

SLRA Newsletter

Silver Lake Residents Association

January

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE SELECTS DESIGN FIRM

Mia Lehrer & Associates Wins Bid For Silver Lake Project

by Greg Ptacek

A contract for the development of the Silver Lake Reservoir Master Plan has been awarded to Mia Lehrer & Associates. The Los Angeles-based firm is expected to begin work in the next 30 days to create a blueprint for the renovation and re-design of the grounds surrounding the Silver Lake reservoirs currently managed by the City of Los Angeles Department of Water & Power.

The master plan, which will be developed with community input, is scheduled for completion within the next nine months. The actual timetable for implementation of the plan is still to be determined.

Mia Lehrer & Associates was selected over four other competing architectural-landscape design firms that were chosen as finalists in an advertised, open competition. All decisions were by the Silver Lake Reservoir Master Plan Committee, comprised of representatives of DWP and members of the Committee to Save Silver Lake Reservoirs and the Silver Lake Residents Association.

The selection of a design firm represents the culmination of a 10-year effort led by CSSLR to first, preserve the open reservoirs which were in danger of being permanently covered by the DWP, and second, to improve the areas immediately adjacent to the reservoirs to enhance public safety and to provide for active recreational use of the surrounding grounds.

What is a Master Plan?

A "master plan" is the term used by urban planners to describe a document that defines a project's scope of work. In the case of the Silver Lake Reservoirs Master Plan, the document will address land use, DWP current and future operations, site access and expansion of public recreation, surrounding vehicular and pedestrian traffic, landscape, lighting and fence improvements, and possible funding sources. The final document must eventually be approved by the Board of Water and Power Commissioners and the Los Angeles City Council.

The master plan, however, will not permit direct access to the reservoirs since they are part of DWP's county-wide system that supplies drinking water to the city and neighboring communities. (What is commonly referred to as "Silver Lake Reservoir" is actually two adjacent reservoirs, Ivanhoe and Silver Lake, which are divided by a spillway.)

Mia Lehrer, president of the chosen firm, recently made a presentation to a meeting of community and political leaders, which was attended by community representatives and local and state officials, including Senator Adam Schiff and State Assemblyman Scott Wildman, both of whom represent Silver Lake, representatives of Los Angeles City Councilmembers John Ferraro and Jackie Goldberg, and DWP.

In introducing Lehrer, CSSLR president Jim Potepan, who was a member of the Master Plan selection committee, said that Lehrer's firm was chosen for a combination of its professionalism, experience and "visionary ideas" for the Silver Lake Reservoir area. Lehrer's firm specializes in public works projects and has developed master plans for Barnsdall Park Master and Santa Monica Airport, and traffic plans for cities throughout Southern California.

[*\(See "Plan" on page 2\)*](#)

LEGISLATORS SCHIFF, WILDMAN PLEDGE SUPPORT TO SILVER LAKE MASTER PLAN

Two key state legislators who represent the Silver Lake area threw their political weight behind the development and implementation of a master plan for the Silver Lake Reservoir in a meeting of community leaders held October 8 in Silver Lake.

President's Message

by Spencer SooHoo, SLRA President

Happy New Year! As we begin 1999, two exciting projects that will have a major, positive influence on the quality of life for Silver Lake residents are underway. They are the Silver Lake Master Plan process and the Gateway to Silver Lake 2000 (GSL 2000) project.

I am pleased to announce that the Department of Water and Power Commission approved the Silver Lake Master Plan contract at its last meeting. This approval was the last step before work can formally start, and we anticipate that the first community meeting will be held in February. When we send out notices about the meeting, please attend and encourage your neighbors to attend.

The signed contract represents the culmination of many years of hard work between the DWP and the Silver Lake community. More importantly, it represents the start of a process where Silver Lake residents have a strong voice in determining what role the Silver Lake Reservoir will play in our community. Although previous SLRA newsletters contained articles about the Master Plan process, we are including two articles that appeared in the last CSSLR (Committee to Save Silver Lake's Reservoirs) newsletter since it is important for Silver Lake residents to understand what a Master Plan can and cannot do.

GSL 2000 is an ambitious project to enhance the area surrounding Silver Lake Blvd. near the 101 Freeway overpass. The organizers are a very exciting, energetic group that has organized fund raisers and applied for grants. Plan on attending their groundbreaking ceremony at 10 am Saturday, January 23rd at the La Palma Auto Insurance parking lot (See page 5).

