

"Together
we have
clout!"



ZOOM COMMUNITY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2022 - 7:15 PM

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

GUEST SPEAKER: CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR MIKE FEUER

EXPAND AND REFORM OUR POLICE FORCE

**TACKLE HOMELESSNESS WITH HOUSING,
MENTAL HEALTH, AND ADDICTION SOLUTIONS**

CLEAN UP AND EMPOWER OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Our April 20th Meeting Guest Speaker will be LA Mayoral Candidate Mike Feuer. Mr. Feuer received both a bachelor's degree (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and a J.D. degree (cum laude) from Harvard University. He later served on the Harvard Law School Visiting Committee, which reports to the Harvard Board of Overseers. He served as a judicial clerk to Justice Joseph Grodin of the California Supreme Court, and practiced law at two California law firms. Mr. Feuer is currently our twice-elected LA City Attorney and a 30-year award-winning public servant. He is the only mayoral candidate who has been elected to a citywide office. He began his career in public service as the Executive Director of Bet Tzedek, a non-profit law firm providing free legal services to Angelenos. The Los Angeles Daily Journal described him as having transformed Bet Tzedek into a "national success story".

As a prior City Councilmember for Sherman Oaks in then Council District 5, Mr. Feuer chaired the Budget and Finance Committee, delivering balanced multi-billion-dollar budgets while protecting funds for public safety, meals and transportation for seniors, jobs for disadvantaged youth, and other essential services in LA. As a former State Assemblymember and current City Attorney, Mr. Feuer has taken on big banks, big polluters, and the National Rifle Association (NRA) – and won. As a result, he has been honored with more than six dozen awards for his achievements in public safety, environmental protection, civil rights, transportation improvements, consumer protection, seniors' issues, and more.

Now, he's running for LA Mayor to empower our neighborhoods and bring his strong, proven, effective, and experienced leadership to a city in crisis.

Please email your questions for Mr. Feuer to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com on or before Monday April 18th. This is your opportunity to ask the potential new mayor a question!

SOHA's virtual Zoom meeting ID is 810 4349 4074 and the passcode is SOHA914. Please sign in between 7:00 and 7:10 pm. The Meeting starts promptly at 7:15. If you need help signing in, please email us at SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com.



▶ DON'T MISS THE SOHA MAYORAL DEBATE IN MAY ◀

Mark your calendar! SOHA's LA Mayoral Debate will be
Wednesday, May 18th at 7:15 pm.

The top candidates will provide their positions and candid answers to your questions.



MONORAIL IS VIABLE AND AFFORDABLE SEPULVEDA PASS ALTERNATIVE

Metro is studying six rapid transit alternatives for the Sepulveda Pass – three monorails and three heavy rail trains. Some organizations won't support or, even worse, have rejected monorail, such as UCLA. SOHA's Bob Anderson wonders why because the monorail alternatives are the only ones that could be built within Metro's available budget on reasonable schedules. But many people have fallen prey to the misinformation campaign against monorail and Metro has done nothing to correct the resulting misconceptions about this viable technology. Monorails are proven and safe with more than 200 miles of urban monorail worldwide and almost that many more miles in construction. The monorail through the Pass has more capacity than the heavy rail trains under the Pass. What's not to like. Monorails deserve a fair chance but are not getting it from Metro, UCLA, and many in the public.

The heavy rail train alternatives all travel under the Pass in huge tunnels with routes that Metro never discussed with the Sherman Oaks and Bel Air communities they travel under. SOHA asked Metro how they chose the tunnel routes and they never responded. One of the heavy rail alternatives even becomes a noisy above-ground train above Sepulveda Boulevard in the Valley. This is called Metro Alternative 4 or, as we call it, the Horrible Halfway – a subway under the Westside but five miles of unfair noisy elevated trains in the Valley. This is a ridiculous alternative that should never have been studied in the first place. Metro must terminate it.

