

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

September 2022

NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE GREEN BOARD

Compiled by Patrick Comiskey

Thirty persons attended the August meeting of the Board at Village Green on August 23, including management and nine Board members.

THE BOARD ADDRESSES THE MILLS ACT ASSESSMENT The Board has approved a letter to be sent to the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission to voice the Village Green's strong opposition to potential changes to the Mills Act program. (A full report on the Mills Act changes, and how it may impact Green residents, is found on Page 3 of this issue.)

SIGNS FLAGS AND BANNERS The Board voted unanimously to approve a new **Handbook** rule governing the display of signs, banners and flags that aligns with the California Civil Code 4710. Other than for sale or rent signs, all commercial signs, flags, and banners are prohibited. Noncommercial signs, flags, and banners are not allowed in the common area but may be posted inside unit windows. The new rule also adopts the Civil Code's language regarding approved sizes and materials.

FULL TIME GROUNDS MANAGER Tree and Landscape Committee liaison Chris Scornaienchi introduced for discussion the prospect of hiring a full time Village Green landscape supervisor. Laura Civiello, chair of the Tree Committee, advocated for the position, which would have oversight over projects, contractors, and Greencrew teams, in order to maintain and improve our most important asset, the urban forest. After a back and forth about cost, funding priorities, and how this position might fit with ongoing discussions about VG staffing, it was decided the Board will review a job description. TLC in conjunction with landscape architect Rios and the office will generate. □



MANAGEMENT NEWS *by Sherri Giles: compiled by Lucy Fried*

ORGANIC WASTE BIN MITIGATION Odors, flies, and other pests from the small black compost (organic waste) bins are plaguing many court trash areas. Ms. Giles' August report to the Board detailed the steps Management is taking to remedy the situation:

- Daily application of a strong odor neutralizing agent
- Daily washing of the bins with a concentrated bleach solution
- Daily emptying of bins regardless of volume
- Increasing main receptible pick-ups to twice a week
- Double bagging the compostable bins with a more durable liner

Ms. Giles is also investigating weather stripping for these bin lids and considering whether to ask residents to use only compostable bags and seal them. She has asked Republic to share solutions other communities have found.

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Buddha (Gordon Brooks's Desert Tortoise) out for a stroll.

Time to Put Your Things Away!

A reminder from the Board that the summer grace period on personal items left out in common areas, including lawns and garden courts, will end come Labor Day. That includes furniture, toys, playsets, tools, etc. Owners of items left out overnight will be subject to notices and fines.

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HIGHLIGHTS is an all-volunteer project of the Village Green Communication Committee.

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ELECTRICAL UPGRADE PROJECT There are two pieces of good news this month from our DWP engineer. First, the recently upgraded “vault-to-vault” 4.8 KV cables in our driveways can handle our future power upgrade with no need for additional electrical structures. Even more importantly, he shared a developer’s ballpark estimate for a 34.5KV power “tap” point at LaBrea and Coliseum that would also reduce our distance and cost to bring additional power here.

SYCAMORE AVENUE REJUVENATION AND GREEN CREW

Installation of new fencing is expected to start in early September, but in August, Greencrew removed extensive debris on Sycamore and repaired broken sprinklers and lateral irrigation lines within the foliage there...

The crew also detailed courts 17-2 and will be in courts 3-6 in September. From now on, Greencrew will trim debris from all garage court lights on a monthly basis.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING /PAINTING/INSULATION/ WOODWORK Work on buildings 90 and 3 is finished or underway, and work on Building 15 begins in early September. Seven more buildings are scheduled for this year.

GARAGES Restoration/painting are tentatively scheduled for courts 6, 8, and 14 in September. Inspections for other courts are tentatively scheduled for early October. □



PUBLIC SECURITY REPORT July 21- August 17, 2022

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

RESIDENT IN DISTRESS Court 11, July 23, 1:27 pm. A resident reported that a neighbor had fallen and was unable to get up. Paramedics took her to the hospital.

TRESPASSER DETAINED BY POLICE East Circle, July 24, 4:08 pm. Security spotted an extremely drunk and incoherent male trespasser in the bushes on Obama Place and called LAPD for assistance. While waiting, an officer kept tabs on him and later reported that the man had begun walking around and exposing himself to children in the West Circle. A 911 call brought LAPD to the Green at 6:25 pm to arrest him.

