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Councilmember Nithya Raman
200 N. Spring Street Suite 415
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via email

February 25, 2025

Argyle Civic Assn.
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Bel-Air Hills Assn.
Bel Air Knolls Property Owners
Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners
Benedict Canyon Association
Brentwood Hills Homeowners
Brentwood Residents Coalition
Cahuenga Pass Property Owners
Canyon Back Alliance
Crests Neighborhood Assn.
Dixie Canyon Assn.
Doheny-Sunset Plaza NA
Encino Property Owners
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Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
Friends of Walnut Canyon
Highlands Owners Assn.
Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
Hollywood Heights Assn.
Hollywoodland HOA
Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn.
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
Lake Hollywood HOA
Laurel Canyon Assn.
LFIA (Los Feliz)
Mountaingate
Mt. Olympus Property Owners
Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
Nichols Canyon NA
Oak Forest Canyon HOA
Oaks Neighborhood Assn.
Outpost Neighborhood Assn.
Pacific Palisades Res. Assn.
Residents of Beverly Glen
Save Coldwater Canyon!
Save LA River Open Space
Save Our Canyon
Shadow Hills POA
Sherman Oaks HOA
Studio City Residents Assn.
Sunset Hills HOA
Sunshine Hills Residents Assn.
Upper Mandeville Canyon Assn.
Upper Nichols Canyon NA
Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

**Re: CF 24-1371
3003 Runyon Canyon Road, ENV-2016-4180-EIR**

Dear Councilmember Raman:

Thank you for asking questions at the PLUM meeting regarding the proposed project at 3003 Runyon Canyon Road. That is exactly what PLUM is supposed to do. It was refreshing to see that there was actual deliberation in public. The Hillside Federation greatly appreciates that you led the way on public deliberation – not just for this project but for all the matters before PLUM. Without public deliberation, public confidence in democracy is undermined.

And you asked the right questions.

You asked about the excessive grading variance. Planning staff tried to justify granting the variance because they were keeping all the dirt on site. That misses the whole point of minimizing grading. The purpose was to keep as much of the topography in the hillsides intact. It is not OK to dig up the mountain and deposit it on the other side of your parcel just because it is a large parcel.

It is important to keep in mind that the family already has a home on that parcel, the Headley/ Handley House, Historic-Cultural Monument #563 designed by the son of premier architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Lloyd Wright, an acclaimed architect in his own right. What a special privilege! The HCM was declared in 1992 so the applicant was well aware of its status and restrictions when he purchased the property.

Did you notice the shenanigans regarding the kitchen? Since there is already one house on the parcel, they cannot build another. Therefore the applicant decided to relegate the 2,018 sq. ft. Wright HCM house to an ADU and designate the new house as the primary house. An ADU isn't supposed to have a full kitchen, but you aren't allowed to make major modifications like removing the kitchen from an HCM. Thus they needed another variance to leave the kitchen in the ADU, AKA HCM 563. If it sounds convoluted, that's because it is, which should make one highly suspicious of the plan.

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Consider the 3,000 sq. ft. basement that doesn't count as square footage for the house. We all know that as soon as the Certificate of Occupancy has been signed and the DBS inspector has left, that basement will become living space. We have seen it happen time and time again. It is a huge loophole that should be closed. Basements must count as square footage.

Planning staff's refusal to recognize the new state requirements regarding minimum access for fire trucks and for evacuation routes is absolutely baffling. In light of the recent massive fires where people had trouble evacuating and fire trucks had trouble getting to the fires, Planning's cavalier attitude is incomprehensible. Wouldn't that leave the city vulnerable to liability lawsuits?

If this plan is approved with all of its required deviations from code, it will make a mockery of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance which has worked effectively since 2010 to define the building code to assure appropriate development in our hillsides. It would establish a disastrous precedent of granting variances that would eviscerate the Baseline Hillside Ordinance.

It was very frustrating that the other two appellants, Paul Edelman of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Garrett Weinstein of the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority, were not allowed to speak for their three minutes. The only reason that the Hillside Federation was allowed to speak for three minutes is that Jamie Hall is an attorney and knows the legal process.

The applicant is not creating more housing; he is just building a bigger house for himself in an inappropriate place.

We hope that you will continue to ask the tough questions and that your leadership will encourage your fellow PLUM Committee members to do the same.

Sincerely,



Charley Mims
President Hillside Federation



Marian A Dodge
Chairman Hillside Federation



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