

From Our President

Any of you who have been involved in the Adams St. redevelopment project know that I have been part of that from the beginning.

I've attended countless meetings and listened to the views of various stakeholders including residents of Highland Gardens, City of Hollywood staff, elected officials and developers.

If anything is clear to me it is that a significant number of members of our community have some misconceptions about what can realistically come out of this process.

In this article I will try to lay out some basic facts that we all need to recognize.

- 1. We live in a low-income area.** That is not an opinion or criticism. It is a statistical fact based on criteria established by the U.S. Dept. of H.U.D.
- 2. No bank will finance the building of a high-end development in a low-income area.** That doesn't mean we can't have something built that will be a 100% improvement over the Theresa Apartments and that will start the process of lifting our neighborhood up to another level. No developer will build something they don't think they will be able to sell or rent.
- 3. Rent is not a dirty word.** Anyone who has been paying attention to this knows that the request for proposal that was prepared with our input resulted in seven proposals. The proposal that was ranked highest by the evaluation committee included senior rental apartments on the East side and low-rise, low-density affordable housing on the West. There are many stable, law-abiding, tax-paying, responsible people who rent the roof over their heads. If we take the position that rental housing cannot form any part of any proposed development, we will virtually insure that the Adams St. land will sit vacant for decades.
- 4. Letting the Adams St. property sit vacant is not in the best interest of the residents.** The City and CRA have spent over three million dollars of our money to purchase the land, raze the buildings and let it sit unproductive (aside from our community garden) with no tax revenue coming in for years. Every year that it remains in that condition is money out of the pockets of everyone in Hollywood. Money that could be used for police and fire protection, sidewalks, bus benches, sewer lines, etc.

If we are to move forward in a constructive manner with any eye towards improving our neighborhood, we must keep our minds open and our expectations in line with what is realistically possible.

David Kout, President

“National Night Out” at the new Rose’s Garden Park



**Thanks to all
who helped make
National Night Out
such a success!**

Highland Gardens Community Garden

We are very fortunate to have a community garden in Highland Gardens. The garden was started over 3 years ago on City owned property at 24th and Adams Street. We have been assisted by the Economic and Community Development and Public Works Department. Anyone can join for only \$2. per person per year. Plot sizes vary depending on the number of people working together in a particular area. A member may choose to have his or her own area to work and harvest alone or to be part of a group that works and harvests together. We have two large groups who are members and they are Izunome which has offices on 24th and Hollywood Boulevard. They follow a Japanese spiritual philosophy and believe in nature farming. And we have a permaculture group which is a practice where taking care of the earth and reusing materials is also very important. There is no City budget for the garden so we rely on what we can find, membership fees, and donations. Shirley Stealey is our treasurer and recently we acquired 4' garden fence which is going to be reconfigured this Saturday, September 15th, to surround all areas of the garden. Louis Rodriguez has helped us with a donation for the fence and he also recently gave a lecture about various root plants and donated roots to plant such as purple yam. Patricia Hamlin of Washington Street has also consulted and donated tomato plants and other ornamentals. There is lots of room for more members. If you have any gardening knowledge we also welcome you to share it. Please contact me at 786-357-2197 to join.

Maria Jackson Ratliff, Manager