

EPIAn^{ways}

Echo Park Improvement Association Newsletter

February - March 2012

Volume 19 Issue 1

The Planning Lady:

Preliminary Redistricting Maps made available

by Christine Peters

After many weeks of deliberating and holding public hearings, the volunteer Redistricting Commission has revealed its recommendation for the new boundaries for our city's 15 Council Districts.

The Commission is tasked every ten years with redrawing the boundaries to balance population and demographics amongst

the 15 Districts. In the last Census cycle, population in the Urban Core reduced significantly, while population growth in the Valley grew.

What does this mean for the Echo Park/Elysian Park area? Well, very little so far. At the center of the "Urban Core" area needing to take on population, Echo Park is currently divided between CD1 and CD13,

currently helmed by Councilman's Ed P. Reyes and Eric Garcetti, respectively. Both Councilman are termed out due to 12 year term limits, and leave an opportunity for hopefuls who live in the Districts, or ones who conveniently move into the districts, to vie for the council seat.

The recommended maps did not

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Recap: Urban planning workshop brings over 40 residents to "Rethink Glendale Boulevard"

by Josh Post

I recently teamed up with urban planner James Rojas and EchoParkPatch.com to organize a community workshop to "Rethink Glendale Blvd." The workshop followed a neighborhood clean-up I spearheaded with Echo Park Improvement Association in November to raise awareness for the need to beautify Glendale Blvd., a car-clogged corridor one block from my home in Echo Park.

When planning the workshop, I had reviewed Rojas's techniques by searching online for articles

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Echo Park Improvement Association meets at 7 p.m. the 1st Thursday of each Month in Williams Hall at Barlow Hospital 2000 Stadium Way in Elysian Park

Continued: What will redistricting mean for Echo Park?

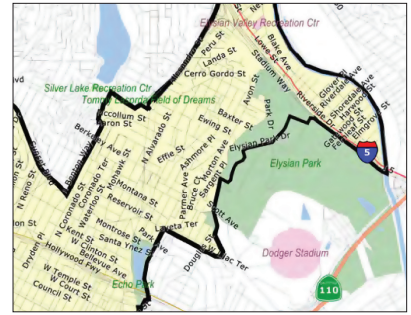
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change the boundaries in our area, but did suggest moving CD13 further north into most of Glassell Park, while losing a portion of Silver Lake by the Silver Lake reservoir to CD4, currently represented by Tom LaBonge. LaBonge meanwhile could stand to lose a significant portion of his Hollywood outposts, Hancock Park, and the Wilshire District as the maps recommend moving CD4 further into the Valley. CD1 loses a gem in Debs Park, but gains a significant stronghold in Mt. Washington.

What does all of this mean? Well it means five weeks of public comment and more input before the maps are fine tuned and submitted to the City Council for final approval. Then, the real fun begins!!

Incumbent Council members who are not termed out will jockey to keep what they consider "theirs." Bill Rosendahl has already thrown down the gauntlet to keep LAX and Westchester amongst his neighborhoods, and Bernard Parks is adamant about keeping Baldwin Hills.

Termed out Council members may try and fight to preserve the District as they know it for various reasons: Some as simple as "nostalgia" or historic boundaries, and others to pave the path for their endorsed replacement. This, oddly, could mean pushing to change or expand the boundaries to accommodate that successor who may live out of the current district, or may need a different voter demographic to get elected. Others will just wait for the maps to be finalized



Check out the maps on epia-echopark.org

and move into whichever district they think will "go their way." It's called politics for a reason!

So tune in for more "musical chairs", as the elected push and pull to hold on to what they had, or what they perceive as a bonus to their newly redrawn boundaries.

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CCAC update: The holidays are over

by Gloria Sohacki

The holidays are over, the decorations have come down, the kids have gone back to school. The staff is tired, but CCAC still moves on each and every day. We tried our best to meet and greet everyone during the holidays but if we missed someone, we're surely sorry. A big thanks to all the merchants who donated toys to our kids - your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. We invite you stop by the center any afternoon if you haven't already, and meet some of our greaaaaat kids!

In November we helped council offices CD13 and CD1 along with the Los Angeles Dodgers pass out turkeys with all the trimmings, providing twenty of our families with a holiday meal. We also had our annual Thanksgiving dinner, and fifteen of

our kids and staff participated. The kids also participated in writing what they are thankful for at this time of year. Hometown Buffet is a big hit with our youth as they just love mac 'n cheese!

During the school holiday vacation, we were able to have a few rummage sales and the kids raised enough money to go out to eat. They can really eat, eat and eat, so we went to Shakey's this time. There were movies, hiking trips, ice skating, more movies and more food.

Thanks to the wonderful weather while the kids were off, we were able to even take them to the park so they could run around. Wouldn't you know it, the one Sunday we went to Magic Mountain it was extremely cold. Amazing that no one got sick.

The New Year is upon us and who knows

what will happen. The youth and staff are cleaning the Silver Lake library twice a month and they kids receive a stipend for their efforts. Most of our kids are in high school. The demands of school come first. Not being from California the school system is still confusing to me. It is a proud heart that watches these youth as they climb life's ladder hoping to move on in order to make their education the top priority.

Community notice:

The Patton Allianza Coalition invites you to a **Community Safety Meeting** on **Wednesday February 1, 2012** at 6:30 pm, at Placentia Elementary 1321 Cortez St., in the school auditorium.

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Continued: Improving Glendale Boulevard

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and YouTube clips. The clips were great, but I had no idea just how special our workshop would be.

On January 14, 2012, between 40 and 50 people crowded into Echo Country Outpost on Glendale Blvd. (at the corner of Branden St.). The idea was for adults and children alike to join together using colorful blocks and recycled objects to create small-scale models of their visions toward a revitalized Glendale Blvd.

An overarching theme from the workshop was creating a more community-friendly zone. Participants built small models featuring bike paths, green space, sculpture parks and historic preservation. Other, more detailed ideas, included building a park-and-ride lot at the end of the 2 Freeway and using light rail or a trolley car on Glendale Blvd. from Silver Lake into downtown. Another idea was to make Glendale Blvd. one-way while utilizing a large portion of the existing road for bike lines and green space.

The ideas were extremely creative, yet practical. And, not to diminish the smart and able folks inside Los Angeles City Hall, but what we saw at the workshop likely could not have been replicated in a bureaucratic board room. The workshop produced real-life ideas from people who live and breathe Glendale Blvd. every day. And, in my opinion, the ideas were exceptional and innovative.

The workshop was an incredible example of the good that can come from giving community members a voice. This same premise was what motivated me recently to file papers to run for Los Angeles City Council in the 13th District. We have to reduce bureaucracy and utilize our city's most valuable resource—our community members—when it comes to our city planning and functionality.



Photos courtesy of Josh Post. Go to www.epia-echopark.org for more photos!

This is going to be the focus of my campaign. And it applies to all areas in city governance, ranging from improving small business policy to finding more effective and efficient ways to clean and repair our streets and sidewalks.

As was evident at the Rethinking

Glendale Blvd. workshop, we are all hungry for “a sense of community.” And, after hearing from the workshop attendees about self-sustained neighborhoods and walkable communities, I know it's possible. The first step may be simply listening to our neighbors.

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