate notice of an organizational meeting for the light rail committee, notice of a home invasion robbery, and notice of golf course hearings. Members also got this newsletter by email, saving the association mailing expenses and paper as well. Please send your e-mail address to [database@cheviot hills.org](mailto:database@cheviot hills.org). Because many homeowners do not use e-mail, we will continue to print and mail our quarterly newsletters.

## Survey Says

Thanks to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey on traffic, light rail, McMansions and General Interests. The survey results may not provide a true picture of all homeowners, since only 300 responded, nor can a survey capture the complexity of some issues as they currently stand or as they change. But the responses provide a more comprehensive picture than is typically available to the Board on various subjects and will provide important context as issues arise. Once again, thank you.



**Traffic.** Most respondents either strongly or moderately supported applying new mitigations to control traffic. Over half of the respondents felt that traffic had either increased (overall or on some streets) or had not changed in the past year or so. There were a range of opinions concerning development in Century City but, for the most part, a small majority was moderately or strongly against both new commercial and residential developments.

**Light Rail.** By an approximately two to one margin respondents felt that light rail should be extended along Venice Boulevard rather than the Exposition right of way. Once light rail does come to the Westside, a large majority of people were strongly or moderately in favor of a non-stop shuttle service from Culver City to

Century City via Robertson/Olympic Boulevards.

**McMansions.** Roughly two-thirds of respondents were very likely or somewhat likely to support limiting the size, in some way, of new and rebuilt houses.

□ by Peter Glassman

## ANOTHER HOME INVASION ROBBERY

From our Lead Officer at LAPD:

*3000 Castle Heights, occurred 8/4/06 at 8:00 AM. Suspect followed victim, grabbed her and demanded money. Suspect struck victim across the face. Victim's husband shot at suspect. Unknown if suspect was injured, suspect fled location without taking any property.*

*Suspect info: Male, Black, 6'0, 20 years of age. Suspect was wearing dark clothing, slim build, short hair. Suspect's vehicle was either a van or SUV grey/green.*

*The suspect did not use a ruse to get into the house. He physically forced the victim into her residence demanding money. The victim's husband confronted the suspect. The suspect fled the residence without taking any property.*

*The advice from our police is to be aware of everything going on around you. Be aware of suspicious cars and people in your neighborhood. Avoid tunnel vision. This incident occurred in the morning and to an elderly person.*

## *Fourteen Story Slice?*

The Office of Zoning Administration is considering allowing construction of a variable height fence ranging from 80 to 140 feet for the proposed 62 tee driving range at Rancho Park Golf Course. The current fence is 70 feet near the front, 40 feet at the rear, and encloses 45 tees. RPG is required to seek a variance for the fence height to enclose a newly configured and 40 foot longer driving range. The Applicant, Rancho Park Golf, Inc. (RPG), also plans to remodel the clubhouse, restaurant, bathrooms.

The City did not publicize the hearings beyond the immediately surrounding homes. However, your association publicized the hearings, registered its concern, and got the City's attention, prompting additional hearings. The August 21st hearing filled the hearing room. Two people attended from Jack Weiss' office as did three of your Board members. The main message from the meeting was that the driving range application will either be postponed or withdrawn. There will be a reevaluation of the project, including a recalculation of how high the fence actually has to be. The time for receiving comments had been extended to October 3rd. Let your voice be heard.

Contact: Anik Charron  
Office of Zoning Administration  
200 North Spring Street, 7th Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90012  
(213) 978-1307 [anik.charron@lacity.org](mailto:anik.charron@lacity.org)

☐ by Carol Bahoric and Mark Huberman

## *“Fighting traffic since 1963”*

Traffic on Motor has been a problem since Century City opened in the 1960s, if not before. The promised Beverly Hills Freeway and mass transit to/from Century City never materialized. And the opening of the Santa Monica Freeway in January 1965 didn't help. According to a 1972 Los Angeles Times article, “In 1971, 22 accidents were recorded on the 30 m.p.h. throughfare between Pico Blvd. and the Santa Monica Freeway.”

The Cheviot Hills Homeowners' Association has been fighting Motor traffic all of that time, and it continues to do so. Motor was widened and straightened in the early 1960s, yet in the 70s the Association fought further widening. In the 80s, it challenged expansion of the Beverly Hills Country Club and stopped the development of condominiums on the Vista del Mar property at Manning and Motor. Several years ago, we reached a settlement with developers and the City to get more stop signs, narrow the road (through lines and bumpouts), and meter the lights that choke traffic at either end of Motor. Phase one of the project is done. Phase two should start in the next month or two.

As an unfortunate result of the way this area was (not) planned, the only main north-south streets in the area are Overland and Robertson. They are miles apart, and that causes traffic to find the north south routes in between. The city will not completely choke off Motor, which, like Manning and Butterfield, is

designated a “collector” street in the City Plan. Also, whatever is done on Motor and Manning inconveniences drivers and puts pressure on other other neighborhoods, such as Castle Heights and Beverlywood, which have also experienced significant increases in traffic. While car trips to and from Century City are supposed to be capped, there continues to be development in and around the area, including in Beverly Hills (which is not part of the cap).

One positive on the drawing board is the widening of the Overland Bridge over the 10 Freeway, which will increase traffic flow on Overland to Pico to Century City. Meanwhile, the Overland neighborhood between Pico and Santa Monica Boulevard, has its own traffic concerns, including a pedestrian death. (See their website at <http://www.overlandave.org/>.) So widening Overland all of the way to Santa Monica is unlikely.

Another significant achievement is our renewed efforts to work with other homeowner associations to fight development and to facilitate traffic flow on the main corridors. Collectively, we benefit from others' expertise and efforts and we don't, figuratively, cut each other's throats as we fight the same fight. (One especially influential and helpful group is Tract 7260, which has allied with CHHA since our formation. Their website at [www.tract7260.org](http://www.tract7260.org).)

