



THE CRAFTSMAN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

MARCH / APRIL, 2010

LETTER FOR PARK GRANT

The Craftsman Village Historical District is located in the central part of Long Beach, CA. The neighborhood has seen a number of transitions throughout the years but a constant throughout, has been the lamentable lack of green open space. Although Long Beach has a relatively standard ratio of park space to geographic area, these open spaces are primarily located in the eastern and beach areas, which tend to be more affluent. The closest parks to our historical neighborhood are MacArthur Park, Bixby Park, and Miracle on 4th Street, a small pocket park. Our goal is to use this grant to fulfill our long-term desire to turn the vacant lot at 851 Orange Avenue into an open green space. Although we worked closely with the owner to preserve the original buildings, the structures eventually fell to city bull dozer's and a vacant weed-filled lot has been our neighbor since. Once the buildings were gone, our group worked closely with the city to obtain this land in the hopes of eventually creating a pedestrian friendly park that would unify the neighborhood.



851 Orange Avenue (looking West to 842 and 858 Ceritos Avenue)

Since its inception in 1992 Craftsman Village Historical District (CVHD) has been actively involved in both our neighborhood and the greater Long Beach community. CVHD has earned numerous awards throughout the years as a result of our involvement and our proactive approach to preservation. These include The Merit Award from Long Beach Heritage, The Outstanding Community Service Award from the City Of Long Beach and 2nd Place in the Neighborhoods USA in the category of Physical Revitalization. Much time and effort has been expended to develop an active network of resources within city services, the business community, and the residents. Originally conceived as Neighbors Organized for a Safer Environment, the group slowly transformed into one of the more active central city historical groups in Long Beach. The majority of the footwork required to achieve historical status, was done through neighborhood volunteers with guidance from the city. Efforts to expand our historic district are currently underway with the photographing, inventorying, and evaluating each dwelling within our boundaries being accomplished through volunteer hours.



Ongoing outreach and education takes place with neighbors, local realtors, and new residents of the community. When the Cambodian community opened the Buddhist Temple on Orange Avenue, our group did fundraising in order to present them with the funds necessary to complete their landscaping. For the last 3 years, the group has participated in the "State of the 2nd District", a neighborhood event sponsored by the 2nd District of the Long Beach City Council to provide a venue for neighborhoods in the 2nd District to showcase their accomplishments.

The ongoing efforts of our group have resulted in our neighborhood being recognized as an example of successful preservation. To achieve this, the group has written grants to underwrite the cost of historical street signage, the creation of our gateway mural at 7th and Orange, and to purchase community trash receptacles which help to beautify the neighborhood. Additional grants and donations have been received to underwrite the cost of parkway beautification. Our most recent grant, from the NPP, will assist us in obtaining plaques identifying the most historical structures in our district.

Craftsman Village Historical District has made great strides in expanding to the greater community. We have participated in the Rose Park Restoration Fair for the last two years and worked with Long Beach Heritage for their holiday fundraiser, "Christmas at the Bembridge". Our newest alliance is with the Willmore City Historical District as they share many of our challenges. This fall, we were host to a walking historical tour that attracted over 100 participants interested in preservation from the ground up. Members of our group have also given demonstrations on preservation techniques.

On an ongoing basis, we schedule monthly cleanups in conjunction with city services. These are attended by neighbors, residents, and local high school students looking to earn community service hours. In February, our group hosted a hugely successful Give A Day, Get A Day event under the auspices of the Disney Corporation.



The Craftsman Village Park has been a long held dream. Many hours went into the initial planning and design and we have worked closely with the architects to create a park space that unifies the neighborhood, creates a sense of harmony with our historical architecture, and creates a neighborhood focal point. Our historical district is split between two city council districts and the park would create a wonderful unifying entity. Initially, the city was to create the park in stages using funding from the Parks and Recreation Department, though with the current fiscal situation of the city and the state, this has been put on the backburner. This grant would be used to fund the development of the barren land into an area that would beautify the neighborhood, reduce neighborhood blight, and create a beautiful green space out of a dirt lot that doubles as occasional parking lot and dumping ground. The land has been purchased, the design has been completed, and now it is just a question of bringing this 'shovel ready' project into a much needed reality. In addition, creating this park would go a long way to increasing the amount of open green space in our part of the city.