FAMILY ALTERCATION Court 5, July 29, 1:57 pm. Officers responded to a noise complaint and arrived to find two men – one with a bloodied face – yelling and cursing at each other. Officers kept the men apart until the arrival of LAFD

COMMITTEE NEWS

The Communications Committee (ComCom) invites your interest...

If you appreciate the information you get from **HIGHLIGHTS**, the website, VG Facebook page, or our forums and events, consider giving us a hand. We’re all volunteers and we need more investigators, reporters, writers, designers, web experts, and event planners. Can you make some time to help? Professionals and amateurs are both welcome. Email us at VGcomcom@villagegreenla.net. or sit in on a Zoom meeting (second Thursday of each month). Let’s talk...□

2023 Budget Open House:

Are you curious how the HOA plans to spend your assessments next year? Come join an in-depth conversation about the 2023 budget, as the board treasurer presents an early draft. Hosted by the Budget & Finance Committee on Thursday, 9/15 at 7pm via the standard committees Zoom link. The board approves the final budget during their October meeting. □



personnel, who treated the injured man, and LAPD personnel, who arrested them both.

PROPERTY DAMAGE Court 1, July 31, 9:40 am. A resident reported a damaged garage. Details were unknown.

NANNY DISPUTE Court 8, August 10, 8 am - 4:30 pm. A resident complained that nannies and children were making too much noise in her court and were “taking over,” and she wanted them gone. The situation escalated and drew the ire of other residents. Officers monitored the situation and briefed management.

FALLING TREE LIMB Court 16, August 12, 6:30 pm. Two neighbors standing under a tree began to run when they heard a limb cracking in their direction, causing one of them to fall and injure her arm, leg, and shoulder. Paramedics arrived to take her to the hospital. □

The \$658,000 Question:

How will the Mills Act Program Assessment affect Village Green?

By Daniel Millner, Court 5

In June 2022, the City of Los Angeles released a comprehensive “Mills Act Program Assessment and Equity Analysis” containing 32 recommended changes. Chief among them is the possibility that existing Mills Act contracts, including our own, will not be renewed once they expire. If City Council approves this change, Village Green residents would lose over \$658,000 per year in property tax savings.

What is the Mills Act?

In December 2010, Village Green entered into a financial incentive program to preserve historic properties in the City of L.A called the Mills Act. The contract provides property tax reductions for participating historic properties with the understanding that the savings would help pay for maintaining and restoring the property. VG is one of 948 Mills Act contracts in Los Angeles.

With 629 individual owners covered in one agreement, VG is the single largest participant by ownership in the Los Angeles Mills Act program. Since signing the Mills Act contract in 2010, VG owners have seen over \$7 million dollars in property tax savings, much of which has been funneled from VG owners to HOA dues which have then paid for long-term infrastructure needs such as piping, sewers, and painting.

Why was the Mills Act assessed?



In June 2022, the City of Los Angeles released an Assessment and Equity Analysis of the Mills Act Program addressing two broad concerns: it is sorely underfunded and understaffed, and the program

disproportionately benefits areas categorized by “low barriers to opportunity.” Overall, the Assessment recommendations are both needed and noble. However, Recommendation 12 calls for the City to “not renew existing contracts older than 10 years.” This has been met with considerable outcry and resistance. If enacted, it would effectively end existing Mills Act contracts and eliminate the property tax savings for contracts older than 10 years. VG owners will stand to lose their annual property tax savings if the city moves forward with this recommendation.

When might VG owners lose their Mills Act savings?

VG is covered by the Mills Act through 2032. Mills Act contracts are for a 10-year period and automatically renew

every year. If the City moves ahead with contract non-renewal, VG would be covered by the contract for an upcoming ten years.

\$658,000 is a lot of money. When will we know?

Unfortunately there is no set answer right now. The Office of Historic Resources is currently compiling feedback to determine which, if any, of the recommendations to approve. These recommendations then go before the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC), then to City Council for final approval.

What can I do?

Stay informed; voice your opinion at public forums. The Village Green website (www.villagegreenla.net), contains all of VG’s Mills Act information, plus links to all current City documents under “Guidelines and Resources – Governing Documents.” □

Movie Night!



