

Los Angeles City Planning Department
200 N. Spring Street, Room 763
Los Angeles, CA 90012

December 30, 2003

Dear Sirs:

I believe that the proposed Environmental Impact Review (Case # ENV-2002-2481-EIR) for the Canyon Hills Project is inadequate, and should be redone. After this document is redone to address the concerns and questions raised by all of the public comments that you have already received about this project, I urge the city to re-release the revised EIR for additional comment.

171-1

The proposed project to build 280 houses on 246 acres of undeveloped land in the Verdugo Mountains would destroy one of the last areas of urban wilderness in the city of Los Angeles. The draft EIR is deficient in a number of specific areas including the following: The document does not provide enough details about the number of trees, wildlife habitat, and other natural features that will be destroyed as a result of this 15 square mile block of undeveloped land. Just as the city of Glendale realized that the impact of the proposed Oakmont development on the Verdugo Mountains could not be justified, the city of LA needs to carefully consider all the impacts of the Canyon Hills Project before voting on it.

171-2

One of the concerns that needs to be addressed in the draft EIR is how this project would affect the overall integrity of the Verdugo Mountains—not just the area of the proposed project within the city of Los Angeles. The Verdugo Mountains is one of the last and most important wilderness areas in southern California. Although surrounded by the cities of Glendale, Burbank, and Los Angeles, these mountains are an important recreational and natural resource for the more than 10 million people who live within 50 miles of them. Another development of million dollar homes can do nothing but harm this precious resource. The city of LA should not repeat the mistakes of the past when unwise hillside developments were allowed to do irreparable damage to this resource.

171-3

The draft EIR does not sufficiently address a number of negative environmental impacts that this proposal will produce, particularly in the areas of traffic, noise, visual aesthetics, land use, and land use. The impact of traffic on the streets of Sunland-Tujunga is not adequately addressed. As a former transportation planner for the cities of Gary, Indiana and Pasadena, I know from my own experience that the traffic estimates from this type of development are notoriously low. Before the draft EIR can be finalized, it should propose a specific access road from the development into Sunland-Tujunga along with what mitigation measures will be taken to deal with the increased traffic.

171-4

The impact of the noise level during construction on surrounding hillside residents is also not adequately addressed. What bothers me the most about this proposed project is that it calls for several zoning and ordinance changes to develop a precious natural resource into a gated community for rich people. Is this wise land use policy? I think not.

171-5

171-6

Sincerely,
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