

# The Crest View

Volume 1, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition

a periodic newsletter sponsored by the Culver Crest Neighborhood Association

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## NOTICE of GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, January 18, 2007

\* 6:30 p.m. \*

at El Rincon School Cafetorium

Guest speaker Charles Herbertson, C. C. Public Works  
Director, who will update the hillside repair project.

## *Anticipated Agenda for January 18, 2007 General Meeting*

- A. GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTION
- B. READING AND ADOPTING OF  
PRIOR MEETING MINUTES
- C. TREASURER'S REPORT
- D. UPDATES ON HILLSIDE REPAIR  
BY CHARLES HERBERTSON
- E. NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON THE PXP  
OIL FIELDS
- F. TRAFFIC MITIGATION  
RECOMMENDATIONS
- G. PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT  
OF SEPULVEDA BLVD. BETWEEN  
SAWTELLE AND SLAUSON AT  
JEFFERSON
- H. REPORTS ON PENDING  
COMMUNITY BUSINESS AND  
DISCUSSIONS  
-WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE  
EXPANSION  
-SEWER PROJECT  
-ANY TOPICS PRESENTED BY  
MEMBERS
- H. NEW BUSINESS
- I. ADJOURNMENT

## Hillside Repair, the Oil Fields and Traffic Safety and Mitigation

These are some of the major issues currently facing  
Culver Crest residents. These topics will be discussed in  
detail at this *General Meeting* including updates on the  
damaged hillside homeowner's lawsuits against Culver City  
and the Insurance Carriers and FEMA's position in  
repairing the hill (both to be discussed by Charles  
Herbertson), the 24 new oil wells planned to be drilled by  
PXP, and Culver City's recommendations for improving the  
traffic conditions on Culver Crest.

In addition, a discussion will take place regarding the  
proposed development of Sepulveda Blvd. between  
Sawtelle and Slauson.

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Hope all our neighbors enjoy a healthy and happy 2007. This year marks the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of our Association's activities plus one initial year in development. Congratulations and a big thank you to all those who assisted in making our Crest a better place to live. We believe that this new year will see many more improvements in our immediate area and together we will continue to make living on the Crest a wonderful experience.

## **PXP OIL FIELD:**

PXP has asked permission to drill 24 new oil and gas wells over the next few months. In connection with this request, the California Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) prepared an Initial Study under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and concluded that the project would have no significant impact on the environment. As required by CEQA, the Initial Study was circulated for a 30-day public comment period. However, for reasons that have not been adequately explained, all Crest residents and the CCNA were excluded from the distribution list. Fortunately, we learned about the Initial Study shortly before the public comment period expired, and thanks to the quick and professional efforts of our member Ken Kutcher, we were able to file a comment letter ahead of the deadline protesting the proceedings and the action proposed by PXP.

In our letter we stated that the Initial Study should be recirculated so that we could have more time to review the proposal and would have a fair opportunity to read the Initial Study and submit comments.

On a substantive level, we argued that the new wells should not be allowed until a full environmental review has been conducted. We all remember being awakened by the horrific odors on January 10, 2006, and it seems self evident that a full and complete study must be done before we are subjected to the risk of a repeat incident. Additionally, there are numerous other environmental issues that should be carefully studied. These include questions such as the following: (i) separate and apart from the major incidents such as last year, are there any health risks from the smaller amounts of gas that are constantly being released, (ii) does the injection of water and other substances back into the wells create any risk of seismic events, (iii) what is the impact of the grading that PXP is doing on the site, (iv) is PXP taking adequate safety measures to protect against fire and explosions, and (v) how significant is the impact from the noise that we have all heard from PXP's operations, and what steps should be taken to mitigate this?

We had several discussions with the City Attorney's Office (which had not known about the Initial Study until we called it to their attention), and this week David E. Cranston, an attorney representing Culver City, also wrote a letter to DOGGR declaring that the Initial Study/Negative Declarations is "fatally flawed" and that the Study be withdrawn and a new study be conducted. This is in accord with the CCNA position. This should get the State to reconsider this issue. Much more to follow.

## **SEWER PROJECT:**

This project has again been delayed. The City is putting 8 projects together, including the Crest sewer project, and sending them out for bid. This way they will get a much more favorable bid on each of them. This new commencement date for this project is now May 2007.

## Hillside Damage on Tellefson: GREAT NEWS!!!!

The homeowner's lawsuits between themselves, the City and their insurance carriers have been settled. Basically, the major issue was who would pay how much and to whom. This will allow everyone to be on the same page and move forward with what really matters... getting the hill repaired. This will now give workers the right-of-way to commence work on the hill that has been long overdue and stuck in a quagmire by legal process.

