

THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



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P.O. BOX 4916, VALLEY VILLAGE, CA 91617

SB 50 - Beware - The More Homes Act?

On Tuesday, April 2, Senate Bill 50, also known as the More Homes Act, had its first hearing by the State Senate Committee on Housing in Sacramento. The Committee voted to move it on to the Governance & Finance Committee where it is scheduled to be heard on April 24. Scott Wiener introduced the bill as an "improved" version of SB 827 which was killed last year in its first committee hearing because it argued that local municipalities should be forced to build more densely near transit in order to ease housing affordability and work toward improving traffic congestion (and mobility) for California residents.

While most residents agree that the lack of affordable housing in California is a real problem, the removal of a community's ability to design its own neighborhood was viewed as undesirable by most constituents.

The bill has been brought back as SB 50, which aims to allow near automatic approval, with reduced review, for 4- and 5-story buildings near all high-frequency mass transit stops. In Valley Village, the obvious stop that comes to mind is the Orange Line at Laurel Canyon and Chandler. However, the bill notes that additional waivers be granted if the residential development is located within a 1/2-mile radius of a rail or train stop or 1/4-mile of a high-quality bus corridor.

As defined, a "high-quality" bus corridor refers to a corridor with a fixed-route bus service that has peak-hour service at 15-minute intervals or less. Valley Village has 2 northbound bus routes that fit this criterion. Under SB 50, that would potentially mean that high-density, reduced parking residential developments exceeding the Valley Village Specific Plan could be built without regard to community input or local municipality guidelines within a 1/4-mile radius of the Orange Line, or a 1/2-mile along Laurel Canyon Boulevard.

The Valley Village Homeowners Association is not in favor of removing local control from the City Charter of Los Angeles and deplores the disregard of the community's input via the North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plans and Valley Village Specific Plan. We are also concerned about the impact to the local infrastructure, for which there is no provision or requirement to improve within the bill. We will be monitoring this bill carefully and providing feedback to our local and state representatives.

The text of the bill can be read here: http://bit.ly/SB50_2019

Rob's Beat

Hello again, Villagers!

The first quarter of 2019 has flown by! YTD, we are at just about a 2.5% increase in overall crime. Don't panic, that's only an increase of four total crimes. That said, Valley Village continues to be one of the lowest crime areas in the south valley.

Grand Theft Auto and Burglary from motor vehicles are both significantly down this year. The absence of personal/valuable items in cars does have an impact on break-ins. Meanwhile, burglary and personal/petty theft are both up.

One of the best ways to prevent personal theft is to pay attention to your belongings. Don't turn your back on your purses, bags, wallets, phones, tablets, etc., while you're out and about. As to burglary, here are some prevention tips:

- Assess all locks on your windows and doors
- Hide valuables from plain sight
- Add motion-sensor lights near doors and windows
- Keep curtains and blinds closed
- Store ladders and tools that could be used to assist in home entry in a locked shed or garage
- Install a secured wireless network home defense system with an updated camera system.

There are many more things that can be done. Be creative and if you have ideas for crime prevention, please share them.

Best, Rob Benavidez, Senior Lead Officer, Valley Village

"Communicate, Participate, Legislate"

Notes from the Meeting, January 16

At its annual general meeting on January 16, the members of the Association present agreed that a change in electing board members should be made and that such change should be reflected in our bylaws. The decision: That candidates would be voted onto the board as members at large and appoint the officers at their first board meeting or soon thereafter. It was further voted by a show of hands that the election that night would be administered under this approved procedure and that the new board will work on new wording in Section 5.05 of the bylaws and bring it to the next annual meeting of the Association in January 2020. For reference, please see the Association bylaws on the website.

Approved the appointment of officers: Beth Fulton as President, Dorothy Apple, Vice President, Morgan Loy and Gil Shorr, co-Secretary, Ellen Wilhelm, Treasurer. ~ Agreed to the following areas of focus: protect parts of the VV Specific Plan within the new Community Plans; create specific projects to alleviate the homelessness situation; grow our membership; update the bylaws.

The VVHA Board:

President: Beth Fulton
Vice President: Dorothy Apple
Co-Secretary: Morgan Loy
Co-Secretary: Gil Shorr
Treasurer: Ellen Wilhelm

Boardmembers at Large:

Glenn Block
Octavio Chaidez
Sandy Hubbard
Jimmy Martinez
Marc Woersching

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Lori Dinkin	Jerry Fagin
Beth Fulton	Ginny Hatfield
Paul Hatfield	Sandy Hubbard
Karen Kaysing	Suzanne Lewis
Jimmy Martinez	Ellen Wilhelm
Marc Woersching	

A Letter from the President

Hello Neighbors,

In January I was appointed as the new President of the Valley Village Homeowners Association (VVHA). I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you, our members.

