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L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference
Looks to the Future

by Laura Dominguez

This fall, the Conservancy and the Los Angeles Department of City Planning’s Office of Historic Resources (OHR) will co-sponsor the 2016 L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference. The day-long forum is open to anyone interested in learning more about neighborhood conservation, including Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs), mansionization and teardowns, public policy, and community advocacy.

The Conservancy and OHR are pleased to present the 2016 conference in partnership with the West Adams Heritage Association. The event will take place on Saturday, October 15 at the historic St. John’s Cathedral in University Park (514 W. Adams Boulevard). Doors will open at 8:30 a.m., and the program will end at 4:30 p.m.

Growing Up with Character

The theme of this year’s conference is “Growing Up with Character,” a reflection of widespread efforts to conserve community heritage and livability within the context of Los Angeles’ ongoing physical transformation. From tree-lined streets of historic homes, to clusters of older duplexes and bungalow courts, to “background buildings” in industrial neighborhoods, residents face increasing development pressures. New policies aimed at curbing the teardown trend and promoting neighborhood character are on the horizon, and residents are more engaged than ever (see page 3).

If you are wondering how to protect the great qualities that drew you to your neighborhood in the first place, the conference is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other Angelenos.

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Tour the Homes of View Park on November 6

by Sarah Lann

Mark your calendar for the Conservancy’s special fall tour on Sunday, November 6. We’ll visit View Park, a lovely historic neighborhood between La Brea Avenue and Crenshaw Boulevard.

View Park lies just outside the city in unincorporated Los Angeles County. It retains much of its historic appearance and was developed over a long period, from the early 1920s to 1970.

Thanks to the efforts of the View Park Conservancy, a grassroots advocacy group mentored in large part by the Conservancy, View Park was recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The roughly 1,800 homes in this predominantly African American residential area make it the largest National Historic District in the country with black ethnic heritage at its epicenter.

The November 6 tour will give you rare access to several private homes, including the first house in unincorporated L.A. County to gain historic landmark status. The tour will be part of a weekend’s worth of festivities celebrating View Park’s National Register designation and its impact on Greater Los Angeles’ history.

View Park’s history is synonymous with that of many areas in Los Angeles County affected by discriminatory covenants and policies that kept segregation firmly in place for many years. Developed in the 1920s as an upper-class neighborhood in the same vein as Preservation Award Applications

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New Schedule for Preservation Awards

2017 Applications Due November 4, 2016

If you have a project in mind for next year’s Preservation Awards, start planning now! For many years, applications have been due in late January for that year’s awards. Starting this year, they will be due in early November for the next year’s awards.

Applications for our 2017 Preservation Awards are due on Friday, November 4, 2016. The awards jury will meet in January and we will announce the recipients in February. We will also hold our annual Preservation Awards Luncheon on a different day next year—Wednesday, not Thursday. Please mark your calendars for the 2017 Preservation Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 3, 2017.

We encourage a range of applications that illustrate the many ways, and reasons, that we preserve historic places. People, buildings, landscapes, educational programs, local preservation plans, grassroots advocacy efforts—all could qualify for an award.

To be eligible, a project must be complete at the time of application submission, be located in Los Angeles County, and meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (or Cultural Landscapes).

The 2017 application will be available the week of September 12 at laconservancy.org/awards. Good luck!

Manuel Huerta and Adrienne Kisson Leave Conservancy Staff

Two staff members recently left the Conservancy staff. We appreciate their years of hard work and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Manuel Huerta left the Conservancy in July after three and a half years as our advocacy department’s community outreach coordinator. He was responsible for managing the Conservancy’s outreach to Latina/o communities, and he contributed to the Conservancy’s ongoing campaign to preserve the historic Wyvernwood Garden Apartments in Boyle Heights. Manuel also oversaw projects to document historic resources related to the 1970 Chicano Moratorium and along the historic core of Central Avenue.

After nearly ten years in our development department, Adrienne Kisson left the Conservancy in August. She managed our Cornerstone membership program and planned our largest fundraising events, including our Preservation Awards Luncheon and annual benefit. Adrienne also secured grant funding for the Conservancy’s programs and operations. She is most proud of earning grants for our communications technology initiative. These projects have made a huge impact in strengthening our communications, streamlining operations, and positioning the Conservancy to meet future needs. Thank you, Manuel and Adrienne, for your lasting contributions to the Conservancy!

