

The Whitley Heights NEWS

Serving the Community Since 1923 Summer 2003

From The President's Desk

I'm very pleased to be starting my third term as president of the Whitley Heights Civic Association. The last two years have been quite rewarding. Not only have we moved forward with so many wonderful projects, but I can truly say I've had a great time. For that I thank an incredible group of tireless board-members who make each monthly meeting a joy to preside over. You have a dedicated board looking after each and every one of you on this hill, I assure you. These are great people who have not only done a tremendous amount to better the neighborhood, but they have become important friends in my life.

It is especially gratifying to see that our membership is at the highest level it has been since the inception of the association over 75 years ago!. In my fourteen years living on the hill we've accomplished so much. Yet with so many issues that face us, we've never lost sight of being a social organization as well as a group of concerned homeowners watching over the betterment of their neighborhood. It was nice to see so many new faces at the last annual meeting and I look forward to getting to know each of you.

With as much as we have seen completed in the past, we still have a daunting list of tasks before us. Our streets are badly in need of repair; the sound-wall construction has left large areas with no landscaping along the perimeter of the freeway; implementation of neighborhood watch; solutions to our ever increasing parking problems; construction of our neighborhood entry treatments; extension of the sound-walls along the freeway; monitoring of development through the Cahuenga pass; continued involvement in the neighborhood council; general neighborhood beautification; seasonal decoration of the neighborhod and fund raising; just to name a few. And let's not forget a few events where we can just have a good time and continue to get to know each other better! (no one will argue the fun and success of the "Halloween Pumpkin Contest" last year!)

With all we hope to accomplish, and an ever growing list of new and exciting projects we want to tackle, now more than ever we need the help of everyone on the hill. We can only be as strong as the commitment and involvement that each of you allows for. Therefore I would like to ask all of you to get involved in some small manner. There are many projects that don't require attendance at every meeting; perhaps even less than an hour a month. In the coming year, we propose to delegate as much as possible to small committees in order to move as many projects forward as we can. We need your help. The list is tremendous, yet there is a very small group doing most of the work.

With your membership bill this year, you will receive a list of committees that are forming. Please check your interests and send it back to us. Or call the hot-line or come to a monthly meeting. Let us know you would like to help out. A small contribution of time can help ease the workload of the board and benefit the neighborhood immensely. You will discover what so many of us here on the hill have learned over the years: getting involved will introduce you to a great group of committed people that not only care about their neighborhood, but who are downright fun to be around!!! For the small price of an hour here and there, you are assured of making some wonderful lifelong friends. That's a promise!

Steven Wolfe

Signs Of The Times

by Annie Gagen-Poons

We, in the Hollywood area, are now living in a "Supplemental Use District" for outdoor advertising. Previously referred to as "the designated appropriate area" and by some as "the dumping ground for unwanted advertising."

As City Council members of other districts have successfully moved billboards out of their area, we have seen outdoor ads multiplying all around us: on both the tops and sides of buildings; and unfortunately this is only the beginning. The Supplemental Use District Ordinance is now going through the "approval process" phase.

According to sources at the City Planning Office and the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, (who, along with the Business Improvement District, lobbied for using Hollywood for all this advertising) there have been numerous "Focus Group" and "Views & Sightline" hearings which we all should have been informed of, but were not.

Intersections at Cahuenga & Sunset, Sunset & Vine, and Sunset & LaBrea have already been targeted for ads. Buildings on Hollywood Blvd. are still being decided. There is a lot of talk about "historic" and "tasteful" advertising but only on buildings of a certain height. There are no guarantees of what the outcome will be or how our views will be affected. When asked if we might be looking at the backsides of billboards from our homes on the Hill, no one would guarantee that would not be the case. It was stated that the ads would be placed for maximum traffic viewing, - the views from homes do not seem to be an issue.

If you would like more information and an opportunity to have a voice in this important "process," there is a meeting coming up **August 14th at 9:30am** at the **City Planning Commission, 200 N. Spring Street**, which you can confirm with Charlie Rausch at (213) 978-1167.

Other sources: www.LACITY.ORG then *Planning Dept.*; - then *Selected Ordinances & Reports*: - then *Proposed Ordinances*; - there you will find a map of the "Sign District.

Mary Richardson of City Planning can answer questions at (213) 482-7077.

