

KENTWOOD HOME GUARDIANS

February 2014

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Office Hours M-W & F 8:30 AM -12:30 PM

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President's Message

Over the last 3 months our Board and its Committees have been very active in trying to offer information, access and value to our Membership. It has been a busy and exciting quarter.

On November 20th, KHG sponsored a **Community Safety and Security Forum**. Over 350 attendees heard presentations from senior officers of the LAPD, from the Facebook group "Moms of Westchester/Playa Del Rey" and from Neighborhood Watch organizer Cyndi Hench. Residents voiced a real interest in the Forum topics during the following Q & A session. An **Ad Hoc Committee for Kentwood Safety and Security** will be formed composed of KHG members working with the Board to promote Neighborhood Watch and other strategies for a safer Kentwood. Interested Members are encouraged to volunteer for this Committee. Please email me at Loren@kentwoodhomeguardians.com.

Our **Architectural Committee** is now working at full strength and is fortunate to have 3 architects on this 5-member Committee. It is the responsibility of this Committee to safeguard and promote standards required by our governing documents. New development plan review, street improvement efforts, and addressing specific land use concerns of our residents has created a full agenda for this working Committee.

The collection of the **Annual Assessment** has been effectively overseen by Suzann Rogers, our dedicated Operations Manager. Assessments are minimal annual obligations of each KHG property owner. In fairness to all of our Members, payment of delinquent assessment obligations will be enforced in this upcoming quarter. Let's all work together to bring payments current.

Our May election is near. The **Ad Hoc Elections Committee** has just completed and submitted to the Board an updated set of rules to govern our upcoming elections. The Board's intent is to conduct and monitor elections within our Association and not to rely on a fee-based outside company. To attract interested, dedicated candidates and to oversee a fair election process within our Association is what we should expect of ourselves.

We hope 2014 will be a year of accomplishment and renewed member involvement within our Association. A very happy and healthy New Year to each of you!

-Loren Davis, KHG Board President

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KENTWOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY REPORT

18 homes were burglarized in Kentwood, Playa del Rey, Loyola Village and Osage during January, 2014, according to LAPD crimemapping. (This may actually understate the number since there is frequently a lag before crimes are posted.) **Officer Chris Richardson**, an LAPD Senior Lead Officer for Westchester, reports that following the neighborhood safety and security meetings in November, multiple arrests were made of burglary suspects. Alert neighbors noticed unusual activity and notified the police. During the last two weeks of January, however, a new rash of burglaries has alarmed the neighborhood. Although suspects with stolen property were arrested recently, it is too soon to know if these suspects are part of a ring responsible for the recent break-ins.

Officer Richardson believes that public awareness and efforts to be vigilant have the potential to significantly reduce criminal activity in our community. The best way to encourage the maintenance of this vigilance is through **Neighborhood Watch**. Officer Richardson stated that *"we need to push for more Neighborhood Watch involvement in order to continue to make headway against these crimes. Ruben Garcia [LAPD Senior Lead Officer] and I are asking local residents to volunteer as super-block captains for Neighborhood Watch."*

Kentwood Home Guardians is currently forming an Ad Hoc Committee for Safety and Security which will work with our Senior Lead Officers and Cyndi Hensch, NW organizer for Westchester/Playa to grow and help organize Neighborhood Watch in Kentwood. **This is our neighborhood. If you would like to make a positive impact and help to maintain the quality of life in Kentwood, please contact Loren Davis at Loren@kentwoodhomeguardians.com.**

-Mary Putnam

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCESS

Are you planning on remodeling the exterior of your home or rebuilding your home? Did you know that it is

a requirement of the KHG Declaration of Protective Restrictions (DPRs) to submit your plans to the KHG office to be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Review Committee before you build?

It's an easy process:

- Before you start any construction submit your plans, both hardcopy and via email, to the KHG office.
- The Architectural Review Committee will review the plans and send you a report within thirty days of submission.
- The report will indicate if you are in compliance with the KHG DPRs and include suggestions and concerns you may want to discuss with your architect/builder.

Please remember that this process is meant to benefit the entire community. If guidelines for building size, setbacks, roof styles, etc. are adhered to, then the ***unique quality of Kentwood*** can be maintained.