The remaining two heavy rail alternatives might be viable with different routes that don't travel under residential communities. But what will kill all Metro's heavy rail alternatives in the end is their high costs and unpredictably long schedules. Heavy rail subways cost two or three times as much as Metro has available and tunneling under the Pass will take two or three times as long as building a monorail above the 405 freeway. And don't forget that Metro has never built anything without huge cost overruns and schedule delays. We need rapid transit through the Pass now – not in 2040 or beyond.

SOHA has been working closely with our neighbors in Bel Air. Here is an opinion from Fred Rosen, a concerned Board Member of the Bel Air Association who has had interactions with Metro and UCLA. This says it all.

"I always thought that solutions that were the most expedient, fiscally responsible were ones that should be implemented. UCLA and Metro advocating for a tunnel under a residential community does not come close to reaching that solution. It's fiscally irresponsible – it will cost more than \$20 billion – which Metro does not currently have the funds for – and will not be completed for 25 to 30 years – assuming the litigation that will certainly occur does not prevail. Not to mention – Angelino's do not like riding underground and the project will be obsolete before its completed – if ever. Everyone who advocates for a tunnel as a solution, in my opinion, is severely uninformed and just a fool."

HOW RHNA FAILED TO PRODUCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Sacramento says we have a housing crisis and California needs 3.5 million more homes. The Biden Administration recently stated that the entire nation needs 3.8 million more homes. Is California trying to house the entire nation? Many experts feel that 1.5 million housing units are much more accurate for California.

The state's housing numbers are a quota called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA, pronounced ree-nah). The state assigns the total quota proportionally to cities and counties to be built over an eight-year cycle including required allocations for very low-income, low-income, moderate-income, and above-moderate-income (market-rate) housing. Cities must identify housing sites (called the Housing Element) to meet their RHNA goals and apply for state approval. Since the state demands more housing, many multi-family housing sites will be in single-family neighborhoods.

Cities must rely on for-profit developers to build this housing – the state no longer gives cities any money to fund housing themselves. Developers build market-rate housing because it's more profitable. They need incentives (density bonuses) to build affordable housing. These incentives allow them more market-rate housing if they include some affordable units.

The RHNA system doesn't work because it sets a false housing goal that cities can't meet. As a result, the state rejected 97 percent of all cities' housing proposals including LA's. An independent audit of RHNA conducted in March found that faulty and inaccurate data was often used to calculate RHNA. Yet, the state still holds cities to its RHNA numbers and decided to penalize cities that don't meet state goals.

In fact, to build the required amount of low- and very-low-income housing required by RHNA, developers would need to build five times the required market-rate housing to be profitable. Even that doesn't guarantee we get all the affordable housing we need. Next month, we'll discuss reasons why we have an affordable housing crisis.

“CLOSE” ENCOUNTERS FOR THE SHERMAN OAKS B.I.D. Honoring Richard Close and his love for Sherman Oaks

The 350 businesses in the Village at Sherman Oaks Business Improvement District (BID) are happy to be finally moving out of the pandemic toward a bright new future. The businesses have suffered mightily with the many lockdowns and restrictions. The ones that survived are determined to thrive. Homelessness in our village has not yet abated and is hurting the livelihood of many of our mom-and-pop brick-and-mortar shops, but they are working hard to mitigate it and are in regular communication with the CD4 office with requests for assistance. CD4 staff are trying out a new on-call Ventura Boulevard Team to help businesses with homeless disturbances. The BID hopes this tool will be helpful and successful.



The Sherman Oaks BID has joined forces with the Encino and Studio City BIDs to usher in a new post-pandemic era of success for businesses along Ventura Boulevard. There is a huge volunteer community cleanup planned for Earth Day morning on Saturday, April 23rd along Ventura Boulevard from Studio City all the way west through Woodland Hills, including side streets and alleys around our BID. Many volunteers are needed, and we'd love your support. We can even grant community service and school credit. Interested parties can contact Leslie Elkan at leslie@VillageAtShermanOaks.com for more details on signing up to participate in an area closest to your home.

We encourage Sherman Oaks homeowners and residents to support their local businesses by patronizing them and helping them grow and stay strong. We will all be rewarded with a more interesting and vibrant commercial hub where residents can save time, gas, and money by parking once and strolling the BID sidewalks to enjoy food, services, and unique retail offerings in the convenience of our own neighborhood.

