

"Together we have clout!"



**Senator
BOB HERTZBERG**



**Councilmember
LINDSEY HORVATH**

ZOOM COMMUNITY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 - 7:15 PM

JOIN FROM ANYWHERE - VIA COMPUTER, TABLET, SMARTPHONE OR TELEPHONE

THE CRITICAL DEBATE FOR COUNTY SUPERVISOR

**Fox 11 News anchor/reporter Phil Schuman
is our debate moderator**

Sherman Oaks' current county supervisor, Sheila Kuehl, is not running for reelection. Our new supervisor will be our current State Senator Bob Hertzberg or West Hollywood Councilmember Lindsey Horvath. Each supervisor represents two million residents and the five together manage a \$30+ billion budget. Supervisors have many other responsibilities – for example, they all sit on Metro's Board and make major Metro's rapid transit decisions.

Robert "Bob" Hertzberg was elected to the CA Assembly in 1996 and later became its 64th speaker. Bob was then a private-sector clean energy entrepreneur. In 2014, he was elected to the CA Senate, representing nearly one million people in the Valley. Bob's been a champion for his communities, delivering \$1+ billion in investments such as the Metro Orange Line, CSUN Performing Arts Center, and Skirball Cultural Center. He pioneered public policy on issues from criminal justice reform to climate change to quality public education to technology. The LA Times named him "One of the Most Influential People in Southern California" and said, "He is a high-velocity wonk; he loves big ideas and will flesh out every one of them if you give him a chance."

Lindsey Horvath is a local leader and small business owner who brings people together and gets things done – from being a founding member of the National Organization for Women local chapter to spearheading efforts to bring a Metro alignment to West Hollywood. In 2009, she was appointed a West Hollywood City Councilmember following a councilman's death. She returned to the council and was sworn in as West Hollywood Mayor in 2015 and again in 2020. Lindsey led West Hollywood's COVID-19 response, cutting red tape so businesses could operate outdoors. When she was mayor, West Hollywood enacted the strongest minimum wage and worker protections in the country while also being named the most business friendly city in LA County.

Please email candidate questions to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com before noon Tuesday September 20th.

The Zoom ID is 899 7747 3879 with passcode SOHA914. Sign in by 7:10. The meeting starts promptly at 7:15.

BEWARE! – POSSIBLE UPZONING IN SHERMAN OAKS

Maria Kalban, chair of SOHA's Legislative Committee, is concerned about the Housing Element. California requires each city to prepare a Housing Element document that identifies sufficient local zoning capacity to meet state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) quotas. RHNA quotas span an eight-year cycle (2021-2029) and are based on population growth, vacancy rates, and housing affordability. *- Article continues on next page -*

! You can find our virtual meeting Zoom link on SOHA's website - SOHA914.com

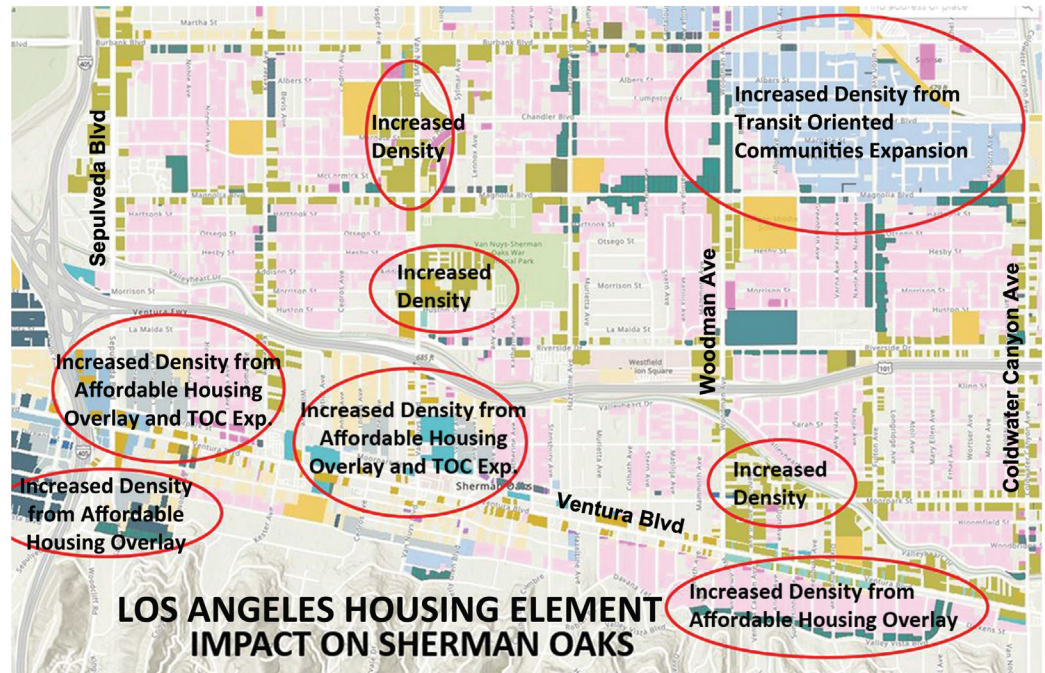
The current RHNA quotas are controversial because they are hugely higher than the previous cycle. With our decreasing state population, many cities are questioning the accuracy of the data and threatening lawsuits. Nonetheless, the City of LA must identify additional zoning capacity for more than 460,000 new housing units over eight years. That's more housing than was built during our boom years of the 60s and 70s!

