CELEBRATING JOYCE: JOYCE PERKINS RETIREMENT DINNER AND PARKWAY DEDICATION CEREMONY  

By Sian Leong & Anna Apostolos

On January 22nd, 2009 LANI celebrated the achievements and career of Joyce Perkins as she retired from her post as Co-Founding Executive Director. Over 200 colleagues, community leaders, and friends gathered at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to toast Joyce and thank her for her many years of service to the neighborhoods of Los Angeles.

The evening program was a glowing commemoration of Joyce’s legacy and featured a three-part tribute video with interviews and congratulatory messages from elected officials, family members and friends. Special guest speakers for the evening included Councilwoman Jan Perry, 9th District; County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, 2nd District; Karen Mack, President of the LANI Board of Directors; and Veronica Hahni, LANI’s new Executive Director. Other highlights were special remarks by Board Member and Master of Ceremonies Marian Bell and a festive limerick tribute to Joyce performed by the entire LANI staff.

At the helm of the organization since its inception, Joyce helped create LANI’s nationally recognized community engagement model which promotes leadership development and stakeholder participation. She will continue to be involved with LANI as an active member of the Board of Directors.

PARKWAY DEDICATION

Additionally, Councilmember Bernard C. Parks joined LANI and a diverse group of well wishers in recognizing Joyce by dedicating a parkway in her honor on April 3, 2009. The Joyce Perkins Parkway sign was posted, quite fittingly, just above the Leimert Park Northern Gateway at the intersection of Leimert Boulevard and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. A LANI project, this recently constructed illuminated community landmark was built in partnership with Council District 8 and the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA).

Amidst orange and turquoise balloons, congratulatory remarks were made by Councilmember Parks; Karen Mack, LANI Board President; Bernadette Kirkwood, former Director of Economic Development for the Department of Water and Power; Valerie Shaw, Board of Public Works Commissioner; David Roberts, former Economic Development Deputy for the Eighth Council District; Brenda Anderson, South Los Angeles Area Director for the Office of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; and Detrich Allen, General Manager of EnvironmentLA.

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A Message from the Executive Director

By Veronica Hahni

Joyce has been Chairman of the Crestlaw Corridor Community Advisory Committee for nearly two decades and through her work at LANI has been instrumental in securing funding for community improvements in Leimert Park Village and the surrounding area.

Joyce’s inspirational leadership, remarkable passion, and tireless commitment have brought real change to the individuals and communities of Los Angeles. Her legacy is evident in the 22 neighborhoods LANI has transformed.

ONE STEP CLOSER TO CREATING PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS IN SOUTH L.A.

“The street is the river of life of the city, the place where we come together, the pathway to the center.”

– William H. Whyte

Although residents may not realize it, city streets are vital to communities. They are the centers of neighborhood life and serve as locations for economic, social and cultural exchange. Unfortunately, the current condition of many streets throughout Los Angeles is not conducive to this broader purpose.

In two South Los Angeles communities this is changing. As part of an Environmental Justice Context Sensitive Planning Grant from the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), LANI partnered with the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) to transform Central Avenue and Washington Boulevard into pedestrian-friendly, transit-safe streets. The Central Avenue Historic Corridor Streetscape Project and the Washington Boulevard Conceptual Plan Project address pedestrian and transit concerns and identify key improvements to help increase safety, beautify corridors and revitalize these main streets.

Utilizing LANI’s nationally recognized community engagement model, in both communities LANI staff worked closely with Project Steering Committees comprised of neighborhood stakeholders, the Office of Councilmember Jan Perry, the Planning Department and Metro, and conducted extensive outreach to garner feedback on the types of improvements needed. LANI pared with the CRA/LA in developing two conceptual plans, successfully completed in February of this year.

The Washington Boulevard Conceptual Plan includes Washington Boulevard from Figueroa Street on the west to Alameda Street on the east. The Metro Blue Line, heavy vehicle traffic, and activity around Los Angeles Trade Technical College and the Los Angeles County Courthouse make this part of Washington Boulevard congested. The Project Steering Committee worked closely with design firm Studio One Eleven to identify streetscape elements that would create a vibrant public environment and a sense of identity along the corridor, which serves as a gateway to downtown and South Los Angeles. The final Washington Boulevard Conceptual Plan includes recommendations for trees, pedestrian lighting fixtures, crosswalk enhancements, and gateway medallions or monuments to improve safety and beautify the street environment.

LANI PROJECTS IN A NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR YOU

By Anna Apostolos

COMING SOON…….

• Approximately 50 London Plane trees will be planted along Western Avenue between Florence and 108th Streets. These broad canopied trees will supply shade and add beauty to this busy corridor.

• Two illuminated gateway monuments for Chesterfield Square (Van Ness/Slauson and Van Ness/Satyr) and one illuminated gateway monument for Angeles Mesa (Arington/Satyr) are in the process of being “adopted” by local community groups. Once adopted, construction will begin.

• A customized bus shelter and colored sidewalk paving are anticipated upcoming features at the bus stop located adjacent to the Koreatown Pavilion Garden at Normandie and Olympic.

• The Hoover Transit Plaza at Pico will soon be expanded and additional elements will be added including landscaping and supplemental seating.

Celebrate Joyce, continued from the Project Steering Committee and feedback from surveys and community meetings, the final Conceptual Plan includes recommendations for trees, pedestrian lighting, landscaped traffic medians, crosswalk enhancements, sidewalk bumpouts, street banners, murals, and gateway monuments, to ultimately create a safe, attractive and inviting environment for the surrounding neighborhoods, visitors, and businesses. 