THE BEAUTIFUL WINDOWS OF MARK'S GARDEN

Driving on Ventura Boulevard, it's hard not to notice the beautiful window decorations at Mark's Garden, the renowned florist located at 13838 Ventura Boulevard. These windows are a great example of a business that takes pride in showing off what they are about and how they enhance their Sherman Oaks neighborhood.



Mark's Garden is critically acclaimed for their spectacular arrangements, and many important events across Southern California desire their services. They employ a large staff and generate more than \$5 million annual sales under co-owner Michael Uncapher.

See their artistry for yourself. Take a drive and check out the beautiful window decorations they display throughout the year, especially during holiday periods.

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 Sogoian, Jay Weitzler. *Richard Close, President 1977-2022*

SWEET BUTTER CAFÉ – A LABOR OF LOVE



In 2009, Leslie Danelian wanted to bring life back into Sherman Oaks, where many businesses had shut down during the recession. Inspired by recipes from her own childhood, she opened Sweet Butter Café with an inviting atmosphere and comforting menu.

Although Danelian passed away six years ago, her son Andrew Smith has taken over the family business – “just a one-minute walk from the home I grew up in” he says. “Our family has lived in this community for 35 years and seeing it grow and prosper is a beautiful thing.”

In addition to their “Sweet Butter Scramble”, Danelian’s signature eggs cooked with lime tortilla chips, and other favorites such as “Mia’s Breakfast” which includes pancakes, eggs, and applewood smoked bacon, Sweet Butter offers a range of healthy salads and other brunch items. And, although Sweet Butter gets busiest on the weekends between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm, Smith doesn’t want you to forget dinner, when customers can order homemade classics such as spaghetti and meatballs, roast chicken, or barbecue pork ribs. He also says, “the outdoor courtyard is magical” and it will reopen soon after being closed due to COVID safety protocols.

In addition to the range of menu items in size, genre, and indulgence, there is a grab-and-go selection as well as a coffee bar and marketplace for books and last-minute gifts.

“We value coziness – that feeling you get when you’re at home,” says Smith. “We value community and being a place where friends and neighbors can gather, enjoy food with good company, and through that grow closer together.”

“My mother loved making people happy through food,” he says. “I’m lucky to be able to carry on what she started, and to have a place that feels so much like her.”

Sweet Butter Café // 13824 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 // (818) 788-2832

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

INTRODUCING – NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

Our neighborhood is such a vibrant place that combines wonderful homes with great shopping and restaurants. In future newsletters, my “Neighborhood Comings and Goings” will keep you up to date on recent retail and restaurants that have gone and new ones that are coming into our community. In this issue, I want to share what’s happening now and in the last few months. Enjoy!

Matt Epstein, SOHA President

As we’re heading into Spring and the weather is getting warmer, it’s a great time to take a walk in our neighborhood. It looks like HomeState will be opening soon on Ventura Boulevard near my favorite restaurant Mistral. Looking forward to some amazing burritos and tacos at HomeState.

And speaking of Mistral...If you’ve recently driven by you’ve seen that they’re expanding. Years ago, Mistral’s owner Henri purchased Gus’s Smoke Shop right next door, and now that he has waited forever to get through the city permitting process, he’ll be opening this new addition to Mistral as a private dining room for 24 people. What a great idea! It’ll be a perfect place to have an amazing private dinner party with phenomenal food and service. I can’t wait for it to open this coming Spring.

I am definitely sorry that the restaurant Pearl District has closed. I know that their Westlake Village location is still open but losing the Sherman Oaks location saddens me. I loved their fried chicken, and their shrimp appetizer was amazing among so many other tasty dishes. Yet, in its place will be a new restaurant from the owners of Taisho which is right across the street in the old Cafe Bisou location. From what I understand this will be either be a high-end Mexican restaurant or a nice Steakhouse. Considering how great Taisho is, I think we’re all in for a treat. Sorry to see Pearl District go, but happy about this new restaurant and expect it to be as special as Taisho.