[\("Plan" continued from page 1\)](#)

Over the next nine months, a series of three public workshops will be held to gather ideas. "The first phase of the creating the Master Plan is data gathering, and we look forward to meeting the Silver Lake community to solicit input, opinions, suggestions, complaints and reactions," said Lehrer. She and her team of architects, urban designers, traffic consultants and water control engineers will also be meeting with city agencies, notably the DWP, the Department of Parks & Recreation, the Department of Transportation and the Department of City Planning.

“ Over the next 9 months, a series of community workshops will be ”

The first community meeting will be held early in the year, according to Lehrer. Community residents will be informed of the upcoming workshops by mailers disseminated by her office. This newsletter as well as those of SLRA and the Silver Lake Improvement Association will also publish notices of meetings. As well, advance notice of community meetings will be posted on the CSSLR hotline at (323)612-5271 as information becomes available.

[\("Support" continued from page 1\)](#)

your community feels strongly about it, then we will be able to put together funding schemes for you."

"The key component for receiving state funds is to have a plan. Without it, state funding would almost be impossible," said Wildman. The master plan currently being developed by Mia Lehrer & Associates will fulfill that goal.

Both legislators indicated that funds for this type of project are available through several sources on the state level, including the Roberti-Zberg Act, the Mello-Roos Act and Proposition A. (The latter were used recently to help build walkways and bike paths along the Los Angeles River in the area adjacent to the Golden State Freeway in Glendale.)

"Many urban park projects like these are partially funded by the state," said Wildman. Both legislators suggested that it might be appropriate to fund the Silver Lake Master Plan project with a combination of city, county, state, federal and nonprofit funds. Working in favor of the project is its location in the council district with the lowest *per capita* park land in Los Angeles.

Silver Lake Fest Raises Awareness and Dollars

by Vincent Brook

The Silver Lake Fest fundraiser for the Gateway to Silver Lake beautification project (GSL 2000), held Oct. 4 at the California Federal Bank (formerly Glendale Federal Bank) parking lot, was a spectacular success. Net proceeds from the event — co-sponsored by SLRA, Silver Lake Improvement Association (SLIA), and the Silver Lake Chamber of Commerce — came to about \$3,500. But the benefits to GSL 2000 and the community weren't only financial — the food fair/arts festival was loads of fun, and edifying too.

Festival goers were treated to live music, lively artwork, appearances by mayoral aide Tom LaBonge and Councilmember Jackie Goldberg, and sumptuous morsels from seven local eateries: The Back Door Bakery & Cafe, Casita Del Campo, Cobalt Cantina, Leela Thai BBQ & Seafood Restaurant, Michelangelo's Pizzeria Ristorante, Omega-3, and Spain Restaurant.

Free Dodger caps were presented and fabulous raffle prizes awarded, including dinners at Netty's and El Conquistador restaurants, therapeutic massages and chiropractic services, car race and basketball game tickets, a truly fantastic holiday basket from Fantastic Baskets, and a \$75 children's birthday gift certificate to MacDonald's.

As for the edification: One of the main purposes of the event was to inform Silver Lake residents about the progress of the GSL 2000 project. Formed in summer 1997 by representatives of SLRA, SLIA and the Silver Lake Chamber of Commerce, GSL 2000 has been working diligently to beautify through landscaping and murals the area surrounding the Silver Lake Blvd. underpass to the 101 Freeway. On display at the event were the latest landscape drawings by Harry Otto and Rhett Beavers, and mural designs by local artists including Christian Anson, Ernesto de la Loza, Leonardo Glacomuzzo, Ralph Loynachan, Frank Romero, Joseph Severino, Annie Sperling, and Eloy Torres. A silent auction was held for the mural designs, with one of the works, by the internationally famed Romero, garnering \$1,500.

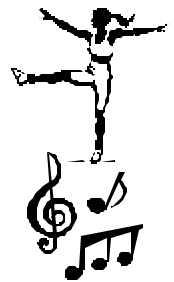
As wonderful in every way as Silver Lake Fest was, the best news came a few days later when it was learned that GSL 2000 had been awarded a \$12,000 grant from Urban Resources Partnership! The money will be used to landscape the Silver Lake Blvd. median strip (from the freeway bridge north to the offramp signal) with flowering jacaranda trees and drought-tolerant shrubbery. Work is expected to begin in early January.