In Sherman Oaks, we could be required to accommodate upwards of 9,000 new housing units over eight years. The new Housing Element map shown to the right would add density in several Sherman Oaks single-family neighborhoods using "overlays" that allow apartment houses next to single-family homes. The state has already rezoned our neighborhoods to allow four housing units on a single-family lot. We don't need more density.

We formed a group to find sufficient zoning capacity without up-zoning our existing single- or multi-family neighborhoods. We found more than enough sites by placing more density in available commercial areas. We didn't rezone any multi-family neighborhoods because older apartments are more affordable and, in many cases, rent stabilized. The areas we identified would enrich Sherman Oaks by creating density while making a more walkable and greener community. We presented our findings to the LA Planning Department, who were very supportive.

Encino and Studio City joined our group and found better solutions than the Housing Element up-zoning in their communities. We presented our joint findings to Councilmember Raman who eventually must approve the Housing Element map. During this initial meeting she praised our work and its thoroughness but wasn't sure the state would allow removal of the proposed overlays in our single-family neighborhoods. We contacted the state's Housing Authority and were told there are no mandates that require overlays in our single-family neighborhoods, but sites must be appropriate and follow fair housing practices. Our selected sites meet these guidelines.

We'll continue to have meetings with Councilmember Raman and hope she'll support our plan. Sherman Oaks, Studio City, and Encino represent 60 percent of her district. If you have any questions, please contact Maria at mpkalban@gmail.com.



SHERMAN OAKS BUSINESSES ARE SUFFERING

Larry Slade, SOHA's Unhoused Committee Chair, notes that Sherman Oaks is suffering from homelessness. We all know how rampant homelessness has transformed our bedroom community into a place that many of us struggle to recognize. We worry about walking down the street. The sanctity of our neighborhood is challenged. As much as Sherman Oaks homeowners have been impacted, homeowner challenges pale in comparison to those of our business owners.

Recently, a Sherman Oaks business owner emailed me, not only complaining about the significant impact of the homeless on his business but providing graphic photographs of what can only be described as "intolerable conditions." They depicted a homeless, mostly naked woman, sleeping in the doorway of his business. Other pictures showed the results of her presence that violated health and safety codes, and reality that this homeless person used the business main entry as a bedroom, storage closet, and bathroom. The business owner described in detail the toxic and outrageous behavior that accompanied the conditions depicted in the photos – screaming at patrons, throwing things, violent threats and acts – all having significant economic and emotional impacts on the business, its customers, and its employees.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP SOHA STRONG. VISIT SOHA914.COM TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We talk about the rights of the homeless and for good reason. Many of us believe that people should have a roof over their head as a basic human right. But that does not mean that the protection of someone else's rights should infringe on ours. We have a right to free speech but cannot scream "fire" in a movie theater. We have a right to a roof but cannot interfere with or destroy someone else's business. Unfortunately, that interference is now commonplace and there is no remedy in place to help the business owner. That must change now!

Put simply: Los Angeles elected officials must protect the rights of the homeless but not at the expense of homeowners and business owners simply trying to make a living. Something's got to give.

We need your help identifying unhoused problems. Please send your findings to Larry at SOHA914@gmail.com.

