

Canyon Hills DEIR

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Overcrowding: The residents of this area are painfully aware that there are not currently enough business establishments to serve the existing community. With the latest Seven Hills development it became obvious that there are not enough markets and other retail and business establishments in the immediate area to service the existing population.

It's a 20-minute trip on surface streets through mostly residential neighborhoods just to get to the market! **The parking lots of the few grocery stores are full at peak after-work hours and on weekends. The number of restaurants in the area is seriously limited. There are no movie theatres or other entertainment outlets in the immediate neighborhood. And there is very little available property on which to expand these types of needed establishments.** Residents must and will continue to go to drive to Glendale, Burbank, or Pasadena to enjoy a night on the town!

And by simply adding more population-- the residents of the proposed 280+ homes, **the City of Los Angeles will get some additional property tax and other service dollars, but realize no gain from the expenditures of that population base-- who will all be spending their money elsewhere!** Not a bright move for the City of Angels...

Visual Impacts / Noise

The La Tuna Cyn, Sunland / Tujunga area is a bedroom community nestled in the foothills. Homes have traditionally been on the smaller side, in nice tree-shaded communities. **The proposed Canyon Hills project goes totally against that semi-rural nature supported by the Community Plan for the impacted area, as evidenced by the variances it is requesting.**

The developer is seeking a General Plan Amendment and numerous zone changes in order to increase the density of the project from what is currently permitted. That in itself clearly indicates they know how seriously the development will visually impact the area! Only 87 homes would be supported by the existing community plan, but the proposal is for developing 280+ homes (approx...) on the same acreage-- some of which exceed 4,000 sq.feet, and many of which would be perched near the ridgelines, with some just a mere 10' apart, and many others on tiny 9,000 sq.ft lots! **That density will have a major visual impact on the neighboring community-- yet it is given inadequate attention in the DEIR.**

This proposed development clearly changes the visual impact of the community and shows disdain for the desires of the local population who have chosen to live in these narrow valleys ringed with mountains. The undeveloped hillsides surrounding us are one of the major attractions of the area! Their loss to development, characterized by graded hillsides and slopes and homes of enormous proportions, will have significant adverse impacts on the quality of life in the surrounding area.

The DEIR for Canyon Hills Project does not adequately address the loss of visual resources that provide the very atmosphere this area is noted for. The depiction of **how and where the proposed homes will be located is purposely vague. No mention is made of how significantly the proposed development will impact the urban wilderness that provides the visual backdrop and recreational areas for the neighboring communities.** And the statements

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concerning the mitigation for the hundreds of oak trees that will be removed is ridiculous: **Planting acorns will not replace the stately trees for generations!** As the DEIR acquiesces: "over the short term (i.e. 10 to 20 years) it is anticipated that impacts to coast live oaks *would remain significant with implementation of mitigation measures.*

And the questions of wildlife that populates the hills, as addressed by the DEIR is woefully inadequate. **Wildlife encounters** are currently frequent in the foothill communities. **Coyotes, skunks, deer, and even mountain lions, as well as hawks and other birds and rodents, etc. inhabit the proposed development area in numbers far greater than those mentioned in the EIR.** On any given evening the coyotes are heard and often seen, in packs numbering greater than 5, and sometimes the nighttime din is truly awesome! Encounters with skunks are also well known to the community. With the construction of the proposed development the wildlife will have no alternative but to migrate into the adjacent currently populated neighborhoods, further increasing the risk of human / animal encounters and seriously impacting the fate of domesticated animal pets kept by area residents. We have firsthand knowledge that coyotes are currently a major problem in the Crystal View area and that problem will only be compounded by the construction of the Canyon Hills project.

And despite the fact that Pages 3-6 of the Community Plan set precedent for the horse keeping nature of the community, **the developers of Canyon Hills promise equestrian amenities but the plan doesn't even provide enough space for two horse trailers to turn around in their 3 acre proposed "equestrian park."** The developers also would have us believe that the purchasers of the 4,000 sq.ft. multi-million dollar monuments (so vaguely depicted in the graphics on their web site) will be horse people. Not likely! The "horse people" who can afford those types of homes already live in La Canada Flintridge, and it is not likely that they would choose to relocate to another hilltop community just a stones throw away. **The homes in this pricey gated community will not be owned by horse people, nor by the locals... thereby irreparably changing the nature of the adjacent hillside communities.**