I have lived in Valley Village for 17 years. My husband Dave and I have two children, Nick and Mckenna. Our son, who is 20, is a junior at UC Berkeley, and our daughter, 12, attends The Wesley School. Both of them attended Colfax Charter Elementary back in the day.

I am truly delighted to take on this role within the Association. And I look forward to using my previous experience as chair of the Neighborhood Council (NCVV) Planning and Land Use committee to ensure that our Association maintains its watchdog work on all development projects in Valley Village.

There are many reasons that I cherish this neighborhood – the sense of community, the beautiful trees, the July 4th Parade and the overall quality of life. Unfortunately, our neighborhood is facing some significant challenges – the rising homeless population, the potential changes to the Community and over-development, the loss of mature trees and a rise in certain crimes.

I have long admired the work that the VVHA has done to help improve the standard of living in Valley Village and I look forward to continuing that work with the challenges ahead. Thank you to all of those who support VVHA through your membership – your support gives us the momentum to sustain the vital advocacy that is needed to protect our neighborhood, and I look forward to working with you all [or getting to know you all] in the coming year.

Best, Beth Fulton

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VVHA AND NCVV?

Sometimes there is a bit of confusion about the difference between the Valley Village Homeowners Association and Neighborhood Council Valley Village – and even whether they are different organizations.

First of all, yes, these are two distinct organizations - with different constituencies and functions. But they also complement each other and collaborate to achieve shared goals.

VVHA is a private non-profit organization whose members are residents (both renters and homeowners). It was founded in 1993 by a group of homeowners to advocate on issues that affect Valley Village. Because it represents only residents, it is focused primarily on quality-of-life issues such as public safety and out-of-character develop-ment. As a private organization, the VVHA has autonomy subject only to its bylaws.

Historically, VVHA successfully fought for a Specific Plan to protect the character of the neighborhood and participated in the creation of the neighborhood council. And, VVHA created and organizes the July 4th Parade.

NCVV is different – it is a part of the City of Los Angeles government structure. As such, it is subject to City laws, regulations and oversight. The 96 Neighborhood Councils in LA were created in 2002 by the City to serve as each neighborhood's liaison with City departments and officials. A key difference with VVHA is that NCVV represents all "stakeholders," which includes residents, businesses, community organizations, employees and property owners.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LORI!!!



Lori Dinkin, most honored and beloved Valley Village resident, will celebrate her 100th birthday in June! Lori is a founding member of Valley Village Homeowners Association and long-time president. In that capacity, she was known and respected by elected officials throughout the area for her outspoken and direct style. She attended most City meetings and hearings in-person and was well known in City Hall.

While Lori was president, the Association wrote and pushed state legislation regarding the growing proliferation of billboards. It did not pass, but it did result in the removal of billboards on Chandler Boulevard, where Lori's unrelenting negotiations also led to the irrigation and planting of the Orange Line busway, not only through Valley Village but along the entire route.

The gateway sign at Laurel Canyon Boulevard and the 101 Freeway was conceived, designed, funded and installed during Lori's presidency. And the 170 sound wall that is finally being built today? Lori advocated and began the process for that radical improvement over two decades ago!

Lori volunteered at other organizations too, and had a long career at Kaiser. She is a wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her many years of devotion to Valley Village are incomparable. Thank you, Lori, and HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

City's Costly, Improper Fees For House Additions Rescinded

For most Los Angeles communities, additions to houses require only building permit fees. However, since 2016, the City has improperly required Valley Village homeowners to obtain Specific Plan Project Permits, and pay fees of more than \$5,000 for additions of less than 200 sq.ft., and more than \$8,000 for larger projects.

In 2000, the City Council approved an ordinance that required Project Permits for developments within Specific Plan areas – but was intended only for commercial and multi-family projects. Prior to 2016, additions to single-family homes in Valley Village did not require a project permit fee. However, un-expectedly and improperly, in 2016 the City started imposing these fees in our area.

On March 1, 2019, the City's Director of Planning, Vince Bertoni, issued a Valley Village Specific Plan Implementation Guidance memorandum rescinding the imposition of project permit fees, stating "... single-family projects that comply with Specific Plan regulations are not to be subject to the Project Permit Compliance processes...."

Though single-family home addition/remodel projects will not be subject to the project permits going forward, it is unclear whether homeowners who paid these excessive fees pre-March 1, 2019 will have their monies refunded. VVHA will continue to help homeowners seek refunds (see how-to article to the right).