It looks like a happy new year indeed for GSL 2000 and the Silver Lake community. Although a list of everyone who contributed to the success of Silver Lake Fest would take up the rest of the newsletter, special thanks are due to the organizers of the event: David Bermudez, Marisa Bernal, Vincent Brook, Christy and Gary Moore, Harry Otto, and Bill Wilbur.

New Community Center Nears Completion

More than 10 years after the Department of Recreation and Parks first proposed to replace the Silver Lake Recreation Center with a 10,000 square-foot, windowless, cinderblock building, Silver Lake's new 4,700 square-foot, stucco, Spanish-style community center is nearly ready to open. Many of us have followed the steady progress of the construction of this new community building. There is still some landscaping to be done and playground equipment to be installed along with other finishing touches. Playground equipment delivery was delayed when one of the manufacturers suffered a fire in its warehouse.

Ray Lepone, a member of the SLRA Board, is working with Sonia Jimenez from Councilmember Jackie Goldberg's office, and Santiago Cuevas, Director, to plan a grand-opening celebration for the new recreation center. The organizers hope to hold the opening in late March or early April. They are planning an event that will include games, food, entertainment, and of course, tours of the new facility. Keep your eyes and ears open for announcements of further details!



Join us at the Gateway to Silver Lake (GSL 2000) Groundbreaking Ceremony

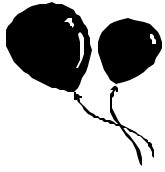


Saturday, January 23 at 10 am

La Palma Auto Insurance parking lot

401 N. Robinson St. (Just southwest of London St. and Silver Lake Blvd.)

GSL 2000 is a beautification project that will be transforming the Silver Lake Blvd. underpass to the 101 Freeway into a glittering gateway to our community. This groundbreaking marks the first phase of the project, the removal of asphalt from (and ultimate landscaping of) the Silver Lake Blvd. median strip from the freeway bridge north to the first stoplight. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call (323)666-



Second Annual SLRA Block Party... Another Neighborhood Success

by Catherine Moyers

The second annual SLRA Block Party, held Sunday, September 13, was deemed a success by all concerned. Held on the block of Rokeby between Tesla and Armstrong, there was a nice view of the reservoir throughout the sunny day. Neighbors once again brought out an appetizing array of dishes to be shared in the potluck, which was in addition to the hamburgers and hotdogs that were offered for sale.

Besides the delicious foods there were fun and games for kids and grown ups alike. Partners paired off for the balloon toss, delicious cakes donated by The Back Door Bakery, Victor Benes, Caffè Capri and The Coffee Table enticed participants for the Cake Walk, and residents puzzled over the Silver Lake Trivia and Name That House games. There was a raffle drawing at the end with gifts donated by Say Cheese, Aloha Flowers, Netty's Restaurant, the Los Angeles Dodgers and the ever popular Silver Lake Reservoir boat ride offered by the DWP.

Recently re-elected State Assemblyman Scott Wildman was seen chatting with constituents and enjoying the day, Sonja Jimenez from Councilmember Jackie Goldberg's office brought her children (much thanks to Sonja for arranging the street closure and the use of tables and chairs provided by the City), and Tom LeBonge from Mayor Riordan's office brought a City Proclamation thanking both the Silver Lake Residents Association and the Committee to Save Silver Lake's Reservoirs for their continued efforts to make our neighborhood a nice place to live. Northeast LAPD Senior Lead Officer for the Silver Lake area, Officer Al Polehonki, came early, stayed all day, and even helped clean up at the end. Station 56 of the LAFD rolled out a fire truck which was a magnet for the younger crowd.

Thanks go to Guillermo Bordarampe for once again providing and operating the music and PA system for the event, and special thanks go to Lloyd and Joyce Peyton who's house was used as staging area for power, storage, water, trash cans, whatever was needed. A special note for potluck participants: Lloyd reports there are a number of serving items left at his house that need to be claimed. If you're missing any utensils that you took to the Block Party, give Lloyd or Joyce a call at 665-1078. Thanks to all the members of the SLRA and CSSLR boards who volunteered to make the event a success.