And finally, what will the **visual impact be of the hundreds of dump trucks and graders and other heavy equipment** that will be crawling over and through our beloved hillsides and canyons during the years of construction that are required for a development of this size and nature? The DEIR states "*there would not be a significant noise impact (no visual impact is mentioned) from the slight construction-related truck volume increase on La Tuna Canyon Road.*" Excuse me... but where are those trucks and other heavy equipment going to be driving if not on La Tuna Cyn Rd? **You cannot build 280+ homes without a convoy of heavy equipment creating noise and visual impact during the hours of 7AM to 9pm!** Ensuring mufflers and engine covers on vehicles weighing several tons, is certainly not an effective method of mitigating the noise on neighboring residences!

Public Safety and Services

The issue of public safety and services is also not adequately addressed in the DEIR.

Schools are said to be able to accept the proposed number of children. Yet teachers at several local schools have differing opinions. (And this is probably irrelevant anyway as people who can afford the price of the proposed homes can afford the price of private schools elsewhere). However, wherever the schools are located, the impact on local traffic by increased congestion will be felt by the surrounding communities.

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Police, fire, and paramedic services are already in short supply as residents will attest. Response time is already currently inadequate and significantly above the norm for the City of Los Angeles. Adding another significant development, separated by a freeway and accessible via only 2 or 3 ingress/egress points, is not going to reduce that emergency response time! And despite the fact that we are talking hillside canyon homes, The DEIR calls for no extraordinary mitigations, only those required under the standard laws. **Yes, fire station #74 may be within the requisite distance, but the response time is the crucial factor, not distance... and with the overcrowded traffic conditions that will be generated by the proposed project, we are seriously concerned by the lack of attention paid to this critical issue.** With the recent firestorms still fresh in our minds, this issue is one left distressingly unanswered by the DEIR. When fires are raging, the major thoroughfares already become a parking lot for emergency equipment... and adding a new, massive development in the hills will only increase the need for more equipment and add to the problem of appropriate response time.

In summary, we believe **the current EIR is inadequate because it seriously underestimates the impact that the proposed Canyon Hills development and its alternatives B,C, D, and E, will have on the neighboring communities, and urge the Planning Dept. to have the consultant redo the EIR and have the City of Los Angeles re-release the EIR when the deficiencies are addressed. To advance the current DEIR would be a travesty.**

Further, we are of the opinion that only Alternative A, whereby the project would not be constructed and the property would remain in its current condition, is in the best interest of the neighboring communities.

Sincerely,

Devon and Randall Vaughn
6543 Greeley Street
Tujunga, CA 91042
818/354-4525

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

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

We are responding to the aforementioned report at this late hour, believing that one of our four concerns about this project would have been previously resolved. It was not, and it remains our most important concern and is listed first of the four.

1. "Incorrect meets and bounds"

The property lines depicted on all of the White Bird information sheets and maps for the Canyon Hills Project are grossly in error, as the project abuts our eight-acre parcel. We communicated with the developer (Mr. Percell) in February of 2002. He has yet to make the corrections or to get back to us regarding our concerns. Not only is this issue important to us, but surely should be important to the developer. To accommodate the correct boundary lines of our property the developer will need to move and engineer the true location of his planned roadways.

Included with this letter are copies of the state assessor's parcel map, two title insurance companies' plat maps, and a recent survey of our property overlaid onto the state official topography map. After your review of these exhibits and any other research you may deem necessary, we would think the project should be sent back to the developer to be reconfigured before any approval is given. In addition, it may be appropriate to have all bordering landowners sign off as to agreement regarding property boundaries. This would eliminate any mistakes that might be made early in the grading and tree removal process.

2. Endangered species

Over the years, we have had the opportunity to come across many different animals that live on our property and in the surrounding hills and canyons. Some amongst these are quite rare, including the horned lizard (or horny toad), the legless lizard, numerous hawks, falcons and owls, and the arroyo toad. We have included two photos of the toad; one with the toad placed on the front page of our local newspaper, the Daily News, dated June 11, 2003; the other compares the size and color of the common toad to the arroyo toad. Copies of these photos were given to Mr. Fred Dong, of the Sierra Club. This animal is found in and close by the small seepage rills located at the bottom of the canyons and arroyos of the project property.

In order to protect these animals, special attention and consideration should be made when grading and drainage channels are planned. One example might be the need for the developer to be required to construct a temporary debris catch wall to protect the area below where they will be grading the new roadway locations needed to curve around our property. This would do much to protect at least this small environ.