CITY PASSES HOMELESS BAN 500 FEET FROM SCHOOLS

Tom Glick, SOHA's Planning and Land Use Committee Chair and Larry Slade, SOHA's Unhoused Committee Chair report that the LA City Council voted 11-3 last month to amend the Municipal Code to no longer allow homeless encampments of one or more persons within 500 feet of a school or daycare center (officially becomes effective on September 18th). Many hailed this as a "common sense" measure to protect our children from the homeless problem. Our City Council made it clear that there is now a line in the sand – protecting our children from the negative impacts of homelessness. This ban did have opponents including our own Councilmember Raman who voted against it. She felt the law criminalizes homelessness and literally moves the problems just to another place "500 feet down the street". In her "no" vote press release, she stated:

"Today, I want to reiterate what I've said time and again on this Council floor, for anyone who might be tuning in for the first time. I'm the parent of six-year-old twins. I want them to be safe; it's something I think about every single day. I also feel very strongly that, as a body, we need to be making effective policy here. We have to stop lying to our constituents; we have to stop making promises that the city simply cannot deliver on. We cannot pretend to parents, who are desperate for change in Los Angeles, that we can snap our fingers, pass a law, and end homelessness in LA by making it illegal to be homeless in various areas across the city."

Prior to the council vote, SOHA sent a letter to Councilmember Raman urging her to support the ban which was simply designed to protect our children from the unsolvable homelessness challenges facing our city – until our government leaders can get it together and provide some measure of leadership on this issue. Our councilmember does have a Homelessness Team to respond to issues related to homelessness. According to her staff, the team ensures all homeless issues – no matter where they are located in her district – get the council office's full and immediate attention. The Homelessness Team can be reached for any homelessness-related issue by contacting Senior Homelessness Deputy Sarah Tanberg (sarah.tanberg@lacity.org) or Homelessness Deputy Josh Scarcella (josh.scarcella@lacity.org). For further information, please contact either Tom or Larry at SOHA914@gmail.com.

THE RESTAURANT THAT TELLS A STORY

If you were wondering what inspired the new, bustling restaurant HomeState in Sherman Oaks, look no further than the childhood kitchen of its founder, Briana Valdez. Born and raised in Texas by first generation Mexican American parents, Valdez moved to California in 2000 and was surprised and motivated by the lack of restaurants offering her childhood cuisine. When opening HomeState, Valdez longed to recreate the food of her youth and recipes close to her family's origin. She embraced a welcoming atmosphere like that of her mother's kitchen, while emphasizing her personal journey through authentic breakfast tacos and queso.

HomeState
A T E X A S K I T C H E N

"HomeState tells a story, and that story is sharing the culture and identity of Texas through my lens," says Valdez. Serving every meal of the day, the restaurant's menu is simple and homemade. For an early morning bite, you can order the customers' favorite Trinity tacos, or Valdez's choice, the Frio

SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION - President: Matt Epstein **Vice President:** Bob Anderson **Treasurer:** John Isen **Secretary:** Jay Weitzler **Board of Directors:** Bob Anderson, Matt Epstein, Jules Feir, Tom Glick, John Isen, Maria Pavlou Kalban, Marshall Long, Nancy Sogioian, Jay Weitzler. Richard Close, *President 1977-2022*

tacos. For lunch, the doors are open for vegetarian Potato tacos or a refreshing Ranch salad. For dinner with friends, you can order drinks and some queso with chips.

HomeState recently opened on the corner of Ventura and Greenbush in Sherman Oaks and is now serving customers dining in and taking out. Valdez notes that eating at HomeState feels like “you’re in someone’s home, the kitchen of a friend or family member. We are here to greet you with a smile and ask what you need.”

HomeState

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The above article is not an advertisement. SOHA does not accept payment for articles.

KEEPING S.O. BEAUTIFUL, VIBRANT...AND RELEVANT

SOHA Volunteer Board Profile: Jay Weitzler

Jay Weitzler has lived in Sherman Oaks for more than 45 years. After growing up in Mar Vista and attending Venice High, he went on to earn degrees from UCLA and UCLA Law School, after which he began his career as a LA County Public Defender – a position which was the foundation for his commitment to helping those in need.



After approximately seven years working for the county, Jay continued his role as a criminal defense attorney before transitioning to civil litigation representing injured persons. His work with SOHA began when he chose to be more proactive in keeping our community beautiful, vibrant, and relevant. Jay and his wife, Linda, are proud to have personally planted one of SOHA’s trees on Ventura Blvd. After joining SOHA, he immediately saw how much work the members do in maintaining and improving Sherman Oaks and the Valley and wished to assist where he could.

SOHA’s work supporting Proposition 13 and promoting Valley secession initially drew Jay in, but SOHA’s members and achievements kept him involved. He is SOHA’s Board Secretary, liaison to The Buckley School, and representative to the Hillside Federation. He also supports SOHA’s Unhoused and Legislative Committees. Best of all, SOHA has enabled him to meet and work with some amazing and committed people, all of whom make living here so very rewarding. In his spare time, Jay enjoys reading novels, skiing, riding his motorcycle or bicycle, and hot air ballooning.