Martha Tapper Gruft (1947 – 2016)

The Conservancy is saddened by the loss of longtime volunteer Martha Gruft, who passed away on July 2. A dedicated volunteer since 1990, Martha was one of our busiest supporters, generously giving her time to special events, tours, seminars, benefits, and committees. She served on the Last Remaining Seats Committee for many years. Martha’s sense of humor and adventure, and her willingness to help with any volunteer task, earned her special recognition from the Conservancy and endeared her to many other volunteers.

Martha had a special interest in the film industry and Los Angeles history, and she was involved with numerous preservation organizations. It was entirely fitting that her memorial service took place at the historic Hollywood Forever Cemetery.
Throughout Greater Los Angeles, older and historic neighborhoods are losing their unique sense of place through needless demolition and incompatible new development. The location and land values of these communities make them increasingly vulnerable. Though not a new phenomenon, the teardown and mansionization trend is critical to address because of its wide reach and broad implications for generations of Angelenos.

The Conservancy is working closely with residents, neighborhood groups, and the City of Los Angeles to conserve the city’s neighborhood character through several ambitious policy proposals, including amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) and the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO).

The City of Los Angeles first passed the BMO in 2008 and the BHO in 2011 to establish regulations for single-family residential properties. The ordinance sought to limit the size and height of single-family homes. Yet a few provisions, including exemptions and design bonuses, actually encouraged the out-of-scale homes it was designed to prevent.

The Conservancy is advocating for sound policies and planning that allow all neighborhoods to adapt for new growth without sacrificing character. We have pressed for a simple and straightforward fix to the amended BMO/BHO.

At a July 14 meeting of the City Planning Commission, commissioners took some important steps to further strengthen the amended BMO/BHO. We had four key concerns that the Planning Commission addressed.

1) Exemptions for Attached, Front-loaded Garages

We have advocated removing a provision that exempts the square footage of an attached garage—up to 400 square feet—from a home’s overall square footage. This issue has been raised repeatedly as a loophole that leads to incompatible design in older neighborhoods.

More than any other design element, attached garages severely alter the pattern, feel, setting, and overall character of an older neighborhood. Most of the city’s older neighborhoods have detached garages at the rear, which provides an important buffer by separating adjacent properties by long driveways.

The design of many new houses focuses most often on the garage, not the house itself. At the front of the property and immediately off the street, a front-loaded garage often adds significant bulk, eliminates the buffer of a long driveway, and fails to blend in with existing houses in a 70- to 100-year-old neighborhood.

An amendment was made at the July 14 City Planning Commission meeting that counts a portion of the attached garage toward the overall square footage of a home. The amendment is not perfect, but it does get us closer. We will continue to press further for all of the square footage to be counted when constructing a garage at the front of a house.

2) Maximum Residential Floor Area

The current BMO/BHO allow a home’s residential floor area (RFA) to equal up to fifty percent of the lot size. In response to public comments on July 14, City staff recommends reducing this amount to forty-five percent.

3) Autonomy of Zoning Administrator

Another provision of the current BMO/BHO gives the City Zoning Administrator independent authority to increase the RFA of a new house by up to ten percent without a public hearing.

In response to public comments on the latest amendments, City staff now recommends that the ordinances prohibit the Zoning Administrator from waiving a public hearing when deciding whether to grant certain increases. Specifically, this restriction applies to increases of up to ten percent RFA, and up to twenty percent for yard, area, building line, and height specifications.

4) Exemptions for Covered Areas

Porches, patios, and breezeways can impair the character of a neighborhood by adding bulk to a property. The current BMO/BHO exempt these types of elements from the overall RFA of a home. In response to public comments on the latest amendments, City staff now recommends that the ordinances fully eliminate this exemption.

Next Steps

The City Council’s Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee will now consider the proposed amendments to the Baseline Mansionization and Hillside Ordinances. At press time, the date of this meeting had not been set.

