Part of the Neighborhood

This article originally appeared in the March 3, 2016 edition of the Park LaBrea News / Beverly Press.

After more than a decade at a location near Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street, the staff for the Hollywood Property Owners Alliance (HPOA) moved its office to a storefront in the heart of the business improvement district.

Kerry Morrison, executive director of HPOA, said as a business improvement district (BID) operation, they are happy that the district is improving so much that the rent for their office was raised, and they are happy their former landlords are attracting high-quality tenants.

The staff moved in December to a storefront at 6562 Hollywood Boulevard, in the heart of the BID, an area loosely defined as the area between Las Palmas Avenue and Cahuenga Boulevard.

By opening their new location at street level, Morrison said it symbolically shows that they believe in the area so much that they are willing to work and invest in a quality business operation.

Morrison said HPOA needed a conference room for board meetings – big enough to accommodate about 30 people – and enough room for five staff members and occasionally interns.

At the location, HPOA will feature changing window displays and forego the metal roll-down door at night. The board will advise the HPOA staff on window displays, which they are committed to changing frequently, in order to draw interest from passersby.

Quick Takes

• Work has begun around planning the second Only in Hollywood Music + Arts Festival. The dates this year will be October 6 through 8. The sponsorship deck is available online at onlyinhollywood.org/festival.

• HPOA’s marketing team Haines & Co is working with board members and staff to tackle some projects this year that further our aims to change the conversation about Hollywood. More details to follow in the next newsletter, but an effort is underway to shed light on the historical theatre assets that exist in the Hollywood Entertainment District. Arguably, there is no part of Los Angeles that hosts as many historic venues as the HED. Additionally, conversations are proceeding with an ad-hoc group of owners dedicated to the transformation of the central part of Hollywood Boulevard, which will include a re-naming and reclaiming of a brand identity for this portion of the Boulevard where the HPOA recently located the staff office.

Sunset & Vine District Launches Public Art Program

Local up-and-coming bands are featured in new utility box art in the area along Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street. The public art initiative was launched with a free concert and art show at Amoeba Music in Hollywood on March 9, 2016. The bands Winter and Drinking Flowers both performed live sets.

“This was our first gallery show with back to back bands, and the event was a great success,” Melissa Logan, Amoeba Music and Sunset & Vine BID board member, said. “We wanted to host the event for several reasons: art, live local music, and an investment in both those things and this neighborhood.”

“The bands were awesome. I bought both of their records after the show,” Logan added.

Initially aimed to transform common utility boxes into visually attractive displays of art, the project has evolved into a greater symbol of neighborhood identity and community representation.

“Public art is important because it helps disrupt the routine,” Chase Gordon, Sunset & Vine BID board member, said. “It catches passersby off-guard and causes them to slow down, or stop altogether, and reflect on what they see. It also provokes a sense of pride and identity in our community.” (Gordon also serves on the BID’s streetscape committee.)

The Sunset & Vine District, in partnership with the Amoeba Music and Sunset & Vine BID, launched the public art initiative with a free concert and art show at Amoeba Music in Hollywood on March 9, 2016. The bands Winter and Drinking Flowers both performed live sets.

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Billions of Dollars Required to Tackle Homelessness

2015 could be described as the year that our city council pressed to declare a state of emergency related to the increase in homelessness in Los Angeles. 2016 brings hope that our elected officials may take real steps to address the crisis.

Much has happened in the first quarter of this year. In the last quarter of 2015, key staff and elected leadership in both the city and the county worked on comprehensive plans to address the homeless crisis. They both released draft plans for public comment the first week in January. The city and county have different roles to play in addressing homelessness. The county is responsible for hospitals, mental health, jails and the court system. The city is where housing decisions are made, owing to land use and zoning authority. Additionally, the city's departments of police, fire (paramedics) and sanitation also play key roles.

Because there are multiple governmental jurisdictions involved, and many agencies who have a role to play in this issue, this has traditionally posed a complicated public policy dilemma. How do we encourage two entirely independent local governments (and the other 80+ cities that comprise the county) to work together on an issue that knows no boundaries? However, this time it appears that the stars are aligned for action. The public is demanding action, and there are indications that the taxpayers may be willing to bite the bullet if meaningful progress can be made.

