

P.O. Box 27404
Los Angeles, CA 90027
323-663-1031
president@hillsidefederation.org
www.hillsidefederation.org



PRESIDENT
Marian Dodge
CHAIRMAN
Charley Mims
VICE PRESIDENTS
Mark Stratton
Wendy-Sue Rosen
SECRETARY
Donna Messinger
TREASURER
Don Andres

City Planning Commission
City Hall, Room 272
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

September 25, 2013

Re: **Curtis School Expansion, 15871 W. Mulholland Drive**
CPC-1989-763-CU-PA1; ENV-2009-MND-RECI

Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood
Bel Air Knolls Property Owners
Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners
Bel Air Ridge Association
Benedict Canyon Association
Brentwood Hills Homeowners
Brentwood Residents Coalition
Cahuenga Pass Property Owners
Canyon Back Alliance
Crests Neighborhood Assn.
Franklin Ave./Hollywood Bl. West
Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
Highlands Owners Assn.
Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
Hollywood Heights Assn.
Hollywoodland Homeowners
Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn.
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
Lake Hollywood HOA
Laurel Canyon Assn.
Lookout Mountain Alliance
Los Feliz Improvement Assn.
Mt. Olympus Property Owners
Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
Nichols Canyon Assn.
N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon
Oak Forest Canyon Assn.
Oaks Homeowners Assn.
Outpost Estates Homeowners
Pacific Palisades Residents Assn.
Residents of Beverly Glen
Roscomare Valley Assn.
Shadow Hills Property Owners
Sherman Oaks HO Assn.
Studio City Residents Assn.
Sunset Hills Homeowners Assn.
Tarzana Property Owners Assn.
Torreyson Flynn Assn.
Upper Mandeville Canyon
Upper Nichols Canyon NA
Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

Dear Commissioners:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., founded in 1952, represents 41 homeowner and residents associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains, from Pacific Palisades to Mt. Washington. The Federation's mission is to protect the property and quality of life of its over 200,000 constituents and to conserve the natural habitat and appearance of the hillside and mountain areas in which they live. The Federation opposes this project as currently submitted.

The Curtis property has a long history predating the current application. Curtis School first applied for a private school use on Mulholland Drive in 1977. At that time, Zev Yaroslavsky was the councilman; he opposed the project. The Planning Department also opposed the project because it was an inappropriate use in a Minimum Density Residential zone and also because it "would set a precedent that could be used to destroy the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Plan and all other Scenic Corridor Plans." The Bureau of Engineering was concerned about maintaining open space along the Mulholland Corridor. Although the City Council granted Curtis's second request after Curtis agreed to reduce the number of students, the Mayor vetoed the project and City Council sustained his veto. Curtis came back a *third time* and was only approved after appeals were filed and Curtis agreed to substantially reduce the grading, school population, square footage and cluster its buildings on the far side of the property, out of view from the scenic corridor, and add trails, open space and landscaping to shield their development.

The current proposal would be larger in scale and intensity than the original proposal that was denied by the City Council. It would degrade the scenic quality of the corridor, permit excessive grading of the hillsides, and interfere with wildlife movement. In fact, I attended the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy meeting this week, during which there was much discussion about the Curtis School project and its impacts to open space, trails and wildlife habitat and connectivity. The Conservancy Board approved a letter raising these concerns.

Approval of this project would set a terrible precedent by granting development rights and conditions that none of the neighboring institutions have – yet. The Federation urges you to deny this project and send it back to Curtis to be reduced in scale and size to protect the hillside and scenic environment.

Sincerely,

Marian Dodge

Marian Dodge

CHAIRPERSONS EMERITUS
Shirley Cohen
Jerome C. Daniel
Patricia Bell Hearst
Alan Kishbaugh
Gordon Murley
Steve Twining
Polly Ward

CHAIRMAN IN MEMORIUM
Brian Moore