On a completely different note ... Equinox will be opening at the Sportsman's Lodge in late Summer. They'll be offering state-of-the-art classes ranging from Pilates and yoga to all the exercise machinery that one can imagine. It's right next to Erewhon and should be an amazing place to go and workout. And then if you're on the treadmill fantasizing about changing the color scheme of your home you can walk over to the brand-new Catalina Paints. This new paint store in Studio City is a couple of doors down from Crossroads and Sit and Sleep on the south side of the street. This nice high-end paint store sells Benjamin Moore and Farrow and Ball paints as well as some specialty finishes like Venetian Plaster and Dry Erase paint, which are certainly some of the absolute best out there. The Grand Opening will be on April 22nd and 23rd with the Kogi food truck. So, paint your wagon green and head out into our wonderful neighborhood and enjoy the beginnings of Spring!

"Hank's a Deli of Sorts" looks like it's definitely hit a chord with the neighborhood in Sherman Oaks and they're also open in Burbank, which was their first location. When they first opened it appeared to be just a pop up. But now it seems that they've decided to stay. If you haven't checked out Hanks yet, I recommend that you do. They serve fabulous homemade bagels with great options. Hank's is definitely part of the currently new wave bagel boom. Hank's is owned by a husband-and-wife team who definitely think out of the traditional bagel box. Imagine a bagel sandwich with thick cuts of gravlax topped with salted cucumbers and pickled onions. They also have an amazing smoked whitefish salad with cream cheese, salted cucumber, red onion, and dill or just a crispy fried egg with spicy maple glazed bacon, sharp cheddar, tomato, and aioli. Whatever you choose here you will not be disappointed. A few times we have found that sometimes there is line to wait, but it's worth it.

It did sadden me to learn that Josephine's on Ventura in Sherman Oaks has closed. It was such a beautiful bakery with wonderful baked goods and beautiful specialty items like tea pots and mugs. It was nice to meet a friend down there for an afternoon tea and a small bite. This shop opened about a year ago and now it is now gone.

There's also a wonderful new restaurant in Sherman Oaks at 13355 Ventura Boulevard called Malama Pono – a Hawaiian restaurant. Our friends Marcie and Stu had been raving about it, so last week after my wife and I returned from our trip to the big island we thought it was the perfect time to try this new gastronomic addition to our community. We were not disappointed. The food was delicious, the owners and staff were wonderful, and the atmosphere is beautiful. Many unusual dishes to try and everything was great! We're definitely going back! My wife even tried the crispy rice cakes with fried spam! And loved it! Go figure!

PLEASE JOIN SOHA AND HELP US HELP SHERMAN OAKS

SOHA is the only member-supported, volunteer-run, non-profit community organization dedicated to improving and protecting our quality of life in Sherman Oaks. Independent of city and county influence, SOHA has been dedicated to achieving the best outcomes for our community since 1964 – over a wide range of areas including traffic, housing legislation, local business support, area beautification, and safety.

Please join SOHA and support our community. SOHA's basic membership is just \$45 annually and includes our monthly newsletter, monthly meetings with consequential speakers, and much more. If you can join at the \$75 Silver or \$125 Gold levels, it gives us additional resources for our work.

To join online, go to SOHA914.com, click on Join SOHA, and become a member via credit card or PayPal.

Or simply mail your name, mailing address, email address, and a check payable to SOHA to Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423-5223. Please email Nancy Sogoian, SOHA Board Member and Membership Chair at JoinSOHA@gmail.com with any questions.

Please share this newsletter with friends and neighbors and encourage them to join! Thanks.

HELP SOHA UPDATE OUR EMAIL LIST

Please be sure we have your latest email address. Email your full name and mailing address (as they appear on your SOHA Newsletter mailing label) and your preferred email address to SOHA914@gmail.com. Thanks!

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.

★ **BECOME A MEMBER** —  **STAY INFORMED** —  **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**



SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

POST OFFICE BOX 5223
SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA 91413

www.SOHA914.com
SOHA914@gmail.com
(213) 377-4590

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