Hollywood Chamber of Commerce 469-8311.

The CRA (although they did not return calls) at (213) 977-1951.

The L.A. Conservancy is actively trying to protect historic buildings from this advertising blight.

Our views from Whitley Heights have already been blemished with that enormous Apple computer ad on the whole side of a storage building at Highland and Santa Monica; - all lit up, it screams at us at night. If this is anyone's idea of "tasteful" or "historic" advertising, one wonders and worries what else is in store for us. If the ordinance supposedly addresses quality and size of signage, and that one is acceptable, we might want to become more involved in this decision-making process before it's too late.

Expansion Contracted

by Lisa Morgan

For those who have not heard the good news on the street, or read it in the local papers, the 101 study to expand the freeway has been dropped. Even before the entire project came to a halt (as a result of public outcry), the preferred recommendation for the study *did not recommend* any expansion of the 101 freeway through the Cahuenga Pass it only recommended the expansion of the freeway from State Route 23 to the 134. Thus, had the study continued, Whitley Heights *would not* have been affected.

This recommendation is a direct result of the efforts of the Whitley Heights Board and those who worked on the 101 freeway subcommittee. While the authors of this article will resist the urge to editorialize on the need for Los Angeles to address traffic congestion by coming up with a land use plan that utilizes a functional mass transit system – rather than adding layers of cement to our City which would be outdated by the time the job is completed -- we do want to extend a big thank you to the 101 subcommittee members who worked so hard researching, gathering signatures and attending meetings (right before the holidays, no less) as well as the 178 residents of Whitley Heights who signed the petition requesting that given the options presented in the study last Fall, the "no-build" option was the only choice for the Cahuenga Pass. The authors also want to thank Councilmember Tom LaBonge who was instrumental in assisting Whitley Heights in its efforts.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

by Caroline Pinkey

Neighborhoods across Los Angeles are being urged to participate in Neighborhood Watch programs due to the fact that there are too few police officers available.

Last year Whitley Heights began forming a Neighborhood Watch. We currently have block captains assigned to specific streets. These block captains will be going door to door to start a telephone tree so people can stay in touch with their neighbors and share information. We still need block captains for Bella Vista Way, Cerritos Pl., Fairfield Ave., Kendra Ct, Lash Lane. and N. Las Palmas.

The commitment is minimal. The block captains are responsible for gathering names and numbers of people on their street and sharing information about crime, quarterly. If you are interested in volunteering for the above streets please contact Cass Coty at (323) 851-2200.

Here are some important numbers to call if you have any problems. For Emergency/Crime in Progress: 911. For Non Emergency/Suspicious Activity: (877) 275-5273. Prostitution: (213) 485-2811. All City Services (graffiti removal, furniture pick-up, etc): 311.



And Dick Lovell reminds us all that we should not leave anything of value in our car (even in the trunk) day or night. The vagrants who pass through the neighborhood will stop at nothing to get a cell phone, a package or anything that can be sold for cash. Protect yourself and your property.

Masthead.....Gregg Barnette
Editor.....Bryan Clark
Assoc. Editor.....Steven Wolfe
Circulation.....Susan Harmon

Beautification Projects

The Bella Vista Way project has been completed thanks to P. Dryden, S. Harmon, F. Marshall, C. Curran, B. Clark, T. Harris, D. Cowan, M. Ferguson and S. Marshal. Looking forward to seeing these folks and more of you at the next project.

Dick Lovell



Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership meeting was well attended on the Patio of Theo and Bob Primes home. (Pictures appear elsewhere). A Board of Directors for the coming fiscal year was elected. The new Board and officers are published in this edition.

Outgoing Treasurer, Debbie Roper, presented a very comforting report of the WHCA financial picture and Vice-President, Dick Lovell reported on membership and beautification projects.

A lengthy and heated discussion of the street-paving problem resulted in the formation of a committee to explore the surfacing possibilities further. Another committee was detailed to look into the sanitary problems caused by some dog-walkers in the neighborhood. Other reports and discussion of on-going projects included Neighborhood Watch, Permit Parking, Sound Walls and the 101 Freeway Expansion.







