

Wayne Meseberg and Lucy Burger
7421 Tranquil Dr.
Tujunga, CA 91042

December 28, 2003

Los Angeles City Planning Department
Maya E. Zaitzevsky
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: ENV-2002-2481-EIR; SCH# 2002091018
Canyon Hills Project-DEIR Comments

Dear Ms. Zaitzevsky,

We have lived in the Hillhaven community of Tujunga for almost twelve years, and our home is very near development area A of the proposed Canyon Hills Project. We have looked at the DEIR, and we have many concerns, including the fact that the DEIR fails to adequately address the total impact of the development upon the culture and lifestyle of the Tujunga community. We will direct our comments to a few areas of special concern to us.

1) Wildlife.

As the owners of almost 3 acres of open land at the corner of Tranquil Dr. and Glen-O-Peace Parkway, we have had ample opportunity to see coyotes and hawks every day. On one occasion we saw a bobcat sitting on our hill, and on Christmas day one year a mountain lion was sitting on our driveway. Most important, we want to tell you that we have seen a Peregrine falcon sitting in the branches of our eucalyptus forest several times. We often go and sit in the forest in the afternoon, and the Peregrine falcon perches above us on the lower branches of the tree for twenty minutes at a time. We do not see the peregrine falcon mentioned in the DEIR, but it is here without a doubt, and it is a special status species in the state of California. What a beautiful bird, and what a beautiful wildlife area right here in the city of Los Angeles! This wildlife area is a treasure, and we believe that the high density housing area which is being proposed will significantly harm the wildlife habitats existing today. Please preserve the natural life of this area by insisting that Whitebird develop its land within the requirements of the current laws and community plan. These are the laws and requirements which we the citizens of California have created because we treasure the land and have envisioned a slow-growth, semi-rural

community here. We have something very special right here in Los Angeles. Let's keep it.

2) Equestrian Lifestyle.

The high density housing which has been proposed reduces the lot sizes so that the homes are no longer truly adequate as horse properties. Horsekeeping requires adequate space for boarding and corralling, and the lot sizes proposed do not provide enough space for this. Whitebird proposes a small 3-acre, open-to-the-public equestrian center as an appeasement for the loss of the ability to have a semi-rural equestrian culture in our Verdugo Mountains. This is preposterous. Three acres is a very small equestrian facility and does not begin to compensate for the loss of the opportunity for a genuine horse-keeping lifestyle on private properties in the Verdugo Mountains- a lifestyle which can exist in the Verdugo Mountains provided that Whitebird develops the property according to the existing zoning requirements, which is what we are insisting upon.

3) Lifestyle of the Open Community.

We understand from the Canyon Hills Project meetings that the proposed development is a modern gated community. The DEIR does not address this at all. For years we have been walking and hiking every morning on the roads of the Verdugo Mountains as do many other people. This is a real part of our culture. Friendships are made, information is passed among neighbors on the morning walks, and everyone is welcome to enjoy the God-given beauty of the Verdugo Mountains. Let us not exchange our culture and beautiful open roads for a gated community which limits access to the land.

4) Project Alternatives.

We believe that alternative B (development of area A only) is completely unacceptable because it changes nothing in terms of density. It will negatively affect our culture and wildlife areas in all the ways that we have previously addressed in this letter, and it changes nothing of the noise light and traffic effects on our area either. There is no advantage in this alternative over the original plan. Alternative C is also unacceptable for every reason mentioned above except that the traffic flow would change a little bit.

We believe that project alternative D is acceptable because the low density would preserve the culture and quality of life in a manner consistent with the environment we have now. Although alternative D does not provide for dedication of open space by donating the undeveloped area to the Santa Monica Conservancy, we do believe that this is preferable to the proposed Canyon Hills Development. As long as private owners of all those areas build according to the current laws and community plan, we believe that the beneath of the land, the semi-rural culture of the area, and the wildlife would be preserved in a better way under alternative D than in the currently proposed project.

Wayne Meserberg

Los Angeles City Planning Department
attn. Maya E. Zaitzevsky
200 North Spring St.
Los Angeles,
Ca. 90012.

