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THE PRESERVATIONIST

The Whittier Conservancy Newsletter

VOTERS APPROVE PROPOSITION A MONEY NOW AVAILABLE TO SAVE WHITTIER HILLS

In November, voters in Los Angeles County approved County Proposition A. This act will provide 400 million dollars for acquisition and rehabilitation of parks and recreation centers throughout the County. Under the provisions of this act, Whittier will receive 18 million dollars for the acquisition of park land in the Puente Hills.

Many individuals and organizations worked to promote the Park Bond Act of 1992. Special thanks go to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, State Senator Frank Hill, and Whittier Mayor Bob Henderson.

In a related development, County Supervisor Deane Dana has publicly stated his opposition to the zoning and general plan change that would be required for Chevron to develop 1500 houses and condominiums on its holdings in the Puente Hills.

The Conservancy has long identified the Puente Hills north of Whittier as a vital part of the community's heritage and character. We applaud the voters who approved this measure and look forward to the expansion of Whittier's wilderness park system that this makes possible.

BUILDING AT NELLES SCHOOL TO BE RAZED

After careful consideration and discussion, including consultation with the Whittier Conservancy, the California Youth Authority has determined that rehabilitation of building number 1 on the Fred C. Nelles campus is not possible and has ordered its demolition.

This 20,000 square foot building was built in 1915 as staff housing and has been vacant since it was damaged in the 1987 earthquake.

In December, Conservancy Vice-President Phil Wintner, Secretary John Smith, and City Councilmember Allan Zolnekoff toured the site. It was apparent from this and other inspections that the structure's foundation had suffered significant damage. In a subsequent meeting with the C.Y.A., the City Council, and the State Office of Historic Preservation, it was decided to allow the demolition to continue, but to preserve elements of historic value and make these available for future development projects. Items to be saved include two fireplace mantels, many panel doors, several claw foot tubs, and a few of the decorative columns from the facade.

The Conservancy would like to thank the California Youth Authority for seeking local input in this important decision.