

"Together
we have
clout!"



★ LIVE COMMUNITY MEETING – NEW LOCATION ★

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023 - 7:15 PM
SHERMAN OAKS EAST VALLEY ADULT CENTER • 5056 VAN NUYS BLVD, 91403
ALSO STREAMED ON ZOOM

MEET THE VALLEY'S "TOP COP" LAPD DEPUTY CHIEF ALAN HAMILTON

Review of Crime in Sherman Oaks for 2022

Department and Valley Crime Reduction Goals for 2023

LAPD Role in Supporting Government Homelessness Efforts

Traffic Enforcement Issues in Sherman Oaks

In 2021, Deputy Chief Alan Hamilton became Commander of the LAPD Valley Operations Bureau. He's an LA native with broad experience across every aspect of policing. He was Captain and Commanding Officer of the West Valley Patrol Division. In the Recruitment and Deployment Division, he was instrumental in raising sworn deployment above 10,000 for the first time in LAPD's history. In 2019, he was named the Los Angeles Woman Police Officers and Associates Mentor of the Year for his commitment to mentoring women in the department.

Please email your questions for Chief Hamilton to SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com by Noon on Tuesday January 17th.

Although this is a live meeting, we plan to also stream the meeting via Zoom. We will email the link to our members, and you can always find it on our website at SOHA914.com. The Zoom ID is 891 8429 5907 with passcode SOHA914. Sign in by 7:10. The streaming starts promptly at 7:15 pm.

RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

VITELLO'S

Jules Feir is happy to announce that once again Vitello's Restaurant will be our Restaurant of the Month. It is in the Tujunga Village area of Studio City at 4349 Tujunga Ave. Vitello's has been serving great Italian food since 1964 – from a wonderful assortment of the freshest fish, produce, and meats. It all comes together as California-inspired contemporary cuisine with many vegan and gluten-free options. Vitello's has several dining options, including:

- Our main dining room at the front;
- A 32-seat private Prohibition-themed Speak Easy called The Rendition Room at the back, serving great food along with a private bar; and
- An exciting new 60s Rat Pack piano bar upstairs, serving a full menu and opening in mid to late February.

We look forward to enjoying a special taste of their delicious food during our Social Hour starting at 6:15 pm.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TOY DRIVE



SOHA's 24th Annual Toy Drive was a great success!

We collected huge numbers of toys that the Department of Children and Family Services distributed to children under their care. We thank you for your support and also thank Gelson's Market who make the event possible with their parking and delicious snacks and desserts.

Gelson's

PERFECT STORM FOR HOMELESSNESS IN SHERMAN OAKS

SOHA's new Board Member Larry Slade reports that it's become clear lately that Sherman Oaks, like all of LA, is suffering from a "Perfect Storm" of political factors that have exacerbated our currently untenable homelessness predicament. We don't need to describe how bad the problem has become in our beautiful community. But what's causing it? Clearly, there is no single simple answer, but here are four realities that make homelessness much more challenging than it should be:

1. **Mental Health** is a significant part of the problem. Mentally ill and severely drug-addicted homeless people do not want to "go inside" and under current law, they cannot be forced to do so.
2. **Law Enforcement** cannot be the "tip of the spear" to handle the homeless. For far too long, the political system has looked to local police to "Band-Aid" the problem. They can play a critical role, but they first need better laws empowering them to remove the homeless who pose a threat to the safety of pedestrians, shoppers, diners, and strollers. They further need a multidisciplinary team of anti-homeless responders working the streets to engage the homeless, determine whether they pose a threat to themselves or others, learn what they need, and make helpful resources available.
3. **The Disconnect** that exists because the City of LA is responsible for housing and LA County is responsible for mental health services. The degree that the city and county work together is limited, and their coordination is minimal. This separation lays bare a disconnect that throws a wrench in "let's get the homeless off the streets". There is no centralized approach to fixing the problem and different agencies often work in different directions.
4. **LAMC 41.18** is LA City Council's new ordinance that prohibits homeless from sleeping or lying on public streets within 500 feet of schools and several other locations. This is a promising ordinance to keep our streets safe and our school-age kids from dealing with the homeless. However, for LAPD to enforce the law, the city must post signs warning the homeless that they are in an area where it is illegal to live on the street. No signs – no enforcement. Our Councilmember Raman opposed the passage of LAMC 41.18 but recently committed to posting the needed signs. That's progress.