3. Oak trees

We believe everyone, including the developer, likes oak trees. We are happy to inform your department that the removal of the twenty-two large oak trees slated and incorrectly tagged to be destroyed by the developer is not necessary, as they are located safely on our property. Please note the line corrections on the map and see the photo attached.

4. Density

We believe the current zoning of this land is appropriate. If the developer were so inclined as to go ahead with a plan that created small ranchos, 180 equestrian parcels of 5 acres or so each, that would be in keeping with the current zoning. This kind of project could be the new Hidden Hills or Acton. This alternative would allow the developer to use his land, while allowing sufficient natural corridors between the properties.

In closing, we would like to thank you for your time and consideration regarding our concerns. Please feel free to call us with any questions or comments.

(818) 352-9744- home. (818) 256-9314- cell. (323) 465-1320- Kathryn's work.

Email-kragland@juno.com.

Sincerely,

J. Anthony Vergona 12 30 '03
Kathryn Ragland

J. Anthony Vergona

Kathryn Ragland

9300 Reverie Rd.

Tujunga, Ca. 91042

Existing Com

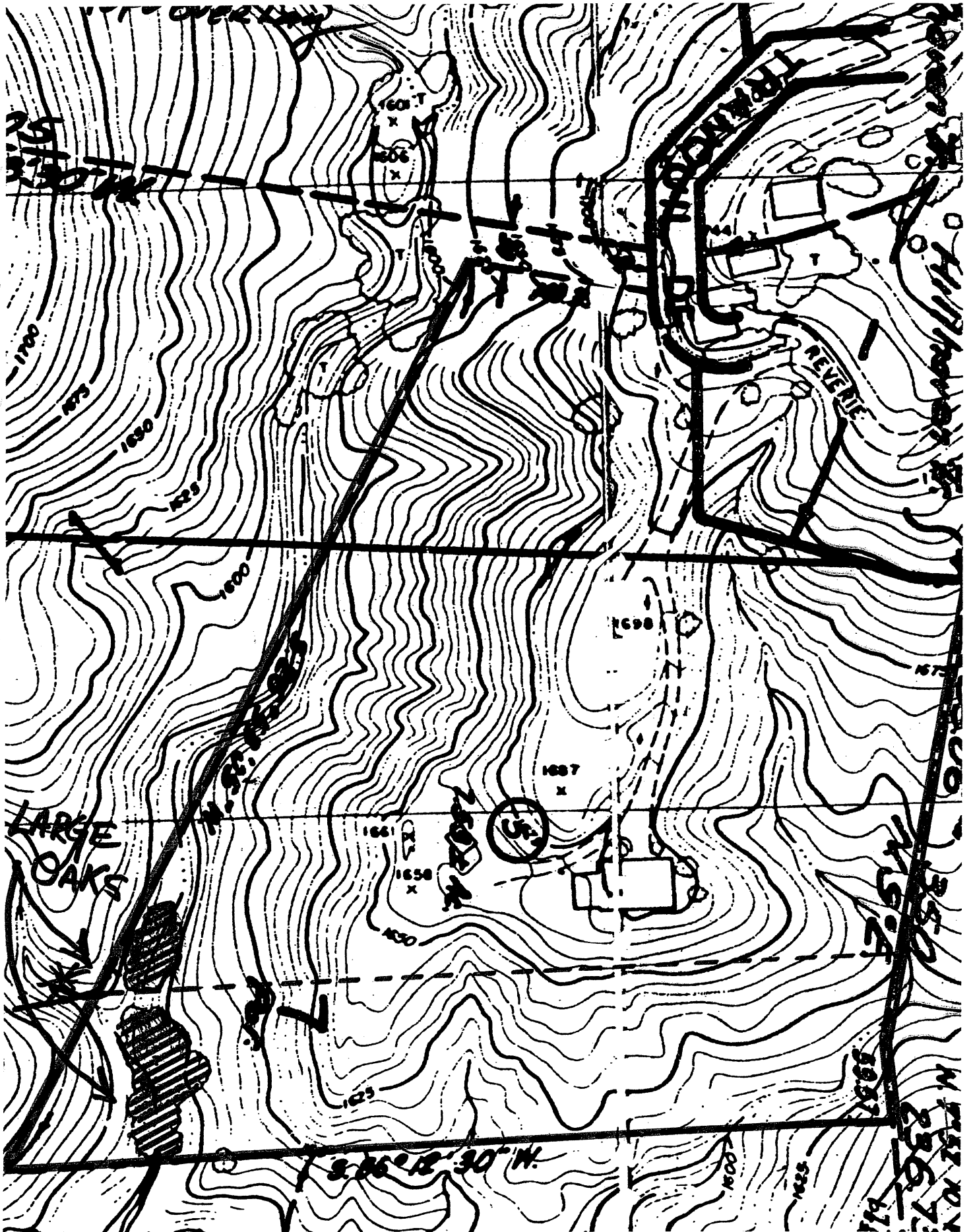
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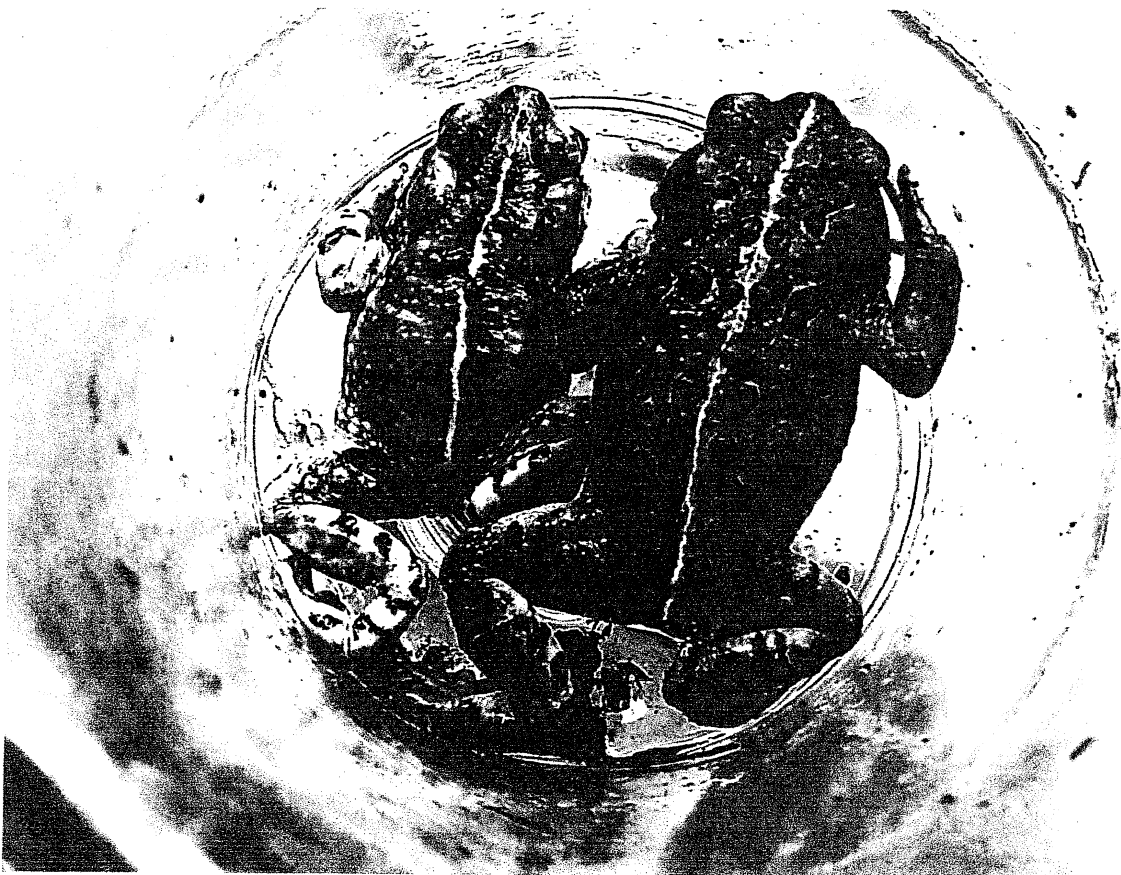
Open Space

La Tuna Canyon Road

Inters
Foothil

NOTE: DEVELOPER'S RED LINE IS INCORRECT. RE: (1)







LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING DEPT.
MAYA E. ZAITZEVSKY
200 NORTH SPRING STR.
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

RE: ENV-2002-2481-EIR;
SCH #2002091018
CANYON HILLS PROJECT- DEIR COMMENTS

Sent by: MARGIE AND ANDY VOGEL
8255 OSWEGO, SUNLAND

TO MAYA ZAITZEVSKY....

