

Castellammare Mesa Home Owners

PO Box 742

Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

<http://castellammaremesa.com>

NEWSLETTER April, 2010

Dear Neighbor: Greetings. We held our yearly homeowner's meeting on February 16 and it was one of the most heavily attended in recent history. Thanks to all of you who were willing and able to come and take part in the many issues we discussed that evening. It was very heartening to have such an active, involved group!

Summary of the news from the Annual General Meeting (AGM):

- **BOARD ELECTIONS:** You elected the following 2010 Board Members. Officers were elected by the Board at its first meeting.
 - Kim Clary, President
 - Mike Lofchie, Vice President
 - Muriel Janes, Secretary
 - Doug McCormick, Treasurer
 - Laura Gerson
 - Bennett Murphy
 - Norma Spak

We would like to sincerely thank the outgoing board members, Doreen Rochman, Peter Newton and Reuel Sutton for their years of commitment to the Board and this community.

- The Board appointed the following to the **Architectural Committee (AC):**

- Kim Clary, Interim Chair
- Marlena Newmark, Secretary
- Margaret Churchill*
- Andrew Martin
- Bob Marrs*
- Gerald Nadler
- Reuel Sutton

(*Denotes alternate)

We wish to thank Andrew Martin, outgoing Chair, and Marlena Newmark, Secretary, for their hard work and dedication to this Committee.

- **COUNCILMAN ROSENDAHL and his Deputy, Jessyca Avalos,** attended the AGM.

Councilman Rosendahl presented Andrew Martin with a Certificate of Appreciation for his years of volunteer work with the community both as President of the CMHO and as a member of the AC.

- The Councilman spoke about City-wide and community issues and answered questions.

Questions from the floor:

- What about paving the streets in Castellammare that have not been paved in years? *Street repairs are low on the list of priorities. Emergency repairs will be done.*
 - What is going on with police and fire protection? *He was responsible for keeping the one Palisades patrol car. Fire Station 69 is on modified coverage.*
 - Can we get updates about traffic conditions on PCH? *Jessyca informed us about PCH Partners at <http://www.pchpartners.org> which is a coalition of several cities and Caltrans that provides information via email alerts about conditions on PCH related to the various projects.*
 - What about the Los Liones water diversion project which was never completed and the funding now is frozen? *He will look into it.*
 - What were the results of the slide study at the Tramonto/Coperto bulkhead? *Soil studies are in progress.*
- **CAPTAIN THOMPSON - LAFD, STATION 23** and his crew attended and gave the following information:
 - The station has free sand and sand bags, limit 25 per household.
 - Volunteers will be doing brush inspections in the spring. Fire stations do not regularly inspect anymore. Satellite imagery is used to survey hillsides, followed up by physical inspections. Regarding inspections log on to <http://www.LAFD.org> and click on "inspections."
 - The modified coverage will be spreading to other stations.
 - **TREASURER'S REPORT** - Mike Lofchie, outgoing treasurer, gave an end of the year report.
Checking Account: We began the year with a balance of \$9923. We received deposits of \$16,725, for a total of \$26,648. Of the total income, \$13,600 was receipts of annual dues and \$3125 was for architectural fees. We had expenses during the year of \$12,623. Our largest expense were legal fees and associated costs, \$6381. Our second highest cost was the CMHO insurance policy, \$4337. Our annual picnic cost \$973. Other costs were for running the Association (printing and mailing the annual newsletter, mail box cost, annual registration with the State of California). The balance in the checking account at the end of the year was \$14,025.

Legal Defense Fund: We began the year with a balance of \$10124 in this account. This is the fund that we began specifically in connection with the lawsuit regarding the vacant parcel of land at Tramonto and Bellino. During 2009, our legal expenses in this case were \$3650. We had income to this account during the year of \$2275, which came from the open house fundraiser and personal donations. We ended the year with a balance of \$8749 in this fund. The Board is concerned that if this case should go to trial, this remaining balance will be quickly depleted, forcing us to use our cash reserve. While we obviously hope that this does not occur, the Board believes that we must prepare for the worst. Therefore, we may again appeal to our neighbors to make contributions to the Legal Defense Fund in the near future.

Money Market Fund: This is the emergency cash reserve. We have a total of \$14,197 in this account. The account earned \$28 in interest over the year.

This made a total of \$36,971 for all accounts at year end.

