



# The Riviera Association

April 2007 [www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org) P.O. Box 41838 • Santa Barbara, CA 93140-1838

## Board of Directors Officers

Paul Cashman,

President 687-6666

Helena Hill

Vice President 452-6883

Muriel Ridland,

Secretary 965-9613

Jan Tyler,

Treasurer 965-7558

## Term Expires 2007

Brigitte Forssell 966-7879

Frank Hotchkiss 682-8830

Gwen Phillips 965-8449

Art Kvass 965-6636

Chuck Croninger 966-2024

## Term Expires 2008

Jules Bender 882-2107

Michael Cooper 680-1169

Helena Hill 452-6883

Ron Hirst 403-9620

Jim Knight 965-4091

## Term Expires 2009

Paul Cashman 687-6666

Bob Johnson 963-4600

Christine Oliver 965-9720

Muriel Ridland 965-9613

Jan Tyler 965-7558

*The Riviera Association newsletter is published semiannually, in April and September, by The Riviera Association, P.O. Box 41838, Santa Barbara, California, 93140-1838.*

## President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

The Riviera Association sends out two newsletters each year prior to our general membership meetings. Typically we send our fall newsletter to all residents within our homeowner's association boundary and include a membership renewal for the coming year. The spring newsletter is sent to current members only. I hope you enjoy your reading.

Fire season is upon us and The Riviera Association has been working hard to improve our fire safety. The Riviera Association, in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Fire Safe Council, asked the city of Santa Barbara to conduct a practice evacuation drill with residents who live on the Riviera. The Riviera Evacuation Drill (RED) will be held on **Saturday, April 28**. Approximately 1,000 homes have been selected to be included in the exercise, so not all homes on the Riviera will be participating. Those residence selected will receive several notifications from the city. Over 20 agencies, (fire, police, highway patrol, sheriff, etc.) are part of the drill. If you are selected to be part of the exercise, please, **please** participate! This is a truly unique opportunity to test our city's response systems and to be prepared as homeowners who live in an area exposed to wildfire.

At our next general membership meeting, City Fire Chief Ron Prince will

discuss the "lessons learned" from the evacuation exercise. Mark you calendars and join us at our general membership meeting on Sunday, May 20, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. at the Marymount School auditorium, 2130 Mission Ridge Road.

At the last general membership meeting, our new fire marshal, Russ Cole, reviewed how the recently approved Wildland Fire Suppression Measure monies would be spent. The measure is intended to provide services to mitigate the wildfire threat. The money created by this measure will be used to:

- Decrease the severity and damage of wildland fires
- Improve evacuation routes by clearing excess vegetation from 28 miles of roads
- Make chippers available to property owners to help with vegetation disposal
- Provide increased defensible space inspection and assistance
- Increase vegetation management/creation of fuel breaks

Fire Marshall Cole has agreed to supply us with a biannual line-item breakdown of how the money is used. We have posted his letter on your new Web site at [www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org). Feel free to call Russ Cole or me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Cashman, President

## The Riviera Association General Meeting

**Sunday, May 20, at 5:00 p.m.**  
**Marymount School Auditorium**  
**2130 Mission Ridge Road**

### **Riviera Evacuation Drill (RED) and Wildland Fire Suppression Measure Funds**

We are pleased to have City Fire Chief Ron Prince's presentation on the "lessons learned" from the Riviera Evacuation Drill held on April 28, 2007. We'll also have an update of the implementation of the Wildland Fire Suppression Measure and how our funds are being spent to increase fire safety on the Riviera.

## Jorgensen Ranch Proposal

In June 2006, the Planning Commission gave directions to the developer of an approximately nine acre land-locked parcel at 561 W. Mountain Drive. A majority of commissioners were not in favor of the proposed six lot subdivision, and preferred a much smaller two lot project. In addition, concerns were raised about the existing private easement and the connection of the parcel to the public road. At the time, concerned neighbors were satisfied with the issued directives during this concept review.

On March 15, 2007 the developer returned with a plan for a subdivision of four lots. In addition, project enhancements such as two fire hydrants, a 20-foot wide access driveway, and homeowner association CC&Rs, were key factors in the commission's approval of the project by a narrow 4:3 vote.

Public opposition, including a petition with 100 signatures, was presented, asking that the commission uphold its directives given at the previous hearing. An appeal to the city council is being planned. —*Brigitte Forssell*

## Riviera Research & Business Park

If you go to movies at the Riviera Theatre you have seen the many upgrades to the property. The new Brooks Hall, while somewhat larger, has preserved the historic facade with enhanced landscaping and is fitting well into the campus layout. Additional parking around the upper campus is already fully used and the upgraded landscaping, with new walkways, stairs and street lighting, is a benefit to the neighborhood. The property is open to the public and invites strolling through the historic site of the former university campus. —*Brigitte Forssell*

## El Encanto Hotel & Garden Villas

A number of Riviera residents were concerned about the removal of the hotel's main building. Due to the unsafe structural conditions of the building, the recommendation of the historian was to remove the structure and rebuild on the existing footprint. Exterior details were photographed and documented and all architectural features (siding, windows, hardware) were removed and stored. They will be reused on the new building. The appearance of the new building will be much like it was in 1938.