More recently, the pressure is coming from the south, with the redevelopment of Palms. We have been monitoring the development of very large developments there, where developers are using

loopholes to build bigger and bigger projects. This should be a major concern for us all.

I am not on the traffic committee, but I can tell you that they are regularly involved in hearings, reviewing voluminous Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), consultations with our attorneys, meetings with politicians, business leaders, and residents. You should consider joining that committee so that you can support their volunteer efforts. (We have two committee co-chairs, and our President is also involved.) The board supports every effort of that committee, but there is power in numbers, and we need everyone who can to work together with us.

This is a never-ending fight, and we must continue to be vigilant. Years ago, Fox funded the purchase of radar speed trailers, but someone has to arrange with the police to move them around. Where there are traffic problems (speeders, etc.), we need you to continuously contact the police to ask for enforcement. Your Board is only 15 volunteers, most of us with day jobs. We have 1400 households who are eligible members. Slightly over half of that 1400 are dues-paying members. Many, many fewer participate in our activities. Working together, and with your contributions, we can do so much more.

□ by *Jonathan Weiss*

Cheviot Hills Bulletin Board  
<http://cheviot hills.org/board/>  
 Register using your **full name**

## ***Hot Topics in Proposed New Bylaws***

For more than a dozen years, the Board has been looking at updating the bylaws. Thanks to all of the prior volunteers and to current committee co-chairs Glen Friedman & Art Naselow, we finally bring you an updated, simplified, and we hope practical set of bylaws. We will be voting on them at the Fall meeting.

***Proxy Voting:*** Ours is a deliberative membership organization. Do you want issues decided based on unchallenged rhetoric or on open debate? Yes, not everyone can make every meeting, but that affects everyone equally on every issue. Also, proxy voting has proven unreliable – how does this volunteer organization authenticate ballots prepared outside of our meetings.

Finally, what about new candidates and new proposals? Should people put all of their voting power in the hands of a few to exercise for them? Your Board proposes making explicit what we have done for 43 years: no proxies will be allowed; you must be physically present to hear the debate and to vote.

***Staggered Seats:*** The past few years have seen a concern about “special interests” taking over the board and about the lack of institutional memory if all board members can be replaced in a single election. Two years ago, before great change came to the board membership, three year staggered terms were proposed. Your Board proposed carrying forward that proposal, with 7 seats coming up for election in odd numbered years, and 8 seats coming up for election in even years.

***No Renters Voting:*** There has been an ambiguity that caused significant controversy. The current bylaws have allowed two eligible voters per household – one for the owner and one for the renter – although only one vote was to be taken per residence. The new bylaws would only allow one adult member from the owner’s household to vote.

***Other changes*** are summarized in the enclosure. Please take the time to review the proposed new bylaws.

# Women Seek Underground Utility Lines

CHEVIOT HILLS—Women in Cheviot Hills and Monte Mar Vista are campaigning to eliminate overhead utility line poles on Motor Ave. between Pico Blvd. and Monte Mar Dr.

About 50 women who live in the area plan to conduct a house-to-house drive to raise funds to reach their goal.

Spearheading the campaign is the Cheviot Hills-Monte Mar Vista Garden Club. Mrs. Harry M. Templeton in charge of the project.

Plans have been completed by the city to widen and re-pave the 2,700-ft. length of Motor Ave. Sometime next summer. Therefore, the Los Angeles Water and Power Department must re-locate its existing overhead power poles.

The extra cost of re-locating the lines underground is \$4,000 and if the residents want the change they must provide the added expense.

Hillcrest Country Club, Signal Oil Co. and Richfield Oil Co. have each pledge \$500 toward the cost, according to Mrs. Templeton and an additional \$2,500 is needed.

The women, both garden club members and others in the community, will start the house-to-house campaign Monday, Feb. 11, to raise the extra money.

Mrs. Templeton said the solicitation will cover about 1,100 homes in a 50-block area. She said the drive would continue through Feb. 22.

The Cheviot Hills Homeowners Association was preceded by other civic groups in our area. First, there was the American Legion Post: "Cheviot Hills Post #501 of The American Legion . . . was fathered by Comrades Fowler D. Jones, Bernard Geissler and Hal Hughes. It was organized on April 30th, 1934 at the Palomar Club, 3084 Motor Avenue, Cheviot Hills." "This Post was organized in virgin territory. Dedicated to the ideals and principles of the National American Legion and SERVICE to the Post's community, comprising Monte Mar Vista, Cheviot Hills, and Country Club Highlands." The American Legion Post was instrumental in converting what had been the Ambassador Hotel's country club into Cheviot Hills Park and Rancho Park Golf Course. (See <http://cheviothills.org/history.htm>)

Three years later, came the Garden Club. "In August 1937, the Chairman of Civic Beautification of Los Angeles, Mrs. Paul William Lawrence, invited a group of forty-one ladies of our area

to a luncheon at the West Side Tennis Club [formerly the Palomar Club] to work for better bus service, tree trimming, better police protection, lot cleaning and improved mail service." The Garden Club met the next month, headed by Mmes. Alfred T. Schaber, Fowler D. Jones, John W. Donner and John Oslin Crawford.

We have the Garden Club to thank for bettering our neighborhood in many ways – including starting our Homeowners Association.



**BEGIN CAMPAIGN**—Conducting a campaign to eliminate overhead utility lines on Motor Ave. are, from left, Irving Feintech, Mrs. John W. Logan, Mrs. Harry M. Templeton and Mrs. Hugh Mason. A drive for funds has begun. Times photo

Article & photo from Los Angeles Times  
February 7, 1963