

"Together we have clout!"

soha news

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AUGUST 2023

SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

SOHA914.com



★ LIVE COMMUNITY MEETING – NEW LOCATION ★

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2023 - 7:15 PM
SHERMAN OAKS EAST VALLEY ADULT CENTER • 5056 VAN NUYS BLVD, 91403
WE'LL ATTEMPT TO STREAM ON ZOOM – VIDEO ALWAYS AVAILABLE DAY AFTER MEETING

COMING TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SOON - HUGE APARTMENTS!!! IS COUNCILMEMBER RAMAN GOING TO HELP US STOP THEM?

Maria Pavlou Kalban, SOHA Board Member, SOHA Legislative Committee Chair, and Chair of the United Neighbors coalition and Jeff Kalban, American Institute of Architects, Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council Board Member, and SONC Planning and Land Use Committee Chair are super knowledgeable of housing legislation and community planning. They founded United Neighbors – a coalition of several hundred community organizations in California – to help people understand and combat unfair housing demands and planning. Maria and Jeff are helping to educate our own elected leaders, including our councilmember, who themselves don't have the time to fully understand the horrible impacts on our communities.

They'll explain how the LA Planning Department could force multi-story apartments onto single-family lots. How LA is trying to up-zone for more than six times the number of state-required residential units. How the state is mandating more new housing when CA's population is decreasing. Why our deteriorating infrastructure cannot accommodate increased electricity, water, and sewage demands. You can help us stop this travesty – and Maria and Jeff will tell you how.

Email your questions to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com by Tuesday August 15th. This is a live meeting. We will attempt to stream it via Zoom – but this may not be possible. We are working with the Adult Center to get wi-fi accessibility, but we don't yet know if it will be available. The Zoom ID is 849 9178 6440 with passcode SOHA914. We email the link to our members, and you can always find it on SOHA914.com. If available, streaming will start at 7:15 pm. The meeting video will be available the day after the meeting on YouTube.com (search for "SOHA Community Meeting").

RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH BACARI

by Jules Feir, Community Liaison Chair

Bacari Restaurant has made its way to the Valley. Bacari has recently opened in the former Rive Gauche location in Sherman Oaks. It is set in a lush and dreamy courtyard bringing warm hospitality and Mediterranean-style dishes. In the short time since they opened, Bacari has become one of the busiest restaurants in our community.

Fan favorites like Shawarma Tacos, Ricotta and Beet Gnocchi, and Pistachio Lamb Kebab are just a few of the popular dishes that have already created excitement and large crowds of diners daily. We are looking forward to enjoying their delicious food during our Social Hour beginning at 6:15.



FIXING HOMELESSNESS IS LIKE BAILING WATER OUT OF A STREAM

by Larry Slade, Homelessness Committee Chair

The State of California has spent literally billions of dollars to combat homeless. Yet, the problem has not only persisted, but it has also worsened. According to CNN, one-half of all homeless in America live on the streets of California. Put another way, **one out of every two homeless in America is a Californian.** Shocking statistic. I love California – but c'mon!

Our state has spent about \$17.5 billion in the past four years addressing the homeless problem. Has this money been spent in vain and to no avail? Is this a problem that cannot be fixed with more funding? These are tough questions the answer to which I do not purport to have. I am not sure anyone else does either.

Like trying to empty a stream with a bucket, the work to “fix” homelessness is a daunting and never-ending task. We – meaning the government, the community, and non-profits – can and will continue to fight to help people and get them off the street. We can and will do it with love in our hearts and pockets full of tax dollars. We will provide on-site health/mental health care and wrap-around social services, and transfer thousands of homeless into either temporary or permanent housing. We will have an impact and make a real difference in peoples’ lives to be sure. You can see it happening on a smaller scale now. Every “homeless” person who loses that title by being placed in a home is a victory. Every person helped is a victory.

But how will we address the constant influx of new homeless? How can we ever provide enough housing and services to mitigate the problem of homelessness (and everything that comes with it for the homeless and for us) when the stream of homelessness is constantly being fed up-river? Work harder. Spend more. Get more buckets. Bail faster.

I write these things not to sound pessimistic. Rather, I do so because we are faced with the reality that people continue to find themselves homeless and living in our community on the streets. Put simply: the water keeps flowing and the number of homeless keeps increasing. How best to deal with that reality?

