

BRENTWOOD HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Brentwood Hills Homeowners Association Newsletter — Spring 2012

San Vicente Peak Communications Tower Proposed by City of Los Angeles



Photo realization from UltraSystems visual analysis.

The City of Los Angeles recently applied for and has been awarded a federal Recovery Act grant of approximately \$7 million for “upgrades” to five existing telecommunications sites. The grant is designed to facilitate communications among City and County emergency responders. The City retained environmental consulting firm UltraSystems to assist with the environmental review process for the project. On January 17, 2012, Ultrasystems, joined by representatives of the Los Angeles Fire Department, Police Department, Bureau of Engineering, and the Mayor’s Office, made a presentation to representatives of public trail advocacy groups and homeowner associations from the Mandeville Canyon, Brentwood Hills, and Bel Air Skycrest areas. The project has since been presented to the Brentwood Community Council and Hillside Federation.

Current plans call for the construction of two new, 180-foot high communications towers that will be placed atop prominent mountain peaks—San Vicente Peak and Verdugo Peak—within the Santa Monica and Verdugo

Mountains. The towers will be orange and white, topped with a 700-watt flashing red light. The San Vicente Peak tower would be on City property at the former Nike Missile Tracking Station above Mandeville Canyon homes, and within view of the popular Westridge, Canyonback and Sullivan Canyon public trails. These public trails are contiguous with the 20,000 acre urban wilderness park known as the “Big Wild.”

Community members raised many questions during each of the community meetings, including about aesthetic and property value impacts, whether the tower potentially opens the door to an “antenna park” as has occurred at other sites, health risks, continued park access, and whether any alternatives to the tower have been studied (not yet, it appears).

Many local homeowner and other organizations, including BHHA, MCA, Upper Mandeville Canyon Association, Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners Association, the BCC, Brentwood Resident’s Coalition, Save Our Mountains, Inc. (SOMI), Canyon Back Alliance, the Hillside Federation, and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy support the preparation an environmental impact report (EIR) for the tower project. Based on this virtually unanimous desire for thorough environmental review among local community groups, the City agreed in mid-February to prepare an EIR.

BHHA is monitoring developments and will keep the community informed.

Portions of this story were adapted with permission from a February Hillside Federation newsletter article.

BHHA Joins the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc.

BHHA recently joined the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., also known as The Hillside Federation. The Federation is a 501(c)(3) organization comprised of 37 member associations representing some 200,000 residents, and its purpose is to protect the quality of life and preserve the natural topography/wildlife of the Santa Monica Mountains and related hillsides.

The Federation celebrates its 60th anniversary on the afternoon of April 28 at TreePeople's headquarters on Mulholland Drive. The event is open to all members of the Federation's member associations. Tickets are \$60. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Don Andres, the Federation's Treasurer, at (323) 333-7445.

For more information about the Federation, visit: www.hillsidefederation.org .



BHHA Board Member Jerry Adomian Joins Brentwood Community Council

Congratulations to BHHA board member Jerry Adomian, who was recently selected to join the Brentwood Community Council board as a member-at-large alternate. In his role for the BCC, Jerry is charged with community outreach to ensure that issues of concern that are not brought to the attention of the BCC by stakeholder organizations nonetheless have the opportunity to be heard by the board. Based on his boundless energy and terrific work on behalf of the Brentwood Hills community over the years, we have no doubt that Jerry will immediately become an important member of BCC's board. Congratulations, Jerry!



BHHA's Monthly Meeting Day to Change Beginning in April

For many years, BHHA's regular monthly meetings have been held the first Wednesday of every month at 8pm. Now that BHHA has become a member of the Hillside Federation, which has its meetings the same night, and based on many conflicts with the night among current board members, the BHHA board has changed the regular meeting night. Beginning in April, BHHA monthly meetings will be held the on the third Wednesday each month. Meetings are generally hosted by a different board member, so if you would like to join us please contact a board member or send an e-mail to secretary@brentwood-hills.org to find out where the next meeting will take place.



Community Update E-mail List

Receive weekly crime alerts, emergency announcements, and other important community information. Email the subject line "join" to: communityupdate@brentwood-hills.org .