Re. ENV. 2002-2481-EIR, SCH #2002091018
Canyon Hills project-DEIR comments.

December 21, 2003

Dear Ms. Zaitzevsky,

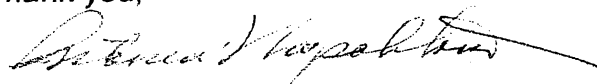
I would appreciate your attention to the following:

In 1989 I became a resident on Reverie Road in Tujunga. The area appealed to me because of its preserved rural setting ; the presence of native oak trees, wild flowers , birds and butterflies , and many different wild animals. It soon became clear to me that all residents were there for the same reason : the appreciation of nature, peace and quiet. Over the years many homeowners bought up lots around them, so no one would be able to build on them. When learning about the proposed housing development , which is very close to our neighborhood, I became very alarmed and decided to educate myself about the process. Consequently, I carefully reviewed the DEIR report and could not help but notice the many inaccuracies on several topics. It seemed as if the executors of this report wanted to give the impression that building 280 homes was really not a big issue, but more of an asset . Well, I beg to differ with their findings, and I wish to highlight just a couple of points:

In the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS , the transportation and traffic issues have been inadequately addressed. I am sure that anybody with basic math skills can work out how many more cars are going to be added to the current traffic congestion on Foothill Blvd, Tujunga Canyon , and the nearby freeways **with just 87 homes**, let alone **280 !!** A new shopping center with an Ithop restaurant in its midst , was recently opened at the corner of Foothill and Tujunga Canyon. While questioning the coincidence of this new complex, [and the timing of the widening of Tujunga Canyon Road by the Verdugo Golf Course] , I need to point out that the parking spots are **already filled** with the current residents . Furthermore I wish to point out that we really don't need any more cars, trucks, lawnmowers and blowers polluting our precious air.

Needless to say, the destruction of nature and wild life is also very bothersome to me. The developer has been given permission to build 87 homes. Please see to it, that this number stands .!

Thank you,


A grateful taxpayer,

Comment Letter No. 172
Attachment 172xx

Antonia Napolitano
9525 Reverie Road
Tujunga
Ca 91042.

7035 Estepa Dr
Tujunga CA 91042

December 23, 2003

Los Angeles City Planning Dept.
Maya E. Zaitzevsky
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: ENV-2002-2481-EIRXZP
SCH#2002091018
Canyon Hills Project-
DEIR Comments

I have lived in Tujunga for 41 years very close to the proposed Canyon Hills project. After reviewing the DEIR I have found many inaccuracies. Under current laws the area is not zoned for 280 homes. The current laws do not allow grading ridgelines by as much as 80 feet and permanently altering 310 acres. I am concerned with the scaring of the land and of mudslides.

The DEIR does not accurately take into consideration the cumulative affect of all the development projects that have just recently completed and that are in the works on traffic. For example, the development at Wentworth the new shopping mall at Tujunga Canyon and Foothill. The traffic on Foothill has increased immensely over the last 42 years. Our streets cannot handle the additional traffic that this 280 home development will bring. The DEIR does not adequately address how this development will affect Foothill Boulevard, where all the local residents do their shopping.

The DEIR does not adequately address the affect that this project will have on air pollution during the construction and after the construction with the additional 280 homes and at least 2,700 extra trips per day on La Tuna Canyon and surrounding streets. This areas workforce is a commuter workforce.

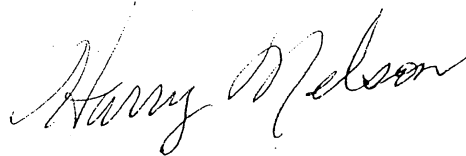
The DEIR does not address light pollution from miles of new streetlights.

The DEIR states that it would only affect up to 5 coyotes. That is grossly understated. Living in this area for 42 years I am a citizen expert and I know that this development will affect many more wildlife than it states. The altering of 310 acres of wildlife habitat will have an enormous effect on the environment and the wildlife's food sources. It will also affect opossums, birds, plants, flowers, raccoons, owls, and rabbits that are being affected by development.

