

Gilbert and Rissa Drucker
4605 San Feliciano Drive
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

April 5, 2007

David Somers, Environmental Review Section
Los Angeles City Planning Department
200 North Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles, CA 90012

PROJECT NAME: Vesting Tentative Tract No: 61553
EAF NO: ENV-2005-2301-EIR
PROJECT LOCATION/ADDRESS: 22255 Mulholland Drive, Woodland Hills
COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA: Canoga Park, Winnetka, Woodland Hills-West Hills
COUNCIL DISTRICT: CD-3

Mr. Somers,

I am a property owner, who lives directly across from the proposed project. My wife and I have lived here for 45 years and we feel that character of our neighborhood is adversely threatened by this project. The review process rulings will impact the future of our community.

There is voluminous technical material, 1280 pages, that needs to be examined before appropriate comments can be made. Since I am inexperienced in this area and do not have the developer's resources, my comments in responding to the DEIR are focused on just a few of my many concerns.

GENERAL COMMENTS

In reviewing the DEIR, I question the DEIR validity and accuracy. In addition I have the following concerns:

- 1) That all required CEQA, Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, CP-WH Community Plan and LA Zoning areas are addressed.
- 2) That the content is accurate and verifiable.
- 3) That all the cons as well as pros are included.

Where appropriate I will point out the above in my specific comments.

COMMUNITY INTEGRITY AND COMPATIBILITY

My primary concern is that community integrity and compatibility is not accurately and completely addressed. The project is surrounded by 1 story ranch style homes on large lots averaging nearly 14,000 square foot. The proposed development is high density. This is not consistent with the surrounding low density single family and residential estate housing. The DEIR does not adequately reconcile the compatibility of the 37-unit residential condominium project and Alternative 2 with the surrounding community. Specifically Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP) guide line 50. Section D. Guide line 50 requires that development be compatible with the surroundings within 100 feet of development.

The DEIR does not mention MSPSP guideline 50, comply with it nor seek relief from it.

Why was this critical guideline ignored?

The DEIR repeatedly states that the 37- residential condominium project is low density housing and is compatible with surrounding housing. Total lot area of the 37 adjacent houses is about 12 acres. Since the 37-unit residential condominiums are on 4 acres, this results in three times the housing density of the surroundings.

Applying MSPSP guideline 50, the average lot size of the 15 homes within 100 feet of the project is 13,950 sq ft and the minimum lot size is 9290 sq ft. Using these lot sizes, the 37-residential condominium project would require 12.8 and 7.9 acres respectively. How is the 6.2 acre project site reconciled with this difference?

Why do the surrounding descriptions (V.F-1 Surrounding Land Use) never mention the RE-40 and RE-15 lots that are directly adjacent to the project? It only indicates the R1-1 lots. The DEIR contains pictures of the project site surroundings which focus on the street rather than the houses. What is the purpose of showing pictures of the streets?

Why are there no pictures showing the houses surrounding the project which would show whether the project is consistent with the predominant character of the architecture of the neighborhood? If there were such pictures, they would show predominately one story single family residences (only 2 are two stories). The pictures would not show any of the following negative project features:

- Minimal set backs of 5 ft from the private 28 ft wide street
- No driveways, with only a 5 ft apron from the street for all but 4 units
- No sidewalks or street lights
- Rear yards will be only 10-20ft deep.
- All units 2 story with a mezzanine (3 stories)
- Separation between units in most cases is about 10ft
- Front yard retaining walls over the existing 3.5ft limit and other retaining walls up to 11.5ft
- A minimum of 100 square feet of usable open space for each dwelling

In light of the above facts and that no rendering or description of the unit architecture is provided, how can the claim be made that the project is consistent with the predominant character of the architecture of the neighborhood?

The applicant states that 54 houses could be built with the current R1-1 zoning (VII—23 1-3.1) and thus the 37-unit residential condominium project would save us from high density development. This statement is flawed and misleading. The only way 54 houses could be placed on this R1-1 parcel would be to assume:

- 1) The parcel is flat and does not require substantial grading.
- 2) No streets or side walks.
- 3) Removal of all existing heritage oak trees and other protected trees.