Your 2012 Membership in BHHA

BHHA keeps our community informed through email, newsletters, our website, and our annual block party. We also undertake initiatives to help preserve our community's quality of life. Here are some specific things that we've done over the past year:

- ◆ Contracted with Palisades Patrol to patrol Brentwood Hills common areas;
- ◆ Represented the neighborhood on legislative issues, such as the redistricting that would have split Mandeville Canyon into separate congressional districts;
- ◆ Ensured SoCalGas sufficiently restored Sullivan Canyon after their Pipeline work;
- ◆ Protected local parklands, such as protecting the Backbone Trail from being turned into a dirt road;
- ◆ Worked with the LAFD to ensure that grading of the area's fire roads and trails was effective but not excessive;
- ◆ Collaborated/participated in Save Our Mountains, Inc (SOMI) which ensures our natural areas are protected from commercial encroachments, like a currently proposed 180 foot communication tower on San Vicente Peak with a 700 watt blinking red light;
- ◆ Some board members received Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, in order to act as points of contact if there is a regional emergency;
- ◆ Contributed to the holiday lighting of the bridge on Westridge Road.

BHHA relies on your contributions in order to maintain these programs. Dues are only \$40 per household to help fund these valuable initiatives. Please do your part and send in your membership for 2012. Please mail a check to: BHHA Membership, P.O. Box 49495, Los Angeles, CA 90049. Alternately, pay online; instructions can be found at: www.brentwood-hills.org/membership.html.

Thank You for Your Support!



BHHA — Initiatives for 2012

Here are just some of the initiatives we're hard at work on for 2012:

- ◆ Restoring the block captain program to our community;
- ◆ A marquee sign to post notices about Brentwood Hills activities and issues;
- ◆ Improving "No Smoking" signs around trails;
- ◆ Improving the BHHA Website.

Please communicate any additional community concerns you may have to president@brentwood-hills.org. And remember, BHHA is an all-volunteer organization; if you would like to get involved, we can always use your help!

Oh Captain! My Captain!

BHHA is reviving a block captain program aimed at improving communication within the neighborhood. Block captains will provide a point of contact for:

- ◆ Information about BHHA board meetings and community news;
- ◆ Coordination in the event of a city or neighborhood emergency;
- ◆ Communicating issues/concerns you may have to the BHHA board.

In many instances, BHHA board members are available to act as block captains, but we will also need other residents to be involved to cover the entire community. Each block captain will represent between 10 and 25 homes. If you are interested in volunteering as or assisting a block captain, please send an e-mail to: jadomian@earthlink.net and cc president@brentwood-hills.org.

Once the program is under way, your block captain will leave a notice to provide his or her contact information. They will also ask for your contact information (phone & email) in order to stay in touch with you. We expect the block captain program to be an important component of our organization, so we hope that the entire community will participate.



No Smoking In Outdoor Areas

Now that spring is upon us, the fire season is not far behind. We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful area, but beauty comes with costs: our neighborhood falls entirely within a Mountain Fire District. Additionally, LA County designates all of Brentwood Hills and Mandeville Canyon a "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone." These classifications mean the *entire* neighborhood is subject to laws that prohibit smoking and open fires outdoors.

Simply put, it is against the law to smoke anywhere outdoors, and this includes all streets, sidewalks, and trails, and *not* just brush areas. Los Angeles Municipal Code section 57.25.14 states: "*It shall be unlawful* for any person to light, ignite or smoke any cigar, cigarette, tobacco in a pipe or other form of smouldering substance within a Mountain Fire District." There are no smoking signs posted in various spots in our community.

Despite the posted no smoking signs, we still encounter much smoking by visiting gardeners, builders, city workers, hikers, and cyclists. Believe it or not, even some of our *neighbors* choose to ignore the law.

The few signs around the neighborhood have become very faded. This year we hope to replace the old no smoking signs with new ones that are less likely to be ignored. As we know from the extremely dangerous fire in Upper Mandeville Canyon last year, a fire started by smokers, this is a very serious matter. We urge residents to inform workers on their property not to smoke. And if you see someone smoking in Brentwood Hills, Mandeville Canyon, or on any of the local trails, please let them know about the law. Most people respond positively to a polite request not to smoke—they just don't know it is prohibited. The home you save from an accidental fire may be your own or your neighbors.