Well ... I believe we have good, hardworking, well-intentioned people addressing the challenges every day in Los Angeles. Say what you want about the effectiveness of the homeless initiatives, but our elected leaders are focused on the issue. They cannot be accused of ignoring it. Nor, can “we” be accused of not supporting more and more resources being thrown at the problem.

That said, one must wonder what happens, if after all this money and effort, the problem continues to grow? For now, though, I am content to give the “new team” (our mayor, city councilmembers, and county supervisors) time to apply more and more pressure to the problem. And I am sure you will join me in wishing them nothing but success. We all have a vested interest in having them succeed.

REZONING NEIGHBORHOODS DOES NOT MAKE THEM AFFORDABLE!

by Maria Pavlou Kalban, Legislative Committee Chair

As we continue to draw your attention to the LA Planning Department’s strategy to rezone the entire city, we want everyone to understand that residential neighborhoods are in jeopardy. If rezoned, we will have **large apartments with no parking requirements in many of our neighborhoods.** We want to point out – this is not necessary – in any way. We have lots of unused zoning capacity on our commercial corridors where we can add more housing without effecting our existing residential neighborhoods.

Here is the data – and it’s terrifying. The state has mandated LA to zone enough land to allow for 455,000 units of housing in the city over the next eight years. The LA Planning Department added a “buffer” to the state’s number and is using 485,000 units as their mandate. Planning also stated that there is enough current zoning for 230,000 units – thus, they need

up-zoning for 255,000 additional new units. But the Planning Department proposed up-zoning of 1,400,000 units instead – more than six times the actual number needed – and that means up-zoning a lot of our residential neighborhoods for no reason. By the city’s own data, if all the additional rezoning capacity they identify in our multi- and single-family residential neighborhoods was removed, the city would still have zoning capacity three times higher than the state mandate. Just to put everything in perspective, 1.4 million units means capacity to accommodate 3.9 million more people in LA over the next eight years. There is no population data supporting such a massive increase – almost double – of people in LA. The Planning Department is wrong. But remember, **once our communities are up-zoned, we are forever vulnerable to developers building apartments next to our single-family homes.**

What Los Angeles really needs is affordable housing – and rezoning our residential neighborhoods will not produce affordable housing. We can build more housing on our commercial corridors, on publicly owned land, and through adaptive reuse of existing buildings – but to make them affordable the city needs to get serious about how to finance affordable housing and streamline the process for accessing the multiple funding sources developers need to build affordable units.

Because of our committee’s outreach, communities throughout the city are waking up to this issue. We must all fight for more affordable housing and fight to protect our neighborhoods. We are working hard to do this and have established a coalition with the like-minded communities of Encino, Studio City, and Los Feliz. **We have until late Fall to convince Councilmember Raman that this massive rezoning is not necessary and in fact detrimental to all people living in LA. So far, it’s been an uphill battle.**

GUNSHOTS INCREASING IN SHERMAN OAKS

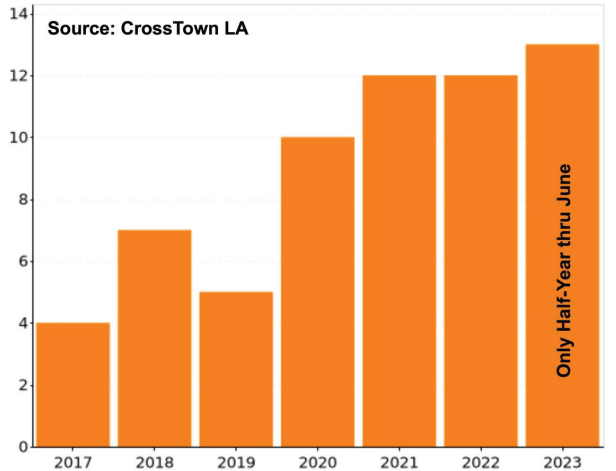
by Bob Anderson, Vice President

Certain neighborhoods suffer more than their share of gun violence. The highest number of gunshots fired in the one-year period from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 were 212 shots in downtown Los Angeles. The next highest was 137 shots in Boyle Heights. Communities with the fewest gunshots include Pico-Robertson (5 shots), University Park (4), and Brentwood (1).