Our new mayor has certainly been taking the issue seriously. She properly declared a state of emergency and is working to coordinate city-county efforts. She's aiming to get the homeless off the streets by building more housing. She is headed in the right direction, and we remain hopeful that she will continue to proactively address the problem. Mayor Bass appears to have the will. But will she find the way? If you have questions, need more information, or want to help SOHA on homelessness, contact Larry Slade at SOHA914@gmail.com.

CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ON COMMUNITY-BASED HOUSING SOLUTIONS

SOHA's Legislative Committee is optimistic that Mayor Bass will be a leading voice supporting Community-Based Housing solutions. She has referred to the Sherman Oaks Housing Study as a great example of how to solve LA's affordable

housing issues by allowing community input and leaving single-family neighborhoods alone. The Housing Element being finalized now by the Planning Department targets several single-family neighborhoods in Sherman Oaks as possible candidates for rezoning. If approved by City Council, the rezoning would allow six-story apartments with 100 percent affordable housing in these neighborhoods. The Legislative Committee and the SONC Vision Committee have been working together to show Planning that our Community-Based Housing solutions can meet state-mandated housing quotas without rezoning single- or multi-family neighborhoods.

We identified many miles of underutilized commercial corridor that if rezoned could provide a richness of housing types, offer mixed-income housing, and create thriving retail environments. We presented these ideas to many of our elected officials and showed them that Sherman Oaks and many other communities around us have identified ample sites to meet the state's housing needs without rezoning our single- or multi-family neighborhoods. We have received many positive and supportive comments from them. However, Councilmember Raman has not yet supported our plan. We will meet with her and the Planning Department again in January and will continue to meet with other councilmembers and mayor representatives to advance our Community-Based Housing solutions.

Sherman Oaks residents must work together and allow more density on our commercial corridors. If we don't our single-family neighborhoods will be targeted. Please contact Maria Kalban at mpkalban@gmail.com with questions.

METRO WITHHOLDING VITAL INFORMATION ON SEPULVEDA PASS TRANSIT

SOHA's VP Bob Anderson has studied every aspect of Metro's Sepulveda Pass Transit Project and its six alternatives. Metro Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 are affordable monorails but Alternatives 4, 5, and 6 are totally unaffordable subways, with the Alternative 4 "subway" ruining Sherman Oaks with noisy elevated trains above Sepulveda Blvd. He has read hundreds of documents and thousands of pages. They tell a sad story how **Metro has withheld vital information from the public** and even from Metro Board members and their staff. Metro is an organization that must be reviewed, reorganized, and reformed – or replaced – before it's too late!

In recent talks with several people including Metro Board staff, it's obvious that nobody has the basic information they need to fully understand the Sepulveda Pass Transit project. A glaring example is passenger capacity – the maximum passengers an alternative can carry per hour. Capacity is critical to selecting the best alternative for this project and getting cars off the 405. Yet in the last five years, Metro has presented passenger capacity information to the public **ONLY ONCE** – four years ago at their January 2019 public meetings. And some capacities they presented then were wrong!

The honest-to-goodness passenger capacity for the three monorail alternatives is 14,040 passengers per hour. That's way above Metro's January 2019 incorrect estimate of 7,500. The passenger capacity for the three subway alternatives is 11,970 to 12,240 passengers per hour. These capacities are available in August 2020 contractor proposals to Metro and can be calculated from data in Metro's November 2021 Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report. Metro has known the true passenger capacities for two and a half years but never mentioned them publicly, put them in fact sheets, or told their own Board that monorail has higher capacity.

