

THE VALLEY VILLAGER

VALLEY VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



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SB 1818 vs. The Specific Plan

The State of California created Senate Bill (SB) 1818 under the guise of encouraging more housing for moderate and low-income families, at least that's how it was sold. The reality is a little less noble. The bill allows developers to increase the density of their projects ("density bonuses") if they can claim they are adding additional units for lower income residents. Well, they got one thing right: there is a bonus, but not for residents and homeowners. The real bonus is to the developers and to the politicians who took their very generous contributions and pushed this bill into law without sufficient citizen input or oversight.

Just in case you want to know what's so egregious about SB1818, here's the short version: SB1818 allows developers to override most significant zoning requirements to achieve larger structures. It allows 35% more units than are currently permitted under current zoning. So that means bye-bye Valley Village Specific Plan. That means buildings larger than 36 feet high, that means more parking problems around those buildings and more traffic congestion on our already congested Valley Village streets.

The damage has been done at the State level and now it's up to the City of Los Angeles to implement the terms of the bill. Under SB1818, each city can execute the bill pretty much anyway they want, providing that the overall requirements of the bill are met. Since it's up to the City to implement the bill, exclusions and exemptions can be included, and that's where we come in.

Everyone needs to contact our City Councilmembers Wendy Greuel 818-755-7676 or councilmember.greuel@lacity.org or Jack Weiss 818-971-3088 or councilmember.weiss@lacity.org. Tell them how concerned you are about the impact of SB1818 on the Valley Village Specific Plan. Tell them that the terms and conditions of the Valley Village Specific Plan should take precedence over the terms of SB1818. It is possible that together we can influence the City Council into understanding just how important the Specific Plan -- and its fair limitations on density, size, and height -- is to our community.

Anti-Mansionization Candidates Elected

On October 17, 2007, eight candidates who pledged to support controls on mansionization were overwhelmingly elected to the Board of Neighborhood Council Valley Village. In the 2005 and 2006 NCVV board elections, residents opposed to any restrictions on residential size won a majority by narrow margins.

This year with a major get-out-the-vote effort, the Valley Village residents who oppose mansionization tripled the voter turnout. The result was a decisive four to one margin of victory over the candidates who favored construction of out-of-scale houses.

In addition to mansionization, the new board will be addressing other issues of concern to Valley Village residents, such as:

- Improvements to Valley Village Park
- Construction of a long delayed sound wall along the west side of the Hollywood Freeway
- Density bonuses for apartment developers mandated in State Bill 1818
- Proposed telephone utility taxes and DWP rate increases
- Major development projects planned for adjacent North Hollywood and Universal City
- Amendments needed to the Valley Village Specific Plan to address additional planning concerns
- Improving graffiti eradication. (continued on page 3)

30ft Lot Hearing

The Office of Zoning Administration will conduct a public hearing at the Braude Building, 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Van Nuys on Monday, February 11, 2008 at 2:30PM. Case No. DIR2007-5376 (BSA) to decide on whether to allow a 30' lot in Valley Village.

Continued support from the neighborhood is urgently needed to prevent a disastrous precedent of undersized lots being allowed. Only a large crowd will show the planning department hearing officer the depth of our concern. Your attendance at this hearing is of major importance to the future development of Valley Village.

If you are unable to attend but also understand the importance of being heard, please voice your opposition to 30' lots in Valley Village by writing Zoning Administrator, c/o Lory Oberg, 11488 Huston St. Valley Village, CA 91601 or e-mail your message to GOLFLIP@aol.com.

EDITORIAL STAFF

Publisher: Peter Sanchez
 Editor: Breice Reiner
 Proofreader: Stuart Simen
 Contributors:
 Lory Oberg David Engelbach
 Betty Velasco Marc Woerschling
 Phone: 818-506-5158

Committees

Committees are forming now. There are many interesting opportunities to be involved in your community. Call The Association at 818-506-5158

A Letter from the President

Dear Neighbors:

As I drive home from work each evening, the Valley Village sign on Colfax Avenue reminds me of how much I appreciate living in Valley Village. We really have the best of both worlds – home town feeling within an exciting metropolitan city.

I like our tree lined streets, knowing my neighbors, seeing people walking their dogs, yet having a access to sports, theater, museums, restaurants and cultures from all over the world. I'm amazed that we have been able to maintain our oasis here in Valley Village with all of that happening around us.

It's remained an oasis because many have been vigilant in protecting our Village. In 1939 a group of local residents realizing how special this area was and wanting to give it an identity named it Valley Village. The City Council officially ratified the name in 1993 at the urging of a group of local residents.



Those local residents were the founders of the Valley Village Homeowners Association. Much of what is here (and not here) today we owe to those dedicated volunteers.

In 1986, over-built, high-rise apartment buildings began to spring up on Riverside Drive, Laurel Canyon and Magnolia Boulevard. In response to that threat, the founders wrote the Valley Village Specific Plan and worked to get the City to approve it.

Let me be clear though, the founders could not do this alone. The first thing they did was start the Valley Village Homeowners Association. They recognized the value of a large, cohesive group and the impact it can have on elected officials. As more residents joined the Association the stronger their voice became.

There has been a Specific Plan and tree-lined streets as long as I have lived here. And like many people, sometimes I just take for granted that it will always be that way. But that little blue Valley Village sign reminds me that many people put in many hours and years to make Valley Village what it is today. Their vigilance paid off. We need to continue that tradition.

Be involved. Volunteer if you can. Be vigilant. Peter

ps: Meet some of your vigilant neighbors at the next membership meeting on January 30th. See the back page for details.

