

# THE RIDGEWOOD-WILTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## A Brief History

Your neighborhood association is an instrument for responsible change in the vital urban setting of Los Angeles. Our partners in this work are Council staff in John Ferraro's office.

In 1978, about 25 neighbors living on Wilton Place, Wilton Drive and Ridgewood Place between Beverly and Third got together formally for the first time. Their reason for meeting was to discuss the City's plans to straighten and widen Wilton Place. They agreed to establish a neighborhood organization and elected Lucy Singer as the first president of what they called the Ridgewood-Wilton Neighborhood Association (RWNA).

Since that time, five other residents have served as president: Carla Mesa, Virginia Kazor, Irving Anderson, Dick Herman and Rick Hauser.

Here are some of the things the RWNA has accomplished:

A nomination to the State was prepared, asking that the Wilton Historic District be created and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The streets between First and Third along Wilton Place, Wilton Drive and South Ridgewood Place became Los Angeles' second historic district on July 24, 1979.

Then, residents and the RWNA convinced the Councilman, John Ferraro, to abandon the street-widening project in order to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.

Four houses purchased by the City along Wilton Place near the curve were sold at public auction and have since been restored.

RWNA was instrumental in closing a drug-selling operation out of a house in the 100 block north and an illegal meeting-house in the 200 block south of Wilton Place.

A neighborhood-wide tree-planting project set a model for all of Los Angeles by obtaining waivers from the Board of Public Works and establishing responsible precedents for inexpensive tree-planting and maintenance. Our organization received a BPW award for community enhancement and "efficient and loyal service" to the City. A blinking red light now flashes in all directions at the corner of Second and Wilton Place every night from 9 PM to 6 AM, significantly slowing nighttime traffic.

Wilton Place will soon be restriped to allow only one lane of traffic north and one lane south, with a two-way left-turn lane the length of the neighborhood. This will help control the speed of traffic and for the first time ever, allow resident to turn into their driveways outside a moving lane of traffic.

RWNA concerns about zoning have led to (Q) restrictions being placed on most R-3 zoning near our neighborhood; and to the creation of a (Q)RD1.5 zone adjacent to our neighborhood on Gramercy Place

from First to Second. Our Board members and neighbors work closely with Council staff and have frequently spoken at City Hearings regarding zoning, reckless development, on-site sale of alcoholic beverages, commercial over-development on Western, the Ambassador Hotel/LAUSD controversy -- all matters which influence the quality of life in the heart of a City. Recently, our distress about heedless actions by the Library Commission saved a single-family home on St. Andrews Place which had been condemned for a Library parking lot.

On August 22, 1990, John Ferraro introduced a motion to the City Council, seconded by Hal Bernson, which initiated proceedings to establish the Plummer Square Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. It will include Ridgewood-Wilton homes and those of our neighbors to the east, the St. Andrews Square neighborhood -- 92 acres which belonged to John L. Plummer almost 100 years ago. The HPOZ will preserve our neighborhoods far into the next century and ensure that our investment will be protected. A hundred years of human urban history which all of us are helping to write!

- Written prior to 2000