

## Westside Village Homeowner Association Is Changing!

By Stacy Shure

Our survey results overwhelmingly showed that our community wanted the Westside Village Homeowners Association (WVHA) to change. More than 80 percent of respondents said they wanted the organization to represent all residents and businesses in our community, not just owners and residents of single-family homes. After holding many community meetings with individuals and a Town Hall meeting, and reviewing written feedback, Westside Village Homeowners Association Board is happy to announce that our new Bylaws are nearing completion; our new name will be filed shortly; and election of our first Board of the **Westside Village Community Council** is scheduled to take place in late September.

### New Board composition and elections

By vote of the Board of the WVHA, the Board of the new Community Council, will be comprised of 11 members as follows:

- **Five Single Family Residential (SFR) At-Large Directors:** Must have been a resident within the WVHA boundaries for at least 1 year, and must provide proof of residency in a single-family home, whether as owner or renter;



*A local young hawk nearly size of an adult, by end of May, jumping to branches, flexing the flight muscles, strengthening the feet and talons. Lifting off of branches, testing the wings.*

Photo by Hartmut Walter, Ph.D.

- **Four Multi-Family Residential (MFR) At-Large Directors:** Must have been a resident within the WVHA boundaries for at least 1 year prior to the date of application, and must provide proof of residency in any of the following: apartment, condominium or co-op, whether as owner or renter;
- **One Business Representative:** Owner or employee of a business within the WVHA boundaries, with letter of authorization to run in the business's name; and
- **One Community Organization Representative:** Authorization needed to run from the named organization. This includes houses of worship within our community boundaries, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts or any other non-profit organization that exists within our boundaries.



Three of the SFR At Large Directors and two of the MFR At Large Directors will hold 2-year terms; two SFR At Large and two MFR At Large Directors and the two specific Representative seats will be for 1-year terms.

WVHA plans to have applications available to download on our website in late August for those who wish to run for the Community Council Board. Completed applications are due to the WVHA for verification and inclusion on the ballot by September 1st. Any member of our community wishing to run for the At-Large Directors positions on the Community Council Board also must obtain the signatures of five members of the community in support of their application for candidacy.

Ballots will be available for download on the WVHA website by September 15th and must be returned to designated drop boxes within our community on specific dates by the end of September. Details regarding the precise dates and location of the ballot drop boxes will be posted on the WVHA website and emailed to residents in our community. The WVHA is also exploring options for electronic voting to improve ease of access and with consideration to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Voting is open to all residents of Westside Village age 18 and over. Proof of residency will be needed when dropping off ballots.

For further details regarding the application process, voting procedures and dates, as well as the election in general, please visit the WVHA website.

### **Committees and Volunteer Opportunities**

We have heard from many people in our community who want to be more involved and are looking for volunteer opportunities. This is it!

The new organization will have several Committees working under the direction of the Board on issues involving land use, transportation, sustainability in our community, safety and resiliency, outreach, events and homeless supportive issues. You don't need to run for the Community Council Board to volunteer to participate on one of the Committees. There is something for everyone, and we encourage you to consider becoming a leader and a voice for Westside Village. Check our website for details on how you can engage in the effort to preserve and improve our special community.

This is our chance, as a community, to ensure that we have representation for and by our own neighbors; determining what our community will look like in the future; providing a safe environment for our children; and furthering our inclusive and diverse community for all newcomers and long-term residents alike. As we face increasing density and developments, this is our opportunity to have a Community Council that understands the needs, ambiance, and history of our corner of this big city, and to make sure that, going into the future, we embrace and preserve the Village that we call home.

### **Why a Community Council?**

The decision to become an independent Community Council (not under the charter of Neighborhood Councils which are run by and through the City of Los Angeles) was driven by community response and support. As an independent Community Council, which is a non-profit organization, we can raise funds to support improvements and events within our own community, as determined by the residents who live here.

Unlike Neighborhood Councils, an independent Community Council has the right to represent the residents of the community and file appeals regarding new developments; to make sure that they are inclusionary; have amenities that will serve our community's needs; and is appropriate in size and density for our neighborhood. City-run Neighborhood Councils do not have this ability and, by remaining independent and community funded and supported, we maintain authority to represent our community without having the City limit our activities.

The WVHA has been in contact with Councilmember Koretz's office (Council District 5) throughout the process of considering this change, and we are pleased that the Councilmember and his staff have given us their complete support in helping us become fully inclusive and representative of all of our residents. Furthermore, we have been assured that we will have regular participation and support from staff of Councilmember Koretz's office, which is not something we have had while associated with a Neighborhood Council that is predominately in Council District 11, represented by Councilmember Bonin.