We have lived in Sunland for eleven years. Raising our family here makes us especially concerned with the directives of the Canyon Hills Whitebird Project and its subsequent DEIR report.

We are close to all our neighbors and feel to be important, contributing members of society and of this community in particular. We feel we make observant, vigilant and relatively objective 'citizen experts' due to our deep attention to our environment on behalf of our two children.

THE DEIR--- ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS:

Section pertaining to: SCHOOLS:

Logically, as parents of school aged children, we are especially mystified on the DEIR analysis claiming that the projects' new household would contain only 1 1/2 children per household. For one, the 1/2 of that grows up to be a full number himself. To that renders the DEIR inaccurate in just a few years. Plus, each household may actually have the normal 3-5 children. What was the DEIR number of 1 1/2 obtained from?

If the numbers appear to ALREADY be inaccurate, then the number of children attending the available schools is actually doubled the amount proposed.

Our schools are already overcrowded. We assume Verdugo High School would be the school used by the teenagers of these new project households. Verdugo High School has a known, but unacknowledge drop out rate of 45% by twelve graders. The reason is the overcrowding and tension related to this overcrowding. And since city/state funds are tight, then we would not see any improvement for years and years by the delay on construction of a new, additional high school.

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RE: ENV-2002-2481-EIR;
SCH #2002091018
CANYON HILLS PROJECT- DEIR COMMENTS

Sent by: MARGIE AND ANDY VOGEL
8255 OSWEGO, SUNLAND

Section pertaining to: GARBAGE:

We are deeply concerned over the misrepresentation of the impact of millions of pounds of extra garbage requiring pick up and disposal. We see the DEIR is inconclusive on its findings about the impact this would have to our current dump site at BRADLEY pit, which services this and other surrounding areas.

Our trash services are already completely taxed and many trucks appears to be on their last legs of servicibility. The DEIR gives impaired results on Garbage service and the impact the project's garbage service would have on the limited resources we have for pick up. Again, due to economic restrictions, the service we have currently, is as good as it gets. The millions of pounds of extra garbage to be picked up in the project would logically affect our current services, yet the DEIR fails to show evidence of any analysis pertaining to this issue.

Section pertaining to: TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The DEIR flatly fails to adequately address the issue of the impact of hundreds of extra vehicles that Foothill and surrounding streets would be subject to.

The danger of the excessive traffic over the already highly congested main blvd. is the danger to our children who travel or walk or take the buses on this Major road through Sunland and Tujunga. This danger is NOT addressed by the DEIR. We feel it should be since the foot traffic on Foothill Blvd, by school children is in the hundreds.

The DEIR is inconclusive on this issue, where more traffic naturally means more accidents, more danger to pedestrians and bicyclists and especially the school children.

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RE: ENV-2002-2481-EIR;
SCH #2002091018
CANYON HILLS PROJECT- DEIR COMMENTS

Sent by: MARGIE AND ANDY VOGEL
8255 OSWEGO, SUNLAND

Section pertaining to: AESTHETICS:

We live here because we love it here and we feel this community is vital to our children's welfare and growth. We cannot emphasize the importance of the appreciation we take in our surroundings and the mountains which add incredible value to our lives.

The DEIR is extremely vague on its impact to that mountain/ridgeline view. We cannot imagine what a loss it would be to have 80 feet graded and flattened ridgeline. The scarring of ground preparation is beyond our ability to envision.....in a positive way.

The DEIR is remiss on the cumulative effects to this communities aesthetic values, once the ridgelines are altered. The value this community places on the views it possesses cannot be minimized or ignored. There is a commercial value attached to the aesthetic appearance of Sunland-Tujunga.

The DEIR clearly ignores this community's property values altering based on the unsightliness of ridgelines lined with two-story, one-story homes and the purity of the mountain, ridgesides being irrevocably destroyed.

We feel that the DEIR addresses Aesthetics as if it is an unimportant side note, of no consequence to the surrounding communities, to the property values of those communities or the personal appreciation the community has in its surroundings.

We would like the DEIR to better reflect sound judgement and sound conclusions based on thorough research and analysis. We ask that no zoning changes are approved or any law allowed to be changed to accommodate the Project. We have a glorious open community, with access to our surrounding mountains unimpeded and we sincerely wish the planning dept. consider our viewpoints on aesthetic values as they relate to our life values, property values and community values.

