

TPOA

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2006
VOL. 43 NO. 2



Dave Garfinkle TPOA President

As you see by the new name and picture, TPOA has a new president. As noted in the last newsletter, Helen Itria Norman, our president for the past nine years, dedicated friend and defender of Tarzana, passed away last year. All of us at TPOA, the community and regulatory people with which TPOA interacts sorely miss her. Our dedication to the community continues in her spirit and the spirit of our past presidents, past and present Board members.

Let me introduce myself. Thirty-eight years ago my wife and I fell in love with a vacant lot in Melody Acres, built our house and raised two kids along with goats and chickens, fruits and vegetables. I served on the TPOA Board for a number of years, left for a while due to business obligations and recently became active again. Having had the pleasure and privilege of working with our founder Louise Frankel, Irma Dobbyn and Helen, I am very attuned to the TPOA vision of preserving this unique community.

Those of us who have lived here for a long time may sometimes take this unusual community for granted. I had my eyes reopened recently during a tour of the community arranged for Christopher Jackson of the Planning Department. Kathy Delle Donne and Len Shaffer (both TPOA Board and Tarzana Neighborhood Council members) and Joe

Bernstein (Tarzana Neighborhood Council) and I introduced Jackson to our community suburban and rural development with inclusions of multi-family, light industry along the Orange line and upgrading commercial along Ventura Boulevard.

Over the years we have overcome challenges to the feel and spirit of the area, including the preservation of the hillsides and efforts to adversely increase the density of the area. And we continue to be faced with challenges, among them the continuing mansionization of our single family home areas, the ever increasing traffic, business and other non-residential incursions into residential areas, the loss of affordable apartments and the threat to our light industry and low density commercial areas. With those challenges also come opportunities: creation of an urban hub around the Reseda/Oxnard Orange Line stop, upgrades to the boulevard and creation of attractive higher density housing where appropriate. TPOA, with community input, will continue to work toward the betterment of the community.

We have included a questionnaire to solicit community input on a number of issues and encourage you to take the time to provide us with your comments and suggestions.

Best wishes for a joyous Thanksgiving, a merry holiday season and a happy New Year.

J O I N T P O A

BECOME A MEMBER

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

TPOA NEWSLETTER

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TARZANA PROPERTY
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P. O. Box 571448, Tarzana
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BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Second Monday of each month
Except July and August
7:30 p.m.
at
TARZANA COMMUNITY &
CULTURAL CENTER
19130 Ventura Blvd.
Tarzana, 91356

COMING EVENTS

TPOA Board meeting -November 13

TPOA Board meets at the Community Center at 7:30 pm on the second Monday of each month (excluding July and August) The meeting is a prime opportunity to bring matters to board attention for consideration and possible action. Due to limits on space at the Community Center, notification of your desire to attend is required. Call Dave Garfinkle at (818) 881-6318 or leave a message at the TPOA phone: (818)344-2137.

City Budget Survey -Thru November15

Here's an opportunity to influence next year's city budget. Go online at lacityneighborhoods.com and click the Budget Survey link under Mayor Villaraigosa's picture.

Tarzana Neighborhood Council (TNC) Elections - November 16

83 Neighborhood Councils have been established to date to provide a formal mechanism for community participation and interaction with the city government. The TNC has been effective in influencing community land use, traffic and budget policies. Several TPOP Board members serve on the TNC to help coordinate the activities of our two organizations. **Be sure to vote for representatives of your choice at the Community Center on November 16.**

Orcutt Ranch Fruit Pick - November 19

____ _Bring bags, boxes to 23600 Roscoe Blvd. to pick grapefruit.

Household Hazardous & E- Waste Round Up - December 2

Between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, both types of waste will be accepted in the Civic Center rear parking lot at 23519 West Civic Center Way, Malibu. TPOA is investigating the possibility of establishing a permanent San Fernando Valley collection point for such waste that will be more convenient for valley residents.

TERN Launch - December 9

The Tarzana Emergency Resource Network is holding an event at the Community Center with live music, food and drinks and several speakers to discuss emergency preparedness and distribute emergency preparedness kits. The kits provide information brochures by the Red Cross, FEMA, and the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP); coupons from the Earthquake store; a flashlight and a handy place to store medications and your emergency call list.

Barsana Dham Hearing - December 14, 2006

At 4:30 pm, the South Valley Area Planning Commission will hold a hearing concerning appeals of Zoning Administrator's approval of a Hindu house of worship plus extensive clergy and guest living quarters to be constructed on the RA-1 lot at 5530 Donna Avenue. TPOA strongly opposes the proposed dormitory-type living quarters for 14 people in an RA-1 zone. In addition, TPOA believes the proposed parking is inadequate and that traffic from the frequent events planned would cause severe congestion. You may attend and voice your opinion.

