



*“The Baseline Hillside Ordinance is a major step toward the protection of our city’s hillsides and ensures that development conforms to the land, instead of the land conforming to the development.”*

*-Director of City Planning Michael LoGrande*

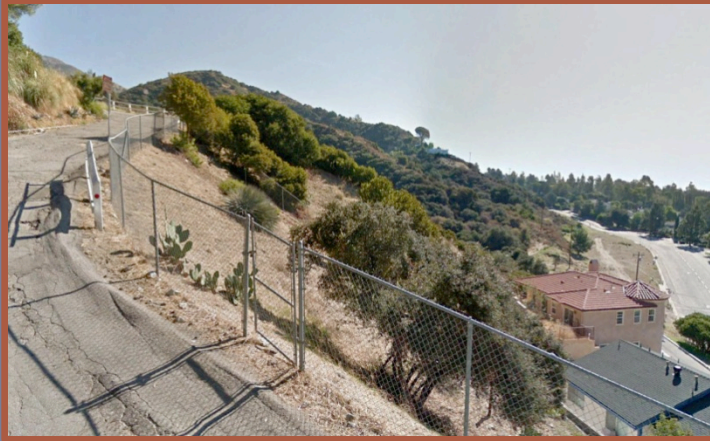
## THE PROBLEM ON SISTER ELSIE DRIVE



**Appeal of the Zoning Administrator’s  
Determination  
ZA 2012-3329 (ZV) (ZAD  
ENV 2009-2926-MND-REC1  
July 17, 2014**

**Sunland –Tujunga Alliance, Inc.**

The Project



The proposed approval of a Zone Variance application for a new 2,400 square-foot single-family residence and attached two-car garage, in lieu of the Maximum Residential Floor Area of 1,147 square feet as required under Section 12.21-C,10(b) (2), LAMC.

The Baseline Hillside Ordinance

*“Hillside residents should now enjoy relief from the out-of-scale development that too often has destabilized the hillsides, damaged the environment, reduced wildlife, increased the risk of landslides, destroyed the visual allure, and imposed on surrounding neighbors.”*

The Appeal

Why We Oppose the Zoning Administrator's Determination:

- ❖ The proposed size of the dwelling and attached garage exceed the maximum amount of floor area allowed on the property (1,147 square feet).
- ❖ The grant of the requested variances and undermines the intent of the City’s Hillside Ordinance (LAMC, Section 12.21.A.17 ).
- ❖ Sister Elsie Drive in the vicinity of the proposed project is a poorly improved “paper street” which is inadequate to accommodate safe access to the site.
- ❖ Development of the site threatens the health, safety, and welfare of residents that live in the area.
- ❖ Approval of the project establishes precedence and invite other speculative developers to build over-sized dwellings on narrow and steep lots in the area.
- ❖ The Mitigated Negative Declaration does not adequately address the impacts of the project and includes insufficient measures to address project impacts.
- ❖ There are no unique hardships associated with the development of this site to warrant findings in favor of the applicant’s request.

Sister Elsie Drive



A Question of Public Safety

- ❖ Inadequate Access for Emergency Vehicles including Fire Trucks.
- ❖ Deteriorated Street Condition.
- ❖ No turn-around areas on Sister Elsie Drive.
- ❖ Earthquake Fault Transverses Project Site.
- ❖ Inadequate Infrastructure to support new development.
- ❖ Over- building on steep hillside lots invites increased traffic and congestion and interferes with the emergency evacuation of residents in the area.

A Question of Public Policy

*The Baseline Hillside Ordinance was adopted to encourage orderly development in the City's hillside areas and to prevent the construction of out-of-scale structures that are incompatible with neighboring properties. The homes constructed along Day Street at the foot of Sister Elsie Drive in Tujunga are emblematic of hillside development gone awry. The side-stepping of existing hillside development regulations should stop now to prevent future incompatible development.*

*Dean Sherer, AICP ENV SP  
Chair, STNC Land Use Committee*

Community Plan Hillside Development Policies

- ❖ *Policy 1-1.2:* Protect existing single-family residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses.
- ❖ *Policy 1-1.3:* Require that new single and multi-family residential development be designed in accordance with the Urban Design Chapter.
- ❖ *Policy 1-3.2:* Seek a high degree of architectural compatibility and landscaping for new infill development to protect the character and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

The Result of the Approval of Hillside Development Variances



Day Street Homes

Multiple Variances were approved for the three larger structures shown in this photograph. The granting of these variances resulted in out-of-scale and incompatible hillside homes.

A Neighborhood Perspective



Sister Elsie Drive

Summary

*“Our community is united in the belief that this project will undermine the intent of the General Plan and of the Hillside Ordinance by furthering development of hillside dwellings that are out of scale and which are incompatible with existing development in the area. The granting of these variances will encourage future developers to ask for and be granted similar variances for their projects. The end result will be an abrogation of the City’s responsibility to uphold its own hard-fought regulations to control mansionization in the City’s hillsides. The proposed project is opposed by the Sunland-Tujunga Alliance, the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council and its Land Use Committee and the homeowners directly impacted who live on Sister Elsie Drive”*