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we have  
clout!"



## ZOOM COMMUNITY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022 - 7:15 PM

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

## GUEST SPEAKER: SHERMAN OAKS COUNCILMEMBER NITHYA RAMAN

### HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

#### THE NEW CD4 HOMELESSNESS TEAM

#### SHERMAN OAKS NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION AND CLEANUP

Our June 15th Meeting Guest Speaker is Councilmember Nithya Raman. Councilmember Raman represents our own Council District 4 and is an urban planner, working mother, and immigrant to America.

After several years serving on the Silverlake Neighborhood Council as well as co-founding the SELAH Neighborhood Homeless Coalition, she felt there was a gap between city services and the expanding homelessness crisis – a gap she was equipped to fill. She ran for City Council in 2019 and won an historic victory, becoming the first Asian-American woman and the first South Asian ever to serve on the council – and the first challenger in 17 years to defeat a sitting councilmember.

Since taking office, Councilmember Raman has prioritized delivering compassionate and effective services for people experiencing homelessness, building more affordable housing, and moving with greater urgency to meet our city's climate goals. She serves as Chair of the City Council Information, Technology, and General Services Committee, Vice Chair of the Homelessness and Poverty Committee, Vice Chair of the Housing Committee, and member of the Economic Development and Jobs and the Immigrant Affairs, Civil Rights, and Equity Committees.

At our meeting, Councilmember Raman will update us on the work of her dedicated five-person Homelessness Team and the Team's community resources. She will discuss her homelessness initiatives and achievements in Council District 4 and especially in Sherman Oaks. This includes developing new programs for RVs, substance use, and mental health, assembling the Ventura Boulevard Team, securing state funding to house more than 60 people living along the LA River, and moving forward with a citywide homelessness strategy. She will also share her efforts on neighborhood beautification in Sherman Oaks and what her office is doing to keep our community clean.

Please email questions for the councilmember to [SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com](mailto:SOHAZoomMtg@gmail.com) before noon Tuesday June 14th.

SOHA's virtual meeting ID is 883 8273 7677 and the passcode is SOHA914. You can always find the Zoom link on SOHA's website at [SOHA914.com](http://SOHA914.com). Please sign in before 7:10 as the meeting starts promptly at 7:15.

**!** You can find our virtual meeting Zoom link on SOHA's website - [SOHA914.com](http://SOHA914.com)

# SOHA'S UNHOUSED COMMITTEE LOOKING FOR EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

Larry Slade, the new chair of SOHA's Unhoused Committee, has lived in Sherman Oaks for 26 years and raised his children here. Larry is an attorney specializing in business litigation, real estate, and business agreements, former Chair of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee, former President of the Sherman Oaks Parents Association, and a founder of Hesby Involved Parents.

Call them what you will – “unhoused,” “houseless,” or “homeless” – Los Angeles has reached a crisis point with too many Los Angelenos living on our streets. Homelessness is a problem “fed by many rivers” – the high cost of housing, job loss, addiction, victims of domestic violence, and this commentary's focus: mental illness.

First, it's important to stress that mental illness is not voluntary and whatever condition someone has is often made worse by being without a home. Can you imagine the stress on a person's mental health exacerbated by being homeless? It is horrible to see but is many times worse to experience. No one suffers more than the unhoused. And the problem has been rendered worse by the pandemic and inflation.

As unsightly and depressing as it is to witness in your neighborhood, there are few among us without sympathy for the mentally ill that reside on our city streets. But the issue goes beyond the victims who suffer, as it impacts the safety of our Sherman Oaks streets as well. Many businesses on Ventura Boulevard have been negatively impacted by problems. These problems persist.

Many of us have supported multi-billion-dollar bond referendums to address the homeless problem, agreeing to pay higher taxes in the hopes of helping those in need. We feel horribly for the unhoused living in tent cities, often through no fault of their own. We hope that they can find shelter and that our city will help them in their time of need. But there are no easy fixes. Many times, the unhoused and mentally ill refuse help.