We’ve always felt very safe in Sherman Oaks – but sadly times are changing. As the chart shows, Sherman Oaks had only 4 gunshots in all of calendar year 2017 – but has already had **13 gunshots in just the first six months of 2023** – heading toward twice the overall number of gunshots as 2022. We all need to remain vigilant and report suspicious activity to the proper authorities.

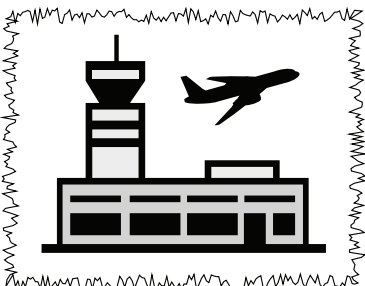
Mariana Romo (40229@lapd.online) is our LAPD Senior Lead Officer for Sherman Oaks north of Ventura Boulevard; Jose Saldana (30853@lapd.online) is our SLO for Sherman Oaks south of Ventura. Please keep them informed about police challenges in our community.

Number of Gunshots Fired in Sherman Oaks



AIR TAXIS OVER SHERMAN OAKS SOON?

by Jay Weitzler, Airport Committee Co-Chair



The news is taking Los Angeles almost by surprise, but the FAA is promoting the development and experiment of what are generously called Advanced Air Mobility Vehicles (AAM) – more commonly “Air Taxis” – which may be flying over us as soon as next year or 2025 – and certainly by the 2028 Olympics if the Air Taxi proponents have their way. Studio City For Quiet Skies has conducted rather extensive research into this issue and believes that the FAA and the AAM industry intend to develop very large-scale operations with **thousands of aircraft operating over densely populated areas such as ours.** These small, but apparently quite noisy aircraft will be designed to carry only two to four people and will be operating at very low altitudes, perhaps only 400 feet above our homes.

There are serious questions involving proper research and regulations designed for these vehicles as the FAA appears to be fast tracking the approval process. We are concerned that the billions of dollars being spent by Toyota, Boeing, Delta, and others are not being spent for our best interests. These Air Taxis will likely only appeal to those few who can afford flying over traffic to go to sporting events, concerts, or other events and will likely not help the general population. We have serious reservations as to whether Air Taxis will be worth the noise, pollution, and violations of backyard privacy we hold so dear. SOHA encourages you to go to the Studio City For Quiet Skies website (studiocityforquietskies.com) and look at their "Newsletter" section to get much more information and see how you can demand the FAA and other regulatory organizations conduct proper research and perform extensive community outreach to determine the benefits and risks of this new industry – before it's too late.

CHICK-FIL-A COMING TO SHERMAN OAKS

by Sean Kurzweil, Board Member

SOHA's Sean Kurzweil attended the July 20th meeting of the Cultural Heritage Commission where he relayed our support of Chick-fil-A's proposed rehabilitation of the old Corky's building. CFA's project update was enthusiastically received by the Commission and supported by Councilmember Nithya Raman, the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council, and abutting residents.



Chick-fil-A's representative, Tina Choi emailed Sean: "We thank you for all of your collaboration, input, and guidance throughout the years and on behalf of Chick-fil-A. CFA looks forward to actively moving towards rehabilitation and restoration." SOHA will be providing regular updates as we receive them from CFA.

CONGRATULATIONS TO STEAMER CLEANERS

by Jules Feir, Community Liaison Chair



The amazing Steamer Cleaners at the corner of Ventura Boulevard and Woodman Avenue is a one-of-its-kind – and has won many awards over the years for its dedication and generosity as the sample certificates at the left show. Owners Shawn Basseri, his wife Nicole, and their two daughters recently attended a Chamber of Commerce event where they were awarded five more certificates from Councilmember Nithya Raman, Congressman Brad Sherman, and three other agencies for their excellent performance as a dry cleaner and community supporter. SOHA congratulates Steamer Cleaners and wishes them continued success.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

by Matt Epstein, President

Maxsons, the beloved drugstore that occupied the corner of Hazeltine and Ventura for decades, has left a lasting impact on our community. When they closed their doors a few years ago, it was a bittersweet moment for many of us. However, if you've driven past their old location across from Ralphs recently, you might have noticed the transformation – the building has been modernized and now boasts a contemporary look. This change is in preparation for the arrival of AVLAU, a high-end furniture, flooring, lighting, tile, doors, and ironwork store (avlau.com). AVLAU prides itself on true design, understanding lifestyle, and offering a range of styles from modern classics to contemporary minimalism. The store's commitment to turning visions into reality is evident in their selection of top-quality materials and timeless trends. AVLAU is set to open its doors at the beginning of September, and my wife, Jane, and I are thrilled about this addition to our community, as we are passionate about home design. We will however miss going to the pharmacy and little post office where everyone knew your name.