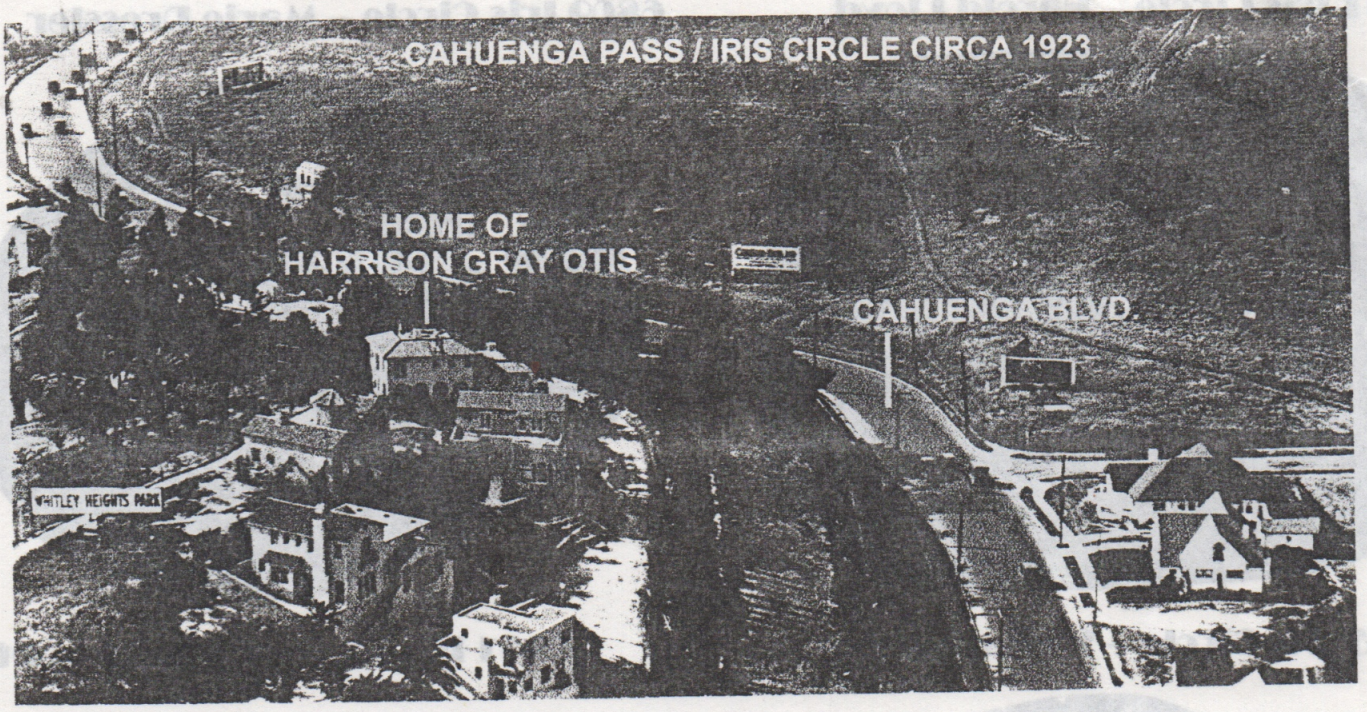












Iris Circle by Steven Wolfe

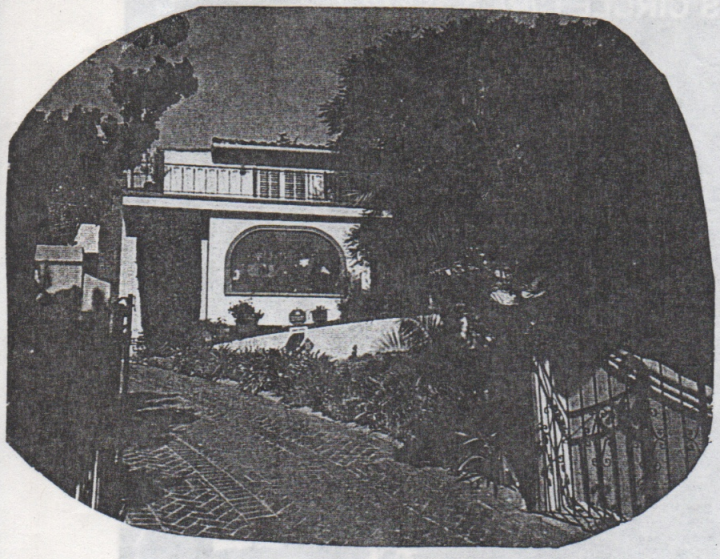
Iris Circle was included in the original boundaries of Whitley Heights until the neighborhood was radically split in two by the construction of the Hollywood Freeway during the 1950's. Originally described as one of the "Estate Streets" of the neighborhood, Iris and its "north of the freeway" neighbors Whitley Avenue and Whitley Terrace were virtually "dismissed" from the neighborhood from the time of the freeway construction until a group of residents banned together and successfully petitioned the membership of the Whitley Heights Civic Association to re-include them 1982. The inclusion of the "step-child" side of the hill to the neighborhood and Association was further cemented when the neighborhood as a whole was placed on the National Registration of Historic Places and included it the cities Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (H.P.O.Z).