Our largest costs are legal fees that arise when homeowners wish to contest the decisions of our AC. It seemed unfair that we should absorb these costs out of annual dues since the legal costs are caused by the actions of a small number of homeowners. In order to preserve our annual dues at the \$85 level, the

Board decided to implement a sliding scale fee structure for architectural reviews. The fee is now \$500 depending upon the scale and complexity of the project. This will help enable us to shift the burden of our legal costs away from general dues toward our architectural review services. This action seemed essential if we are to have the financial reserves necessary to preserve our CC&R's.

Our new Treasurer, Doug McCormick, updates: 105 people have paid their CMHO dues, for a total of \$8,925. Checking Account: We currently have a total of \$10,947 in this account; Legal Defense Fund: We have \$8,111 in this fund and the Money Market Fund has \$14,203 for a total of \$33,261 in the three accounts. Although we are only in the first quarter of the year, our expenditures (\$11,582) have been almost as much as our receipts (\$12,103).

- **ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REPORT:** Andrew Martin, outgoing AC Chair, reported the following: Marlena Newmark, the AC's Secretary, confirmed that the AC had over 20 developments to review during 2009. Andrew discussed the importance of the CC&R's and their major focus, i.e., ensuring that there is no unreasonable view impairment and making sure that no homes are built or remodeled to exceed one story in height. The job of the AC is to interpret the CC&R's correctly and apply them in a consistent manner. To aid the AC in applying the CC&R's, Operating Practices and Procedures (OP&P's) have been developed.

The AC's work involves obtaining and reviewing plans from homeowners who wish to build or remodel, making site visits, consulting with immediate neighbors and having story poles installed when necessary. A homeowner should contact the AC to discuss and review preliminary plans before going to the time and expense of having engineered drawings prepared.

All AC decisions are based on a majority vote and all votes are recorded in the minutes of the applicable meeting. Members of the AC maintain complete documentation on an individual home file basis, which creates an enormous amount of paperwork. For that reason, the position of Records Custodian (RC) has been established for all CMHO and AC files and records.

- **ARCHIVE STORAGE REPORT:** Bob Marrs, (RC), reported that all of the existing HOA and AC paper files from 1953 through 2009 have been scanned and digitized and copies have been made for safe keeping. He is currently in the process of changing all of them into searchable PDF files. There are years of files that are missing. However, we have continuous files from 1988 to the present. The large architectural plans, which are too large to scan, have been placed in a waterproof container.

We want to thank Bob for taking on this huge project. This includes decades worth of files and took months of his time. What a significant contribution to helping the CMHO maintain its' files!

- **STATUS OF LAWSUIT:** David Morena updated us on the four year old suit which involves the vacant lot at 17642 Tramonto. The owner attempted to invalidate our CC&R's but the court ruled against him in 2007. Story poles were installed in 2008 and the AC requested changes due to view impairment issues. The CMHO has been in and out of court in 2009. However, recently the owner and the AC agreed to have the story poles reinstalled according to new plans. Neighbors input will be solicited and the AC will conduct its normal plan review process. There is still a chance that this could go to court but, for now, the process is moving forward.

- **GENERAL DISCUSSION/COMMUNITY UPDATES:**

- Getty Villa Conditional Use Permit (CUP) - Kelly Comras reported that the three year CUP review is now underway with the City. Last year, the affected home owners associations voted to accept the proposed CUP modifications with the stipulation that the Getty would revert back to the original CUP condition if a majority of the HOAs determined that the modifications were detrimental to the community.

Update: On March 25, the Planning Commission voted to approve the requested modifications with one exception: The third-party sound monitoring program shall not be deleted yet - one additional sound test shall be performed to determine that amplification with a small controlled sound system used in the Inner Peristyle, Outer Peristyle, Herb Garden and Outdoor Classical Theater (OCT) can keep amplified levels below the already approved OCT amplification for voice level (65dBA), sixty feet from the speakers. If an occurrence of non-compliance with the sound decibels is found by the third-party sound consultant, the Planning Commission may consider whether appropriate remedial action has been undertaken and whether to extend the sound monitoring program. The next step in the CUP process will be review by the Coastal Commission.

- Los Liones Gateway - Kelly Comras is working with community leaders to beautify the areas on Los Liones at the Fire Station and the corner of Tramonto. They are clearing the property of the dead dry plants and will plant new shrubs and trees native to the area. A motion was passed at the AGM to approve \$2,000 for the project from the CMHO's general fund and to request contributions from the community towards that amount.