Once again, there was an air of community and good feelings that dictate that the event be mounted again next Fall. Another year, another block. We're open for suggestions, just call the SLRA Hotline at (323)661-6465.

■ *Editor's note: The following letter was received from the family of Jeff Lund. Jeff won the boat ride on Silver Lake reservoir that was a prize at the Second Annual Block Party held on September 13 (Ssee article above).* ■

■ Dear Silver Lake Residents Association: ■

■ At the Rokeby/Armstrong block party this past September, our son, Jeff, won the boat ride on Silver Lake Reservoir. ■ Brian White, the DWP's biologist, took the whole family on the pontoon ride while describing his job measuring algae ■ and chlorine in the water. While on the water, he pointed out the sea gulls, mostly California and Heermann, and told ■ us they "migrate" daily from the ocean to Silver Lake and back again. Since it was winter, there were many migrating ■ ducks enjoying a beautiful day. The ducks we saw were Buffleheads, Lesser Scaup, American Coot. ■

■ At other times during the winter, Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Pied-billed and Western ■ Grebes, Mallard, and Brandt's Cormorants are prevalent. He pointed out that the Reservoirs are on the Pacific Flyway ■ extending from Canada to Mexico. As we toured the out take tower at the south end of Silver Lake, we spotted the ■ mud nests of Cliff Swallows. We had hoped to locate the coyote's den, but were unsuccessful. ■

■ The perspective of viewing our neighborhood from the water was quite amazing and made all of appreciate what a ■ special place Silver Lake is. Many thanks to the SLRA and the DWP's Brian White for the tour. ■

■ The Lund Family ■

GEYSERS, DARKNESS AND BEES



by Maryann Kuk

West Silver Lake Drive @ Balmer had a busy week. At 2:05 a.m. a swerving truck took out both the lamppost and the fire hydrant. The fire hydrant geyser lasted about 20 minutes until the LA Fire Department arrived to turn off their street valve. By early the next morning, LA Public Works was on the scene assessing the job. A worried inquiry about replacing this decorative lamppost with the tall cobra was relieved with the response; "We've learned not to even try." Perhaps we can have the balance of the cobras replaced by the decorative fixtures?

For the daily walkers, joggers, stroller pushers this may be old news. But at the community trash can (maintained by a dedicated resident!) you may have noticed a considerable amount of activity. Apparently, the winds had knocked a very big beehive out of the tree above. With the Orange County killer bee story in mind, we called LA County Vector Control (since I had to look it up, *vector: an insect or other organism that transmits a pathogenic fungus, virus, bacterium, etc.*) They arrived in a very new truck, donned their bee keeper outfits, sprayed the hive with a foam, cut the remaining hive out of the tree, left a trap for later retrieval, scooped it all up and took it to the lab. It may just have been honeybees, only the lab test will determine. But the beekeeper said it was the biggest beehive he had ever seen. We've asked for test results and will keep the community informed. If you have a *vector* problem, call them at (818) 764-2010.

Editor's note: Maryann Kuk called with the test results. Fortunately, the bees were European honeybees and not Africanized bees.

HIGH TECH TOWERS

by Maryann Kuk



With the explosion of cell phones has come an equal proliferation of antenna towers sprouting up all over town. In a 6-week period, we received notice that there would be a hearing about 2 different locations for these antennas in Silver Lake. We were informed that there are no acceptable objec-

tions due to health concerns. So, what can we do to minimize this possible visual blight? It turns out, not much. But, at the most recent hearing that we attended, we requested and received consideration to our objection to undisguised or unscreened antennas. Of concern to us is the fact that there isn't any one City department that knows how many of these antennas exist, where they are and how many ultimately will be needed. Apparently, the industry could share sites and do share when they encounter an existing antenna in an area that they need, but there is no plan. Our further question is do neighborhoods that don't object end up with the most ugly and visible antennas? Along Sepulveda Blvd near the Mountaingate entrance there are 3 palm trees, only 2 of which are real, the third is an antenna. We will continue to monitor this issue and have requested help from the Council offices for the appropriate City department to develop a plan for these necessary antennas and guidelines for disguising them.

SLRA NEWSLETTER

Published 3 times a year by the Silver Lake Residents Association PO Box 39587 Los Angeles, CA 90039. SLRA HOTLINE (323)661-6465.

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