I urge Los Angeles City officials to disapprove any portion of the Canyon Hills project that requires changes to the current Los Angeles City General Plan, Los Angeles Municipal Code, local Community Plans, the Hillside Ordinance, the Slope Density Ordinance, the Oak Tree Ordinance and all current zoning and all current laws.

Sincerely,

Harry Nelson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harry Nelson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the printed name.

John Novak
10041 Silverton Avenue
Tujunga, California 91042

28 December 2003

Los Angeles City Planning Department
Maya E. Zaitzevsky
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Reference: ENV-2002-2481-EIR
SCH#2002091018 Canyon Hills Project - DEIR Comments

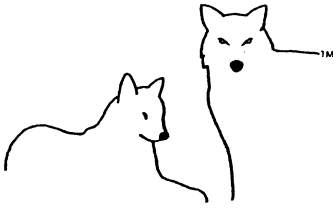
Los Angeles celebrates diversity, both in its peoples and its terrain. Our community is in the northeastern edge of the mountainous part of that terrain. Every day many thousands of Californians and visitors drive along the I-210 through our La Tuna Canyon. Here everyone is treated to a glimpse of California's history in its natural scenic highlands and flora. Building the 87 homes allowed by present zoning would diminish, but not destroy the ambiance. Building a dense development of nearly 300 homes with towering noise barriers in the middle of this scenic corridor would devastate the site. La Tuna Canyon is an irreplaceable asset, which Los Angeles cannot afford to lose.

Please reexamine the DEIR with an emphasis on building 87 homes on 887 acres under current zoning restrictions.

Sincerely,



John Novak



Sam Palahnuk

501 E. Santa Anita Ave, Suite 108 • Burbank, California 91501

December 28, 2003

Los Angeles City Planning Department
Maya E. Zaitzevsky
200 North Spring Street, Room 763
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Regarding: Canyon Hills DEIR case number ENV-2002-2481-EIR
SCH# 2002091018

Ms. Zaitzevsky,

I have reviewed the EIR in question, and found it to be inadequate, incomplete, and inaccurate. Most importantly, in my opinion, it does not adequately state the true impact of the proposed development.

I strongly recommend that all permits and approvals be denied until such time that a correct and complete EIR is produced by the applicant, and its *true* impact be considered by the Los Angeles City Planning Department and the public.

Some of the issues I found were:

"I. SUMMARY, A. INTRODUCTION"

Both the name of the applicant and the address given for the applicant are false.

The DEIR states the name of the applicant as "Whitebird, Inc." The actual name of the applicant is "Whitebird Development Company". Additionally "Whitebird Development Company" appears to be a "Limited Liability Company", not "Incorporated".

The DEIR states the address of the applicant is 444 S. Flower Street, Suite 1300, Los Angeles, CA 90071. In fact, this is the address for Consensus Planning Group, Inc. which appears to be a public relations company.

My research indicates that "Whitebird Development Company" is actually located in Las Vegas, Nevada.

“II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, PAGE II-5”

The DEIR states: “The proposed project is consistent with the applicable policies of the Sunland-Tujunga and Sun Valley Community Plans.”

This is false.

The Sunland-Tujunga and Sun Valley Community Plan is in conflict with this project in many regards. Additionally, many, many items in the plan are ignored. I will illustrate a few examples:

Example 1: The Community Plan states, in part:

The Plan designates scenic highways which merit special controls for protection and enhancement of scenic resources. Stonehurst Avenue, La Tuna Canyon Road, Lopez Canyon Road, Wentworth Street, Big Tujunga Canyon Road, Sunland Boulevard and the Foothill Freeway are designated as Scenic Highways on the City’s Scenic Highways Plan. These highways offer views of the San Gabriel Mountains, the Verdugo Mountains, the Tujunga Wash, Hansen Dam, and horse ranches.