We strongly recommend the Canyon Hills DEIR be re-issued. Please uphold the Scenic Plan, and the Community Plan as those reflect the aims and directions of this community.

Thank you for listening to us.

Margie Vogel
Margie Vogel

December 28, 2003

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

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

Dear Ms. Zaitzevsky,

I am a citizen of La Crescenta for over 20 years and live about 2-3 miles from the anticipated Canyon Hills Project. My whole neighborhood, as well as everybody living on both sides of the Verdugos will be drastically affected by the environmental impact such an undertaking will create. Gone forever will be the beautiful green hills and mountain tops and canyons, our hiking trails, streams and the sounds of nature. Gone forever will be our way of life as we enjoyed it and took it for granted all these years.

As I studied some of the DEIR filed by Whitebird with the City Planning Department and from attending several Community Meetings in regard to the Canyon Hills development plan, I understand that:

The existing given zoning, "City Hillside Ordinance" and "Slope Density Formula", at 887 acres of ownership allows the building of 87 housing units and not Whitebird's projected 280 homes. I desperately urge you to have the company abide by these ordinances and DO NOT CHANGE the existing zoning law in order to accommodate this out-of-state developer.

I am grateful to the City Council for passing the Scenic Preservation Plan. While the site plan of the Canyon Hills Project does not appear to conflict with the Scenic Preservation Plan in terms of constructing homes that would silhouette a Prominent Ridgeline, it frequently has it's proposed homes silhouetting principal ridgelines which, to me, still goes against the heart of the Preservation Plan. Additionally, the Community Plan DOES say there is to be no grading of PRINCIPAL RIDGELINES, something of which the Whitebird site plan is highly guilty and this, along with the homes built atop the graded plateaus, will be clearly visible from, and a blight to, the designated Scenic Corridor of La Tuna Canyon Road.

TRAFFIC

The DEIR states that there would be NO significant increase of rush hour traffic on the I-210 and the La Tuna Canyon Road. This is grossly understated! I live on Montrose Ave. on the south side of, and below, the I-210 and I can verify that the existing daily traffic is already too much. In the morning rush it is already almost impossible to enter the Fwy at Pennsylvania Ave. on-ramp into a stop-and-go slow traffic. Now add several hundred more cars every day, and what we will get is not an "INSIGNIFICANT" increase in traffic, but a complete traffic jam.

Since we have no sound-barrier walls on our – the south – side of the Fwy, the noise, especially from big trucks changing gears, is already very disturbing and the vibrations rattle my windows and have caused cracks in the walls and foundations. Now add several hundred more cars every day, plus heavy trucks and earth-moving machinery during the 5-years of grading and preparing for the Canyon Hills Project, and life below the I-210 will become unbearable.

Whitebird states in it's DEIR that the traffic increase will only amount to less than 0.65 vehicles per Canyon Hills household in the morning and less than 0.8 returning in the evening. I cannot quite follow that mathematics when I realize that the average home on their drawing boards will have 4-5 bedrooms and 3-4 car garages. Out of a 3-car garage, I am sure 2.5 vehicles will leave every morning and return every night – not 0.65! The DEIR indicates an almost 2,700 ADT over the current traffic volume, an almost 20% traffic volume increase, a SIGNIFICANT increment that can hardly be tolerated on the narrow, winding La Tuna Canyon Road with constant lane changes and the existing speed limits.

Let me add something else from my own observation. When I was still working at Lockheed, I traveled two times a day on La Tuna Canyon Road. At that time I would pass, more often than I would have liked, dead wild or domestic animals killed by traffic, and report them to the Dead Animal Pick-up Department. That was 20 years ago and I am sure things did not get any better since. But I hate to think what will happen when 2,700 extra car trips will add to that slaughter of wild and domestic animals in the Canyon.

Driving through the Canyon now, one is already confronted with the unpleasant sight of litter, of dumped debris and abandoned household goods, which is cleaned up only once a year. Now add to that area an increase of 20% of through traffic, one can visualize a 20% increase in litter and dumping. This will mean, that the area will not only become an eyesore for the residents of La Tuna Canyon Road, but also a health hazard. So I can only feel sorry for La Tuna Canyon residents, who have not only to deal with highly increased traffic, noise and air pollution in front of their doors, but also with the increase of debris piled up around their properties.