The focus of SOHA's Unhoused Committee is on the unhoused and mentally ill who pose a danger to themselves and to us because they are threatening, unpredictable, and sometimes violent. Specifically, we will focus on how to harness available and new resources to help these people. We need more effective programs in place right now to remove those who threaten their own and our physical safety and to provide them with indoor housing and treatment. We need cooperation between the city and the county on these issues.

Over the past month, we have been working with Councilmember Raman's staff to better understand the problem, its causes, solutions that help, and those that do not. Addressing these issues is clearly a priority for the councilmember as she has dedicated staff expressly for this purpose. We have learned that resources and money exist, but their application is either held up in red tape or falls victim to a scattered and ineffective approach implemented by often competing governmental entities and publicly funded organizations.

Our Unhoused Committee is committed to working with our elected officials – Councilmember Raman's office specifically – to both help the unhoused become housed and to protect Sherman Oaks residents and businesses. Everyone shares the same interests in the end. There is no single answer to this seemingly intractable problem. Despite progress being made, there remains much to be done. Over the coming weeks and months our committee will be working to facilitate solutions to these pressing issues, and we will be reporting in this newsletter on our progress.

The Unhoused Committee welcomes your ideas and feedback. You can email us a question to [SOHA914@gmail.com](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com) or leave a voicemail question at (818) 377-4590.



## HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Contact SOHA by email at [SOHA914@gmail.com](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com) or leave a voicemail at (818) 377-4590. Provide your name, contact info, and desired info. We'll respond as quickly as possible. Thanks!



# SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS FACING AGGRESSIVE UP-ZONING

Maria Kalban, Chair of SOHA's Legislative Committee, wants to keep you informed on what's going on in Sacramento. The housing bill that would have allowed public golf courses to be used for housing – which we objected to because it removed valuable open space and was inequitable – has been defeated in the Assembly. But affordable housing is still the number one issue facing the state and has been declared a state emergency – which sounds good but strips cities of much local control.

The pressure from Sacramento to build more housing has never been greater. The state unrealistically believes that more housing will lower housing costs and make California affordable again. They should remember that California has the highest urban density of any state yet suffers the second highest housing costs and rents. The state's pressure to build housing has led to building more market-rate units instead of more affordable units. The state is simply in denial on how to solve the affordable housing crisis. California used to subsidize cities with funding for affordable housing, but no longer. This funding was critical to create affordable housing. Now the state funds the high-speed rail project instead of the affordable housing crisis.

Locally we face the challenge of increased housing density in our communities. The state requires local planning departments to prepare "Housing Element" documents, with maps that identify community areas suitable for higher housing density. Because the LA Planning Department does not know our community like we do, there are glaring errors in many of these maps which up-zone single-family neighborhoods. It's a slippery slope because once an area is up-zoned, state law prohibits it being downzoned.

SOHA's Board is working with Jeff Kalban's Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council Vision Committee to prepare maps that show where we can easily and effectively add needed housing in Sherman Oaks – and where we can't and shouldn't. Councilmember Raman has already come out in support of the Housing Element. We want to show her the glaring errors and erroneous assumptions in the Housing Element that make it unfair and inequitable, and our extensive work solving the required housing needs in Sherman Oaks while maintaining a livable community. Will she stand up for us?

If the Planning Department and our own councilmember are really interested in building affordable housing and placing it in areas that will enrich our community, we want to work with them to push for a fair, equitable, and livable community. Many other communities from the statewide United Neighbors organization are working with us to find solutions and make communities more affordable and equitable for everyone.

Our communities are at stake. We don't have a lot of time.