Iris Circle originally played home to such celebrities as Carol Lombard & William Powell (6861), Marie Dressler (6809), Wallace Beery (6825) and one of two homes that Charlie Chaplin (6616) owned in Whitley Heights. Whitley's partner, Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the LA Times lived at 6851 Iris Circle, and the former home of Harold Lloyd, originally a four story house in the path of the Hollywood Freeway was reduced to two stories and moved to 6801 Iris to make way for the impending highway in the late 1940's.

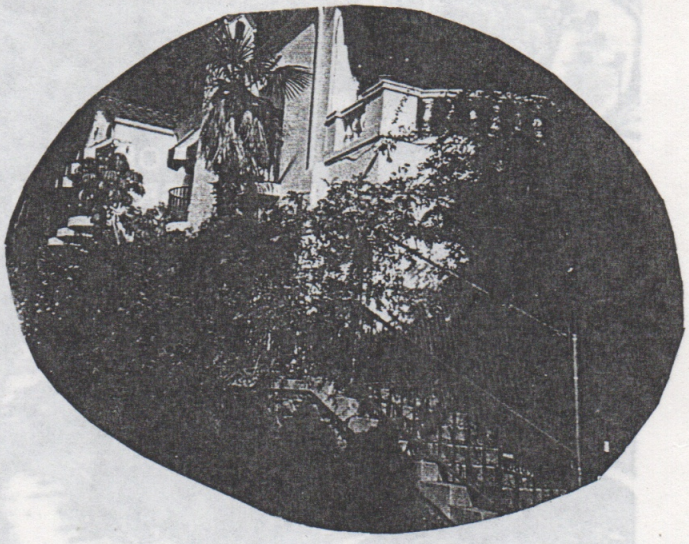
Iris Circle is actually composed of three different streets. Iris Drive runs from Cahuenga Boulevard to the top of the hill, which turns into Iris Circle and becomes one way. The hill is bisected by Iris Place, a walk street that cuts from one side of the circle to the other, with two homes actually having addresses on the walk. The majority of homes were built in the early 1920's, with many of them among the larger homes in the neighborhood, several of which were built on double or triple lots, thus it's early description as one of the "estate streets." The former home of Marie Dressler is rumored to be one of the most expensively detailed homes in the neighborhood, containing extravagant custom bathroom tiles and inlaid floors. There are even stories that one of the downstairs rooms housed a secret speakeasy during prohibition.

Originally the center of the circle played home to Whitley Park, a fully landscaped park which included grass and a plethora of palm trees, many of which are still there today (and quite tall!). Crowning the hill was an elevated sign proclaiming "Whitley Park" to anyone passing by on Cahuenga Boulevard, then visible from the top of the hill. Only one non-conforming home built in the 1950's managed to make it onto Iris Circle. So once you venture to the top of Iris Drive and start your journey around the circle, it looks pretty much like the Mediterranean hillside village that Whitley first imagined when Whitely Heights was just the brainchild of it's creator.

6801 Iris Circle – Harold Lloyd



6809 Iris Circle – Marie Dressler



6825 Iris Circle – Wallace Beery



6851 Iris Circle – Harrison Otis



6861 Iris Circle – Carol Lombard & William Powell



6616 Iris Circle – Charlie Chaplin



BRUSH WITH GREATNESS

(Celebrity Sightings in Whitley Heights)

by Jim Geoghan

He was driving a green Mustang convertible. An old Mustang convertible. It was dirty and needed body work. I'm not judgmental or anything but I asked myself "Why would Francis Ford Copolla drive such a heap?"