Congressmember Brad Sherman's November 2022 letter to Metro asked, "What is the capacity at rush hour and what are the opportunities to add additional capacity?" He doesn't know. Neither does anyone else. Because Metro never told anyone. They withhold information, so we aren't knowledgeable enough to ask tough questions.

Metro is also spreading misinformation. Last month, they published a bogus survey where two-thirds of survey participants had never heard of the Sepulveda Pass project. Participants were shown incomplete and misleading information, then responses were treated as gospel. Garbage in – garbage out! The survey is worthless.

And at last month's San Fernando Valley Council of Governments meeting, staff for two Metro Board members asked Metro's External Affairs Director Jody Litvak when Metro would decide on the final alternative to be built. She responded, "I don't know". Metro is spending \$200 million to make this decision. Let's hope someone in Metro knows when they'll decide!

The next time you attend a Metro public meeting and hear Jody Litvak or other Metro staff try to explain something, listen warily then contact SOHA for honest answers at FairTransit4ShermanOaks@gmail.com. Email us your name and email and we'll send you our own honest project updates.

VOLUNTEER FOR 2023 SHERMAN OAKS HOMELESS COUNT

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority opened registration for the 2023 Los Angeles Homeless Count that helps the county understand the needs of the homeless. The count will occur the evenings of January 24, 25, and 26. Please volunteer to help the Sherman Oaks count at <https://www.theycountwillyou.org/volunteer>.

FAREWELL TO SOHA MEMBER SIDONIA LAX

SOHA sadly announces the passing of Sidonia Lax, a SOHA member of many years. She was born in Poland and was a mere 95 years young when she died peacefully in December. After the Nazi invasion in 1939, she was forced to live in the Polish ghetto then transported to Auschwitz. She forever bore the identifying tattoo she received there. After the War, Sidonia emigrated to the U.S. and joined her cousins in Los Angeles, where she met her future husband Lewis Lax. Sidonia became deeply involved in educating the community about the Holocaust. Despite her challenging history, she was always a symbol of optimism and joy. We will greatly miss Sidonia.

LARRY SLADE – NEW SOHA BOARD MEMBER



Larry Slade is a New York City native who moved to Sherman Oaks 26 years ago. His wife's family has lived in Sherman Oaks since 1946. Larry is a licensed attorney and began his legal career in Miami at the Dade County State Attorney's office as a prosecutor and trial lawyer. Larry relocated his family to Sherman Oaks and in 2004 opened "Slade Law" which provides commercial litigation, real estate, land use, and business transaction services.

Larry has always been active in local politics and non-profits. He was elected to the first Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council in 2003 where he served for three years as Land Use Committee Chair. He later served Sherman Oaks and the Valley as President of the Sherman Oaks Parent's Association, President of the Hesby Involved Parents, Encino Neighborhood Council member, Mediator for the Los Angeles Superior Court, Commissioner of Baseball and VP of Sherman Oaks Little League, legal counsel for Encino-Sherman Oaks Softball, and board member for Encino Franklin Fields. Larry was recently elected to the SOHA Board and serves as its Homelessness Committee Chair.

Next month we'll profile Sean Kurzweil, SOHA's second new Board member.

MATT EPSTEIN'S NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

If you love travel yet can't get away right now, you might want to just travel over to Ventura Blvd where you will be transported on a journey of the senses. There's a beautiful candle store on Ventura called Voyage et Cie. It's been there for years. It was located behind Pain Quotidian and is now located where the old Canyon Beachwear store used to be. This store is the ultimate blend of travel, design, and scents – with emphasis on the scents. The candles are not only beautiful but also evoke the scents of places that you have probably already been to on your travels. The soy candles use no paraffin and are primarily created with coconut or apricot oils and beeswax.