It does indeed "take a village" to effect change – council office, neighborhood organizations, homeowner participation – but there are usually a couple of people who are the moving force behind the success of any great endeavor. In this case, the community owes a debt of gratitude to Glenn Block and Dan Caplan for their stalwart efforts on behalf of Valley Village. Dan eloquently lobbied the case before key members of the Planning Department, and Glenn pursued the matter relentlessly through bureaucratic channels. This major win would not have occurred without their dedication.

A PARTY FOR LORI!



Valley Village Homeowners Association will host a **PARTY** for Lori Dinkin on:

**SUNDAY, JUNE 9
11:00am to 1:00pm
Valley Village Park**

RSVP to Dorothy Apple at appledorothy@gmail.com

Please send Lori a birthday card to celebrate her 100th year!!

**c/o Valley Village Homeowners Association
PO Box 4916
Valley Village, CA 91617**

**Or email:
mail@ValleyVillageHA.com**

LOOKING FOR IMPACTED HOMEOWNERS

Have you recently expanded the size of your home and had to pay an exorbitant fee to the City of Los Angeles for Project Permit Compliance? (Please refer to the article to the left for background.)

If you did:

- (1) You are entitled to file a Claim for a Refund and should go to the website <http://www.ladbs.org/>, and search for the Claim form. You will need to provide proof of payment.
- (2) Residents who were impacted by this now-rescinded fee are joining together to seek redress.

If you had to send your home expansion plans to Project Permit Compliance, please reach out to VVHA at mail@ValleyVillageHA.com with a synopsis of your experience and we will do what we can to help you.

Mixed Results NOHO West Sign Changes

In early March the Los Angeles City Council approved a set of revisions to the sign district for the NoHo West project that is redeveloping the site of the former Laurel Plaza Shopping Center in response to an application by the developer to amend the ruling to allow additional signage and hours of lighting. Our Association supported Laurel Grove Homeowners Association in opposing the appeal.

The revised amendments negotiated with the developer and the Council Office by Laurel Grove Homeowners Association are complex and make it difficult to determine whether there is a net benefit to the surrounding community, here are a few examples of the arguments:

On one hand, two key provisions are retained in the billboard reduction program: the ratio of square feet of existing billboard sign area to be taken down in exchange for square feet of new signage remains at 10:1 to 2:1 for digital signs and at 5:1 to 1:1 for supergraphics signs. On the other hand, these are offset by a reduction in the area from which billboards are to be removed in the reduction program from a three-mile radius around the NoHo West project to a one-mile radius, reducing the number of billboards that can be taken down with more unsightly billboards remaining.

On one hand, a visual improvement program was added, to be utilized if, due to the reduction in the radius from three miles to one mile, there are an insufficient number of billboards available to be taken down to enable all the square feet of digital and supergraphics signs to be put up. The visual improvement program would improve existing parks and pocket parks in the area, landscape the sidewalks, parkways and street medians in the area, plant trees on streets and parkways, and undertake community beautification projects, community cleanups and graffiti removal. On the other hand, signs in the interior of the project not facing the surrounding streets, both digital and supergraphic, are exempt from the billboard reduction program, resulting in fewer billboards that need to be removed in exchange for the digital and supergraphic signs and thus less of a need to utilize the visual improvement program.

On one hand, there are lower square foot limits of 630 and 925 square feet for the digital signs allowed on the north and south sides of the parking structure – less than the 1,200 square feet allowed for a third digital sign on the east side of the parking structure. On the other hand, the two signs are new signs not permitted by the previous version of the sign district approved last year.

On one hand, there is no increase in the number of hours that digital signs can be on at night. On the other hand the rate of change for advertisements on the digital signs has been increased from one ad per minute to one ad every ten seconds, allowing a six-fold increase in the number of ads that can be shown.

Thus, while there are no doubt benefits to the Laurel Grove community, there are also concessions to the developer that make it ambiguous as to who really prevailed in the negotiations and who received the short end of the stick.

Village 'vents

Saturday, April 27

Free Shredding Event

8:00am to Noon

Valley Village Park

Hesby Street & Westpark Drive

Bring your shreddable papers, as well as old batteries and used light bulbs. Also collecting: protein canned and dry goods, like pasta and rice, for the Food Pantry. Contact: Ginny Hatfield 818-970-4577 or Suzanne Lewis 818-679-1153.

Monday, April 29

Colfax School Project Meeting

6:00pm

Colfax Charter School Auditorium

Colfax Avenue & Addison Street

Discussing project overview and timeline, improvements to landscape and farm area and configuration of the parking lot. Plus Q&A time.