Okay, I'm judgmental.

There was no time to think on it any longer. He stopped in front of my house. He needed directions. "I'm looking for a house," he told me. I ignored it and launched into my very best Al Pacino impression. "Fredo! Come back! You're still my brother!" Copolla made a face. The face he probably makes all the time. The face that says "Another schmuck I have to deal with." Clearly Francis Ford Copolla did not want to spend time discussing show biz with me. He was on his way to a Whitley Heights A List Party and I told him how to get there. (I had seen the valet parkers hours before.)

He rattled away and I thought to myself "He should read my screenplay." This could be the beginning of one of those legendary Hollywood stories. Years from now someone will ask Copolla "Is it true someone simply tossed a copy of *Bippy Gets a Headache* in the back seat of your ratty Mustang?" How could I pass that up?

I ran home, got my screenplay, jumped in the car and sped over to the Whitley Heights A List Party.

"The man with the Mustang!" I shouted to the valet. "Where's his car? This fell out of it!" The valet took the screenplay and promised to put it back "where it belongs." I gave him five dollars for his trouble.

I drove away feeling great. More than great. I was glowing. My stuff was in the back seat of a major player. My odds had been cut from one in a million all the way down to one in five hundred thousand.

I haven't heard from Francis Ford Copolla yet. But Showtime has a new release and the lead actor looks a lot like the valet I handed the script to.

I think I'm going to need a lawyer.

I'm going to stand in front of my house until Johnny Cochran drives by.

.....

Notes From The Veep

SCAMS

Be on the alert for kids selling subscriptions for their sports club. They do not carry identification and the magazines are sent to a home for unwed mothers. They also try to find out if you are the only one at home or live alone. There have been several of them in the area lately so, - heads up.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

You will see the new "24 Hour Video Surveillance" signs posted at several locations around the Hill. Because of the limitations of City regulations, we were restricted as to location; however, we did what we thought was the best possible placement and we hope they meet with your approval.

BEAUTIFICATION ON HOLD

The City has issued a work order to cleanup the Wedgewood - Whitley Terrace and the Iris Circle Freeway Wall areas. With the lack of funds in the City budget, I can only hope that this gets completed soon.

Our proposals for the beautification projects in both areas are waiting for approval. The overwhelming support in pledges from the residents for our major projects is greatly appreciated. Unfortunately, most of the requests made to the Bureau of Public Works by the many organizations in L.A. have been turned down because of lack of funds.

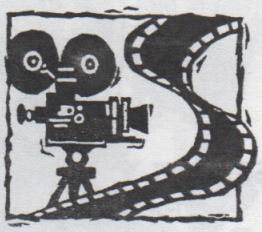
If we get nothing for these projects this year we will then do an Association project with funds collected from the residents. The one most costly expense will be the installation of the water system.

Dick Lovell
(Vice President)

Stuffed with Stuff

In this edition you should also find:
an **ORANGE sheet** - Info on Events, Clubs, etc.
(with a white reply card)
a **BLUE sheet** - Phone Numbers & Services.
And a **WHITE envelope** - all about Dues and Membership.

Home Movies



by Robert Harmon

(A continuing feature, wherein we invite a distinguished member of the profession to recommend films that might be a welcome addition to your home library.)

Here are the five films, with very short commentary:

"2001: A Space Odyssey"

I've long felt (since I first saw it in its initial release in 1968) that this is the finest film ever made -- and by a huge margin. My personal measure of a film's quality seems to be the degree to which a film can only be a film. What I mean by that is this: I find that a film that could also be successful as a book (or play, etc.) is, in some sense, a lesser work of the cinema than that film which can 'only be a movie.' In that sense, "2001" is the granddaddy of great films, in that is such a visual/aural experience that it could only be a film. The film completely bypasses the literary or 'character-based' paradigm exemplified by novels and plays -- and I find that exhilarating.

"Raging Bull"

I can't resist the intense and complex character study that this film exemplifies. I've never needed (or really fully understood) an audience's need to 'identify' with a particular character to enjoy a movie, and "Raging Bull" certainly isn't a movie with too many characters that one would choose to identify with. And yet, I find its treatment of its characters somehow universal and moving. Not fully sure why, but I love this film.

