

Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN SUNLAND TUJUNGA

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November 17, 2014

Council Member Felipe Fuentes
City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring Street, Room 445
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

RE: Proposed Canyon Park Homes Development – 12400 Big Tujunga Canyon Road - Preliminary Recommendations

Dear Mr. Fuentes:

The Land Use Committee (LUC) of the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council (STNC) held two recent meetings in which a proposed new development of 242 homes in our community was discussed. The location of this proposed 110-acres development is on the east side of Big Tujunga Canyon Road between the Tujunga Little League Fields to the south and Camp Louis Roth to the north. It is located within the San Gabriel-Verdugo Mountains Scenic Preservation Specific Plan and the Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon Community Plan. It is known as the “Canyon Park Homes” development.

Our first exposure to this project was on August 18, 2014 when the proposed developer of the property (Mr. Brad Rosenheim) appeared before the LUC to present and discuss concept plans for the proposed development; and on November 3, 2014 when representatives of a group known as SCPD (“Stop the Canyon Park Development”) appeared to present their objections to the proposed project.

Our deliberations on this development proposal are preliminary. We have not seen or had an opportunity to review a site plan for the project. However, after due consideration of both presentations and the discussions held by LUC members and members of the community, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously voted by the LUC to make the following preliminary recommendations in regards to the proposed project:

Full-Scope Environmental Impact Report

The Land Use Committee recommends that a full-scope Environmental Impact Report (EIR) be prepared for this proposed project. This size and scale of such a project triggers compliance with CEQA and the requirement to prepare an EIR. As such, we expect the following topics to be fully addressed and analyzed in the project’s EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

The developer is aware of the CEQA requirements for this project and an Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) is in the process of being filed by the project applicants. Nevertheless, the Land Use Committee and those attending our meetings will be keenly interested in the validity of the environmental analysis included in the EIR. The location of this proposed project is in a sensitive ecological area of our community. As such, we expect the analysis to not only be adequate but comprehensive in its analysis of potentially significant effects of the project.

No Up-Zoning of the Property

The developer has filed entitlement applications for the proposed development (78-acres) that include a General Plan Amendment that would change the General Plan designation of the project site from Low Density Residential (Minimum) to Low Density Residential (Low). Additional applications include approval of a Tentative Tract Map, Site Plan Review, and Project Permit Compliance Review. In addition, the applicant is seeking approval of a zone change on the property. This would change the zoning of the project site from A-1 to RE-9.

Our position is that neither a General Plan Amendment nor Zone Change on this property is needed or warranted. Furthermore, it is our understanding that this property was purposely down-zoned in 2007, limiting potential residential density on the site. This was done in response to a proposed development proposal that would have allowed 268 dwelling units on the site. The Planning Department, Planning Commission, and this current City Council should acknowledge these past actions to preserve the property for only minimum density development. *We are unanimously opposed to any actions that would deviate from established densities in our Community Plan.*

Community Impact Statement

Our concerns in regards to the potential development of this area with 242 homes are so great that we believe a Community Impact Statement is warranted. We do not recommend the adoption of these statements on a routine basis. They are only recommended under those circumstances in which we believe a development proposal or land use policy poses a grave threat to the quality of life of our community members. We believe that this project poses such a threat. Consequently, we have drafted a Community Impact Statement addressing this project, which is attached for your information.

The Land Use Committee understands and acknowledges that an economic recovery has been underway for quite some time, especially in the real estate sector. We also understand the need for new housing to be constructed in the City to meet the housing objectives of the City and commitments made in the City's Housing Element. We really can't blame housing developers wanting to secure entitlements for their projects under these current favorable economic conditions. However, we are often called upon to balance those interests against the interests of our community and try to safeguard the quality of life of our residents.

It is unfortunate that the needs and priorities of the development community in our area are often not in sync with the needs and priorities of our residents. How much better it would be for our community if the effort and capital being expended to build new housing in our community were instead redirected to revitalize our commercial core (Foothill Boulevard) and improve other aspects of life in Sunland-Tujunga including public infrastructure, aesthetics, schools, and public safety. We believe that the proposed Canyon Park Homes development does nothing to improve

the quality of life of our residents and perpetuates the imbalance between our community's needs and those of the development community.

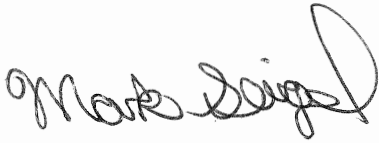
Respectfully Submitted,



Dean C. Sherer, Chair
Land Use Committee
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council

cc: Michael LoGrande, Director of City Planning

STNC supports the above recommendations of the Land Use Committee 11-12-14



Mark Seigel
President
Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council