

LaBrea Hancock Homeowners Association
Board Meeting – Sunday, February 10, 2019

MINUTES

<u>Board Members in Attendance:</u>	<u>Absent Board Members:</u>	<u>Block Captains, Guests, Community Members:</u>
Tammy Rosato	Justin Urcis	Frank Rosato
Phil Messina	Diana Suh	Diana Eisele
Jane Prentiss	Abbish Rand	Barbara Hansen
Bob Eisele		Lara Magnusen
Cathy Roberts		Ross Anderson
Jill Brown		Nancy Dannevik
Brad Jewett		Charles Brown
Bill Dannevik		Roger Schroeder
Michelle Owen		Vanessa Marzaroli
		Marian Williams
		Brian Lee
		Annie Kim
		Tim Johnson
		Genia Quinn
		Conrad Starr
		Brett Parsons
		John Wellborne – Larchmont Chronicle
		Liz Fuller – Larchmont Buzz
		Council Member David Ryu – CD4
		Rob Fisher – CD 4
		SLO O'Brien

The Annual Meeting of the Board was called to order by Tammy Rosato at approximately 12:35 pm

The article posted to the Larchmont Buzz on February 11 constitutes the minutes for the meeting with the following additional note.

Board President Tammy Rosato and Council Member David Ryu both encouraged people to get involved in our La Brea Hancock neighborhood and the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council. Involvement and activism are key to making our area the best it can be in terms of safety and livability.

The meeting was adjourned at approx. 2:35 pm.

LBHHA Annual Meeting Provides Updates on Streets, Trees and More

larchmontbuzz.com/featured-stories-larchmont-village/lbhha-annual-meeting-provides-updates-on-streets-trees-and-more
Elizabeth Fuller

February 11, 2019



City Council Member David Ryu addresses members of the La Brea-Hancock Homeowners' Association at Sunday's annual meeting, held at the Compass Real Estate office on Larchmont Blvd.

On Sunday, February 10, members of the La Brea-Hancock Homeowners' Association held their annual meeting to discuss issues of importance to the neighborhood, and to elect their new slate of board members for the coming year. Discussion topics at the meeting included many items of interest to most of our local neighborhood associations: street repairs and resurfacing, tree maintenance, traffic safety and signage, crime, and development and increasing density (especially in the form of new zoning changes like the Purple Line Transit Neighborhood Plan).

Street Repairs and Resurfacing

While neighbors at the meeting frequently cited 6th Street, between La Brea and Highland, as the street most in need of repaving in the neighborhood, others cited Mansfield Ave. and the neighborhood's other north/south residential streets between Wilshire and Third St. as equally in need of attention. Guest speaker City Council Member David Ryu explained to the group that the city has historically patched and repaved mostly streets with quality grades of "A" or "B," and has not touched failing streets because repairs to those areas are much more expensive. Ryu said the type of street surface also complicates maintenance and repaving issues, because the city will either patch or re-surface asphalt streets fairly frequently, but has not done repairs to any concrete streets for nearly 100 years. This is because, he said, the city has always

claimed that concrete repairs are much more expensive and not affordable. As a result, Ryu noted, many of our local concrete streets, including those in the La Brea-Hancock area, are now in desperate need of repairs.

Ryu said that he has been trying to get the city to evaluate the actual cost of concrete street repairs, and over the last three years he completed a pilot program that replaced three concrete intersections, and small portions of some other concrete streets in neighboring Hancock Park (the one area in the city, he said, where streets are “required by law” to be paved in concrete). Despite the pilot being finished a year and a half ago, however, Ryu said he is still waiting for the city to report back on the comparative costs, both short- and long-term, of those repairs.

Ryu agreed with the La Brea-Hancock residents that their streets need significant attention, and stated firmly that “an asphalt patch is not considered a fix in my book.” Ryu and his field deputy, Rob Fisher, told residents that a good first step toward any larger fix for neighborhood streets will be prioritizing which streets are most in need of attention, and asked for the association’s help in surveying members and soliciting input, so that when funding and staff are finally available, there will be agreement on where to start. Ryu and Fisher also said they would research whether or not the failing concrete streets could be temporarily re-surfaced with asphalt, to improve them somewhat until full concrete repairs can be arranged...and they asked neighbors to decide whether they would support such an option. Finally, Ryu also mentioned that the city is exploring other types of new, “cool” street surfaces (which would better combat the urban heat island effects of dark paving materials), and said several of those materials can be seen today in the parking lot at the LA Zoo.