“The Neighbors Think I’m Selling Dope”

Three Black filmmakers shifting the narrative in South LA

The Cultural Affairs Committee is thrilled to announce this year’s Black American Filmmakers program on **Saturday, September 24th at 7pm**, with a Q&A moderated by the legendary Charles Burnett, who presented his classic “To Sleep With Anger” here last year.

Curated by director/producer and Village Green resident Moira Griffin, the program will feature five award-winning short films by two VG residents and a Baldwin Hills neighbor.

The filmmakers include: Marshall Tyler (VG) director, Moira Griffin (VG) producer - *Slow Pulse*, *Cap*, and *Night Shift* Adisa Septuri (VG) director - *A Day Without Mines*

Katrelle Kindred (our neighbor up the hill) - *War Paint*

Warm drinks will be provided. Outdoor location at the Green is TBA.

Look for the flyer with more details, forthcoming. □

Dear Neighbor...

a new column from former **HIGHLIGHTS** editor Lucy Fried

It was a wonderful honor to be invited to write a recurring column for **HIGHLIGHTS**, and I can't think of any topic more important to launch with than safety. I want to think that our Village is immune to crime, but of course it cannot be and never has been. In fact, back in the very early 2000's, Don and I were burglarized, and I still remember the feeling of violation when I found my drawers and closets ransacked and precious items stolen.



New screen doors with security features came out this year, and we plunked down the \$1200, hoping it would be worth the money. But the summer's rash of break-ins and other crimes showed we must fight back as a community, so when the Safety Committee announced a meeting in July to share experiences and offer safety tips, I knew I had to attend; here's a report on what I learned:

From Neighbors Gabriela Worrell, Rosalind Goddard, Joan Anglin, and Mickey Fielding, who described the devices

they've installed in their homes – including Google cameras in the front and back (simpler than Ring, as messages come via one's phone); ADT's hard-wired battery-driven security system, with sensor alerts at two door entrances and windows; a wireless ADT system with cameras and

alarms on both floors; and a Ring device similar to Google's for a patio.

From Public Security Officer Al Johnson, who said, "Even with fences and gates, people who want to get in will get in. The best tool we have is residents' eyes and ears; ADT and Google cameras are useful."

From LAPD Officer Kenny Sanchez, who said, "Barking dogs are deterrents. Cameras are a huge help, even better than alarms because by the time we get the call, the burglars are gone."

And Court 17 Rep Regina Bryant, a member of LAFD's Community Emergency Response Team, offered these tips: "Be common-sense smart. Think safe and act safe...keep

TV and lights on or use timers when you're away...close the blinds at night...get dusk to dawn porch lights from the office...close windows before you leave home...be sure your garage is locked...lock the door when you leave your unit, even just to go to the trash area...keep eyes on the street...be proactive in getting to know your neighbors...give a trusted neighbor a key in case an alarm goes off when you're not home...update your email address with the VG office to receive alerts...don't leave a purse or wallet unattended in your car at a gas station...and put a whistle on your key chain." □



Please email column suggestions to me at villagegreenhighlights@gmail.com. The Safety Committee also welcomes your interest; find their meeting time at www.villagegreenla.net.

Five Things You Don't Know about Post Commander Al Johnson

—From the ongoing series "Get to Know Your Friendly Local Security Officers" by P.J.C.

1. Alfred "Al" Johnson is a proud son of Compton, growing up on South Cahita Avenue, just down the street from a city park named for (Brooklyn) Dodger great Roy Campanella, one of the greatest catchers of all time.



2. Five kids on that block excelled at baseball, including Johnson, who played for the Campanella Park Indians, a traveling Pony League team; he got as far as AA ball for the Texas Rangers' farm team in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he pitched and played first base.

3. Al's been with his wife Angela for 33 years, and they have five children - Jasha, Little Al, Mychael, Niante, and Kayla.

4. He's been in security for more than thirty years. Before that, he worked assembly at General Motors, Lockheed, Rockwell, and Hughes, and other large aerospace companies south of LAX.

5. He is an ordained Baptist minister. "I'm not a cloak and collar guy," he says. "I just meet people at their level; I may plant and water the seed, but God will make it grow." □