

# MCA Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2019

## MCA Board Meets With Councilmember Bonin on Recent Agency Failures

On Monday, September 9th, Councilmember Mike Bonin and Lisa Cahill (Field Deputy for Brentwood and Pacific Palisades) met with MCA Board Members to discuss numerous City Agency failures affecting our canyon.

What follows are reports on those failures, a summary of our discussions with Mike Bonin, and MCA's action plans for addressing them.



Left: Kathleen Durbin MCA President, Councilmember Mike Bonin, and Lisa Cahill Field Deputy.

## July 19, 2019 Power Outage and Closure of Mandeville Canyon

Canyon residents, workers, and guests suffered unreasonable disruptions to their lives when a City owned tree located at the mouth of the Canyon toppled into power lines along Sunset Blvd at 12:26 AM. LADWP took control of the Canyon entrance and Sunset Blvd. while taking nearly 18 hours to remove the tree and restore power. City agencies mismanaged the emergency, ignoring protocols previously agreed upon with MCA and adding immeasurably to the danger, confusion, and inconvenience. Residents were allowed to leave the canyon but not told they would be blocked from returning. Stranded caregivers, workers, visitors, and residents alike had no reliable information on when the canyon would reopen. Mike Bonin and his staff were away from the office and we were uninformed. Although promised by early August, the City still has not released its "After Action Report" assessing its failures and future remedies.

Your Board impressed upon Mike Bonin and Lisa the seriousness of the City's failures, the extreme problems they caused, and the calamities that could have occurred. Mike Bonin promised to follow up to the Board.

Because we have had several canyon outages and closures caused by falling trees in the past few years, we also asked Mike Bonin to have the City assess the trees along the rights of way in the canyon and mitigate any potential future problems identified. However, Mike Bonin candidly admitted there would likely be a very long delay before a City arborist could assess the trees in our canyon. Thus, your MCA Board voted to hire an arborist to evaluate all trees along rights of way in the canyon and identify any that should be trimmed or taken down to minimize the risk of a repeat of this incident.

In addition, your MCA Board is implementing a plan to have volunteers on call to communicate with City officials and provide information and progress reports to the residents via NextDoor Mandeville. Although MCA has no authority to direct City employees in their duties, our relationship with Mike Bonin and local leaders of LAPD, LAFD, LADPW, and LADWP provides us the opportunity to offer support and Guidance.

## May 19, 2019 Wildfire Evacuation Exercise

As reported by Mike Bonin in his June newsletter:

The Councilmember's Newsletter points out the fact that the City's newly upgraded emergency notification system "NotifyLA" failed to alert many of the canyon residents of the evacuation despite them having signed up to receive such notifications. This is similar to the failure of the City's prior emergency notification system in place during the last Wildfire Evacuation Drill in 2014.

Your MCA Board asked Mike Bonin to take action to assure that the City identifies the cause(s) of the NotifyLA system failures and fixes them. This is critical not only to Mandeville Canyon residents but to all LA residents in the event of a true emergency. Mike Bonin promised to follow up with the relevant agencies and report on his progress by mid-October.

Meanwhile, MCA has followed up with LAFD and LAPD to discuss how to improve on their performance during the evacuation. MCA is also assessing other means for alerting canyon residents in the event of an emergency.



## Escape Routes from Mandeville Canyon in event of an emergency:

As we all know, normally Mandeville Canyon has only one way in and one way out. However, other ways in and out do exist (e.g., The Rockingham Trail at 1806 MCR, Chalon to Kenter, and Queensfer-ry to Sullivan Canyon) and in the event of an emergency could mean the difference between life and death. However, over the years these routes have been closed off (sometimes illegally). MCA Board Member Teri Kahn has taken the lead to identify, investigate, and tour these routes with representatives of LAFD and others.

Your MCA Board discussed the importance of these alternative escape routes with Mike Bonin and Lisa. Mike Bonin agreed to bring this topic up at a scheduled meeting with Seleta Reynolds, the General Manager of the LA Department of Transportation and get back to the Board by the end of September on what next steps are appropriate to open these alternative escape routes when needed in an emergency.

### Stay tuned for more MCA news. Coming Up Next...

- \* ADA Ramps and Painted Crosswalks at the Mandeville-Westridge Road intersection.
- \* Non-Enforcement Building Codes and Safety Ordinances.
- \* Insurance in the Canyon.