All over the world, Orient Express Hotel projects are known for careful adherence to historic importance and meticulous, and costly, rehabilitation. The Riviera neighborhood will be greatly enhanced by this project. Although the hotel management has been diligent in informing the public about this project through newsletters, hearings and presentations, General Manager Mr. Clive O'Donoghue welcomes inquiries and can be reached at 805/679-5000.

—*Brigitte Forssell*

## Franceschi Park & House Update

**Park:** For the planned upgrade of the driveway and parking lot the City of Santa Barbara required a new survey. It resulted in a significant reduction of available parking spaces. Of the previously estimated 19 spaces, the Park Master Plan allocated 13 for house activities and six for drop-in park visitors. The projected number of 13 spaces is approximately 30% less than previously planned and could affect future house activities. The Parks Department therefore decided to leave the parking lot unstriped, designating only a single handicap-accessible van space.

The proposed demonstration planting bed has been put on hold due to lack of funding. A \$5,000 contribution from the Horticultural Society is not enough to start the development. The request of \$30,000 grant from the Stanley Smith Horticulture Foundation was not successful. The Franceschi Park Advisory Committee is working on a docent and volunteer brochure. The Riviera Association will pay for the printing costs of approximately \$500.

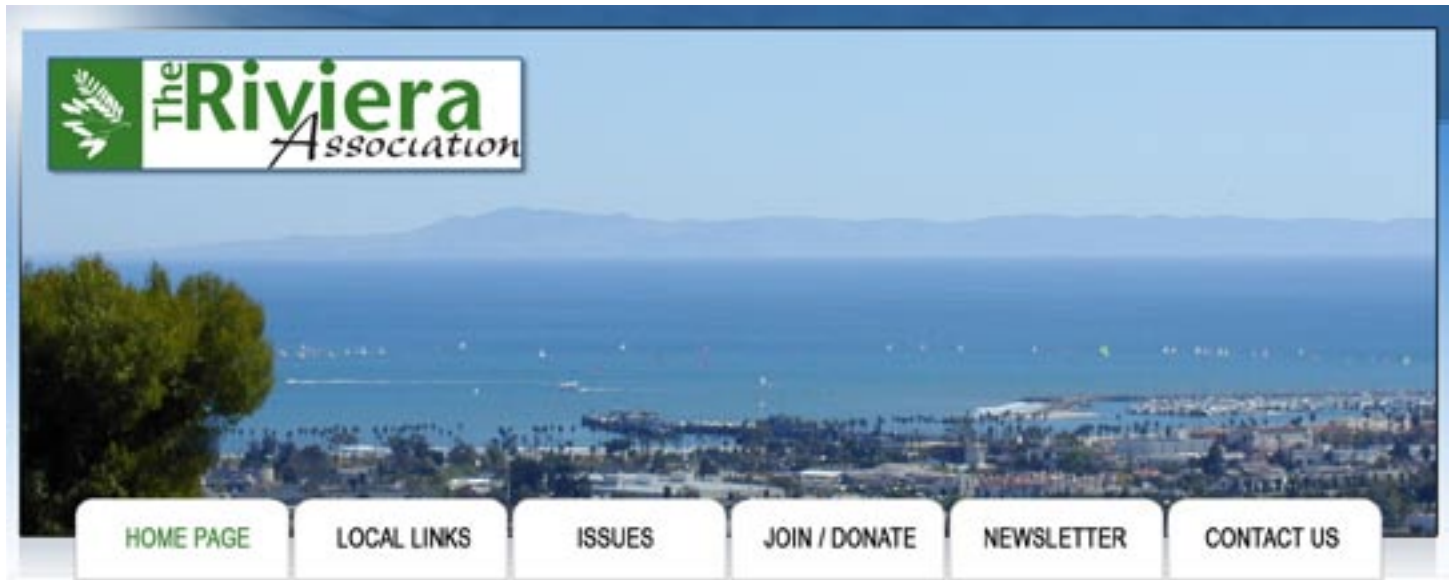
**House:** At a June 2006 Park and Recreation Commission hearing, Pearl Chase Society President Ms. Lowenthal reported the spring 2007 start of a community fundraising for house rehabilitation. In addition, it was reported that approximately 50% of the needed \$2 million had been raised. The annual PARC Foundation report shows approximately \$275,000 available for house rehabilitation.