## UNFAIR HOUSING ELEMENT UP FOR CITY APPROVAL

Tom Glick, co-Chair of SOHA's Planning and Land Use Committee, reports that on May 19, 2022, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve a new, much more aggressive up-zoning package called the Housing Element and forwarded it to the City Council for approval. The commission completely supported this revision to our prior Housing Element which the state claimed was not aggressive enough. The state told LA to revise their Housing Element to allow more up-zoning and more density. The Housing Element effectively creates the opportunity for the city to aggressively up-zone communities when updating their Community Plans. The reality is that much of the Valley will be significantly up-zoned – especially Sherman Oaks, Encino, Reseda, Tarzana, and Woodland Hills.

The Housing Element is now before our City Council and we need to make Councilmember Raman understand that while we support reasonable density increases, especially along transit corridors and within regional centers, we do not support the city using the Housing Element and the Community Plan updates to aggressively and inequitably up-zone single-family neighborhoods. SOHA will keep you posted on how to make your voice clear on this matter to Councilmember Raman and her staff.

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

# NEW CHICK-FIL-A SHOULDN'T HAVE A DRIVE-THROUGH

Tom Glick and Marshall Long, co-Chairs of SOHA's Planning and Land Use Committee, report that they have reviewed the proposed Chick-fil-A restaurant with a drive-through at 5043 Van Nuys Boulevard. While SOHA's Board supports a sit-down restaurant at this Sherman Oaks location, like the previous Corkys and Lamplighter restaurants, any drive-through concept is not acceptable due to the tremendous impact and burden it would create on the surrounding neighbors, many of whom are members of our association. The board echoed the action of the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council's Planning and Land Use Committee that unanimously rejected the drive-through proposal at their May 19th meeting because of insurmountable issues such as cut-through traffic, air/noise pollution, and safety for the residential area west of Van Nuys Boulevard. By unanimous vote, the SOHA Board approved the following motion and submitted it to the Council office:

**"The Board of the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association opposes any drive-through use by Chick-fil-A at 5043 Van Nuys Boulevard but does support them opening a sit-down only restaurant."**

It was clear that there is overwhelming community opposition to any drive-through concept at this location especially from those neighbors to the east who would be most impacted. There was still support for a Chick-fil-A at this location without a drive-through, like their existing locations in Burbank and Westwood. Chick-fil-A has an opportunity to build something special and complement our community. With a simple change, this location could really be one that the community supports wholeheartedly and could be a positive for the parent corporation.

## MID-JUNE PUBLIC MEETING ON SEPULVEDA PASS TRANSIT PROJECT

Bob Anderson, Chair of SOHA's Transportation Committee, reports that Metro will be holding a public meeting on the Sepulveda Transit Corridor Project in mid-June. Metro has been silent on the project since 2021 and we're hoping they provide more details on the project alternatives and recent public comments. SOHA will email details on the meeting date and time to all members and post them on our SOHA914.com website.

## OUTDOOR WATERING RESTRICTED TO TWICE PER WEEK

California is facing its driest 22-year period in at least 1,200 years. Effective June 1st, the City Council unanimously approved an ordinance limiting outdoor watering to two days per week. If your address ends in an odd number (1, 3, 5, ...), you can only water outdoors on Monday and Friday. If your address ends in an even number (0, 2, 4, ...) you can only water on Sunday and Thursday. No matter the days, you must water before 9:00 am or after 4:00 pm. Each of your sprinkler stations is limited to at most eight minutes on your assigned watering days. All of us love lush landscaping, but let's work together to maintain our water supply. And while you're at it, think about installing water-saving California Native plants and drip irrigation.

## NEIGHBORHOOD COMINGS AND GOINGS

SOHA President Matt Epstein wants you to know that if you've grown up in Sherman Oaks or moved here at some point, you've grown to love the iconic clothing store Sy Devore. In 1944, Sy Devore moved his store from New York to Sunset Boulevard. Early customers included Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Sidney Poitier, Bob Hope, and The Rat Pack. It was Sy who designed their sharkskin suits and narrow ties. In 1962, Sy moved his store to Studio City where it quickly became the place to shop and has remained so to this day under the leadership of Danny Marsh (a true Valley boy who attended Millikan Junior High and Grant High Schools) and Marti Devore (daughter of Sy Devore's brother and business partner, Al Devore). They've been located on Ventura Boulevard near Coldwater Canyon since 2000 and are now moving a little bit east on Ventura to the Coldwater Curve building. One of the truly cool things about this move is that the building they are moving to is the Iconic corner building and one