Update: Clearance of the dead trees and brush from the corner of Los Liones and Tramonto Drive is almost complete. Planting will begin in two to three weeks. Refurbishment of screening material for the fence at Fire Station 23 is complete and the irrigation system has been repaired. One diseased Eucalyptus tree must be removed and another will be pruned at this corner. The City of Malibu is donating a load of rocks to line the drainage channel. Planting at the Fire Station will be scheduled at the same time as at the other corner.

This project will greatly enhance the entrance to our neighborhood. Because we have been doing this work with volunteers and with reduced prices from vendors, the value of this project far exceeds the actual cost. We have almost reached our fundraising goal but still need a few hundred dollars. Please consider making a donation towards this worthwhile project if you have not already done so. Checks should be made out to CMHO - Los Liones Planting, and mailed to the CMHO PO Box 742 or dropped by Kim's house.

If you would like to participate in the planting, please call Kelly at 310-459-5661 or email her at k_comras@hotmail.com.

- Waldorf School and the Traffic Signal at Los Liones and Sunset: Kim Clary and Shirley Haggstrom updated the community on this issue. In order to allow the school to open, in 2006 the City required Waldorf School to install a traffic signal as Condition #11 of their Conditional Use Permit (CUP). As is obvious, the school has not yet installed the light. The installation costs have increased considerably and the school has said they can raise some, but not all, of the money and are looking for other entities to pay for it. The issue is whether or not to ask the City to enforce its CUP. A long discussion ensued, in which the community members made it clear that they expect and want the City to enforce its requirement. The following resolution was passed: "Be it resolved that the CMHO Board and members present at the AGM recommend to the City of LA to enforce the Westside Waldorf School to comply with the CUP." This resolution was sent to the City's Zoning Administrator.

Update: The City Zoning Administrator held a hearing on April 1 in which Waldorf was to present a plan as to how they were going to achieve their goal of installing the light. Shirley Haggstrom and Norma Spak represented the Pacific Palisades Community Council and CMHO and spoke at the hearing, stating they want the City to uphold their CUP condition of installation of the light. The hearing officer said Waldorf is irresponsible and in violation of their CUP and gave them two weeks to get their engineering plan approval and two weeks more to present a plan of the final cost and how they will be in compliance with their condition. It appears that the school is now exploring getting a loan for the project.

- Home Tours - Judy Orsini planned and organized the very successful tour of the Morse home last year. She asked the members if they were interested in the possibility of another fund-raising home tour in 2010 and everyone seemed enthusiastic. Judy mentioned two possibilities - the Joseph Cotton house on Tramonto and the Gotlieb house on Vicino, which is a green house. She will be available in the fall to set up a committee and go forward with another home tour.

- Vons Remodeling - Norma Spak informed the community about the remodeling plans for Vons. The loading dock will be moved from the PCH side to the Sunset side. This will likely present more difficulty for trucks entering to unload. It may cause traffic stoppage on Sunset. Vons had no plans to re-configure the driveway to align with the traffic signal, although the community has long wanted that.

Update - It appears that Vons will have to align their driveway with the light. Community leaders and Councilman Rosendahl have been working together with the City to make this a condition of their remodel. We have heard recently that the project is being held up in the City's Department of Building and Safety.

Other News:

- **CMHO DUES; Membership** dues are \$85 for the year. Your dues continue to support the important work of the CMHO and the AC in protecting and enhancing our neighborhood. Without your support, the home owners association cannot exist. If you have not yet paid your dues, please consider doing so. You receive a Getty Villa card when you become a CMHO member, which allows walk-in access any time the Getty Villa is open. To dues-paying members, remember to make arrangements to pick up your card from Kim Clary.
- **PLAYGROUP FOR YOUNG CHILDREN:** One of our neighbors is interested in starting a playgroup for kids under three. The Board thought that other neighbors with young children might also be interested, so we are enclosing her information and note to the community: "My name is Vicky Schiff and my husband Shaun Bryant and I have a fabulous 16 month old son Jake. We've noticed how many small children live in Castellammare and thought it would be fun and convenient to start a playgroup right here. If you are interested in group play or playdates, please call me at 310-339-5690 or email at vshciff@orocap.com. It would be great to meet other toddler's parents too. Jake and I look forward to hearing from you!"
- **STRAY CATS:** Neighbors have asked for an update about the stray cat situation that was occurring last summer. As we last reported, all of the adult cats had been trapped, neutered and returned to the street where they were living and where they are being fed. However, three kittens remained at large and we were hoping they were either males or would get trapped before they reproduced. But one came

up very pregnant and miraculously, Doug McCormick was able to trap her and get her spayed. Thanks to Doug, it looks like the situation is completely under control now.