If you have questions, concerns, or need help submitting your plans, contact the KHG office for assistance.

The KHG office is located at:

8921 S. Sepulveda Blvd, Suite 102, LA, CA 90045

310-670-5111

email: srogers@kentwoodhomeguardians.com

-Maria Warner, Architectural Committee

EMERSON/MANCHESTER DEVELOPMENT

There is a proposed project to build twelve single-family homes on the corner of Emerson and Manchester. The plan is to add twelve three-story homes with roof top gardens on a 19,000 square foot parcel. Each is an individual single-family home, the owner of which will be responsible for upkeep of both the exterior of the home and the adjacent landscaping. The walls between the homes are separated by a six-inch gap that will be enclosed to protect against weather, trash, and animal habitation. As a result, it will appear to be one contiguous building rather than individual homes.

These plans have been reviewed by the KHG Architectural Committee and a report has been returned to the developer with the feedback and concerns of the Committee. The developer also held a meeting on December 28, 2013 with adjacent community members. The main concerns of both the KHG Architectural Committee and the neighboring residents were: parking, refuse pick up, density and height of the project, safety risks due to increased traffic, overall visual design of the project, and potential impact on adjacent residences.

The Developer presented the project plans to the Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUC) of the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa on January 21, 2014. The PLUC Committee tentatively approved the project with the stipulations that: 1)the developer would provide an environmental report showing that the site is free of any hazardous material and 2) the developer would explain how the home buyers will be required through an enforceable document to maintain the exterior of the buildings and common areas. The NCWP will review this at their next meeting on February 4 at 6:30 pm.

-Maria Warner, Architectural Committee

PROPOSED CHICK-FIL-A RESTAURANT

Chick-fil-A has submitted plans to open a restaurant on the corner of Sepulveda and Manchester at the site of the old Grinder Restaurant. The proposal includes sit-down dining both inside and outside and a drive-through. Chick-fil-A submitted their plans to the KHG Architectural Committee for review, and made a formal presentation to the January KHG Board meeting. The developers also presented their plans to the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa (NCWP) Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUC) at their January 21, 2014 meeting.

Feedback from all meetings has included: the limited number of parking spaces for patrons, potential back-up traffic onto Manchester at peak business hours, concerns with left-hand turns from eastbound lanes of

Manchester, noise from order boxes, and the lack of a lighting plan.

The developers have responded to many of these concerns. Among other concessions, Chick-fil-A has added off-site parking for staff, moved the pick-up window to allow more cars in line to address the Manchester traffic issue, implemented noise-sensitive ordering boxes to decrease noise, and planned lighting that would not be intrusive to neighboring homes and apartment buildings.

PLUC also requested information on signage and a traffic barrier to prohibit left-hand turns from the eastbound lanes on Manchester. The Chick-fil-A representative also noted that they would remove the trees on Manchester up to Kentwood Ave to assist in the cost of sidewalk repair and planting new trees. PLUC requested that Chick-fil-A clarify if they would repair the sidewalks on Manchester up to Kentwood Ave or just remove the trees. Chick-fil-A will submit additional information at the next PLUC meeting in February.

-Maria Warner, Architectural Committee

PROPOSED KHG ELECTION RULES REVISIONS

KHG's Board is currently drafting revisions to the Election Rules that were enacted shortly before last year's Board Election. Key goals of these revisions are to avoid delayed elections (as occurred last year) and to enable KHG to conduct the election without the high expense of hiring an outside consultant. The Board is also trying to clarify the candidate nomination process to encourage more participation.

The Revisions will be posted on KHG's website by early March, and will be mailed to all members. Member comments may be submitted to the KHG Board by email to info@kentwoodhomeguardians.com. Public comment is invited at the April KHG Meeting during Board consideration of this matter.

-Craig Callahan, Ways and Means Committee

MAY 2014 BOARD ELECTION NOMINATIONS

In late May 2014, KHG will hold an election for two seats on KHG's Board of Directors, each for two year

terms. As Board members, Directors manage KHG's operations and policies, with monthly Board meetings and related activities. These are volunteer positions, which benefit this community and its members. The only required qualifications are: 1. candidates must be Members of KHG and, 2. candidates must be current in payment of their assessments.