—*Brigitte Forssell*

## Riviera Association Website

Your board created a membership Web site so that you can click on important **Local Links**, read news articles on member **Issues** and board activities, **Join/Donate** through a safe online payment, read the current and past

**Newsletters**, **Contact** board members by e-mail, and much, much more! Visit your new Web site at [www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org) today!



## City of Santa Barbara Residential Utility Undergrounding

On November 22, 2005, the Santa Barbara City Council voted unanimously to approve a draft policy statement for city assistance in the creation of Underground Utility Assessment Districts. Accordingly, it shall be the policy of the City of Santa Barbara to support the undergrounding of utilities when requested by the homeowners of a particular neighborhood. Details of this city program are presented in a "Private Residential Underground Utility Assessment District" (UUAD) packet available through the city's engineering division by calling 805/564-5363.

Neighborhoods that seek to have utilities undergrounded should submit a petition in accordance with the requirements of Santa Barbara Municipal Code Chapter 4.60 "Public Works Benefit Assessment District." This municipal code chapter provides the direction for the formation of the Private Residential Underground Utility Assessment Districts (UUAD). The combined procedures of Proposition 218 and the Municipal Improvement Act of 1913 will also be followed in the establishment of any UUAD.

The city will support petitions through city staff coordinating with local utilities, providing a handout defining the process, and start-up funding support.

The city will fund start-up support for the formation of a district if a petition is submitted requesting the city council to institute proceedings for the formation of a benefit assessment district and if the petition is signed by property owners of not less than sixty percent (60%) of the area of land proposed to be included within the benefit assessment district. A copy of the requisite petition is included in the UUAD packet. This support consists of an assessment engineer, who prepares the engineer's report, project design and cost estimates, and assistance with the Proposition 218 voting process. If the assessment district is ultimately approved, the city will be reimbursed for all the costs of the start-up support and those costs will be made part of the assessment. If the district fails to be approved, the city will not seek to recover the funds.

If the assessment district is approved by the property owners and city council, the city will not contribute to any of the construction costs.

Additional questions should be directed to Jim Britsch of Facilities Management Specialists LLC at 805/729-4629. Jim is the city's coordinator for these projects.



The Riviera Association  
P. O. Box 41838  
Santa Barbara, CA 93140-1838

## Wildland Fire Suppression Benefit Assessment District Update

On March 27, the Riviera Association received an update regarding the Wildland Fire Suppression Benefit Assessment District. The full text of that letter including their budget, may be found at our new Web site:

[www.rivieraassociation.org](http://www.rivieraassociation.org). Following are a few excerpts:

“In July 2006 establishment of the Wildland Fire Suppression Benefit Assessment District was approved by voters within the Foothill and extreme Foothill high fire hazard areas. Approval of the “WFSBAD” provided funding for services in three general categories. These three categories

included: expansion of the vegetation road clearance program, implementation of a defensible space fire inspection and assistance program and implementation of a vegetation management program.

On April 14, 2007 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. we will be holding an open house at City Fire Station 7. Information regarding defensible space, fire prevention, emergency preparedness, along with fire station and apparatus tours will be provided.” —*Helena Hill*

## Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Foundation Workforce Housing

Currently the plan is to tear down all of the St. Francis Hospital building except for the Villa Riviera on the northwest corner, to grade the slope, and to construct 49 new buildings containing 115 condo units on 5.94 acres. In addition, the lot lines are to be redrawn on the remaining northern 1.45 acres, which abuts Grand Avenue. Of the 115 units, 81 would be sold to Cottage employees at “affordable unit” rates. The remaining 34 units would be sold at “market” rates.

The redrawn lots on the northeast corner of the property facing Grand Avenue would create three .24-acre lots. Villa Riviera occupies the remaining northwest .72 acres of the Grand Avenue frontage. Current zoning would allow a duplex on each of the new .24-acre lots. Cottage’s plan redraws the lines but does not build on this prime view section of the property.

Under the current zoning, a builder would be permitted to construct 73 “market rate” units on the 5.94 acres. By offering a plan, which includes “afford-

able units,” Cottage is thought to be able to increase the density of the project and build 115 units.

This increase in density is now being challenged in a court action brought by a new neighborhood group called Friends and Neighbors of Saint Francis. It is their contention that the city council has overstepped its authority in allowing the project to increase the density and in allowing exemptions to set back rules.

In a recent letter to neighbors, Ron Biscaro, vice president of the Santa Barbara Hospital Foundation Workforce Housing Project wrote: “Our project team in coordination with Sigma Engineering intends to begin removal of the underground storage tanks on or after April 30, 2007. This will be followed by interior hazardous waste remediation that is required to ensure that the future demolition on the site will be accomplished in a safe manner. These activities will be under the supervision of the County Fire Department and the Air Pollution Control District, (APCD) respectively.” —*Chuck Croninger*