CURRENT ISSUES

The Orange Line Busway

The Orange Line is an example of a successful, relatively low cost public transportation system. Ridership is up to 21,000 people per day, almost three times original projections. The line provides a comfortable alternative to automobile travel from Warner Center to North Hollywood and easy transfer by subway to Hollywood and downtown via the Red Line. Construction is underway to extend the route to the Chatsworth Metrolink station. The bike/pedestrian path alongside the busway provides a safer, pleasant alternative to surface streets. The landscaped right-of-way is certainly an improvement on the old weed infested rail right of way. Active participation by residents along the line "persuaded" the MTA to include the bikeway and landscaping amenities.

The busway is not without problems, however. Thankfully, the accident rate has fallen dramatically as people become accustomed to its presence and observe the traffic signals. Noise remains an issue to those households within a few hundred feet of the line. Residents on the south side of the line are impacted by the sound-walls on the north side which reflect and magnify the sound; residents on the north side between Yolanda and Wilbur have neither a sound-wall nor landscaping. Another serious problem is the impact to automobile travel on Topham/Oxnard as well as on the Corbin, Tampa, Wilbur and Reseda cross streets. The signals at these intersections are now excessively long, causing motorist frustration and diverting considerable traffic into adjoining residential areas and onto the already impacted Freeway and Ventura Blvd. TPOA, the Tarzana Neighborhood Council and organizations along the route are working to see what can be done to mitigate the problems.

Mayor Villaraigosa has strongly advocated increased density along transportation corridors, and the Planning Department is working to develop specific plans to implement that thrust. There are plusses and minuses to that concept. On the positive side, there is the opportunity to develop a viable commercial center at the Orange Line/Reseda intersection. Joe Bernstein of the Tarzana Neighborhood Council is leading an effort to develop some guidelines and work with the Planning Department to optimize the development

effort. On the other hand, we have to be vigilant to ensure that we protect the light industry currently in that area and limit the incursion of multi-family complexes into the existing single family area.

Building and Safety Enforcement

We are seeing an increasing number of Building and Safety violations. These violations range from buildings which exceed the height limits to illegal/unpermitted grading to block walls which impede the drainage sheet flow and cause flooding of adjacent properties. Other violations include conducting commercial business or auto repairs on residential property; frequent (sometimes weekly) yard sales; construction without permits and proper inspection; outdoor storage of furniture and appliances and inadequate maintenance of yards and pools.

Building and Safety violations are apparently a low priority item for the City Attorney. Even after a violation is documented and the property owner is cited, there is often inadequate or no follow up to ensure compliance.

Beth Nelson of TPOA and the TNC is heading an effort to address this issue and is arranging a meeting with the supervisors from Building and Safety in early December. Meanwhile, perseverance is necessary in reporting and persuing specific instances. If you note a violation, call 311 and ask to be connected to Building and Safety or go on line to <http://ladbs.org> ; right click on "code enforcement"; right click on "property violation" and enter the specifics. In addition, you may call TPOA Building & Safety Chair Steve Webber at (818) 345-2433. If the problem persists, contact us at (818) 344-2137 and we will add the violation to our list of violations as we continue to pursue this issue with the Department and Councilman Zinc's office.

J O I N T P O A
IT'S THE BEST BUY IN TOWN
\$15.00 PER YEAR

TARZANA DEVELOPMENT

Condo Conversions

As you have probably read, thousands of apartments, mainly rent controlled, continue to be converted to condominiums or demolished and rebuilt into condos. These conversions are significantly reducing the number of affordable housing units in the city. As an example, the following applications for condos were submitted to the City Planning Department for the Tarzana area.

5239-5305 Lindley Avenue - The developers proposed to demolish the 39 rent-controlled apartments and construct a 4-story building with 58 units. Their application called for 136 parking spaces. This is less than 2 spaces per unit plus the $\frac{1}{4}$ guest space per unit the City requires for areas such as Lindley Ave., which are designated as "parking congested." Even though the public hearing was in April, 2006, the determination was not mailed out until September. It seems that the City Planner allowed this reduction of 9 guest parking spaces. TPOA appealed the action and, as a result, the developers have redesigned their project to allow for the extra spaces.

5445 Lindley Avenue - The same developers are involved in this project which is the demolition of 44 rent-controlled units and construction of 43 condo units. The public hearing was held in April, but no report has yet been issued.