A Candidate Nomination Form will be mailed to all Members in March. Candidate nominations will be accepted through mid-April. Details about the election process can be obtained from the KHG Office.

All members are welcome who wish to participate and make a difference in our community!

-Craig Callahan, Ways and Means Committee

KHG FINANCIAL REPORTING

We have completed the format and content changes for the monthly financial reporting. Our goals are to make the financial statements transparent, informative, complete and concise.

There are three parts to the monthly financial reporting package: the Balance Sheet, the Profit/Loss Statement and the Profit/Loss Statement projection (the Outlook).

The purpose of the **Balance Sheet** is to show our financial position at a point in time. For example, the balance sheet will show how much cash KHG currently has, how much the cash balance has changed this year, and how the current cash balance compares to the end of the last fiscal year.

The **Profit and Loss Statement** shows revenue, expenses, and profit/loss at the end of a monthly period and fiscal year-to-date (YTD). A comparison is made to the Budget. These comparisons show how much we expected in profit this month (the Budget) and how that compares to what actually happened (the Actuals).

The last of the monthly financial reports is the **Outlook**. The Outlook is a month-by-month financial projection which shows the monthly financial results for each past month and the monthly budget for each month that is

left in the fiscal year. The total of the YTD monthly actuals plus the remaining monthly budgets shows where KHG expects to end the fiscal year.

If you have any questions or suggestions about the monthly financial reporting, please join us at the next KHG Board meeting and we will gladly listen to suggestions and answer any questions.

-Clay Turner CPA, KHG Treasurer

UPDATE ON THE SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association (WSIA) and Westchester Town Center Business Improvement District (BID) will be improving the streetscape on the **west** side of Sepulveda Blvd from **Howard Hughes Pkwy to 77th St** before the **end of February, 2014**. This is funded by a grant from Arden Management, the developers of the Howard Hughes Center.

WSIA, Westchester Lutheran Church, and Covenant Presbyterian Church worked together to complete the improvements on the **west** side of Sepulveda Blvd from **77th St to 80th St** in **2013**.

The remaining portion of the **west** side of Sepulveda, from **80th St to 84th Pl**, received funding from a Maxine Waters' earmark from the federal government. Federal government funding entails certain restrictions. Only defined parties are allowed to receive the funding. In this case, the work must be done by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering.

The City of Los Angeles first promised to start the work on this remaining portion of Sepulveda Blvd in March, 2013, but ran into unexpected delays. WSIA, a community non-profit, donated \$30,000 and arranged for the tree removal on the **west** side of Sepulveda Blvd. **between 80th St. and 84th Pl**, on the understanding that the sidewalk and curb improvement was to take place immediately thereafter. The **latest promise from the City** is that the sidewalk and curb improvement on this portion will be **completed in 2014**.

On the **east** side of Sepulveda Blvd. the City of Los Angeles received a \$625,000 grant from the federal program for "Safe Routes to Schools" to repair the sidewalks and curbs from **79th St. to 83rd St.** The City of LA **plans to complete this work in 2014.**

The repair and landscaping of the remaining portion of the **east** side of Sepulveda Blvd. from **79th St to Howard Hughes Pkwy** will be funded by a \$1 million grant from Equity Office Partners, developers of the Howard Hughes Center. **No date has yet been set** for this work. An additional \$850,000 grant from Equity Office partners will be invested and the investment yield will be used to fund maintenance of landscaping throughout the community, including on Sepulveda Blvd.

If you have questions, you may email info@WestchesterStreetscape.org; write to Westchester Streetscape Improvement Association, 8726 S. Sepulveda Blvd, Suite D, #1621, Westchester, CA 90045; or telephone (310) 225-7630.

--Don Duckworth, *BID Executive Director*
and John Ruhlen, *WSIA President*

KENTWOOD BURGLARIES: WHEN DO YOU CALL THE POLICE?

The LAPD Senior Lead Officers for Westchester Chris Richardson and Ruben Garcia, LAPD Detective Robyn Salazar, Cyndi Hensch of Neighborhood Watch, and Cherie Dame of "Moms of Westchester/PDR" answered important questions at the **Kentwood Home Guardians Safety and Security Meeting** on November 20 at Covenant Presbyterian Church Hall.