Sherman Oaks has been experiencing a coffee shop boom lately, with several new establishments joining the scene alongside the familiar Starbucks and Coffee Bean. One of the noteworthy additions is **The Boy and The Bear - Coffee Roastery** (theboyandthebear.com), founded in 2012 as a pop-up shop in Colombia, with a mission to exclusively serve Colombian coffees. The founder, Andrew Pineros, moved to Los Angeles in 2013 to establish his brand in a city known for its coffee savvy. The Boy and The Bear has already opened three locations in Redondo Beach, Culver City, and Westchester, and the fourth one in Sherman Oaks promises a strong Colombian brew. Another exciting spot is **Ideology Coffee**, taking over the old Starbucks location on Ventura Boulevard next to On the Thirty. Studio City, too, has embraced the coffee culture with various coffee shops like Civil Coffee, Philz Coffee, Bluestone Lane, Red Window Coffee, Alfreds, Blue Bottle, and the new store Coffee and Plants.



While some comings have been smooth, others have faced challenges. The Burger Bar restaurant, for instance, appeared to open overnight, but in reality, it was merely a name change from The Fish Grill. Unfortunately, Breadlok in Studio City did not fare well and had to close down all its locations due to financial struggles caused by the pandemic. Hopefully, they will return one day with their fantastic gluten-free bread options. On a more positive note, the old Kriker's Dog and Grooming store has been revamped and reopened as **Earthwise Nutrition Center and Grooming spa**, offering similar services as before.

In Studio City, the space previously occupied by Mazza's upstairs next to Tender Greens has now become **The Daily Outpost**, a new restaurant owned by The Daily Grill. The transition from The Daily Grill to a fish house, and then to Shanghai Rose, brought changes to this mall on the second floor, and now The Daily Outpost aims to find its place. With The Daily Grill's reputation for quality, I'm hopeful that this new venture will be successful. As someone who enjoys trying out new eateries, I'm eager to visit The Daily Outpost when they open in mid-August. Additionally, I'm eagerly awaiting the opening of Prince Street Pizza in the area.

Overall, it's evident that our communities are evolving and adapting with new businesses and concepts. It's exciting to see these changes unfold, and I'm looking forward to exploring all the fresh offerings in our vibrant neighborhood!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN NOW TO SUPPORT SOHA'S WORK ON YOUR BEHALF

by Nancy Sogioan, Membership Committee Chair

If you live in Sherman Oaks, please take a few minutes and think about what's important to you regarding your community. Is it the family neighborhoods? Tree-lined Ventura Boulevard with its variety of restaurants and shops? Or knowing you have an entire team of dedicated, knowledgeable volunteers who work to preserve and protect your community? That team, of course, is SOHA, your **Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association**, the **ONLY member-supported, volunteer-run community nonprofit organization free of city or county funding and influence!** Since 1964, SOHA's work has yielded significant benefits, whether it's working with our local LAPD to increase safety, lobbying our elected officials, providing solutions to preserve our family neighborhoods, or advocating tirelessly for sensible mass transit – and yes, SOHA even planted the leafy trees along Ventura!

So, if you're not a member yet, go to SOHA914.com today and click on JOIN SOHA. It's only \$45 per year and members enjoy our monthly newsletters, community meetings, and more. Select your membership level and click on Pay via PayPal to use a credit card. You can also join by mailing a check to SOHA MEMBERSHIP at PO Box 5223, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5223. And remember to share this newsletter with neighbors and encourage them to join, too – because we can't do the work without your support!

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP SOHA STRONG!

VISIT SOHA914.COM TO BECOME A MEMBER AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

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**

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