Ryu cautioned, however, that whatever paving options are finally supported, they won’t be immediate...and that concrete repairs will take much longer than asphalt solutions. Fisher said he would report back to the neighbors with further details on the options available, and they could then form a committee to study the options and do local surveys to see which materials and locations the neighbors would support.

Tree Maintenance

On the subject of local trees, many of which are nearing the end of their natural lifespan, discussion centered on trimming existing trees (both a cosmetic and safety issue, since dead branches can fall on cars and people), removing dead trees, and replacing trees as they expire.

Ryu, who has taken to calling himself the “Lorax” of city trees, noted that his district has more trees than any other in the city of Los Angeles, so protecting the local tree canopy is definitely a top issue for him (he recently introduced a package of three city council motions aimed at cataloging the city’s trees and reforming city staffing and tree policies at several levels). At the same time, however, he noted that the city’s urban forestry department has been understaffed for more than 10 years, and has mostly relied on

contractors for trimming services...and those people may not be well trained or particularly knowledgeable about the trees they're trimming. So Ryu said any improvement in tree services has to start with improving funding for the department, so it can hire and train good technicians. (Ryu also noted that the staffing problems are actually two-fold – due to cutbacks during the recession, which were never restored later...and also to natural attrition: fully 40% of the city's staff is now eligible for retirement, and those who do retire are not being replaced quickly enough to maintain staffing levels.)

Ryu said that the city will respond quickly to emergency situations, in which trees are obstructing traffic signs or touching power lines (though not the lower telephone and cable lines, which aren't as dangerous). For other issues, however, Ryu said he is working with the Windsor Square and Hancock Park neighborhood associations to develop more comprehensive tree maintenance and replacement programs, in particular for Larchmont Blvd. street trees, which he hopes will serve as models for the city. The La Brea-Hancock neighbors (and those in other neighborhoods, too), he said, could help by working to develop tree policies for their own areas, which they can then work with the city to implement.

Traffic Safety and Signage

Neighborhood traffic safety was also a huge issue of importance for the LBHHA members at the meeting, focusing mostly on 6th Street, but also cut-through traffic on the more residential streets, which is being encouraged by new driving apps such as Waze. Ryu noted that the cut-through issue is citywide, and that the city is looking into possibly suing Waze to deal with it. In the meantime, though, he said, solutions are tricky because we can't close entrances to local streets, and the Department of Transportation is very engineer- and data-driven, so changes can only be implemented after extensive studies, and have to be specifically keyed to the resulting data.



For example, Ryu noted, neighbors along the portion of 6th Street that runs west from La Brea to Fairfax were very upset about speeding traffic and three fatalities that occurred there in recent years. But while some residents supported a “road diet” that would have narrowed the street, increasing congestion and slowing traffic, studies revealed that two of the three deaths were not due to speeding, but instead to improper left turns. So instead of the road diet, the city installed a new left-turn pocket at a key intersection, which improved turn safety, but did not affect traffic speeds.

Ryu said it’s important for residents to log every accident they see along streets they’re concerned about, and to report them to the Department of Transportation through the [MyDOT](#) website, even if the collisions weren’t reported to the police. This provides information to the city, and can help justify traffic studies in areas that might warrant further action.

Several residents at the meeting asked if they could get “no turn” signs at certain intersections, but Ryu said, again, that it would depend on traffic studies, and whether or not the data from those studies indicated behavior that could specifically be solved by installing new signs (and not some other kind of traffic control measure). Ryu did say, however, in response to another resident’s inquiry, that he could look into having “Do Not Block Intersection” painted at a couple of 6th Street intersections, to improve visibility for drivers trying to cross or enter the street at those locations.

Meanwhile, Fisher noted that even speed humps – another solution neighbors often request – may not help much with speeding cars. Drivers get used to them over time, he said, and gradually speed up again. Also, he said, Waze doesn’t mention that some streets have humps, so they don’t divert traffic away from streets that have them.

Finally, LBHHA President Tammy Rosato noted that it would also be helpful if someone from the neighborhood would join the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council’s [Transportation Committee](#), to help advocate for better traffic control measures in the area.

Crime

Rosato told neighbors that while crime overall is down throughout the city, property crimes in our Wilshire neighborhoods have increased. Many incidents, she said, happen in retail shopping areas, but the fact that so many people park on streets and in driveways instead of garages at home also makes cars an attractive target in residential areas.

