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Planning the Future of Leimert Park Village



The Leimert Park Village 20/20 Vision Initiative held a planning charrette on Saturday, January 7. Issues ranging from homelessness to driverless cars on People's Street Plaza were discussed. The Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood Development Council held their Town Hall Meeting during the charrette.

The Leimert Park Village 20/20 Vision Initiative, an alliance of business owners, residents, artists and other stakeholders, held its third planning charrette on Saturday, January 7, inside the Vision Theatre. The purpose of the half-day planning session was to discuss a range of issues, challenges and opportunities facing Leimert Park Village.

The Empowerment Congress West Area (ECWA) Neighborhood Development Council Town Hall Meeting took place during the charrette. Established in 2002, ECWA is one of 96 certified neighborhood councils in the City of Los Angeles created to facilitate discussion about public policy at the community level. Leimert Park is one of several communities served by ECWA.

"Taking Care of Our Own," an in depth discussion about the homeless in Leimert Park, immediately followed the ECWA Town Hall meeting. Roland Wiley, principal partner at RAW International Architecture gave the opening prayer followed by introductions from Leimert Park Village Stakeholders co-chairs Clint Rosemond and Johnnie Raines, III.

Presentations were made by Darryl Everage, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health; Harold Turner, National Alliance of Mental Illness Urban Los Angeles (NAMI Urban LA); Kimberly Ramsey, Community Build Interim President representing the Greater Leimert Park Village Crenshaw Corridor Business Improvement District (GLPVCC BID); the Los Angeles Police Department Homeless Outreach Partnership Endeavor (LAPD HOPE); and the Los Angeles Trade Tech Architectural and Environmental Design School for the Leimert Park Village Resource Center Concept.

Each presenter spoke about the challenge of homelessness and the efforts their organizations are making to address the issue. Kim Ramsey outlined the efforts of the Los Angeles Housing Services Authority (LAHSA) Homeless Emergency Outreach Team assigned to Leimert Park. Two LAHSA outreach workers visit Leimert Park and surrounding areas each weekday to assist and follow-up with individuals seeking city

Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Hills-Crenshaw Tops it off!



L.A. City Council President Herb Wesson (L) and Kaiser officials autograph a structure beam at the topping off ceremony for the Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Hills -Crenshaw Medical Office.

said Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson. “The reason why we’re here today is because of Dr. Howard Fullman, Georgina Garcia, the entire team at Kaiser Permanente and their commitment to this part of town. When negotiations were tough, they stayed with the community.”

Located on the corner of Marlton Avenue and Santa Rosalia Drive in Marlton Square, the Baldwin Hills – Crenshaw Medical Offices will bring convenient access to high-quality primary and specialty care services for the 50,000 members who live and work in the Crenshaw community. The 100,000 square foot, \$90-million facility will be a cutting-edge, four-story medical office building complete with LEED Gold certification – the highest standard for energy efficiency in a building’s construction and operation. Approximately 60 world class providers will treat our Baldwin Hills – Crenshaw members in technologically advanced exam rooms, equipped with the ability to conduct real time virtual consults with other Kaiser Permanente providers throughout the region.

Construction of the facility has brought an economic boost to South Los Angeles through job training and apprenticeships. Turner Construction hired locally for the construction of the new facility. 2nd Call, a local nonprofit group that assists formerly incarcerated individuals transition back into society, is one of several organizations that benefited from those local hires.

Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Hills - Crenshaw Medical Office Building celebrated a milestone at its topping-off ceremony on November 15. Topping off occurs when the highest structural element of a building is about to be swung into place. As the medical office building is concrete, the topping off occurred when the last layer of concrete was poured and the building became self-supporting.

City Council President Herb Wesson, representatives from the offices of Congresswoman Karen Bass, Assembly member Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, Assembly member Autumn Burke, and Senator Holly Mitchell, Kaiser Permanente West Los Angeles officials as well as Turner Construction crew members and key stakeholders were in attendance at the invitation-only ceremony held on the grounds of the construction site.