"Days of Heaven"

Again, like "2001," this film expresses itself almost exclusively through the visual and auditory channels that are the true domain of cinema. The story is almost ridiculously simple, there are about 700 words spoken in the whole thing, and yet it feels as rich and full as a great Russian novel. One of the world's sublime film experiences, as far as I'm concerned – with the best voice-over narration ever conceived.

"Seven"

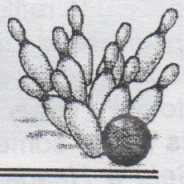
On its surface, "Seven" is some sort of horror/thriller hybrid that keeps threatening to veer off into "B" movie territory -- but never does. Elevated to great artistic heights by the direction, cinematography, sound design, acting, and writing, this film is the ultimate example of an 'elevated genre.' One of the most thrillingly crafted movies ever made.

"Lawrence of Arabia"

A bit of a cliché for one's "Five Best" list, but I can't help it. Great, great writing, incredible direction (every moment under complete control, yet feeling spontaneous and alive), and wonderful performances. One of the last of its kind, created prior to the dawning of the digital age. When you see 1000 mounted soldiers stampeding across the desert, that's really 1000 mounted soldiers -- not some digitally multiplied "effect."

(Robert Harmon is a noted film director.)

HEY NEIGHBORS!



Whitley Heights is gonna' go bowling for dollars sometime in September at Lucky Strike our new bowling alley at Hollywood and Highland!!!!!

We hope to have a blast, - bowling and raising some money for our neighborhood. Watch for flyers in the mail with details about the

Whitley Heights Bowlarama!

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DANGER

Wrong Way On Grace

A silver Porche came flying the **wrong way** down Grace Avenue through Whitley Terrace a few days ago. Fortunately, no one was hurt, - with no thanks to the driver.

It was probably a visitor who just wasn't paying attention when he or she pulled out of Kendra Court. Surely no one who lives on the Hill would take the risk of injuring a neighbor or killing a child just to save a few minutes. But all of us should be careful at that intersection and, of course, you are encouraged to report any car that is recklessly driven to the police.

WHCA Board of Directors

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Cass Coty, Amanda Embrescia,
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Alternates

Susan Brooks, Patty Dryden,
Ryan Hamilton, Susan Harmon, Debbie Roper

We are all saddened by the passing of long time resident
William Flatley
of Bella Vista Way

Questions? Comments? Letters ?

Call 213-228-9388
Write P.O. Box 1003
Hollywood, CA 90078
Email.....bc7c@pacbell.net

SPAM

by William Mickelberry

Plead with me
in some other fashion.
You say
you don't want
to waste my time
or yours.
Then don't.
You ask if I am tired
of the old 40/40 --
you know, 40 hours a week
for 40 years.
There's drink for that.
Would I like
the investment secret
of the big boys?
I'm sure you have it.
Do I want
to watch coeds
doing what they do
when they're alone?
I know what they do
when they're alone.
Would I prefer to work
from home?
Would I like to find out
anything about anybody?
No. Nor would you.
Trust me.

Is it hot where you are?
As you sit at your keyboard,
are the jalousies open
to the sodium-lit night?
Are there figures outside
waiting on the sidewalk?
Is you wife
in the other room
listening, beyond hope?
Is this your last chance
for business success?

I don't want to know.
Your message has reached millions.
You've done enough.

William Mickelberry, a retired [illegible] and resident of Laurel Canyon, spends most weekends in Whitley Heights. He is a full-time admirer of 'the hill'.

BARRY SLOANE

THE WHITLEY HEIGHTS SPECIALIST

SOLD

- **6665 Emmet Terrace** **Asking $850,000**

Barry represented both Buyer and Seller.

CURRENTLY LISTED

- **2071 Grace Avenue** **Asking $799,000**

"Bedside Manor, 1932, Frank Scully's marvelous combination of streamline moderne, nautical architecture, and Norwegian Country house – all capped off with a classic Whitley Heights Spanish roof. 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Spectacular city views and rolling lawns and gardens.

We receive calls every week from buyers looking for property in Whitley Heights. For a free, no obligation market appraisal of your home in this hot real estate market, call Barry!

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