SOHA FAREWELL TO LONG-TIME BOARD MEMBER CHUCK BETZ



Chuck Betz, a SOHA Board Member for more than 30 years, passed away on his 92nd birthday. Chuck served as SOHA Treasurer for a decade and loved his Sherman Oaks community. He was known as a one-man cleaning crew along Ventura Blvd, spraying, scraping, and removing illegal signs and posters. His philosophy was simple: “If you believe in something, get involved. Don’t wait for somebody else to do it for you.”

Chuck was involved in much more than cleaning up. He was one of the architects of Proposition 13, which limited property taxes. He was deeply involved in the Valley succession movement. Chuck, thanks for all you did for Sherman Oaks and California. We miss you!

MATT EPSTEIN’S NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

An old friend has returned: fully renovated. The Sojourn opened its doors 60 years ago as the Valley Sojourn Motel. The beloved motel rose to icon status during the height of California’s golden age of travel when families and lovebirds were on their way to newly opened Disneyland. It’s now a fully renovated property except for the original vintage sign out front. This new retro-modern hotel invites you to relish in the sweet nostalgia of a classic California Coupe de Ville, fab fashion, soda shops, record players, and Elvis sideburns. Rooms are retro cool and beautifully appointed. And they also offer guests free breakfast! This is a nice new addition to our community and one to keep in mind if you’ve got guests coming to town. The Sojourn is located on Ventura Blvd just west of the 405.

A great new addition to our community is HomeState (see our review above). The neighborhood seems to love this new modern Mexican restaurant, yet the neighbors and customers are very upset about the parking lot in front of the restaurant. If you've tried to have a meal at HomeState you'll notice the usually empty front parking lot is for valet only at \$8.00. The parking situation around HomeState is very tight and difficult. If you plan on going for a burrito either walk to there or prepare to park blocks away. Local residents are up in arms because so many HomeState customers are parking on their streets. It seems un-neighborly and extremely greedy on the part of HomeState to limit parking in front of their restaurant to only those people willing to spend an additional \$8.00 for a burrito. Give me a break!

ICON furniture on Ventura is an interesting place. They've been in business more than 40 years and at their current location for about a year. When you pass by this furniture store it looks like many of the less-expensive stores out there. But the owner explained that most of their business is customers that love the furniture of Restoration Hardware or Crate and Barrel, yet don't want to pay steep prices. He said ICON will replicate any piece of furniture that you find on the open market – at a lesser price. So, if you love the Restoration Hardware Cloud sofa it can be replicated for a lot less money.



Speaking of furniture stores, I went to Modernism the other day on Woodman and Ventura. I was stunned to see the entire glass window on Ventura had been tagged with graffiti. The windows on the store entrance on Woodman were clear of all graffiti. We live in a reasonably upscale neighborhood and our store merchants would be well served to maintain their properties, so our neighborhood continues to thrive. We all should take pride in where we live and work, and I don't think it's asking too much for all of us to take care of the streets and sidewalks and storefronts among which we live.

Know of something new? Email Matt at somatt@aol.com.

SOHA WORKS FOR YOU – SO KEEP SOHA STRONG

Encourage Your Neighbors To Join!

SOHA is the ONLY, member-supported, volunteer-run, non-profit organization that advocates for Sherman Oaks without city or county influence. We're also the ONLY organization to give you a front-row seat to major events, such as August's SOHA meeting featuring the first LA County Sheriff debate between Sheriff Villanueva and Chief Robert Luna. Our lively debate was so newsworthy, it was featured on CBS, KCal, ABC, and other TV news that evening with clips from the debate. It's our members who make special events like this possible! Our events provide you the opportunity to ask candidates questions, shining a light on Sherman Oaks and its importance in LA.

SOHA's members are the very foundation for all our good work on behalf of our community. Whether it's advocating for appropriate housing and zoning legislation to protect our neighborhoods, working to obtain the best Metro mass transit solution for Sherman Oaks, or working on major developments to reduce negative impacts and enhance our community – SOHA is YOUR advocate for the best outcomes.

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER with a neighbor (or two!) and encourage them to join. Membership is vital and we need your support right now! If you're not a member, JOIN NOW! It's so easy! Just go to SOHA914.com and click on "JoinSOHA" to join via credit card or PayPal. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Sogioian, SOHA Membership Chair, at JoinSOHA@gmail.com. We appreciate your support!



Sherman Oaks

SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The **ONLY** member-supported,
volunteer-run, non-profit
community organization
dedicated to preserving and protecting
the quality of life here in Sherman Oaks.

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