5544 Yolanda Avenue - This apartment building constructed in 1986 is located at the northeast corner of Clark St. and Yolanda Ave. The property owner is interested in converting these 24 non rent-controlled units to condominiums. A public hearing has not yet been scheduled for the project.

18546 Clark Street - The developer proposes to demolish 25 rent-controlled apartments and construct 28 condominium units with 70 parking spaces. The public hearing was held on Sept. 3, 2006, and the City Planning Dept. approved the project. They are conforming to the 2 *Vi* parking space requirement per unit.

Subdivisions

There have also been several subdivision applications where owners would like to split their property into two lots. The Tarzana-Encino Community Plan and the City Zoning Code govern how these lots may be split. In the Melody Acres area, the Community Plan notes that each newly formed lot must have a minimum of 20,000 square feet. Outside of Melody Acres, lots in the RA-1 zones must have a minimum of 17,500 square feet. If the RA-1 lot is in a hillside area with a slope of 15% or more, each lot must then contain a true acre of 43,560 square feet.

5706 Calvin Ave., 5650 Melvin Ave., 5929 Melvin Ave., 5950 Melvin Ave. are the subject of applications specifically in Melody Acres. All the property owners are requesting subdivision of one lot into two. In addition to complying with the 20,000 sq.ft. provision, TPOA recommends that all of these projects maintain the horse and animal keeping rights, and that for the adjoining properties the City consider a drainage plan to protect against future flooding, that masonry walls not be built that would block the natural flow of water in this area and, lastly that all street improvements such as curbs, gutters and sidewalks be waived so as to protect the rustic character of this neighborhood. Public hearings have not been scheduled for these cases.

One application outside Melody Acres is at **5530 Donna Avenue**. This case involves a request for a conditional use permit to allow construction of an approximately 11,000 sq.ft. Hindu Meditation Center and accessory structure and is now at the appeal level. A report was issued in September approving the permit, but with the condition that applicant must designate the location of a minimum of 60 off-site parking spaces. TPOA appealed the decision and a hearing scheduled for November 9, 2006 has just been continued to December 14, 2006.

Mann Theater Update - Phase 1 of the construction continues for this upscale shopping center coming to Tarzana with completion scheduled for the early part of next year. Plans for Phase II are underway, and within the next couple of months, TNC will hold a community meeting exclusively on this project. TPOA will keep you posted.

.....Kathy Delle Donne

Mansionization

Building oversized homes that are out of character with the nature of the community is an issue throughout the city. In June, Councilman Tom LaBonge introduced a motion in the City Council concerning the issue. The motion was heard in the Planning and Land Use Committee in August and referred to the Planning and Building and Safety Departments. No report has been released yet, nor has the motion yet been scheduled for committee. We are closely following the issue.

Councilman laBonge's Motion

Preservation of established single-family neighborhood character has emerged as a citywide issue, in both the flat and hillside areas of the City. Changes in land value, housing preference and housing inventory are all playing a part in the trend toward larger and larger single family homes being constructed in the City. These larger homes, however, are often incompatible with the established scale and character of existing single-family neighborhoods.

Current Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) provisions governing building height, yard setbacks and, in hillside areas, building footprint lot coverage are insufficient to address the issues of massing and bulk of single family homes, both in relationship to the property on which they are built and to the neighboring existing homes. For example, a 7,020 square-foot house can be constructed by right on a 5,000 square-foot lot; on a 7,500 square-foot lot, an 11,040 square-foot '(Muse tun be unstilluted/atstf without any variances or other entitlements.

Existing communities and neighborhoods have been demanding interim control ordinances to control this overbuilding. However, ICO's are temporary measures which are meant to curb activity until permanent legislation is approved. Creation of ICO's and processing of hardship exemptions consume staff resources that would be more efficiently used in pursuing a permanent solution. Therefore, rather than creating a patchwork of ICO's, a comprehensive, citywide approach is needed.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of City Planning, in conjunction with the City Attorney and the Department of Building and Safety, be directed to prepare an ordinance amending the LAMC to establish the appropriate size of single family homes in flat and hillside areas. Such ordinance should consider: the size of the structure in relation to the size of the lot (floor area ratio) for both new construction and additions to existing homes, the relationship between percentage of slope and allowable buildable area and amendments to existing Specific Plans and municipal code provisions to ensure consistency.

PRESENTED BY: (s) Tom LaBonge

SECONDED BY: (s) Ed P. Reyes

JUNE 6, 2006

ALPHABET SOUP

That's exactly what it sounds like when Tarzana organizations are referred to as TCCC, TIA, TNC, and TPOA. How is one, particularly a newly arrived resident, to distinguish among them? Their missions are distinctly different. The following profiles will hopefully answer some of the questions you may have.