With a few additional tweaks and improvements, we hope that an amended BMO/BHO will be adopted by PLUM and then the full City Council, as the strengthened ordinances will help protect the unique character of L.A.’s older neighborhoods.
**Thank You, 2016**

**Last Remaining Seats Volunteers!**

Alice Allen  
Linda Arroz  
Darin Barnes  
Scott Benson *  
Robin Bowers *  
Joshua Bregman  
Tommy Bui  
Jose Castro  
Laura Cohen  
Julie Courtney  
Karen Coyle  
Rory Cunningham  
Jaw Cywan  
Terry Dadd  
Tom Dailey  
Matt Dillhoefer  
Devin Donner  
Julie Downey  
Alice Elmer  
Howard Fink  
Lee Fink  
Peter Fuad  
Alex Garcia *  
Alice Garcia  
Ken Gehrig *  
Chava Gerber  
Margot Gerber  
Michelle Gerdes  
Steve Gerdes  
Brandon Gilbrech  
Heather Goers  
Dolores Graham  
Chris Gray *  
Thea Green *  
Annie Gregory *  
Rosalind Groesse  
Martha Gruff *  
Diana Guzman *  
Marcia Hanford  
Laureen Harding  
Rivas  
Owen Harvey  
Randy Henderson  
Susana Hernandez  
Araico  
Will Herron  
Liz Highstrete *  
Caroline Hill  
Douglas Hill  
Karen Himes  
Ann Hobbs *  
Celeste Hong *  
Connie Humberger *  
Gary Iacobucci  
Kim Ishikawa  
Laura Janssen  
Kathleen Jetson  
Anna Jonsson *  
Melanie Kaminski  
Shannon Kaminski  
Jonathan Kaplan  
Daniel Loftin  
Susan Lucas *  
Eric Lynxwiler  
Joseph Magazeni *  
Steve Markham *  
Leslie McDougall *  
Brenda McFarland  
Maria McGinley  
Rob McManus  
Lindsay McMenamin  
Tom McQuaide  
Susana Miller  
Elysha Navarro *  
Andrew Odom *  
Michelle Paré *  
Betty Petitt  
Lanna Pian *  
Vivian Pine  
Yolanda Ramirez *  
Erin Ramos  
Carol Randall  
Tom Ruff  
Jasmine Regala  
Ed Reilly  
Joan Renner  
Alan Reyes  
Valerie Reynolds  
Cheryl Roberts  
Amy Rosenstein  
Stephen Russo  
Shannon Ryan  
David Saffer  
Brittany Salazar *  
Sandra Sandoval  
Jon Sansom  
Barry Schwartz  
Lynn Segal  
Stanley Sheff *  
Robert Simonton *  
Evelyn Slater-Shew  
Steven Smith  
Tom Sutherland *  
Larry Swanson *  
Nicole Thompson  
Paul Tolbert *  
Katherine Tolford  
Mickie Torres-Gil  
Nicole Trejo  
Shawna Upp  
Kristin Voss Hyatt *  
Daniel Wachtenheim  
Cliff Weimer  
Jan Westman *  
Carol Widmer  
David Willenberg *  
Jeanne Wilson  
Mark Wojan *  
Diana Yang  
Dale Zapata  
Michael Zoldessy *  
Shannon Kaminski  
Jonathan Kaplan  
Daniel Loftin  
Susan Lucas *  
Eric Lynxwiler  
Joseph Magazeni *  

**Last Remaining Seats: A 30th to Remember**

*by Sarah Lann*

In honor of the 30th annual Last Remaining Seats, the Conservancy hosted nine film screenings over four weeks in June. The series had the second-highest attendance in the history of the program, with more than 13,000 tickets sold. We had the help of 120 volunteers who worked one or more screenings. The newly instituted LRS Committee Teams programmed front-of-house events and décor for each film, which were widely effective and valuable.

An ambitious lineup of new programming to celebrate this milestone was especially successful. This diverse range of activities included backstage tours of theatres, tours of site locations from the film *Safety Last!* panel discussions with film archivists from major studios, Q&A sessions about the theatres following the films, and bar trivia at Clifton’s. These educational and social opportunities were very popular and well received, and they provided patrons with a deeper way to engage with the series and the Conservancy.

We extend our deepest thanks to the many volunteers (listed at left) who helped run the series, as well as our 2016 sponsors. Series Star Sponsors: Hollywood Foreign Press Association; Walter J. and Holly O. Thomson Foundation. Series Supporting Sponsors: Shangri-La Construction; Webcor Builders. Series Sponsors: Delijani Family; Grand Central Market; JPMorgan Chase & Co.; NBCUniversal; Paramount Pictures; Trina Turk and Mr. Turk; The Theatre at Ace Hotel; Roy Allen White. Evening Sponsors: Clifton’s; Cole’s, Originators of the French Dip; Linda and Jerry Bruckheimer; Hugh Hefner; Cathy and Steve Needleman. Media Sponsors: KLCS; *Los Angeles Downtown News*; Laemmle Theatres. Community Partners: Downtown Center Business Improvement District; Historic Core Business Improvement District. Major funding for the Conservancy’s educational programs is provided by the LaFetra Foundation and the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation. Thank you!
Summer Youth Programming: From NOMA to HOLA

by Rebecca Duran-Perez

In July, the Southern California chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (SoCalNOMA) invited the Conservancy’s director of education, Sarah Lann, to participate in their Project Pipeline Architecture and Engineering Summer Camp. NOMA describes Project Pipeline as “an educational summer camp that provides an opportunity to teach and engage African-American youth about the process and impact of architectural design.”