“There were times I didn’t know if this day was going to happen,”



(l-r) Los Angeles City Councilmembers Joe Buscaino and Curren Price

Public Hearing on Sidewalk Vending

Over the past two years, Los Angeles City Council members Curren Price, Economic Development Committee Chair and Joe Buscaino, Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee Chair have hosted three hearings and solicited dozens of hours of oral testimony, written comments and letters from concerned stakeholders regarding sidewalk vending.

According to Council members Buscaino and Price, “the core question is whether sidewalk vending poses a threat so grave to public health, safety and welfare that it is worth continuing to expend limited police and prosecutorial resources enforcing a citywide ban. We do not believe it does.”

Based on public input, the two council members proposed a regulated sidewalk vending program that included nine core elements:

- Location
- Enforcement and Criminal Penalties
- Operational Requirements
- Special Vending Districts
- Business Improvement District
- Incentives for Healthy Food
- Education and Outreach
- Automatic Comprehensive Review

The Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee held a public hearing on the proposed framework on December 12. After public comments were heard on both sides, the committee advanced the plan to the full city council where it was approved on February 1, 2017.

Pan African Film Festival Celebrates 25 Years

The Pan African Film Festival (PAFF) will celebrate 25 years of presenting the largest selection of films representing the African Diaspora, February 9 – 20, at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw 15 Theatre, 3650 Martin Luther King Blvd., Los Angeles.

PAFF 25 will feature an unprecedented lineup of films, workshops, interviews and panel discussions focused on the African film and entertainment experience. During the 12-day festival, 202 films will be screened - 124 feature-length and 78 short films - representing 56 countries on six continents. Over the past quarter century, PAFF has premiered films from prominent Black filmmakers such as Gina Prince Blythewood (“Beyond the Lights”), Malcolm D. Lee (“Best Man”), Michael Jennings (“Moonlight”), Ava DuVernay (“Selma” & “13th”) and Academy Award winner Gavin Hood (“Tsotsi”); PAFF has also screened films by Raul Peck (“I Am Not Your Negro”), Oscar nominated Mahamat Saleh Haroun (“Gris Gris”) and many others.

“It’s been an incredible experience to witness the growth of this PAFF, and at the same time witness the tremendous development of the Pan African film industry,” says Ayuko Babu, PAFF Executive Director. “Both have allowed me the pleasure of working with thousands of filmmakers and honoring the artistry from South Africa to Atlanta - all of whom tell their own stories and present their images to the world.”

PAFF 25 will celebrate the work of actress Alfre Woodard with The Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by PAFF Co-Founder Ja’net Dubois during the Opening Night Gala, Thursday, February 9, held at the DGA Headquarters in Los Angeles. PAFF’s Lifetime Achievement Award will honor Woodard’s extraordinary career. Woodard will share her journey with the PAFF audience in a hosted “Conversation with Alfre Woodard,” one-on-one on Sunday, February 10, at 3 p.m., narrated by Director Neema Barnett at the Cinemark Baldwin Hills Theater.

For a complete list of screenings, special screenings, panel discussions and an events lineup visit www.paff.org.



Actress Alfre Woodard will receive the Pan African Film Festival Lifetime Achievement Award.

Michelle’s Country Diner Opens at BHCP



Michelle’s Country Diner is the latest venture by business owner Michelle Allaire, owner of S&W’s Country Diner in Culver City. The restaurant has been highly anticipated since its arrival was announced in the fall of 2015. Following the grand opening a year later, dinner at the restaurant has been by reservation only.

Specializing in all American homestyle cuisine, Michelle’s Country Diner serves breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner. The diner will soon add beer, wine and desserts to its list of menu options.

A few of the attributes the restaurant prides itself on are hospitality, warmth and authenticity, with a touch of elegance. Dine-in and outdoor patio seating options are available.

The new restaurant has also provided employment opportunities for some of the young adults in the Crenshaw community. Michelle’s Country Diner’s team ranges from ages 17 to 25. Some of the team members had previous restaurant experience from working at Fatburger which occupied the same location prior to the construction of Michelle’s Country Diner.

“I am so grateful for all the support we’ve received,” said Allaire. “I’ve been really blessed to have members of the community join my team here at the diner. They are young, really ambitious and great to be around.”