Thursday, May 16

Neighborhood Council Valley

Village Board Elections

4:00pm to 8:00pm

Faith Presbyterian Church

5000 Colfax Avenue

For more information:

www.MyValleyVillage.com

Saturday, May 18

Colfax World Fair

11:00am to 7:00pm

Colfax Charter School Grounds

Colfax Avenue

Major fundraising event of the year! This community event is for everyone and it benefits the school by enriching its education, arts and music programs. There will be rides, games, booths, delicious food, an amazing silent auction and lots of fun for the whole family! Local businesses and organization all come together to support Colfax and you can find more information at www.ColfaxWorldFair.com.

We hope to see you at the fair! Come out and have fun while supporting your neighborhood school!

Park Praise

Had Spring finally come? After cold and rainy days that seemed to go on forever Valley Villagers could finally see the sun shining through our many trees. A week before Spring officially arrived, it was a blustery day, as Winnie the Pooh would say, and at the Valley Village Park butterflies were taking advantage of the winds as they migrated from northern Mexico to Oregon where they breed. Hundreds of them were fluttering over the brilliant greenery. It was an amazing sight to see these Painted Ladies which at a glance one might take for Monarchs because the similarities are strong.



Dozens of children in the playground area stopped to watch the butterflies as did the adults, this writer among them, and the dogs walking with their people looked up. The hawks have returned to their nest on one of the tall trees along the 170 freeway. Surely this, like a blooming crocus, was a sign that Spring had come!

On Saturdays and Sundays the park is busy with children learning how to play soccer. Usually there are parties having a good time in the table area, kindly observing the no-bouncer signs. And on weekdays the park is host to people riding bikes or walking on the footpaths, and in the early evening, dozens of dogs romp across the lawn. But our park, it must be said, is busiest on the morning of the Fourth of July when the Association celebrates our members with an old-fashioned parade and refreshments.

Our park is a wonderful place to forget our human troubles and reconnect with other creatures who share the planet with us, and it provides one good reason to call Valley Village home.

In Memoriam – Tom Paterson

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Tom Paterson in late-March.

A native of Chicago, he spent much of his life in Valley Village, where he served as the first president of the Valley Village Homeowners Association. He also served on the founding board of Neighborhood Council Valley Village, which was certified in 2002.

Tom was one of several residents who worked assiduously to create the Valley Village Specific Plan. It was no easy task, spanning six years (1985-1991) of negotiations and multiple City Council votes. Tom was also the Valley Village point person on the Burbank Airport when the airport authority was being established and he continued represent our interests in getting the FAA to establish a noise curfew. His expertise on land issues helped keep development in check and he also fought against those mini-mansions referred to at that time as “stucco mountains.”

Valley Village has much to be grateful to Tom for. His efforts largely maintained the small-town character of our community. With repeated legislative assaults on our quality of life, it is increasingly important for us to carry on his work and resist such measures as SB 50.

Residents Fight Crime With Private Security Patrol

In the last few years we have seen a dramatic rise in particular crimes in our area, such as car break-ins, stolen packages, burglaries, etc. In response, a group of Valley Village residents, led by Jon Sanserino, came together to work on a solution. After learning that other local neighborhoods were experiencing success using private patrol companies, they conducted a study to find a company that would best suit their needs and ultimately hired Security Specialists, a company that has a reputation for seeing drops in crime of as much as 50% where they operate.

Currently there are about 250 homes signed up with Security Specialists who deploy armed patrol officers in marked vehicles throughout the Valley Village neighborhood. The service costs \$30 a month and there is no contract, so subscribers can cancel at any time. VVHA does not endorse this organization but if you would like to learn more or sign up, please visit [www.http://securityspecialists.pro](http://www.securityspecialists.pro) or contact Jon Sanserino at valleyvillagesocal@gmail.com.

Like VVHA On Facebook!

www.Facebook.com/ValleyVillageHA

Homeowners Association Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 – 7:00pm

WE'RE GOING BACK! PLEASE NOTE MEETING VENUE:

Colfax School Auditorium

11724 Addison Street

Addressing The Issues Around Homelessness

Guest Speakers:

Ramona Casupang, Mental Health Clinical Supervisor at the LA County Dept. of Mental Health

Melody Jaramillo, Director of Community Engagement, LA Family Housing

Rob Benavidez, LAPD Senior Lead Officer

Luis Oliart, Director of the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry
and Advocacy Lead for the NOHO Home Alliance

Q&A follows

Also, SLO **Rob Benavidez** will give a short Police Department Update

Light refreshments will be served from 6:30pm

This meeting is neither sponsored by nor is it in any way connected with the Los Angeles Unified School District

**Mark Your
Calendar:**

*2019 Membership Meetings will be on Wednesdays April 17 * July 17 * October 16
2019 Board of Directors Meetings will be on Mondays Aug 5 * Oct 21 * Nov 5 * Dec 2*

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