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This change will help our community get better representation at the City Council, from our County Supervisor's office and State Elected officials as we represent a small community with very specific needs, with preservation of our unique community as one of our primary goals. Currently, Neighborhood Councils operating under Los Angeles City rules (like the Mar Vista Community Council) are not allowed to communicate directly with elected officials other than the Los Angeles City Council and the Mayor. Our Community Council will have no such prohibitions.

## Our new vision

Westside Village's new Community Council will be responsive to Westside Village only. Our needs are unique, our residents are unique, and this change will help Westside Village continue to be unique: a diverse and inclusive community for its residents; supportive of our local businesses; and fully engaged with organizations that operate within our community.

It is the hope of the entire WVHA Board of Directors that this will energize our community in the face of threats against residential zoning, more densification

of the Westside, and promote the specific goals of making lifestyle changes involving sustainability as our community faces the global climate crisis. With an additional emphasis on emergency preparedness, resiliency in the face of disasters, and community self-reliance, as well as special events tailored to our community's interests, we have an opportunity to make the Westside Village Community Council an organization that will represent and lead us all to a brighter future for our little corner of the city.

Please consider running for office and join the volunteers that have been working so hard over the years to ensure the success of the Homeowners Association, and now the new Community Council!

Again, please check our website for further dates and details. And keep an eye on your emails, as there will be quite a few in the future to remind everyone of important dates. In the meantime, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to our Board. We are here to answer any questions, provide information, and help our community as we evolve to the Westside Village Community Council.



## Development, Land Use and Zoning News

By Stacy Shure

Our communities are under attack by legislation that will have a dramatic effect on our neighborhoods and will increase land speculation. The ultimate winners will be developers, not those who need affordable housing.

### State

The California State Legislature left for summer recess on Friday, July 16th, without passing the most onerous and destructive land use bills that were again proposed by the cadre of legislators in Sacramento that wants to outlaw single family residential zoning throughout our state. SB 9 and 10, the two most destructive bills, as well as AB 140 – which allows developers to determine for themselves if they want to provide parking (or not) and how much (the “let them take the bus bill”) – never made it to the floor for a vote before summer recess.

However, AB 1401 is scheduled to be heard on August

16th, the day the legislature returns. The effect on our community would be severe and dramatic: imagine the development proposed at Palms and Sepulveda (which has not engaged further with our community) building 455 apartments without any parking. Under this bill, that would be allowed.

The Wednesday before the legislature took their break (July 14th), a coalition of community leaders in Assembly District 54, of which we are a part, met with our new Assembly Member, Isaac Bryan.

At the meeting, our community leaders (many of whom are on the Westside Village Homeowners Association Board) shared with Assembly Member Bryan our thoughts about SB 9 and 10, which included the fact that neither bill required affordable housing to be constructed; the gentrification and displacement that would occur in our community; and the risks borne by other diverse communities in need of homes that families can afford. We also discussed the need for more infrastructure to accommodate such an increase in development, and the stress on infrastructure we already are experiencing with existing development in our community.

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Assembly Member Bryan would not commit to how he would vote, but assured us that he did not like the bills as written. He stated that he wants to work on housing legislation to specifically address the lack of affordable housing, as opposed to development that would enrich a few developers. We are watching carefully how he votes and will report back to the community.

What can you do in the meantime? We encourage everyone to visit the website for Livable California [www.livablecalifornia.org](http://www.livablecalifornia.org), where there are easy links to contact your state representatives. We also urge everyone to contact the Governor and urge him to veto these bills, if they pass, to protect single-family residential communities. We must maintain pressure for solutions that meet our affordable housing needs as well as getting our unhoused neighbors off the streets and into housing, which none of these bills address.

## Federal

The Federal Infrastructure Bill proposed by President Biden includes the Safe Homes Act, which did not advance in the U.S. Senate last year. Buried in this bill is a prohibition against R-1 single family zoning, particularly for the largest cities and most populous states in the country, including in Los Angeles. This would have the same effect as SB 9 and 10. Although the federal government cannot write zoning laws for our city, President Biden has been clear: cities that do not remove R-1 single family zoning risk losing federal funds for infrastructure, police, federal programs to assist with housing the homeless, etc. We will keep everyone updated as the Infrastructure Bill progresses.

## Homeless Issues

Thus far, we have been unsuccessful in finding a commercial property with enough space to allow a Safe Parking location in our community. Several commercial landlords point to liability issues; problems they might have with their commercial insurance policies for such activities; and the risk of harming their businesses because the Safe Parking organization that met with our community does not screen participants for mental health issues or drug addiction issues. While we want to help those who need (and will accept) the assistance that our community and our city wants to provide, the risk of liability is a major stumbling block. We continue

to seek a location where we can accommodate some form of Safe Parking and will update the community on our efforts.