When do you call the police? What should you do if you see unfamiliar people sitting in an idling car on your street? What if the people have a nice car and appear well-dressed, but are behaving suspiciously? What if you see people going door-to-door, trying doorknobs or gates and staring up driveways?



Loren Davis Addresses the KHG Safety Meeting

According to Westchester Senior Lead Officers Chris Richardson and Ruben Garcia, you should call the police immediately!

- **If you see a crime in progress, or if you see persons matching the description of suspects, call 911 and ask for an officer dispatch.**
- **If you are suspicious, call (877) ASK-LAPD.**
- It is important to make a **knowledge-based call**. Tell the operator that the senior lead officers in Westchester (who are familiar with the types of property crime in our area) have instructed residents to report suspicious activity and to ask for an **informational broadcast** (a radio broadcast to Pacific Division officers).

How do you increase neighborhood safety? Officers Richardson and Garcia and Detective Salazar recommend the following:

- **"Lock it, Hide it, Keep it":** Always lock the windows and doors of your house, even if you are gone only a short time. According to Detective Salazar, burglaries can take less than 10 minutes. Lock the doors of your vehicle and remove property inside from sight.
- **"Harden Your Target":** Make it more difficult for thieves to break in easily by installing a home security system or cameras, motion-sensor lights, and locking gates.

- **Never open your door to a stranger.** Some criminals pose as contractors, salesmen and utility workers. Just say through the closed door that you are not interested.
- **Start or join a Neighborhood Watch group on your block.** Cyndi Hench, a community advisor for Neighborhood Watch, pointed out that when people know their neighbors, their cars and their habits, they begin to take ownership of their block. They pay attention to suspicious behavior and people who do not belong and immediately call the LAPD.

What should you look out for?

- Groups of 3 strangers, the driver (frequently a female) sits in an idling car (new, rented), a male looks out, and a male breaks in. They have previously cased the street, and are in and out of the target home in less than 10 minutes. If your neighbor is robbed, they have probably been studying your house, too.
- “Knock-knock” burglars go door to door, knocking to see if anyone is home. If there is no answer, they go to the side and look up the driveway, or around the back if the gate is unlocked, checking for open doors or windows, or ways to break in. If someone is home, they may pose as contractors, salesmen, or utility workers.
- Thieves are looking for unlocked cars. They will walk along streets trying car doors until they find one open. Sometimes they remove property from the car, sometimes they may even steal the car.

How can neighbors stay informed?

- Westchester/ Playa del Rey **Neighborhood Watch** Block Captains are part of a Yahoo group which stays apprised of current criminal activity in our specific area. Each Block Captain has the emails of the neighbors on his/her block and keeps them informed.

- The Facebook group, “**Moms of Westchester/Playa del Rey**” (specifically for mothers of young children), updates moms frequently about safety and security concerns.
- Crime reporting is available at **LAPDonline.org**. For the latest crime mapping information, choose “*crimemapping*,” scroll down, choose “*Pacific Division*,” and check the box in the upper right-hand corner to select the dates you are interested in.
- **KHG is forming a Safety and Security Committee. Please become involved!** The goal of this committee is to make use of the upcoming improvements to the KHG website and the KHG Facebook page to keep members up to date on safety and security issues pertinent to Kentwood.

For specific questions, please contact:

Senior Lead Officer Ruben Garcia: (310)622-3978; 33236@LAPD.LACity.org

Senior Lead Officer Chris Richardson: (310)622-3976; 27443@LAPD.LACity.org

Detective Robyn Salazar: 33687@LAPD.LACity.org

Cyndi Hench: cyndiah@aol.com

-Mary Putnam

LMU DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS TO SPEAK AT KHG MEETING

Grace Yao, new Director of Community Relations for LMU, will address community concerns regarding LMU parking issues, LMU student off-campus behavior and student rental issues at the upcoming KHG Board Meeting:

**KHG February Board Meeting
Westchester Fire Station
8900 S. Emerson Ave.
Wednesday, February 19 7PM**