The preservation and protection of these scenic corridors should be an integral part of the design of buildings and structures that are concentrated adjacent to or near these highways in order to maintain their existing, panoramic scenic views. Height restrictions, landscaping buffers, special landscape treatments, tree height limits, and sign controls may need to be imposed by discretionary land use decision-makers and by the department of Building and Safety in order to maintain the integrity of these scenic highways. Plans for development of the Scenic Corridors indicated in this Plan should also be prepared and implemented. These plans should include:

- 1. Roadway design.*
- 2. Location and development of view sites and recreational areas.*
- 3. Controls on use and intensity of use of lands within and/or adjacent to the Scenic Corridor.*
- 4. Prohibition and/or control of signs and billboards.*
- 5. Location of other necessary public facilities.*

If you review item 3, you’ll see that the Canyon Hills development site is clearly adjacent to two of the scenic highways, and certainly violates the intention of this Community Plan.

Example 2: The Community Plan states, in part:

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER Issues

- *Scale, density, and character of buildings that complement surrounding uses.*
- *Effects of residential development on commercial corridors.*
- *New hillside buildings blocking views or presenting an unsightly view from below.*
- *The need to preserve and rehabilitate areas with sensitivity to the character of established neighborhoods.*

Opportunities

- *Efforts aimed at preservation of the low density, rural character and of the equestrian lifestyle.*

The character of the area currently is a very low density, or completely undeveloped mountainous terrain. Most roads are dirt.

This development is certainly a notable deviation from the intention of the Community Plan.

“II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, C. RELATED PROJECTS”

The DEIR has many omissions.

The projects listed by the DEIR are mostly commercial in nature – most of them along Foothill Boulevard. These are not relevant.

Relevant, and certainly a “cumulative impact” issue, is the issue of the many privately own and undeveloped lots that completely surround the Canyon Hills proposed development site.

These lots are currently “un-developable” because there is no access to sewer, and because of poor roads. Upon completion of this project, numerous lots would become “developable”, and would likely be developed, and the results would be more degradation of air-quality, more traffic, more noise, more destruction of the open spaces, and compromised aesthetics. The DEIR does a poor job of evaluating the true cumulative impact of this proposed development.

“IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS, B. AIR QUALITY, TABLE IV.B-2”

The DEIR makes broad assumption based on the results of the SCAQMD Air Monitoring Station SRA 8. The data presented is not current (2001 is the newest information in the table) and it cannot, for that reason, be used for trend analysis.

"IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS, B. AIR QUALITY"

The DEIR has many major omissions. It only deals air pollution during the construction itself.

Omitted from the DEIR are the amounts of Ozone, Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Dioxide and Suspended Particulates that result after the construction from the following sources:

1. Home-owner Private Vehicles: These are to be expensive homes, and these residents tend to own multiple vehicles, and their vehicles tend to be luxury cars and SUV's which are the most polluting of all private vehicles.
2. Barbeque Facilities: The DEIR states that the project will include recreational facilities including barbeque facilities. Many, if not most, residents will also purchase barbeque grills. The DEIR does not include the impact of these gross polluting devices.
3. Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance: The DEIR states that 111 acres of the development would be "modified open space" – this is certainly to include large grassy fields. These fields must be maintained by gardeners who use gasoline powered leaf-blowers, gasoline powered lawn-mowers, gasoline powered edge-trimmers, etc.

Do not doubt the severity of this as a severe source of air-pollution, note the following data from respected sources:

The California Air Resources Board reports on "The typical [single] leaf blower owned and operated by commercial lawn and landscape contractors. . . for the average 1999 leaf blower and car data . . . , we calculate that hydrocarbon emissions from one-half hour of leaf blower operation equal about 7,700 miles of driving, at 30 miles per hour average speed. . . . For carbon monoxide, one-half hour of leaf blower usage . . . would be equivalent to about 440 miles of automobile travel at 30 miles per hour average speed." (Source: California Air Resources Board)

"Cars disperse their pollutants over long stretches of road, while a blower concentrates its pollutants in one neighborhood. Two-stroke engine fuel is a gas-oil mixture that is especially toxic compared to automobile emissions¹." (Source: Orange County Grand Jury report)

¹ This fact is particularly relevant given that this development is in a "V-shaped canyon" which will trap all these pollutants.

