

# VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

# HIGHLIGHTS

A Monthly Publication of the VGOA

December 2021

## NEWS FROM THE BOARD

By Lucy Fried and Patrick Comiskey

28 people, including 8 directors, attended the November 16 Board meeting. The agenda was short and lively, including two discussion resolutions.

### Pump Failure

The irrigation well pump failed on November 1, during midday use. A technician temporarily restored it but determined that it would eventually need to be replaced. Typically, systems like this have a lifespan of about five years; this one was installed in 2016. On a recommendation from management, the Board voted unanimously to authorize funds for a new pump but continue using the current one until it fails.

### Addressing Hate Speech

A Communication Committee discussion resolution prompted by recent instances of hate speech at the Green sought to explore whether we can adopt a preemptive policy against hate speech, and if so, what form it might take. After earnest discussion, directors agreed unanimously to ask legal counsel what our options are.

### Kids in Trees

In another discussion resolution, directors considered how to protect vulnerable trees if a rule change were to allow tree climbing. Several ideas were suggested, including requiring a waiver for tree climbing. However, it was noted that a tree's safety is hard to assess; weaknesses may not be visibly apparent. Also, accidents may injure parties other than those who had signed waivers. Alternative climbing options will be explored further.

### Land Survey for LADWP Easement

The DWP recently announced that we can access the 34.5 kilovolts of power needed for the electrical overhaul from a power pole on Obama west of the Green. This would be the closest and least expensive option. The Board voted unanimously to perform a land survey and underground location near the entrance to Court 10 to learn if the location is suitable.

### Inspectors of Election

The Board unanimously appointed Robert Creighton, Heide Oglesby, and Michael Boucher to be the inspectors for the 2022 Board election.



Happy Holidays!  
from the  
Communications Committee!

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## IT'S TIME TO GET INVOLVED!

Lucy Fried is retiring as editor of the **Village Green Highlights**, and we're looking to build an expanded team of editors, writers, photographers, and designers to usher in the new era.

Please help us! We want to open these pages to more new voices, reflecting the full range of our diverse population. Reach out by emailing us at the address above.



## MANAGEMENT NEWS

*From Manager Sherri Giles' November Board Report*

**GREEN CREW** reported having to move residents' furniture and toys to mow, slowing their progress and adding to their workload... This month, they will detail courts 5-9.

**GOPHERS** Ms. Giles has reached out to the L.A. Department of Parks and Recreation and multiple country clubs about methods to control gopher populations. Only the LA Country Club responded; all the methods they employ are lethal. The office will continue to explore non-lethal alternatives.

**COPPER RE-PIPING** of administrative and residential buildings 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 97, and 99 will complete the project next year.

**ARBORIST CARLBERG ASSOCIATES** reported three high priority risk trees during their November visit and recommended removal and replacement as soon as possible. They also noted that many Chinese elms, London plane trees, and sycamores need attention.

**PAINTING AND INSULATION** is proceeding as planned, with buildings 54, 54A, and 78. Work on Building 85 will begin once re-piping is completed.

**GARAGE RESTORATIONS AND PAINTING** for Court 15 are completed, and work on Court 5 starts in December. □

## Public Security Report

*Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore*

### October 21 - November 10, 2021

**NOISE COMPLAINTS - October 21, Court 7, 7:49 & 10:23 pm.** Officers could hear an overly loud TV or radio from outside, but the resident did not answer the door.

**CARJACKING SUSPECT DAMAGES PROPERTY - October 22, Court 1, 11:55 pm - 1:47 am.**

After crashing the car, the suspect fled into the interior of the property and hid. LAPD used a helicopter and multiple officers to conduct a search and prohibited anyone from entering or exiting the Green until they eventually found and arrested the suspect.

**LOUD MUSIC - October 26, Court 15, 7:49 pm.**

A resident reported loud music from a neighbor's unit. Security responded but heard nothing.

**DOGS BARKING - November 5, Court 5, 12:15 pm.**

Officers saw and heard two dogs at the window barking uncontrollably at landscape workers below for a prolonged period. No one answered the door. □

## Open Air Halloween Fun for All Ages



*Scary decorations had been appearing on lawns and buildings for weeks, telling the kids that HALLOWEEN was coming, and finally IT WAS HERE! Ghost stories at dusk near the coral tree, a spectacular costume parade on the oval path, and at last, trick-or-treating! Once again, Villagers outwitted COVID and celebrated Halloween by staying masked and safe outside. Thanks, Cultural Affairs Cmte.*

**Enjoy more photos on Page 4!**



## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

**Highlights** printed a picture of a Cooper's Hawk in the November issue. It was a pleasure to see the beautiful bird. What bothered me is that people consider anything that isn't useful to them a nuisance. Every creature has a role to play in nature.

Heide Oglesby, Court 16

## Safety Committee Crime Tips

The LAPD has noted a recent string of "follow home robberies" targeting expensive jewelry, watches, and purses. Victims have also been targeted based on the type of vehicle they drive.

They advise:

- » Be aware of your surroundings and cautious about displaying high value property in public;
- » Report and record suspicious activity to police;
- » If you're driving and being followed, dial 911 and, if possible, drive to the nearest police station;
- » If you're being robbed, do not resist. Be a good witness. Call police immediately and write down everything you can remember;
- » Do not chase or follow the suspects.

