

Save Our Mountains Inc./Boeckmann Property

As we turn a new leaf in a new year, there is progress to report regarding the so-called Mandeville Canyon Estates property at the end of Westridge Road, which has a pending development application for a 34-mansion tract.

In December 1999, after a hearing at which we spoke, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) voted to accept acquisition of the property as parkland in conjunction with the City and the State. The political process to accomplish this has been unbelievably protracted, difficult, contentious, and fraught with pitfalls. Despite that, it actually looks like the Year 2000 will be the year we achieve our goal – a fight begun back in 1991, when Brentwood Hills Homeowners Assn. (BHHA) first got wind that a notorious developer, Southwest Diversified Inc. (now bankrupt), planned to grade and build out this property.

When the acquisition is (hopefully) complete, the property will be managed by the SMMC as the last link in a wildlife corridor and regional park stretching up to Dirt Mulholland and the old Nike base down to Mountaingate, crisscrossed by fire roads and trails with panoramic views of the ocean and city. A new trailhead will be designed at the top of Westridge, but primary access will be from Sepulveda just south of the Skirball Museum.

Nine years ago BHHA formed Save Our Mountains Inc. (SOMI) to fight a proposed gated 34-mansion development on the Boeckmann property, which sought to grade 3 million cubic yards of dirt (enough for a 40 foot by 15 foot tunnel from Brentwood to Long Beach). At the time Lower Mandeville had just lost a land-use fight over a pristine piece of wilderness on the east wall of Mandeville Canyon at Chalon to another development of gated mansions. BHHA decided we needed to try a different approach. We resolved to work toward putting the Boeckmann property into the public domain. Within a short time we had built a broad-based constituency representing homeowners associations, residents,

continued on page 2

Speed Tables On Mandeville

As some of you may know, the lower Mandeville Canyon Association (MCA) is urgently pushing a proposal to install five “speed tables” on Mandeville Canyon Road between Chalon Road (on the north) and Kimberly Lane (on the south). Speed tables are similar to speed bumps, but longer. About one-third to one-half of our Brentwood Hills community uses Mandeville as their primary egress (as opposed to Westridge Road).

We got wind of this project in October, shortly before a Public Hearing at which homeowners in Upper Mandeville Canyon Association (UMCA) appeared and vehemently spoke in opposition. Their opposition was based on the fact that, first, speed tables will present an obstacle to firetrucks and emergency vehicles who need to reach both Upper Mandeville and Brentwood Hills; and second, Mandeville Canyon Road does not meet the legal requirements for speed tables, including width of the road and support of the required percentage of “affected homeowners.”

BHHA is alert to this proposal, and has gotten involved in the process. As those of you who use it know, Mandeville is a chronically congested and obstructed road, especially when gardeners and construction crews illegally park their trucks on the road, when combinations of sun and shadow eliminate visibility, and when trash trucks stop on blind curves, forcing southbound cars into northbound lanes. There has to be a better way to reduce speed, and strengthened City enforcement is one way. Another is the so-called “speed trucks,” radar-controlled devices that display your speed as you drive. We're already trying to get a dedicated "truck" for the canyon.

Late in January, there will be a meeting between the presidents of UMCA, MCA and BHHA and Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowski to attempt to reach a compromise decision on this matter. We hope that occurs, and will keep you posted.

Boeckman - continued from page 1

hikers, cyclists, environmentalists and others, plus 11,000 people from every part of the City who signed our petitions.

To everyone who helped, including you who contributed to our Neighborhood Defense Fund, your Board gives a resounding "Thank You!"

Fire Danger

As everyone knows, this has been an extraordinarily dry winter. Even with the few drops of rain we've received in the last few weeks, the situation is still grim. We are far below the normal annual rainfall levels for this time of year. That's great for beach volleyball and other outdoor activities, but with Santa Ana winds still blowing, we are in the unusual position of worrying about fire danger in winter.

Please keep alert! If you see someone smoking in the brush or on the fire road, tell them to put it out. Clear your own property of brush, and comply with City orders. Let's not have a repetition of 1978, when fire took out several houses in the canyon, and set off mudslides the following rainy season.

Westec/Edison Security

We can give thanks for being one of the most crime-free communities in the whole City of Los Angeles, but our record is not perfect. We are miles from the nearest police station (Purdue below Santa Monica Blvd.), and the nearest patrol car is a long time away. Last spring BHHA's Board held a mass meeting after a "career criminal" committed a number of burglaries posing as a daytime construction worker.

A big part of the solution is to subscribe to Edison Security (formerly Westec Security). If a few more homeowners subscribe, we can boost our coverage from 16 hours to 24 hours a day, with a dedicated patrol car for our community. Do it now! You can contact Edison at (818)909-0078 – press 3 for sales, and ask for Ara.

Home Values

Our realtor Board members can tell you that home values just continue to rise. If you haven't checked some of the recent sales, you'll be in for a surprise. Inventory is almost nonexistent; so desirable is our community that almost nothing is for sale, and many are clamoring to come in!

brentwood-hills.org Is Now Online

BHHA is pleased to announce that our new web site is now available. The site was recently created to give residents and board members an online home to facilitate communication and bring important online resources relevant to our neighborhood under one roof (for example - earthquake and brush clearance information and local government web resources). We encourage you to visit us at: <http://www.brentwood-hills.org/> and e-mail can be sent to: webmaster@brentwood-hills.org.

Time To Renew BHHA Membership

January is here and it is once again time to renew your membership to BHHA. If you haven't joined us in the past, please do so now! We are instrumental in keeping this a desirable, clean, and orderly neighborhood.

If you'd like to get involved in community affairs, come to our meetings (on the first Wednesday of each month, contact us for a location) or run for the Board. Regular newsletters will soon be available via e-mail, so if you would like to receive them that way, please fill out the form below, rather than the one on the envelope, when sending in your renewal.

The Santa Monica Mountains, in whose midst we live, are one of the most spectacular amenities of life in the US's only city with a mountain range running through it. The combination of living in the country, with panoramic views over the rest of the City, makes us unique. Let's all pitch in and keep it that way!

Brentwood Hills Homeowners Association - 2000 Renewal

Please enclose check payable to BHHA for \$35

(additional donations to BHHA Defense Fund are also welcome)

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

Address: _____

Send me newsletters via e-mail

Los Angeles, CA 90049

All membership information is confidential