Price Tag to Make a Difference is Not Insignificant

There are many reasons why people find themselves homeless on the streets of our city. Some are recently homeless, owing to a job loss or eviction from an apartment. This is an unfortunate outcome in a city where housing costs are considered the highest in the nation, and job growth has not been robust. In these cases, the goal is to "rapidly rehouse" people, to keep them from slipping further into a situation which becomes harder to overcome.

On the other end of the spectrum, some individuals suffer from severe mental illness and deserve and need treatment. The reasons why they remain on the street are complicating, and the costs associated with helping and housing are considerable.

I recently wrote a blog, Labels are Not Helpful When Applied to the Homeless. In that blog, I pointed out that there were at least nine different cohorts of people facing different challenges and requiring different responses from our societies and systems.

With that in mind, the city and county are presenting cost scenarios that are mind-boggling, but realistic.

For example, the county and city both adopted their comprehensive plans on February 9, 2016. The county immediately allocated $100M in one-time funding for this year (on top of $50M already budgeted) and began to work on a longer term funding strategy. It is anticipated that hundreds of millions of dollars will be required over the next decade, and the county's chief executive office is looking at an array of potential financing mechanisms, including a parcel tax, a marijuana tax, and a transaction/use tax, among other options. In each of these cases, the voters would have to approve a tax increase, and the county is currently polling to ascertain where voters stand.

In the city, the Chief Administrative Officer has declared that it would cost $1.85B over ten years to fund the initiatives outlined in the city plan, including expanding the commitment to permanent supportive housing. Again, tax increases are on the table in evaluating revenue options.

2016 Homeless Count Results Due in May

Across the county, 7,500 volunteers combed virtually every census tract during the last week in January to help the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) conduct its annual count. In Hollywood, that count occurred on January 28, 2016, and we are awaiting word on whether the numbers changed much from the 2015 count. It appears that the electorate recognizes that absent significant changes in affordable housing development, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and assistance to those exiting the criminal justice system, there will be no relief on the horizon. It will take dollars and political will. It seems that 2016 is the year that both are coming into alignment.

-KERRY MORRISON, @KerryHMorrison
Greening the Concrete Jungle

If you’re familiar with the streets of Hollywood, you might’ve noticed some new additions to the neighborhood. A touch of green has been added to the intersection of Hollywood and Vine, as well as Sunset and Vine! Under a new pilot program, the Hollywood Entertainment District and Sunset & Vine District have each received four landscaped planters aimed to enhance the pedestrian experience and beautify the streetscape. Landscaped planters are a great way to add greenery to an urban environment that is limited in terms of greenway and park space. They can add color, texture, and seasonal interest, all while fostering a mini-urban ecosystem.

The new planters, which coordinate with the litter receptacles in the Districts, were professionally planted by Landsco. Italian Cypress, Nandina, and Alyssum were planted in the Hollywood Entertainment District, while Morea, Asparagus Fern, and assorted Succulents were planted in the Sunset & Vine District. The plants were selected based on their low maintenance and water requirements and will be maintained by the BID’s maintenance vendor, CleanStreet.

Over the coming weeks, the planters will be closely monitored to assure the plants are doing well. Should the pilot be deemed a success, we hope to further the greening of the neighborhood with additional planters along Hollywood and Sunset Boulevards. Additionally, the Sunset & Vine District will be experimenting with the installation of various plant types in tree wells. Keep an eye out for blooms this spring!

-MATTHEW SEVERSON

Trial Pop-Up Park Coming to Selma and Ivar

The Sunset & Vine District will soon premiere a brand new pop-up park at the intersection of Selma Avenue and Ivar Avenue.

In partnership with LA-Más, a non-profit organization offering design-based solutions that strengthen communities, the demonstration project will re-imagine an unused private space into a lively pedestrian way that will encourage meaningful interactions and feedback from the community. Made possible with the help of property owner Gil Zahavi, the installation will include the introduction of amenities such as seating, plantings, wayfinding, trash bins and other options that would let the community see the potential of the space if it were to be made permanent.

Starting May 1, 2016 at the Hollywood Farmer’s Market 25th anniversary celebrations, the installation will create an opportunity to facilitate conversations with community members to provide input on future placemaking initiatives.

We can’t wait to share this new public space with the Hollywood community!