- **COMMUNICATION:** The Board is open to suggestions about what and how to communicate with you and what you would like to see us do. If you are interested in attending a Board meeting, please let us know. Also, please be sure to give us your e-mail address if you haven't already, or if it has changed.
- **CURRENT ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE PROJECTS:** Neighbors are reminded that we all purchased our homes subject to the empowerment of the AC, which is authorized by our CC&R's to review and approve plans to build new homes or remodel existing ones. We received copies of the CC&R's as part of the documentation we received when we close escrow on our homes. Please be sure to bring your construction projects, no matter how small, to the AC early in the process to save time and money.
 - 204 Coperto/17543 Tramonto - The owner will be building two houses on this large lot, where one house now exists. He is currently seeking a variance from the City for a front yard set back on Coperto. This project was approved by the AC in 2004 and the plans have not changed.
 - 228 Monte Grigio - The owners have been approved for a room addition to the back of their house with a deck on the roof.
 - 266 Quadro Vecchio - The owner submitted slightly revised plans which have been approved. The proposed house will be slightly lower in height than the existing house and will have an underfloor story. Construction under the approved plans will not unreasonably interfere with views in a manner prohibited by the CC&R's. In all aspects, the new home meets the criteria of our CC&R's.
 - 17475 Revello - The owners submitted plans over a year ago for a 6,420 sq. ft. home with an understory and pool. Due to requests from the neighbors the plans have been undergoing changes and the AC is awaiting new plans.
 - 17763 Sabbiadoro - The owners have been approved for a room addition to the front of their house.
 - 17537 Tramonto - The owners plan to replace the existing house. The AC has determined that the proposed plans as submitted are not in conformance with the CC&R's because the house is over one story in height.
 - 17642 Tramonto - Please see the section "Lawsuit" earlier in the newsletter.
 - 17708 Tramonto - The owners have submitted plans for an addition to their house. Story poles have been installed and the AC is going through its' plan review process.
 - 17860 Tramonto - Plans have been submitted for additions to the front and rear of the property. Story poles have been installed and the AC will go through its plan review process.

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Board Members

Kim Clary, President	310 230-8041	kimjdave@msn.com
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Norma Spak	310 454-2677	zjahley@verizon.net

Architectural Committee Members

Kim Clary, Interim Chair	310 230-8041	kimjdave@msn.com
Marlena Newmark, Secretary	310 454-4592	PaulMarlena@aol.com
Margaret Churchill*	310 573-1713	bermarg@roadrunner.com
Bob Marrs*	310 454-2030	bobmarrs@yahoo.com
Andrew Martin	310 310-2218	a.forbesmartin@gmail.com
Gerry Nadler	310 459-3746	Nadler@usc.edu
Reuel Sutton	310 459-1286	reuel.sutton@yahoo.com

* Denotes alternate.

Other Important Numbers:

LAPD: Senior Lead Officer Michael Moore: 1-310-444-0737; 27995@lapd.lacity.org

For non-emergency immediate service: (877) 275-5273

Fire Dept. 911 Brush Clearance: (818) 374-1111

City Services and Building & Safety: 311 or <http://www.lacity.org/boss/request.htm>

Note: This number is for any kind of question or concern re the City (graffiti removal, pot-hole repair, brush clearance, code violations, tree removal, etc.)

City Council Office:

Bill Rosendahl: LA Office: 200 N. Spring Street, Rm. 415, LA, CA 90012; 213-473-7011

West LA: 1645 Corinth, Room 201, West LA, CA 90025: 310-575-8461

councilman.rosendahl@lacity.org

Jessyca Avalos: Field Deputy for Pacific Palisades: jessyca.avalos@lacity.org

Getty Villa Community Relations Committee:

Kelly Comras: 1-310-459-5661; k_comras@hotmail.com

Getty Villa Complaint Hotline: 1-877-625-4282

Remember to conserve water & to recycle!!

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