



**Shadow Hills Property Owners Association**  
*Dedicated To Preserving Rural Community*

December 7, 2003

Maya Zaitzevsky, Project Coordinator  
 City of Los Angeles Dept. of City Planning  
 200 North Spring Street, Room 763  
 Los Angeles, California 90012

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 ENVIRONMENTAL  
 UNIT

Re: Canyon Hills Project  
 ENV-2002-2481-EIR  
 SCH No. 2002091018  
 October 2003

Ms. Zaitzevsky,

The Community harbours serious reservations about the grading plans proposed by the Canyon Hills Project. We believe little effort has been made to honor the Sunland – Tujunga – Lake View Terrace – Shadow Hills – East La Tuna Canyon Community Plan (heretofore to be referred to as the “Community Plan”).

I quote Footnote #7 from the Community Plan: “Subdivision in steep hillside areas shall be designed in such a way as to preserve the ridgelines and the steeper slopes as open space, limit the amount of grading required, and to protect the natural hillside views. The total density allowed over the entire ownership shall be clustered in the more naturally level portions of the ownership.” I quote from the Canyon Hills Draft Environmental Impact Report (heretofore to be referred to as the “DEIR”) from IV-N-26: Substantial landform alterations would be visible from this perspective. (Photo simulation Figure IV-N-18). Irregularities in the existing skyline would be straightened out and replaced with horizontal lines.” I further quote the DEIR from IV-N-37: “In some places, the existing skylines would be lowered and their natural forms reshaped into horizontal planes to support the proposed development.” I further quote the DEIR from IV-N-38: “However, the proposed project would cause landform alterations to approximately 240.2 acres of land due to grading.” ..... “Within the proposed Development Areas, grading would transform the rugged skyline and complex terrain of the hillsides into more regular ordered patterns of horizontal planes. In some locations, such as the central portion of Development Area A, grading would reduce the height of an existing secondary ridgeline by as much as 80 feet.” This hardly constitutes the “minimized grading and hillside viewshed protection” that Footnote #7 of the Community Plan promises us. I further quote the DEIR from IV-N-39: “While there is existing residential development along La Tuna Canyon Road west of the project site, it is tucked in along the sides of the road and does not dominate the landscape. However, some of the proposed homes in Development Area B would be elevated above La Tuna Canyon

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Road and visible to passersby. Consequently, the substantial increase in the number of homes in the canyon and their high visibility from La Tuna Canyon Road would substantially impact the rural ambiance of that portion of La Tuna Canyon. For these reasons, the project could be considered to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Development Areas and the proposed projects impact on the visual character and quality of the project site would therefore be considered significant." We ask that Canyon Hills take a very close look at the existing residential development along La Tuna Canyon Road west of the project site and take some development guidelines away with him - homes set back from the roadway and tucked away at level terrain, undisturbed hillsides, respect for the minimum density development as laid forth in the Community Plan maps, etc. further keeping in mind our Community Plan Objective 1-3 which states: "To preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character and integrity of existing single and multi-family neighborhoods.

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And what happened to Mitigation Measures?:

1. I quote from the DEIR IV-N-39: "All structures on the project site shall comply with the applicable requirements of the Draft San Gabriel/Verdugo Mountains Scenic Preservation Specific Plan." Frequent breakage of skyline silhouettes hardly exemplifies any effort to honor the essence of the Draft Specific Plan. Furthermore, one might seriously question any honest commitment on the part of the Canyon Hills Project to honor the concept of the "Prominent Ridgeline" as designated "Prominent Ridgelines" have altered altitude in successive proposed Canyon Hills Project Development Maps resulting in the elimination of designation as "Prominent Ridgelines" at the very border of Canyon Hills land ownership.

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2. I further quote from the DEIR IV-N-41: "Project impacts with respect to scenic vistas, scenic resources and existing visual character would remain significant following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures." If impacts will remain "significant" despite mitigation, how can this project possibly be approved as proposed?

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This thoughtless landform alteration is totally unacceptable by a community so wholeheartedly dedicated to preserving the wonderful natural contours of the hills about us while still allowing for reasonable population expansion - here that allowance being for the 87 units permissible by existing Zoning, Hillside Ordinance and Slope Density restrictions imparted on the totality of the Canyon Hills 887 acre ownership. As proposed, the Canyon Hills Project irrevocably alters the topography of the project site. I quote from the DEIR IV-N-37: "While some may consider the introduction of a residential development into an undisturbed hillside as a significant intrusion under any circumstances, others may consider a sensitively-designed project as an asset to the community and desire to purchase homes there." Yes, a "sensitively-designed" project certainly could be an asset to the community, but as so many submitted letters to yourself must be making very clear, Canyon Hills hardly classifies as a "sensitively-designed" project.

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*[Handwritten Signature]*  
SHADOW HILLS PROPERTY ASSOCIATION