-MATTHEW SEVERSON
Hollywood Farmer’s Market Celebrates 25 Years

Twenty-five years ago, work was afoot on behalf of many constituent groups in Hollywood to improve the quality of neighborhood life for residents and business owners alike. Out of these efforts, the idea for a Farmers’ Market was suggested by then City Council Member Michael Woo as a means to create a safe, weekly community event for all; to establish a sales venue for California Farmers, food purveyors and local artisans; and to benefit local businesses in the immediate area of the Market.

Through the support of Woo and the City, the Hollywood Farmers’ Market (HFM) launched on Sunday, May 5, 1991 and proved to be an immediate hit. The success of the HFM led to the founding of a nonprofit named Sustainable Economic Enterprises of Los Angeles (SEE-LA) that today acts as owner/operator of the Hollywood Farmers’ Market.

SEE-LA is celebrating 25 years of farm fresh success on Sunday, May 1, 2016 with a special event at the market, followed by four more Sundays of events throughout May. From 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., a main stage at Cahuenga and Selma will feature local performers and some of the Market’s top musical talent, “buskers,” performing live. At 12:30, an official ceremony celebrating the Market’s history and future will take place, featuring civic and community leaders, many of the original “Legacy Farmers” who’ve been at the market since it opened and other special guests. The day will also be marked by celebrity chef appearances cooking demonstrations at the 25th Anniversary Culinary Stage, and book signings by well-known authors, food writers and authorities. The celebration continues each Sunday in May (May 8, May 15, May 22, and May 29) with more celebrity chefs preparing dishes for market shoppers as well as culinary authors making appearances and signing copies of their books.

“The Hollywood Farmers’ Market has been an instrumental part of Hollywood’s revitalization since 1991,” said Woo. “Over the years the Market has expanded to become a community meeting place, hosting more than 160 farmers, producers and food artisans who specialize in every crop that’s grown seasonally around the state and a large variety of culinary perspectives and practices from around the globe.”

“The great experiment that launched in 1991 as a way to use public space in a community-oriented way – then a rare venue, a farmers’ market – ultimately also helped shape SEE-LA,” said James Haydu, Executive Director of SEE-LA, “The organization is now a leader in providing fresh food access through farmers’ markets to all residents of Los Angeles, no matter where they live, what their income might be or what socioeconomic barriers they face. What better gift could an organization provide? We’re delighted to celebrate 25 years of service and we’re looking ahead to the next 25 years of possibilities,” he concluded.

In addition, SEE-LA’s annual Feast from the Farm fundraiser is coming up on Wednesday, April 6, from 11:30am-2:00pm at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood. This year’s guest chef is David Lentz, Proprietor and Chef of the Hungry Cat Restaurants. For a complete schedule of events, visit www.hfm.la.

- Kim Sudhalter, @KimSudhalter

Lights, Camera, Cure

When is dancing more than just dancing? When you’re dancing for a cause! Lights Camera Cure, a local charity organization committed to raising funds and awareness for pediatric cancer patient support and research, will host the 5th annual Hollywood Dance Marathon at the historic Avalon Theatre in the heart of Hollywood on Saturday, April 2, 2016 from 1:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Last year, over 1,000 people attended the event, which has raised over $300,000 in its first four years. Past celebrity guests and performers have included Moby, Lindsay Arnold, Joe Mantegna, and Melissa Joan Hart.

The six-hour dance-a-thon features non-stop entertainment from bands, musical performers, DJs and dance groups, plus a silent auction, raffle and more.

To participate, register online at www.lightscameracure.com. The registration fee is $30, which goes toward the suggested minimum fundraising goal of $300. Dancers can register as an individual or as a team. There will also be general admission and VIP tickets on sale closer to the event, for people who don’t want to commit to dancing and fundraising.

For a complete list of closures, or to sign up to receive text and/or e-mail alerts, visit www.navigatehollywood.com.
BID Open House Photos

Hollywood Property Owners Alliance welcomed the neighborhood into our new storefront office space with an Oscars-themed open house on Thursday, February 25, 2016. Over one-hundred stakeholders and neighbors attended the event.