In the meantime, St. Johns Church, with the support of WVHA, is planning a shoe drive as well as other assistance drives in the future. Please check our website for updates and event announcements.

Everyone in our community has shown a great deal of compassion and willingness to help in any way they can, and we will work to find opportunities to assist our unhoused neighbors.

## The Doctor Is In

*By Ken Alpern, M.D.*

The biggest problem with COVID-19 is the competing messages and conflicting narratives that confuse virtually everyone, but there are some facts that we cannot ignore and that enjoy overall consensus. This article helps address those facts by answering the following questions.

### Should I consider getting vaccinated?

The best protection against COVID-19, including the new Delta Variant which originated in India a few months ago—and more reliable than the antibodies from having contracted COVID-19 already (because they are from older variants)—is to be vaccinated with either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

Ninety-six percent of surveyed American physicians report having been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Let that be your overarching answer to the question of “should I consider getting vaccinated?” because most doctors do “follow the science.”

(LINK: <https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-survey-shows-over-96-doctors-fully-vaccinated-against-covid-19>).

Yet vaccination never has been an impenetrable “shield” against viruses, but rather it “awakens” and steps up your immunity faster than a normal infection ever can. Furthermore, for vaccines to work, high percentages of the general population must be vaccinated (so-called “herd immunity”). Therefore, the greater the percentage of a population that is vaccinated, the more everyone is protected.

There is one certainty, however, as evidenced by what we saw in 2020: getting sick with COVID-19 in the



summer is bad enough, but the aggressive and greater exposure as people head back inside with colder weather makes this virus (as with the flu) much more dangerous. If you're still on the fence about getting vaccinated, please start the two-shot process by October 1!

### **Will vaccination protect me from new variants?**

With the increasing spread of variants, those vaccinated with the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will enjoy the greatest likelihood of protection for the immediate future. Although older and more weakened individuals can get sick or die with the flu or any other virus, including COVID-19, despite being vaccinated, it's very rare. Of 18,000 COVID-19 deaths in the United States during May 2021, only about 150 were fully vaccinated, which is less than 1% (LINK: <https://www.webmd.com/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine/news/20210629/almost-all-us-covid-19-deaths-now-in-the-unvaccinated>).

### **If I am fully vaccinated, should I get a booster?**

The CDC is conducting studies on the need for booster shots, because both COVID-19's older variants and the newer Delta Variant are on the rise. (LINK: <https://www.webmd.com/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine/news/20210714/covid-delta-booster-shots-what-to-know>).

At this time, the FDA has denied a request for an Emergency Use Authorization by Pfizer and Moderna for booster shots for those already vaccinated. My own inquiries to infectious disease and other physician experts have resulted in a consensus that no booster shots are needed for those who received the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

Maybe some weaker and vaccinated individuals will be recommended for booster shots, but that is being studied, and the risks of a third or booster shot are not known to be higher or lower than any potential benefits. It is my own opinion that some people who are immunocompromised, who are around seniors and patients more than others, or who have certain illnesses that prevent a proper response to vaccination will need a booster shot at some point.

### **What is the new mask mandate?**

In Los Angeles County, until the evening of Saturday, July 17th, masks no longer were needed in public

places but still were required in medical settings, on public transport, and in large indoor gatherings. As of now, a new mask mandate exists for all indoor settings such as grocery stores, salons, and restaurants. There are no closures, however, so access to businesses and both private and public venues is unaffected.

The purpose of the new mask mandate is to protect the unvaccinated because, as mentioned above, while a small percentage of vaccinated people have gotten sick from the Delta Variant, it is the unvaccinated who are most at risk of getting COVID-19; having more severe cases; being hospitalized; and dying because of this new and hyper-contagious outbreak.

### **If I am vaccinated, how do I safeguard my vaccine record?**

Below is information provided by the LA County Department of Public Health:

#### **What is the white vaccine record?**

The CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (white card) is the official proof of vaccination. Everyone should be given one when they are vaccinated. Please keep it safe as it cannot be replaced. Consider taking a photo or making a photocopy of it.

#### **What can I do if I lose my white card?**

If you did not get a white card, or you lost it, there are 2 ways to get a copy of your official record from the state's California Immunization Registry (CAIR).

- Ask your primary care provider to look up your vaccination record in the California state immunization registry (CAIR) and give you a copy.

Request a copy of your vaccination record directly from the state immunization registry, CAIR. Please wait at least 2-3 weeks after you are vaccinated before making the request and know that this request may take an additional 2-3 weeks given the high demand. Complete the online Authorization to Release Form. Have a scan or photo of a current official picture ID ready to upload as the form must be completed in a single session. You will receive a record by email. The record can only be requested online and can only be provided by email. For more information, visit [cairweb.org](http://cairweb.org).