TIA = TARZANA IMPROVEMENT ASSN.

TIA is a business improvement district ("BID") covering Ventura Boulevard from Reseda Blvd. on the east to Burbank/Crebs on the west. It's composed of property owners and concerned citizens who want to improve the quality of life along Ventura Blvd. The business property owners provide the monies to fund **TIA** expenses.

Since the City of LA has reduced or eliminated services in the area, the group has provided attractive trash receptacles and twice weekly trash pick-up; installed animal silhouettes to street light poles; planted and maintained trees and is currently working with the City to install new street and pedestrian lights along the BID.

If you would like to participate in the BID, please contact *Kathy Delle Donne*.

TNC = TARZANA NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Neighborhood Councils are a product of the 1999 Los Angeles City Charter revision. TNC is one of 83 Neighborhood Councils that have now been formed across the city. They are a part of City government.

TNC receives annual funding of \$50,000 for administration, outreach and community projects. To date, it has funded such projects as children's books and DVD's for the Tarzana Library, trophies and basketball uniforms for the Tarzana Recreation Center, copy paper and digital camera for Tarzana Elementary School, a computer and digital cameras for the local fire station and handicapped accessibility improvements, roof repairs and building of an amphitheater for the Tarzana Community Center. Local organizations — schools, libraries, community organizations — are invited to submit funding requests to its budget committee. Meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Tarzana Elementary School. All are welcome.

TPOA = TARZANA PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

TPOA was formed in 1962 when neighbors were drawn together by a mutual concern over a zoning problem. During these past forty-four years, the Association has been and continues to be involved in a variety of community issues, including but not limited to residential and commercial development, land use planning and zoning, park lands, public safety, recycling, beautification, transportation, etc. It's funding is solely derived from the \$15 annual dues.

TPOA wants a nice residential area and an attractive, successful business district and works with all groups to make this happen. All work is done by volunteers. More volunteers or simply members are welcomed.

The **TPOA** Board meets the second Monday of every month, except July and August, in the Tarzana Community & Cultural Center at 7:30 pm. Meetings are open to all.

TCCC = TARZANA COMMUNITY & CULTURAL CENTER

Every city needs a focal point for community activity and the magic moment came when a garden statuary business on the large corner lot at Ventura Blvd. and Vanalden shut down its kilns. That **TCCC** now occupies that corner is the result of two dreamers named Helen. In print, in this newsletter, Helen Norman gave voice to her dream of a center. Simultaneously, Helen Baker was sharing an identical dream with friends. That was in 1999.

Today you see the result of those dreams. Since its founding by Helen and Robert Baker, **TCCC** has become home to the other Tarzana organizations profiled on this page as well as to the Tarzana Chamber of Commerce. The grounds are under constant development that permit it provide a home for a variety of activities, from Scrapbooking to dog training, from seminars on investment to cooking lessons.

Fund raising is an ongoing necessity. Of the \$1,800,000 purchase price, \$250,000 still remains. So become a member, donate and volunteer.

MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

TPOA would like to encourage increased participation by our membership. One step in that direction is the following survey. We need to know what issues are important to you so that our activities can be channeled in those directions. Please fill in the survey and mail your results to us at Tarzana Property Owners Association, P. O. Box 571448, Tarzana, CA, 91357. The results will be published in the next Newsletter.

We also invite members and other Tarzana homeowners who have an issue that needs our support to attend our meetings as noted on page 2.

Keep your calendars flexible for our Annual Open Meeting and Community Forum to be held next March or early April at the El Caballero Country Club. The exact date and subject for the forum discussion to be announced.

SURVEY

Importance to TPOA			
Item	Very	Somewhat	Not
Mansionization of new housing; large 2-story houses on R1 or RS lots			
Mansionization of new housing; large 2-story houses near lot lines on rural RA lots			
Better enforcement of Building and Safety regulations			
Monitoring of Q conditions on new and existing construction			
Traffic flow on Ventura Blvd			
Traffic flow on streets affected by the Orange Line (Topham/Oxnard, Tampa, Reseda, Wilbur)			
Preservation of current single family residential zoning			
Preservation of current light industry on the Orange Line corridor			
Upgrading of commercial buildings on Ventura Blvd			
Preservation of current height limits on commercial buildings, especially along Ventura Blvd.			
Development of a new commercial center around the Reseda/Orange Line intersection			
Repair of potholes			
Speed humps and stop signs to moderate traffic in interior residential areas			
Homeless/transients soliciting funds, camping in tunnels, other areas			
Long-term (several days) parking of commercial vehicles on residential streets			
Other: add your own item			