Sarah led a workshop on adaptive reuse with a group of around fifty campers, aged ten to fifteen. They met in an optimal setting—the lobby of the renovated Vision Theatre, a historic Art Deco gem in Leimert Park. This collaborative lesson let campers explore the concept of adaptive reuse in action: they were asked to demonstrate unique new purposes for a folding chair. The results were truly impressive! The students then worked in groups to brainstorm ideas for adaptively reusing existing buildings.

July also marked our eighth annual Adventures in Architecture summer program in partnership with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), a nonprofit community center for underserved youth in the Westlake/Lafayette Park neighborhood.

Eleven students aged ten to thirteen learned about their community, architecture, and the Conservancy via the concepts of preservation, adaptive reuse, and architectural styles. Our adventurers explored their own neighborhood, with visits to Southwestern Law School/Bullocks Wilshire, MacArthur Park, American Cement Building, First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, and the Park Plaza Hotel. They also took a detour downtown to the new SkySpace Observation Deck atop the US Bank Building. Students engaged in active discussions and hands-on activities, such as creating their own model buildings. We appreciate the remarkable work and support of the many people who helped make this summer’s Adventures in Architecture class another success.

Fall Benefit October 22 at Eclectic Beverly Hills Estate

by Liz Leshin

In addition to membership, benefit events provide the Conservancy with a large share of our operating funds. Our 2016 fall benefit will take place on Saturday, October 22 at the Liliore Green-Raines Estate, an elegant 1940 Georgian Colonial home in Beverly Hills, designed and built by James F. Dickason.

The lovely home was built for the daughter of oil tycoon Burton Green, one of the original developers of Beverly Hills (he is, in fact, credited with naming the city). One of the home’s prominent owners was media mogul Merv Griffin.

The home’s architecture is an interesting blend of styles and influences. The current owners reflect that spirit, taking a fresh and cheeky approach to décor, mixing paintings by modernist masters with vintage-style wallpaper and assorted chandeliers. The estate features extensive grounds with exquisite gardens, an original Adirondack cabin with amazing city views, and a natural spring.

Tickets for the benefit start at $450 for a three-hour cocktail party; sponsors at higher levels will also enjoy an al fresco dinner in the impressive rose garden. For details and tickets or sponsorships for this extraordinary event, visit laconservancy.org/benefit.

Thank You, Summer Interns!

Once again, we benefitted this summer from the hard work of two wonderful interns from the Getty Multicultural Internship Program.

Our advocacy intern, Samuel Mori, researched and developed online content related to Los Angeles’ older and historic neighborhoods. His work will contribute to our ongoing neighborhood outreach efforts, including the upcoming L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference (see cover story). Sam recently received his bachelor’s degree in history and Asian studies from Swarthmore College. He plans to work and travel before attending graduate school.

Rebecca Duran-Perez, our education intern, graduated from California State University, Los Angeles in June with a bachelor’s degree in history. She has worked as an instructor and teacher’s assistant at various institutions, including the Los Angeles Unified School District. She aspires to earn her teaching credential in social science and a master’s degree in history. This summer, Rebecca helped teach our Adventures in Architecture class (details at left); assisted with the research, writing, and creation of our Student Walking Tours; and investigated resources for our November 6 tour of View Park (see page 1).

Thank you Sam and Rebecca for all of your contributions this summer!
CONFERENCE continued from page 1

who are organizing around similar issues. The program includes presentations by experts in the field, interactive workshops, and dialogue with neighborhood advocates.

We will kick off the conference with a keynote presentation (special guest to be announced). Participants will then attend one of three morning sessions examining neighborhood conservation tools, design topics in HPOZs, and advocacy strategies. Guests will then choose from one of four brief “power sessions” designed to introduce timely issues and generate new questions. Topics include small lot subdivisions, character corridors, and a brief primer on local architectural styles.