News Briefs

Changing of the Guard
In early March, Captain Pete Zarcone, the hard-working and extremely dedicated commanding officer of Hollywood Division, was transferred to head 77th Division. Captain Zarcone has been a tremendous partner with both the Hollywood and Sunset BIDs and has led a very effective team at Hollywood Division. Though we are sad to see him go, a very capable replacement was named by LAPD: Captain Cory Palka, who previously served Hollywood as Patrol Captain. He returns to head this command and has hit the ground running, making himself available to meet with the community and hear concerns and ideas.

Skooby’s Becomes Cre8 Crepes
Cre8 Crepes is a one-of-a-kind unique food offering new to Hollywood. They make each custom crepe fresh to order with premium ingredients and a lot of love! With a wide variety of ingredients to pick from, the only difficult part is choosing your personal perfect combination for the crepe! From fresh fruits to cakes to ice cream, they carry a wide array of goodies to go into your fresh-made crepe. All of their delicious crepes are served hand-held for enjoying on the go, while you are taking in the wonderful and world famous view along Hollywood Blvd. Cre8 Crepes is open now at 6654 Hollywood Boulevard.

LADWP Offers Rebates, Loans
LADWP has several programs that could be of use to property owners. One is the Commercial/Industrial and Multi-Family Water Rebate Program. Property owners can save money and reduce their water use through a variety of rebates. Visit www.ladwp.com/cwr, or call 888-376-3314 for more information. Additionally, LADWP’s Utility Infrastructure Loan Program is available to new and existing commercial/industrial customers. Loans will only be extended to qualifying prospective projects. Examples include the purchase and installation of electric energy equipment, energy efficient equipment, and solar photovoltaic systems. Contact Belu Onyedika at 213-367-3770 or belu.onyedika@ladwp.com.
GREETINGS TO ALL PROPERTY OWNERS!

Greetings fellow property owners!

I am honored to be elected to serve as the president of the Central Hollywood Coalition for the coming year. I know I speak on behalf of my fellow board members in expressing gratitude to our colleague, Carol Massie, who served in this capacity for the past three years. She invested enormous time, energy and talent into leading our board and representing the Sunset & Vine BID in our community, and I am inspired by how she approached this responsibility. I am grateful that she will remain on our board as her expertise is invaluable.

This year, I hope to work with my fellow board members and the staff to pursue three objectives. First, I think it is important that our BID – and the services we provide – are more visible to our stakeholders. Great work is being done to maintain our sidewalks and trees, address trash and graffiti, deter crime and provide outreach to homeless individuals. Perhaps because our teams work late at night, or early in the morning, many don’t realize that your BID dollars are at work every day. We are going to look for ways to communicate that presence to you this year, not only through our newsletter and web site, but also through making our security and cleaning teams more visible.

Second, I want to find ways to seek input from you, our assessment-paying stakeholders, about what is important to you. There are a number of ways we can do this, including surveys and meetings. I plan to discuss this with the board and it is very likely you will see a survey arrive this spring seeking your opinion on how we can improve our service to you and what issues are most top-of-mind.

Third, I will seek to make more connections with other organizations that serve our neighborhood. We will be reaching out to other nonprofits and agencies, and will likely invite some of you in to meet with our Board. The CHC Board is committed to serving this neighborhood. For example, for the last two years, we’ve donated proceeds from our very successful Sunset & Dine event to The Center in Hollywood, which is doing important work serving adults experiencing homelessness in Hollywood. We will continue to look for ways to serve and support good organizations in our community.

Please know that you are always invited to attend our monthly board meetings and can address the board on any topic, or merely come and listen. We love receiving input from the community, and meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m. (See page 3).

I am looking forward to a good year and looking forward to meeting many of you!

Ciao!

-FABIO CONTI, PRESIDENT, CHC

Last fall, the LA Times reported that “activists were seeking a ballot measure for a moratorium on Los Angeles’ “Mega Projects.” Since then the measure, currently referred to as the “Neighborhood Integrity Initiative,” has made waves across the city.

Backers of the initiative are currently aiming for the March 2017 election. Passage of the measure would, among other things, halt all projects requiring a zone change or general plan amendment. In other words, any development that seeks to “increase the number of housing units allowed on a particular site” would not be allowed. Only projects that have already broken ground or have a development agreement in place would be allowed to proceed.