More information can be found at [www.lapdonline.org/newsroom/follow-home-robberies-nr21317ml](http://www.lapdonline.org/newsroom/follow-home-robberies-nr21317ml). □

## VG'S ELECTRICAL OVERHAUL

### *Essential, Complex, Costly*

*As we close the books on 2021, this Q&A brings the VG community up to date on the Green's electrical overhaul project. Thanks to VG director Steve Haggerty for once again sharing his time and knowledge with readers.*

#### **HIGHLIGHTS: Let's start from the beginning, Steve. When and why did the Board approve the electrical overhaul?**

In the 2000s, more and more owners were installing unapproved new appliances and air conditioners requiring greater amounts of electricity. In 2018, the directors made a tough decision to restrict owners from adding more power to their units' electrical loads. Soon after, they hired Hariton Engineering to evaluate our electrical system, including our meters and the wiring, outlets, and electrical panels in the units.

#### **HL: What did Hariton find?**

Hariton told the Board that our electrical system cannot accommodate residents' needs for more power. The system was installed in the early 1940s when homes had fewer appliances, and it cannot meet today's power demands.

#### **HL: What's wrong with our electrical system?**

The system faces multiple challenges, including the wiring in units and between buildings. Many units still have the original cloth wiring, which over time can spark, creating a fire hazard.

You may be asking, "Can't I just rewire my unit with modern wiring, add a larger panel, and install the appliances I want?" There are multiple reasons why not. To begin with, unfortunately, one's building is not wired directly to the electrical vault in the driveway that brings the power. Instead, groups of buildings are daisy-chained together: the first building is connected to the vault, but a conduit from that building passes power along to another building and another, putting a strain on the power supply going to all of the units in the daisy-chain.

Everyone in the chain could experience low voltage or sudden

voltage drops or spikes, dimming or blinking lights, overheated wires, burned-out DWP transformers, and tripped breakers.

#### **HL: Can I install my appliances once the buildings are rewired and each is connected to a vault in the driveway?**

Good question, but **"No,"** because LADWP's current power capacity is based on 1940's consumption and cannot deliver the additional power you want!

To bring the 34.5 kilovolts of power we need to the Green, a new conduit must be built from a DWP power source to a site on our property. We have identified four possible locations that the Board will be discussing. The VGOA must choose the site because we must grant an easement to LADWP to install the two transformers. The LADWP has told us the conduit cost is our responsibility.

#### **HL: The upgrade seems complicated. How many separate parts are there?**

The upgrade consists of four projects, each with separate costs and timetables:

1. Bringing the buildings up to code via new wiring;
2. Installing new meter enclosures on the buildings;
3. Connecting each building's meter enclosure directly to a vault via new conduit;
4. Bringing 34.5kv power to the Green via transformers to be installed on the easement.

#### **HL: In previous articles, you referred to three phases, with "Discovery" first. Although much has been learned, it appears we will continue to "discover" at each phase. Are we close to Phase 2, Engineering?**

We are entering the Engineering design phase for courts 16 and 17! This includes getting Board approval for the meter enclosure design and meter enclosure locations for each building. It requires unit by unit inspections to evaluate what work needs to be done to bring the buildings up to the electrical code and issue RFPs for contractors to work on the buildings, construct and install the meter enclosures, and run new conduit to the vaults.

While this work is going on, Hariton and ARG will be in constant contact with LADWP, LADBS, and LAOHR to make sure we have submitted plans, requested permits, and obtained approvals for every part of the project. As the work in courts 16 and 17 progresses, we will begin the planning phases for subsequent courts.



**"LIGHT"** by Tina Sanders LeBrun, Court 13

*Cont'd on page 4.*



## Electrical *Cont'd from page 3.*

**HL: Is there anything residents can do to help move the process forward?**

**Yes!** The electrical configuration in all 629 units will need to be inspected. Owners and renters can help keep the process moving by being accommodating when the VG office reaches out to schedule the inspections. Once the work in courts 16 & 17 is completed, we will develop an inspection schedule for the rest of the courts.

### HL: How much has been spent on the upgrade so far?

So far, we've spent about \$200,000 on two contractors who are leading us through the electrical upgrade process. Hariton Engineering is responsible for the electrical design and securing approvals from LADWP and the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), while Architectural Resources Group will make sure that any necessary architectural modifications meet L.A.'s Office of Historic Resources (LAOHR) requirements. We have also spent \$12,000 for the transformer location surveys.

**HL: What do you estimate the project will have cost when finally completed, and when do you project that to be?**

While we do not have definitive timetables or costs yet, suffice it to say it will likely take millions of dollars and 10 years to complete all four projects.

**HL: The Board raised the monthly assessments for 2022. Will the overhaul require another such increase every year until the project is completed?**

We don't know, but it's likely we will need increases in the future.

**HL: Could the Board seek financial help for this project? We are a national, state, and local historic site seeking to restore basic safety to its residents. Surely, there is a grant or no/low interest loan waiting for us somewhere out there...?**

There are public and private organizations, including the Historic Preservation Fund and Save America's Treasures Grant Program, that provide various grant opportunities.

*If you know someone with grant-writing expertise in the area of historic preservation willing to assist the Board and the office in pursuing these opportunities, please reach out to Steve via the Village Green office. □*