During the lunch hour, guests will enjoy OHR’s biennial HPOZ Awards Ceremony, honoring exemplary projects and community leaders in Los Angeles’ historic neighborhoods.

After lunch, participants will attend one of three afternoon sessions, highlighting neighborhood conservation tools (a repeat of the morning’s session) and community outreach for HPOZs. We will also present an interactive mock HPOZ board meeting.

After a brief closing program, guests will end the day with one of four walking tours of nearby neighborhoods: University Park HPOZ, North University Park Specific Plan, Adams-Normandie HPOZ, or the proposed 27th and 28th Street HPOZ.

A Site Steeped in History

We are thrilled to return this year to University Park, where we held our 2007 HPOZ Conference. Developed as one of Los Angeles’ first suburbs in the 1880s, University Park is home to one of the most intact collections of early twentieth century and prewar architecture in the city. The neighborhood forms the residential backbone of nearby University of Southern California and Exposition Park. Its homes have a range of architectural styles, including Queen Anne, Italianate, Craftsman, and Period Revival.

Guests will also have a chance to explore the conference’s historic venue, St. John’s Cathedral. Completed in 1925, the church is one of Los Angeles’ most monumental examples of Romanesque Revival architecture. Architects Walter and Francis Pierpont Davis modeled their design on ecclesiastical buildings in Northern Italy, as well as the eleventh-century Basilica di San Pietro in Tuscania. St. John’s Cathedral is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, in the California Register of Historical Resources, and as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

Show Your Pride with #LAStoryhood

Help us generate excitement for the conference ahead of time! Every neighborhood is distinct in some way. Before the conference, tag photos of your neighborhood on Instagram and Twitter with #LAStoryhood.

To see session descriptions and register for the 2016 conference, please visit laconservancy.org/neighborhoods. Be sure to register by October 7 to take advantage of our $25 rate, which includes conference materials, morning refreshments, and lunch. After October 7, tickets will be $30. A small number will also be available for purchase at the door for $35.

Questions about the conference? Please contact Laura Dominguez at ldominguez@laconservancy.org or (213) 430-4211. We look forward to seeing you October 15!
Leonard Hill (1947 – 2016)

Lifetime Cornerstone Member Leonard Hill passed away June 7 at age 68. A passionate preservationist, Hill joined the Conservancy in 1986 and served two terms on our board of directors. He was instrumental in the fight to preserve the former Cathedral of St. Vibiana.

A native Angeleno, Len built a distinguished career in entertainment as a writer, producer, network executive, and entrepreneur, before entering real estate development in the late 1990s. With Yuval Bar-Zemer, he founded Linear City Development to revitalize underused properties, particularly in downtown L.A.’s Arts District.

Len hosted our 2011 benefit at the magnificent historic home he had painstakingly restored. He also introduced Diane Keaton to the Conservancy, agreeing to give her a tour of his home if she joined the organization. Len was a powerful force for preservation, and we miss him greatly.
CONSERVANCY WALKING TOURS

Tours cost $10 for Conservancy members and youth 17 or younger; $15 for the general public.

Most tours require reservations. We accept walk-ins on some tours, subject to availability.

For details and reservations, visit laconservancy.org/tours. Questions? Contact us at info@laconservancy.org or (213) 623-2489.

WALKING TOURS

Angelino Heights
Art Deco
Broadway Historic Theatre & Commercial District
Historic Downtown
Millennium Biltmore Hotel
Modern Skyline
Past Meets Present: Reinventing Downtown's Old Financial District
Union Station

Youth, family, and group tours available by special arrangement. For details, visit laconservancy.org/tours or contact us at info@laconservancy.org or (213) 623-2489.

New schedule for Preservation Awards! See page 2 for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS

L.A. HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS CONFERENCE
Saturday, October 15

Learn about the latest topics and tools in neighborhood conservation at this day-long forum, co-hosted by the Conservancy and the City of L.A. Details on page 1.

FALL BENEFIT: ECLECTIC STYLE IN BEVERLY HILLS
Saturday, October 22

Support the Conservancy and attend our annual benefit event. Enjoy a fun and fascinating evening exploring a 1940 Georgian Colonial estate built for the daughter of an oil tycoon. Details on page 5.

FALL TOUR: THE HOMES OF VIEW PARK
Sunday, November 6

See inside several beautiful homes in this historic neighborhood, which was recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Details on page 1.