While many agree that the city’s planning process has been somewhat discontinuous, this measure appears to go too far. With a 3.6% population increase within a five-year period (according to 2010-2014 US Census Bureau), nearly half a percentage point higher than the nation’s average, it seems illogical to limit the amount of units being built in our city. This is especially true when considering issues such as homelessness and affordable housing, which continue to impact our local downtowns and millennials, who are looking for cost-effective places to live near where they work.

The “preservation” proposed in this initiative would only preserve the status quo in a city that is in desperate need of housing. With limited “by right” development options in the city available, proponents of the ordinance could be putting existing low income and rent controlled housing at risk. Both the HPOA and CHC boards have voiced opposition to the measure.

-JOSEPH MARIANI JR., @GOODNEWSJOE

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www.sunsetandvinebid.org

Demitasse Now Roasting on Cahuenga

Hollywood residents, rejoice! The brand new location of Demitasse (its fourth) is now live and boasts one of the neighborhood’s most beautiful and bustling patios on Cahuenga, a part of Space 15 Twenty. It’s also big enough to house the coffee shop’s very own roaster.

Initiative Seeks to Halt Development, Planning in Los Angeles

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-JOSEPH MARIANI JR., @GOODNEWSJOE
A New Home for BID Staff, Board

HPOA is also working to create a space dedicated to potential investors, including maps of the area, development information and information on the BID. It will create a place where people can meet and a place to stop while giving a tour of Hollywood.

“We’re going to be very intentional about meeting our neighbors this year,” Morrison added.

In March, a meeting was held with business owners in the neighboring area in hopes of creating a catalyst for activity and change.

“We’ve seen it work very well for business owners in other areas,” she said. “Once they have a reason to get to know each other and work together, that creates positive synergy. We’re going to facilitate that process.”

Public Art Project in Sunset & Vine BID

with the Do Art Foundation, selected local artist Paige Emery through an extensive application process. Emery was chosen based on her ability to capture the neighborhood’s unique creative spirit and authentic vibe.

The project culminated in ten original public artworks that will be on display on utility boxes for a year. Bands Night Beats, Fever the Ghost, FEELS, Cosmonauts, Triptides, The Molochs, HOTT MT and Froth are also featured in the art.

“Most obviously, Paige’s work is appealing aesthetically, particularly when compared to what we had before,” Gordon said. “The color and energy in her pieces really invigorates our streetscape. But beyond that, it’s accessible. Anyone can stop and ponder, appreciate, critique or draw inspiration from these artworks. Enriching our neighborhood and community; that’s really the value we’re hoping to bring with this project.

-Nerissa Silao, @NerissaS

The band Winter, one of the ten bands painted for the utility box program, performing at Amoeba as part of the program’s launch. (Photo by Devin Strecker)
let us entertain you

festivals

The TCM Classic Film Festival returns to Hollywood April 28 through May 1, exploring moving pictures - the ones that bring us to tears, rouse us to action, inspire us, even project us to a higher plane. In the heart of Hollywood, movie lovers will gather to share the big-time emotions of big screen stories, from coming-of-age pictures to terminal tearjerkers, from powerful sports dramas we feel in our bones to religious epics that elevate our spirits. These are the films that set our love of cinema in motion. Sponsored by Delta and Citi Bank.

movies

Alice returns to the whimsical world of Wonderland and travels back in time to save the Mad Hatter in Disney's “Alice Through The Looking Glass”, out May 27. The world premiere of the James Bobin-directed picture will take place at El Capitan Theatre prior to the movie's wide release. The movie stars Johnny Depp, Sacha Baron Cohen, Mia Wasikowska, Helena Bonham Carter and Anne Hathaway. The fantasy/adventure film is a sequel to Tim Burton's 2010 “Alice in Wonderland” and both films are based off Lewis Carroll's original books.

concerts

Texan post-hardcore band At The Drive-In will play two nights at the historic Hollywood Palladium, June 1 and 2. The first night is already sold out so get your tickets for night two soon! At The Drive-In first formed in 1993 and released three albums, receiving a number of accolades and being cited as a landmark of the post-hardcore genre before disbanding in 2001. Following the breakup, two members formed The Mars Volta. In 2012, At The Drive-In reunited and played Coachella and Lollapalooza. Their 2016 Tour kicks off in March.