Michelle’s Country Diner is located at 4070 Marlton Ave, Los Angeles, outside Baldwin Hills Plaza. The hours of operation are from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. Reservations can be made by calling: (323) 290-0575. For more information, visit the diner’s website at: www.michellescountrydiner.com.

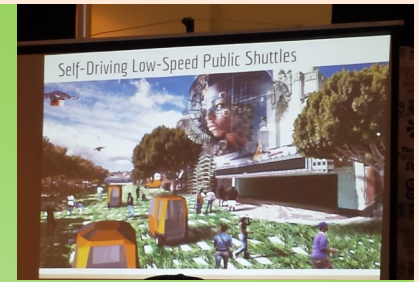
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services, such as obtaining identification and registering for temporary and permanent housing. Audience members also spoke about their experiences with the homeless and its effect on the community. A homeless individual from Leimert Park also spoke on the difficulties of chronic homelessness and her need for assistance and hopes for the outcome from these types of discussions.

After lunch, Sherri Franklin, Urban Design Center; Carl Morgan, ECWA Neighborhood Development Council Center board member; and Roland Wiley introduced the finalists from the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) Design Competition.

Leimert Park was selected as the location for NOMA's 2016 Barbara G. Laurie Annual Student Design Competition. The competition challenged student teams from around the country to design the African American Cultural Museum and Community Center along Leimert Park Boulevard. Charrette attendees were asked to vote for their top picks from the NOMA student designs. Visit the 2017 20/20 Vision Initiative Charette page at www.leimertparkvillage.org to view the student designs.

The charrette concluded with "Programming People Street- Sankofa City" presented by Ben Caldwell, owner of Kaos Network and GLPVCC BID Advisory Board member. In conjunction with the University of Southern California (USC) School of Communications Innovation Lab, Caldwell demonstrated a look into the future, getting a virtual tour of Leimert Park, riding in self-driving vehicles and wearing augmented reality glasses. To get a summary of the virtual tour and other USC/Kaos Network collaborations, visit <https://challenge.la2050.org/entry/sankofa-city>.



Kaos Network and USC School of Innovation Lab presented, "Programming People Street—Sankofa City." A view of the possible future in Leimert Park.

The Annual Kingdom Day Parade and Freedom Fest



"Now More than Ever, We all Must Work Together" was the theme for the 32nd Annual Kingdom Day Parade. Billed by organizers as the oldest and largest of its kind in the nation, thousands of spectators lined the parade route to see over 100 floats, bands, drill teams, marching bands, and equestrian and dance groups. An estimated 200,000 people were drawn to south Los Angeles to remember and honor the iconic civil rights leader's life and continuing legacy.

The parade route began at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Western Avenue, then continued west on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard before turning south onto Crenshaw Boulevard and concluded at Vernon.

Groups participating in the parade included a New Orleans-style brass band, the Korean Dance Company, We Can Foundation, Community Coalition, Los Angeles Fire Department, rep-

representatives from the local labor unions and law enforcement agencies, and the Omega Psi Phi fraternity – the first predominately black fraternity to be found at a historically black university. A highlight of the parade featured a replica of the bus Rosa Parks rode in 1955 when she refused to give up her bus seat, which began the 381-day Montgomery Boycott, leading to desegregation of buses and a pivotal point in the civil rights movement.

Some parade participants celebrated King's legacy through practicing peaceful protest for which he was known. Los Angeles County health workers, nurses and technicians, marched carrying "Obamacare Works!" signs in protest of a possible repeal of the Affordable Care Act, President Obama's landmark healthcare legislation.

"We're entering uncharted territory in 2017," said Parade President and CEO Adrian Dove. "Not since Martin Luther King marched have we faced such national divisiveness. It is our hope that the Kingdom Day Parade will be the beginning of a coming together." The Kingdom Day Parade was sponsored by CORE-LA and 102.3 Radio Free KJLH.

The end of the Kingdom Day parade route marked the start of the day-long Freedom Fest in Leimert Park. Sponsored by Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson, Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson and 102.3 Radio Free KJLH, Freedom Fest featured a variety of music performances, art installations and information on community organizing and advocacy.