of only a few commercial buildings designed by Rudolph Schindler. Schindler is a well-noted mid-century architect who, among others, was influenced and worked with Frank Lloyd Wright. This is a great location for this iconic store now situated in an iconic building. I know that I'll be one of the first ones to shop there, maybe even wearing my Sy Devore "Livin' the Dream" tee-shirt. Good luck in this new fabulous location!

Sherman Oaks has a new pizzeria! One of my favorite foods and I can't wait to try this new restaurant located right next to Sweet Butter. It's called Pizzana! There's one in West Hollywood and another in Brentwood – and now a third in Sherman Oaks! Valley pizza lovers prepare yourself. Naples-born Chef Daniele Uditi's unique 48-hour fermented dough pizzas won the Michelin Bib Gourmand award. He has created some of the best pizzas, not only in Los Angeles but nationwide. There are the traditional pies as well as pizzas that play to familiar pasta flavors like vodka sauce pie with smoked coppa and calabrian chili and Caccio e pepe pies. Pizzana also offers vegan and gluten-free pies as well. The Valley is certainly becoming a foodie destination with Jon and Vinny's, Homestate, Uncle Paulie's, and now Pizzana. It's great news that we don't have to travel over the hill for great food!

And if you're looking for a sophisticated yet simply delicious plate of pasta, Osteria La Buca is quite a good choice. This friendly light and airy Italian country tavern started out during the pandemic as a takeout restaurant and then opened outdoor seating in the back. It's now a dine-in restaurant with some great food. It's their second location with the first one on Melrose. Their menu is that of a traditional osteria offering a less complicated classic grass roots approach to Italian country food that is inspired by their backyard garden. Bucatini Carbonara, short rib ravioli, or clam pie are just a few of the menu items! Lots of new choices for dining out in our great neighborhood.

## WHY BECOMING A SOHA MEMBER IS SO IMPORTANT!

Nancy Sogoian, Chair of SOHA's Membership Committee, explains how we have consistently produced so many benefits for Sherman Oaks! Since 1964, SOHA's hardworking, dedicated volunteer board has accomplished significant community improvements. SOHA remains the only member-supported, non-profit community organization with total independence from city or county influence. That means our only mandate is to preserve, protect, and improve Sherman Oaks. Here are two of SOHA's recent achievements.

### Mansionization Protection

**SOHA's Goal:** Curb rampant oversized McMansions which negatively impacted adjacent neighbors. We worked with our then-councilmember to enact the Sherman Oaks Interim Control Ordinance for initial protections, later improved upon by the revised Baseline Mansionization Ordinance for common-sense, neighborhood-friendly building parameters.

### Sunkist Development

**SOHA's Goal:** Eliminate negative impacts to surrounding areas and improve design and functionality for greater community benefit. We worked with the developer, the architects, and our then-councilmember for two years to effect beneficial changes and the developer incorporated virtually all of them. SOHA's input, steadfast determination, and cooperation with the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council literally transformed the project from an institutional-looking monolith into a family-friendly, amenity-filled development that will beautifully augment our community character.

Thank you current SOHA members! Your support makes all this and more possible. Please share this newsletter and encourage your neighbors to join. If you live in Sherman Oaks or vicinity and are not a member, please join! Go to [SOHA914.com](http://SOHA914.com) and click on "Join SOHA" to join via credit card or PayPal. Your membership helps us continue our good work! Please contact Nancy Sogoian with any questions at [JoinSOHA@gmail.com](mailto:JoinSOHA@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:SOHA914@gmail.com). Thanks!

# SHERMAN OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The **ONLY** member-supported,  
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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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