

June 16, 2023



CARING FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

It's Time to Retire the Neighborhood Council System

Ordained in 1999, the Neighborhood Council system (NC) was created to assuage the anger of residents in the San Fernando Valley who were threatening to secede from the City of Los Angeles. The idea was to give constituents more “say” in their communities and by 2020, the citywide system included 99 neighborhood councils, each with a governing board and subcommittees.

This May, only 70 stakeholders bothered to vote in the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council election, a pattern that was seen across the city. And with only 24 candidates running for 21 open seats, the majority of regional seats were uncontested (five out of eight), which demonstrates a lack of interest. However, EmpowerLA, the Neighborhood Councils' department, submitted a proposed budget of \$3,463,997 for fiscal years 2022-23. This is money we think could be better spent on expanding the L.A. City Council and programs like affordable housing options, street repairs and crime abatement.

[READ MORE ABOUT WHY SLT IS ADVOCATING FOR A CHANGE](#)

Video of a recent fire on Tesla that was posted on Next Door. LAFD quickly extinguished the

blaze.



Second Arsonist at Large

The Los Angeles Police Department is working closely with its partners, residents and LA Fire Department arson investigators in identifying all suspicious fires reported for the month of April and May in Silver Lake and other northeast communities. One suspected arsonist was arrested on June 1, released hours later, and re-arrested again on June 2 after citizens observed him setting fires again. He is currently in custody without any bail pending court hearings. A second suspected arsonist is still at large.

As always, citizens are encouraged to contact 9-1-1 or [LA Crime Stoppers](#).

Tragic Hit and Run on Silver Lake Boulevard

An 81-year old Silver Lake woman was hit by a car and killed around 9:30 p.m. Monday night at the intersection of Silver Lake Boulevard and Berkeley Avenue. LAPD is looking for the driver, who drove off. According to NBC4, officers found the woman injured in the middle of the street on June 12. She was taken to the hospital and died. Police are talking to witnesses and collecting evidence.

This kind of horrible tragedy is all too common in our community. Last month, the 74-year old owner of Silver Lake landmark Tacos Delta was hit by a car while crossing Glendale Boulevard in a crosswalk at 1:45 p.m. In this case, the driver of the vehicle stopped and tried to help Maria Esther Valdiva. Sadly, she died of her injuries several days later. These kinds of tragedies are avoidable. In our rush to go places, we are not being careful about pedestrians—and especially older community members who may need more time to cross

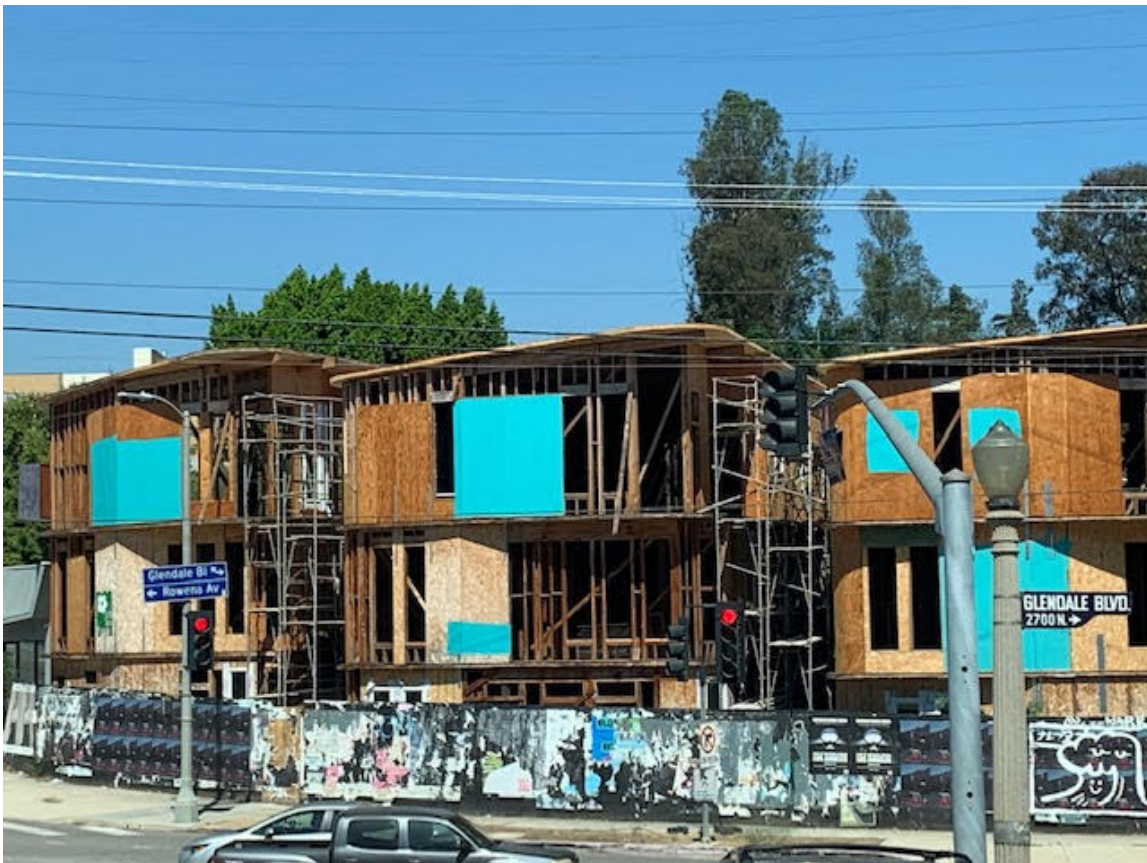
a street. Nevertheless, nothing can excuse a hit and run, consciously leaving the scene of an accident that involves a fellow community member.