Rosato and LAPD Senior Lead Officer Ian O’Brien said it’s important to “harden the target,” whenever possible, and O’Brien confirmed that a large number of car break-ins occur when people leave doors unlocked, and when they leave bags and things like computers visible in the passenger area. So “hide it-lock it-keep it” and “don’t give people the opportunity to victimize you,” O’Brien said. O’Brien also noted a slightly newer crime

trend, in which the suspect comes along between 2 and 5 a.m., jacks cars up and takes the wheels, leaving the rest of the car behind. The process, he said, takes 20 or 30 minutes, but because it happens during those early morning hours, no one sees what's going on and the thief can work uninterrupted.

Both O'Brien and Rosato urged people to stay in touch with their neighbors, be on the lookout for odd trends or patterns in the neighborhood, and report suspicious activity to LAPD's non-emergency number at 1-877-ASK-LAPD. Security systems and cameras can also help, O'Brien said...even if photos or video of suspects doesn't result in their immediate capture, the pictures are still distributed to local patrol officers and can help identify suspects later, if the police run across them.

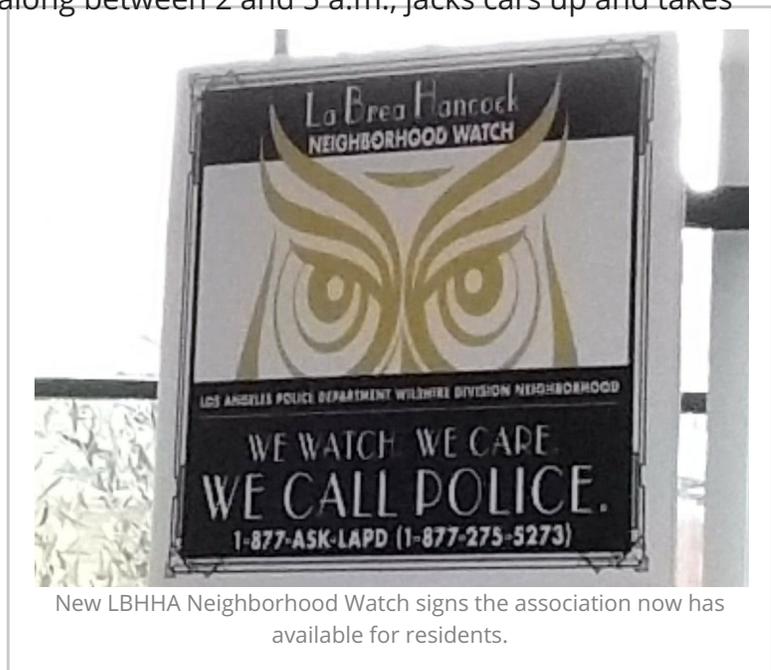
O'Brien also told attendees to always say "no" to door-to-door solicitors, and that placing electronic vehicle keys in "Faraday" bags may help deter people who use remote signals to activate them and unlock cars.

Finally, Rosato noted that the LBHHA has printed some new neighborhood watch signs, which residents can purchase for \$10 from the association.

Purple Line Transit Neighborhood Plan

LBHHA board member Cathy Roberts, who also sits on the GWNC's Land Use Committee, reported that the Association has voted to "oppose as currently presented" the city's proposed Purple Line Transit Neighborhood Plan, which would allow additional housing density in some areas within half a mile of the new Purple Line subway stop at Wilshire and La Brea. Roberts said that although the plan has been in the works since 2016, many La Brea-Hancock residents didn't find out about it until a meeting last summer, seeking input on the scope of an Environmental Impact Report for the plan.

Roberts said that the neighbors' opposition comes from the fact that the plan area overlaps with the city's Wilshire Community Plan area, but it is not being worked on in conjunction with a scheduled rewrite of that Plan. Also, she said, they are not sure yet how the plan would affect parcels on the west side of S. Sycamore Ave., between 4th and 6th Streets, as well as others along Carling Way between La Brea and Highland Aves.,



which are now limited by a [Q] condition to use as single-family housing or parking lots. Roberts said it's still unclear whether or not those lots would be up-zoned under the TNP, and the Association wants to make sure their single-family status is protected.

Board Elections

The final issue dealt with at Sunday's meeting was the election (or re-election) of the Association's Board Members for the coming year. The 11 members on the ballot included Jill Brown, Bill Dannevik, Bob Eisele, Brad Jewett, Phil Messina, Michelle Owen, Jane Prentiss, Genia Quinn, Cathy Roberts, Tammy Rosato and Justin Urcis. Of those 11, 10 are returnees to the board, and Quinn is the one new board member.