The construction plans are complete, save for a few changes to satisfy the homeowners. These plans should be complete this month and will be ready to go out to bid in early February, with final bids acceptance in March. A contractor will then be selected and approved by City Council. If all goes well and the rains don't impede activity, construction will commence in April and be completed in September 2007. As they say, "from our mouths to God's ears".

The City has communicated with FEMA, who's funding is still undetermined, and further explained the reasons for the delays in the project and the necessity for the City's extension request. While they have not heard back from FEMA, the City is obligated to move forward with the project in accordance with the terms of the settlement agreement with the homeowners.

**Therefore, THE PROJECT WILL MOVE FORWARD REGARDLESS OF WHAT FEMA FUNDS OR DOESN'T FUND.**

As a side note, the City purchased the house at 10745 Cranks (the blue and orange one). The official explanation is that it made the settlement agreement less complicated. The house will remain as-is unless it is determined that repairing the hill would be easier if it were demolished. After the completing of the repair, the property will probably be sold by the City to whoever wants to purchase the property.

## Kudos to our New Board Member:

Congratulations to Rich Kissel who was recently elected President of the Culver City Homeowner's Association. His first order of business is to re-vamp their constitution and format. We look forward to a very progressive year from Rich.

## Welcome to our New Neighbors:

Do you know anyone who's moved onto the Crest recently? We do, and welcome to the Parker family! They bought the former Esther Tarn red ranch house on Ranch and now live amongst us. If you think of it, wave when you drive (slowly) down the hill.

## **Traffic on the Crest:**

Speaking of driving slowly down the hill, Culver City Traffic Engineering Director Gabe Garcia has put together recommendations for improving traffic conditions on the Crest. These include speed and hazard awareness prompts, permanent alternative side of the street parking, and other aids and deterrents to drivers who continue to abuse the traffic laws..

Over the holidays, there were several vehicular accidents on the Crest. At Tellefson and Bernardo, a car jumped the curb and took out 4 feet of a driveway wall between two properties. The car sped away without capture. At Flaxton and Drakewood, a car sped down the hill failing to stop and collided with another vehicle. Fortunately, there were no injuries caused by these mishaps. Hope we stay this lucky!

Please, let's all be more respectful of our neighborhood. It's not just the employees at Marycrest Manor, as those who were ticketed by the CCPD at the corner of Ranch and Tellefson recently will attest. It's not that big and imposition to slow down and stop at the stop signs.

## **Culver Crest Neighborhood Watch Report:**

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, there was an incident on Northgate at 1 pm. A clean cut white male around 20 years old was door knocking for the purpose of selling magazines and/or looking for donations for the High School football team to go to Hawaii. After being refused by a resident, he became very loud, abusive, and threatened to return and retaliate. The Police were called and responded immediately. The young man was not arrested but instead, instructed to leave Culver City. Unfortunately, he continued to knock on doors that same afternoon. That same day, a young white woman was also knocking on doors soliciting for similar donations. She claimed to be a daughter of a family on Ranch Road but that was false. She would not accept cash donations, only checks. This is potentially another scam. We have had instances here on The Crest where outgoing mail containing checks have been stolen from mailboxes. The checks were then "washed", a process that removes the ballpoint ink so that the thief can put in a much larger amount and change the name of the payee. The Post Office recommends that you hand outgoing mail to your Mail Carrier, or bring it to the Post Office or some other secure place where mail is picked up. While the above incident was unfolding, another call was received by the CCPD, this time to a home on Whitburn where they caught 2 hispanic male suspects opening a stolen package from the doorsteps. They were arrested.

Please report any instances directly to CCPD at 310-837-1221. Additionally, please be vigilant about calling the police if you see anyone going door to door that appear to have no particular purpose for doing so except to ask for money. Protect yourself and your family. Do not open the door if you do not know the person. Door-knocking scams for donations are often used as a way to find out if anyone is home. If no one answers the door, it's an invitation to head for the back yard and search for an easy entry point for a burglary. If you do answer the door, the solicitation for a donation is just icing on the cake! If in doubt, ask to see their business license, which is required. Any legitimate solicitor will have one available to show you.

Also, three black male youths were arrested on Sunday, December 17 on Galvin Street and charged with breaking and entering, burglary, and possession of stolen goods (jewelry.)

**Moral of story:** It doesn't matter what race, color, gender, how they are dressed, or profile. The crooks are out there, so be on Neighborhood Watch...call the police on all suspicious activity.