[Silver Lake has also seen a string of violent traffic collisions, as reported by CBS News.](#)

If you have any information on the June 12 incident, please contact LAPD at (213) 833-3713 or call [Crime Stoppers](#) at (800) 222-8477.

WATCH NBC4'S REPORT ON MONDAY'S HIT AND RUN

READ MORE ABOUT MARIA ESTHER VALDIVA'S REMARKABLE LIFE



Update on the Abandoned Project at Rowena and Glendale

The update on the unsightly project at the intersection of Rowena and Glendale is that there is no further update. In our [October newsletter](#), we reported that the project has been stalled for several years. Silver Lake resident Debbie Slater has been monitoring the decaying project, but after several calls to the developer, she has not received any further update. Slater noted minor activity, such as cleaning, but said that the wood was becoming warped after a very wet winter and there were no crews working or any significant progress on the site.

The Mattachine Steps, also known as the Cove Avenue stairway, located in Silver Lake, is dedicated to the Mattachine Society in memory of Harry Hay, who cofounded the gay rights group in 1950.



PRIDE and, Sadly, Hate

Silver Lake is famous for being home to the gay rights movement, specifically the Mattachine Society (founded in 1950) and the Black Cat Tavern, a historic LGBT landmark. In 1967, the Black Cat was the site of one of the first demonstrations in the United States protesting police brutality against LGBT people. (It preceded New York's Stonewall riots by over two years.)

When Harry Hay founded the Mattachine Society decades ago, being gay or lesbian was so secret that the [members didn't even know each other's names](#). Today, of course, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Pride Month is celebrated openly every June. Sadly, however, LAPD reports that Detectives Juan Aguilar and Ryan Watterson are investigating the HATE crimes of LGBTQ flags being vandalized and stolen from the Shakespeare Bridge. All patrol officers are made aware in daily rollcalls to be in the lookout for suspicious activity.

LAPD encourages anyone who may have information to come forward. If they wish to remain anonymous, please contact SLO Ramirez at (213-793-0763) or submit tips at <https://lacrimestoppers.org>.

On a happier note, be sure to watch the Silver Lake History Collective's [interview of gay filmmaker Billy Clift](#) on Monday on the collective's YouTube channel. Billy is a director/producer/writer/actor/designer who grew up in Hollywood and has lived in Silver Lake for many years. His story of how he became a filmmaker is fascinating as is his longtime friendship with Elizabeth Montgomery. The interview was produced by Michael Masterson and Khoi Pham.

May-June Crime Report

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LAPD Senior Lead Officer Jose Ramirez notes that there have been (63) crimes reported from May 7, 2023, to June 3, 2023 in the communities he monitors — the 11A71 area.

Homicide (0)

Rape (1)

Robbery (4)

Aggravated assault crimes (1)

Gang Related (0)

Shots Fired (0)

Victims Shot (0)

Burglary (5)

Theft (10)

Grand Theft Auto (7)

Burglary/Theft From Motor Vehicles (19)

Recovered Vehicles (2)

Violent Crimes (2)

Property Crimes (12)

LOOKING FOR MORE STATS? USE THE LAPD WEBSITE AND CRIME MAPPING FEATURES

Let Us Know!

www.silverlaketgether.com

Need help with an issue in Silver Lake? Do you have ideas that will help our neighborhood or want to share community news?

Email Us

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