Every city in the world has its own particular scent, whether it is a plant, flower, church, or building. The fragrances here are often named after the place which is evocative of that scent. I think someday I'm going to ask the owner Melanie what the scent would be for Sherman Oaks. One of my favorites is her Los Angeles candle. If you're longing to get away, visit Voyage et Cie and I promise that you will be transported.

Speaking of Aromas ... Fat Sal's has been serving Southern California for more than ten years, and now they're finally coming to Studio City. Jerry Charles Ferrara is one of the owners and you might remember him as the actor known for his role as Turtle on the HBO comedy series Entourage. Fat Sal's new location is where the Chinese Restaurant Green Apple used to be near California Pizza Kitchen. It's a sandwich shop like no other. Just by the name you might worry about not being able to stay health conscious there, and it might be tough. But according to the owner they try to have a menu that

appeals to everyone. While most of their food can definitely be classified as guilty pleasure or indulgent, they also have a good selection of healthy menu items like salads, wraps and plant-based items. Yet when they put mozzarella sticks, macaroni and cheese, or chicken fingers on your sandwich you know you're in trouble – although it might be good trouble. So, if you're looking to share a food adventure, you might want to try Fat Sal's. Maybe fast the day before!

Most of us have over the past few years become more ecologically thoughtful with our concern for our planet. The new Re_ grocery store in Studio City is definitely a place to check out. "Re_" stands for rethink/reuse/refill and it's a grocery store with a sustainable twist. You bring your glass bottles and containers to fill them up with products – dry goods, spices, tea, oils, eggs, vegan dairy/meat alternatives, cleansers, soaps, lotions, and produce. This package-free grocery store makes it easier to stay conscious about the environment, although I've heard that it's a bit pricey. Re_ is a zero-waste grocery store committed to making sustainable shopping convenient and affordable. Their mission is to do better than recycling and to say no to plastic altogether. They strive to source only the highest-quality organic, non-GMO, clean products – all plastic free. You bring your own containers as I mentioned before and can shop a selection of over 500 refillable bulk goods. Their items range from herbs and spices to pastas and cereals, to oils, vinegars, and honey. This is certainly an interesting grocery concept and time will tell as to how sustainable a concept it is.



And now for something completely different. We've gone from beautiful scents to great food and now art. The Art Gallery Van Eaton which was based in Sherman Oaks for many many years has now moved to Studio City on Ventura Blvd as well. They specialize in animation art. If you're Disney animation art follower, this is your place. They have an amazing gallery of animation art for sale, and they also oftentimes have art auctions. Their focus of the gallery is on popular culture and Disneyland art. Of course, they have superhero art as well. An interesting addition to Studio City, and a place that you might want to visit.

Our town is thriving and changing, and new things are being offered every day. I look forward to 2023 and better days ahead for all of us.

MESSAGE FROM BOARD MEMBER AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIR NANCY SOGOIAN

The new year – a time of NEW beginnings! SOHA is welcoming two NEW Board Members, and we're excited to have in-person meetings again beginning January 18th at a NEW location!

As the ONLY nonprofit, volunteer-run, member-supported community organization created to preserve, protect, and improve quality of life in Sherman Oaks, SOHA has advocated and worked for the best outcomes for our community, whether securing the best mass transit solution, housing legislation that protects our neighborhoods, safety, beautification – and more! Being member-supported, SOHA is free from county or city influence, and our membership – YOU – makes our work possible.

Thank you, Members! **Please share this Newsletter with your neighbors and urge them to join!** If you are not already a SOHA member, please join now!

Just go to SOHA914.com and click on "JOIN SOHA" to join via credit card or PayPal. Membership includes our monthly meeting, monthly newsletter, and occasional email updates on key issues of concern.

Membership is a small investment in your community that yields big benefits!

Wishing you and your family a safe, healthy, and very happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you January 18!

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP KEEP SOHA STRONG. VISIT SOHA914.COM TO 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**

IT'S EASY! SIMPLY GO TO www.SOHA914.com AND CLICK "JOIN SOHA"



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