

Katherine Velasco

3928 Franklin Street, La Crescenta, CA 91214

January 8, 2004

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

RECEIVED
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
JAN 12 2004
ENVIRONMENTAL
UNIT

Dear Maya Zaitzevsky in LA Planning Department:

I am a local resident of city of La Crescenta, neighboring city of Sunland and Tujunga, and I found myself concerned over the proposed Canyon Hills Development. We have seen a high number of developments within the area by developers purchasing large parcels of undeveloped land and exploiting the local communities to a lesser quality of life by promoting higher traffic areas, inability for the local schools and emergency services to accommodate the increase in population as a result. Some developments can be justified and are deemed as valuable to the local communities however, this one isn't one that is seen as valuable and the DEIR falls short of properly addressing important issues.

197-1

The proposed areas of development are very primitive and are viewed as a major contributor to the local wildlife. To develop in this area would require major grading of the hillsides and would destroy all natural vegetation, impacting the local wildlife and promoting a less desirable visual appeal to these beautiful hillsides. Grading the mountainsides would destroy local landscapes and change the dynamics of the hillsides impacting the neighboring communities as well. Not to mention an increase in flooding when rainfall is upon us. Traditionally, once a hillside is graded all vegetation is removed leaving a hillside stripped bare of plants and trees leaving only a large dwelling in it's place. This process of development leaves little room for the natural habitat to exist. Additionally, development in both areas surrounding the 210 freeway are very close to the freeway promoting a need for sound barriers to be built alongside this long stretch of freeway.

197-2

197-3

197-4

197-5

Another shortcoming in the analysis is the housing demand for the area. Taking into consideration the market analysis for the housing market in southern California there is a shortage, however this is for moderately priced homes in established neighborhoods/communities. The homes projected to be built are high priced, not median priced. Common areas will need to be maintained by a homeowners association as well, resulting in an increased price to purchase the property. The proposal does not provide an alternative to developing in the area surrounding the 210 freeway in Sunland/Tujunga area. A less cohesive development could be building in the nearby city of Lakeview Terrace. A development of this magnitude would be less impactful for the city given the fact that there are a larger number of undeveloped mountainside with considerably less vegetation and wildlife inhabiting the area. The location is slightly under 5 miles from the proposed area and the cost of land is far more cost effective. The developer is proposing the most cost efficient development, based on their narrow margin for gaining profitability while failing to take into consideration the environmental impact for the local communities. It is highly questionable that these homes fulfill a need in the real estate market at this time.

197-6

The number of homes that will be built on this land is very high number and will negatively impact the overall dynamics of the mountainside and communities surrounding the area. Two hundred, eighty homes (280) being built in an area which only inhabits local wildlife and natural flora including the oak and sycamore will most definitely impact the local mountainsides. Local wildlife includes the coyote, red tailed hawk, rattlesnake, scorpion, tarantula, quail and squirrel. With the growing number of

197-7

● Page 2

January 8, 2004

developments being made in the area and the shift in increasing population these inhabitants will be forced to find other means of living within the area if possible. An effort to provide for these natural inhabitants should be taken into consideration. Preservation should be on the forefront not only opportunity for financial gain for an investor.

197-7

Other environmental impacts include additional traffic throughout Sunland/Tujunga areas, which are currently congested during peak hours of the day. This would increase the need for improved roads and increased noise levels for the community. Overall, new development in this rural area, which is considered entirely wilderness, would severely impact the various ecosystems that inhabit this location and promote more pollution.

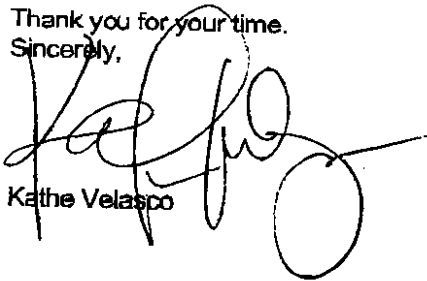
197-8

197-9

Once these lands are commissioned to develop we will be unable to go back and maintain environmental integrity for the local communities and the natural beauty of these mountainsides. Please view this proposal as being one that requires closer attention to detail and gives an unbiased analysis. I do not believe that is the case with this developer and the current DEIR. Provide a means for the developer to be accountable for creating a value added community taking into consideration building specifications that would maintain the integrity of the rural area. It is unacceptable to develop in a rural area such as this, especially since the projected number of homes to be built is so high (280) it would have devastating on the environment, wildlife, and the surrounding communities. We have seen developers go beyond what is reasonable in an effort to satisfy their own private agenda. This is not a pleasant thought and with your help, please ensure that this doesn't continue to take place in our Beautiful Southern California.

197-10

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,



Kathe Velasco