#### **Can I get a digital vaccination record?**

- The CDC white card or CAIR record is your official proof of your COVID vaccination. You



may receive a digital record in addition to your white card as a convenience, but it may not be accepted at all places/companies as the official proof of vaccination.

- Several different kinds of digital reminders and records are being used in LA County. The type depends on the record keeping system used by the provider who administered the vaccine. Most systems require the person being vaccinated to give an email address and/or cell phone number when they make an appointment or get vaccinated. Ask your provider when you get your vaccine about a digital record.
- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) has partnered with Healthvana to provide a digital copy of the vaccination record. This is available to people who are vaccinated at locations in Los Angeles County that are run by DPH, the City of Los Angeles, select community clinics (that are not part of a hospital system), and pharmacies. For more information on Healthvana and electronic records, see the DPH “After you get a vaccine” webpage.

See also: What You Need to Know About Your Vaccine Card <https://www.nytimes.com/article/vaccine-covid-card.html?referringSource=articleShare>

**Note: Laminating your card will make it more durable if you’re planning to carry it around in your wallet, but that would prevent information from any possible future booster shots from being added.**

## Preparedness Update – Don’t Count Yourself Out

By Valerie Fontaine

After a disaster such as an earthquake, traditional first responders will be busy elsewhere (we hope—that means we are not the worst off), so we will need to rely on each other. We will need everyone, even our seniors, those with little or no preparedness training, and those with other limitations, to pitch in. There will be a role for all Westside Village residents to play—and that means YOU!

Even if you think there is not much you can do to

help, community members with more training will direct your efforts and can use your help in a variety of ways—even if it’s just to lend an extra pair of hands, watchful eyes, or a calming presence. Not everything that needs to be done requires strength, agility, endurance, or advanced knowledge. So, please, don’t count yourself out. After you make sure that you, your family and home, and your neighbors are safe, please join others in the effort to help those in need.

That is what the Neighborhood Team Program (NTP) is all about. NTP organizes neighbors, both CERT-trained and untrained into Neighborhood Emergency Teams. In this program, CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) volunteers who have completed a 7-week disaster preparedness course taught by the LA Fire Department instruct neighborhood participants in personal, family, and limited group preparedness and disaster response skills.

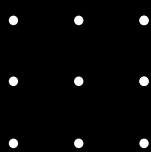
Westside Village, along with Palms Neighborhood Council and Mar Vista Community Council is in the process of presenting a series of monthly online trainings, starting last May and concluding in September. Past sessions covered basic disaster preparedness, disaster first aid, light search and rescue, and disaster radio communications. Upcoming on the September 13 session will cover situational awareness and security after a disaster. These programs are on Monday nights from 7-8:30pm on Zoom. Register for them online on [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com) to get a link to join.

Don’t worry if you missed any of the sessions as videos of them, along with other preparedness training videos, are available at <https://www.youtube.com/c/LAFDCERTCoordinators/videos> You may watch them at your convenience and for free.

Do you want to receive notifications of upcoming NTP sessions and disaster preparedness trainings offered in our neighborhood? If so, sign up on the CERT mailing list at <https://join.ntp-la.org>. This resource is open to everyone, not just those who have taken the CERT training. And you do not need to join or commit to volunteering for anything; you can take these classes solely for your own personal preparedness. If you haven’t taken any training, you’re especially encouraged to sign up so you can get started at your own pace.



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When filling out the form, click the selection stating that you live in the Battalion 18 area, type in your neighborhood as Westside Village, and designate Fire Station 43 as your local LAFD station. That way, you'll receive only those notifications appropriate to this area. We take your privacy very seriously and do not share your information with anyone outside of CERT administrative leadership.

Note: CERT/NTP now uses this consolidated mailing list for all disaster preparedness notifications. Therefore, even if you received emails about upcoming programs and events in the past, you won't continue to do so unless you sign up on this mailing list. (You will continue to receive emails from WVHA, however, if you have provided your email to the Association.)

Remember, in a disaster situation, we will need to rely on ourselves and our neighbors for a period of up to several weeks. So, let's all work together to get prepared.

## Family Movie Night at St. John's Presbyterian Church Wed. August 25 at 6:30 pm

With grilled burgers, hot dogs. Free with a suggested donation of \$2 per person or \$5 per family for food.

Please let us know what you think.

If you wish to contribute to News and Views, please email us at [board@westsidevillage.org](mailto:board@westsidevillage.org) Visit us at [www.westsidevillage.org](http://www.westsidevillage.org)

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Our newsletter is written and produced by volunteers.

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If you are interested in submitting an article please reply to [board@westsidevillage.org](mailto:board@westsidevillage.org)

All articles are subject to acceptance and editing.