These assumptions are not mentioned. Why?

ZONE CODE CHANGE AND SPECIFIC PLAN EXCEPTIONS

The RD-6 zone change will open the door to apartment development. The developer can very easily convert this condominium project to an apartment project after the zoning change is approved and even after the project is completed. This has happened before especially in cases where the housing market is soft. No review or hearings are required. What safeguards are provided to prevent this from happening? This concern was included in the NOP response. The concern assessment on page V.F-42 is non responsive.

The DEIR lists Discretionary Actions which they seek approval. Besides the zone change and the 37 unit condominium development, they are seeking MSPSP view shed, retaining wall height and length exceptions. It is claimed that the visual impact of these exceptions will be mitigated by their landscape screening plan.

How many years will it take for the vegetation to mature to effectively screen these exceptions, five years or more?

What plans are there to mitigate the exceptions until vegetation shielding becomes effective?

What assurances are there that the landscaping will be maintained in perpetuity?

The vegetation screening plan to mask the excessively high and long retaining walls and dwellings, assumes that the viewer is at street level. Street level viewing is not the case for me or from other adjacent lots which range up to 40 feet above the project level. Even if the vegetation matures after five or more years, no visual impact mitigation is provided to shield the existing elevated surrounding dwellings from these eye sores. The landscape plan contains no specific information to evaluate. The plant type used and size are not called out. In addition, MSPSP Guideline 62: Project visibility, Guideline 63: Landscape screening, Guideline 64: Screening Maturity, Guideline 65: Screening Maintenance and Guideline 66: View shed Protection have not been adhered to. This is poor project design and weak mitigation sustainability.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Of the three DEIR alternatives, number 2 is the only development project. The many concerns raised for the 37 unit condominium project apply to this alternative. The main difference between them is that there is no zoning change for alternative 2. However, the same exceptions and non compliance to MSPSP still remain. Alternative 2 is not consistent and compatible with the surrounding low density single family and residential estate housing. There are additional concerns with this alternative.

The plan shows one driveway serving 9 houses bordering Mulholland Dr. This is not allowed by code. Why has it been ignored? The plan includes four flag lots. The Woodland Hills Warner Center Neighborhood Council is working to eliminate the creation of any new flag lots. All the flag lots should be eliminated to conform to the WHWCNC goal.

Applying MSPSP guideline 50, the average lot size of the 15 homes within 100 feet of the project is 13,950 sq ft and the minimum lot size is 9290 sq ft. Only 2 of the 15 are at the minimum lot size. Alternative 2 average and minimum lot sizes are 8300 and 5000 square feet. Ten of the 29 are at the minimum lot size. This is still not consistent with surrounding housing density

The MRCA will soon operate a public natural area at the adjacent Girard Reservoir site. The DEIR does not take into account the adjacent public natural area and what the impact of MSPSP guide line 20 will have on their project.

Why is there no alternative which fully complies with Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, CP-WH Community Plan and LA Zoning with no exceptions and ZADs? This would be a viable economically feasible alternative even though it would not maximize the developer's profits?

SUMMARY

An EIR that does not fully comply with Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, CP-WH Community Plan and LA city code is not in the best interests of community, the city and Mulholland scenic corridor and should not be approved. This project creates unavoidable, significant adverse impact to the environment, and community.

I realize that the city must allow development, but I believe the development must be slanted toward preserving community integrity and not maximizing developer's profits. A smaller scale development of higher valued homes that comply with all the code and community and specific plans can satisfy both the developer's and community objectives. I have raised many concerns and questions in my letter that need to be answered. I am respectfully requesting complete answers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gilbert and Rissa Drucker
4606 San Feliciano Drive
Woodland Hills, CA 91364
gsdrucker@roadrunner.com

Cc: City Clerk
200 N. Spring Street, Room 360
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Councilman Dennis Zine
19040 Vanowen
Reseda, CA 91335

Gail Goldberg, Director of Planning Dept
200 N. Spring St, Rm 525
Los Angeles, CA 90012