“IV. D.1. FLORA AND FAUNA”

The DEIR is myopic, and incomplete.

The following are examples of the DEIR short-comings:

Example 1: The effect on migrating animals is ignored

The DEIR states that animals migration though this area will not be effected. However, it does not state how the loss of this habitat will effect those animals who do migrate through this area. The DEIR *only* studies the animals it proposes currently reside in the area.

Migrating animals likely rely on the vegetation, and other animals and insects for food, and shelter.

Example 2: The study's results do not match current resident's "real-world" knowledge

Residents testify that numerous "DEIR unreported" animals have been sighted, and/or are regularly seen in the proposed development area. A partial list of these species include: mountain lions (not even mentioned in the DEIR), peregrine falcons (not mentioned in the DEIR), toads, and many key insects.

Residents noted that the field study took only four days, and researchers never ventured deep into the thickly vegetated areas². Perhaps the lack of completeness in the DEIR is, in part, due to this reason.

Example 3: The study claims to have performed a "literature review" and some of the literature sighted is irrelevant and/or misleading.

The literature review included a Masters Thesis by L. M. Lyren entitled "Movement paterns of coyotes and bobcats relative to roads and underpasses in the chino hills area of southern California."

The planned development site is not in the Chino hills.

² The DEIR implies that some areas are "inaccessible" due to terrain and to thickets of poison oak.

Example 4: The study does not consider the destructive effects of non-native plant and animal introduction by future residents.

As with all residential environments, there is sure to be:

1. Introduction of non-native plants which will quickly spread into the "natural open-space" areas, and choke out delicate native plants.
2. Introduction of "outdoor" cats, which will kill native birds and rodents.

Example 5: The study does not consider the killing of native insects and mammals by intolerant future residents.

As with all residential environments, there is sure to be:

1. Poisoning and killing of native moles to protect flowerbeds.
2. Poisoning and killing of coyotes to protect domestic cats and small dogs from predation.
3. Poisoning and killing of Sphecidae wasps (mud wasps) as they nest under eaves for fears that they might threaten pets and children.
4. Animals killed by vehicles, both those used in construction, and those belonging to future residents. It takes wild animals some time to acclimate to massive environmental destruction such as proposed by this plan. During this susceptible time, they are particularly vulnerable to being killed by cars as they are being displaced and struggling to survive.
5. Poisoning and killing of native mosquitoes, which are a critical food source for the amphibian and reptile populations in the area.

Example 6: The DEIR study was only conducted for a short time, and did not consider all seasons and conditions of the proposed natural area.

A complete study would record all seasons and transitory animal populations, including "wet years". For example, this study was done prior the incredibly abundant spring of 2003 which residents will testify had far more abundant wildlife than the study period.

**“IV – D.2. NATIVE TREES, FIGURE IV.D-6 TREE INVENTORY THROUGH
FIGURE IV.D-18 S6 TREE DETAIL”**

The publicly available images in the DEIR are of such poor quality (low-resolution) that the public cannot read, comprehend or comment on the data in these sections.

As stated in “I. SUMMARY, A. INTRODUCTION”, The purpose of this Draft Environmental Impact Report 9 (“Draft EIR”) is to inform decisions-makers and the general public of the potential environmental impacts resulting from the construction...”

The General Public cannot be informed about this project, or comment on it, if the materials provided the public are illegible.

“IV – F. ARTIFICIAL LIGHT AND GLARE”

There are false statements in this section.

The DEIR states, in part: “The percentage of clear nights in the vicinity of the project site is low due to the ever-present pollution, haze, and “marine layer” in the Los Angeles area.

Acting as a citizen expert, I can state that I am an avid hiker and I spend several hours every weekend hiking in the Verdugo mountains. I have hiked these mountains morning, mid-day, and evenings for many years and I can testify confidently that there is very little “marine layer” in this area of the Verdugo mountains. The typical situation, is that the marine layer stays in the basin, and Verdugo mountains isolate the marine layer from the proposed sight.

In fact, I will go on to testify that there is a HIGH percentage of clear nights in the proposed project site – especially at this time since there is little development in this pristine valley.