


		CITY OF LOS ANGELES California	
		Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council	
<p>DALE GIBSON president</p> <p>BILLY HAYS vp administration</p> <p>CRIS HUGHES vp communications</p> <p>KEVIN DAVIS treasurer</p> <p>ROYAN HERMAN recording secretary</p> <p>NANCY WOODRUFF correspondence secretary</p>	<p>BOARD MEMBERS</p> <p>CILE BORMAN FRITZ BRONNER ERWING DAVIS DALE GIBSON CHERYL GRESLIE JOHN BLUE HERGET TERRY KAISER KEN KEEBLE JACOB LOHR BART PAUL</p>	 <p>ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA MAYOR</p>	<p>9747 WHEATLAND BLVD, SHADOW HILLS, CA 91040 818-353-2000 www.ftdnc.org</p> <p>C/O DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT Attn: Barry Stone Project Coordinator 340 E. 2nd St., 4th Floor Los Angeles, Ca, 90012 213-485-1585 barry.stone@lacity.org</p>

JULY 16, 2009

David Sommers, Environmental Coordinator
City of Los Angeles Department of Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Sommers,

The Foothill Trails District Neighborhood Council, at its regularly scheduled General Board meeting this evening, voted to OPPOSE the proposed project at 6433 La Tuna Canyon Road, Tujunga.

The project requests the approval to construct 229 single family residences to be occupied by approximately 577 people which is about 2 ½ people per home, per the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Because the plans call for 4 and 5 bedroom 2-story homes, it is unrealistic to expect so few residents.

Although there are many areas of the DEIR to discuss we will limit this to some which concern our stakeholders the most:

Aesthetics – This beautiful venue has been here for a very long time and has been enjoyed immensely by those driving by it and those using the facility. Its loss will be huge. To have a lovely landscaped area buffering the local natural hillsides and single family homes is unique and refreshing. It is irreplaceable.

Biology – As a manner of mitigating the removal of 85 mature Coast Live Oaks the project propose planting new container Oaks in their place. A time period of 10 years is shown as what is needed to replace the existing Oaks DBH (diameter of trunk at breast height) and canopy spread. Item D.2-17 further states the project applicant shall “post a cash bond or other assurances acceptable” guaranteeing the survival of the trees for 3 years from the date of the bond or date a tree is planted (or replaced if it dies under the 3 year time). It appears that if an Oak dies 1 day after 3 years it will not be replaced, so the long term effect will not save the Oaks at all.

Fourteen local stakeholders who have or know about Coastal Live Oaks have offered the following experiences:

Coastal Live Oaks grow very slowly (photos enclosed).

They require special watering away from the trunk and not during warm seasons once established.

Ground covers which are watered regularly around the trunk will cause disease and the Oak will die.

They thrive best with mulch made naturally from their own leaves.

They can take months or years to die when they have been transplanted and don’t adjust.

All these reasons are why we normally only see them naturally in canyons, etc. where they are not

disturbed.

When the Homeowner's Association overtakes the care of the landscaping what assurances are there that the Oaks will be treated and cared for in an appropriate manner?

Geology – The Summary states that no known active or potentially active faults cross the project site. This is based on the State not identifying “active surface fault traces” on the project site. The site is, in fact, located in the midst of the Verdugo Hills Fault System as identified on the “California Fault Map” Number 6 (Division of Mines and Geology). As the project site is covered in vegetation such traces would not be observable. Recent slide activity can be observed along La Tuna Canyon Road directly west of the site as well as continuing west down along the Canyon. The Northridge Quake of 1994 as well as the San Fernando Quake of 1971 showed that a significant impact can be made by a thrust fault with NO previous fault traces and these are part of the same major fault system, the San Gabriel Fault System as is the Verdugo Hills System.

Public Services, Fire – The Summary states that the response distance from 3 separate fire stations is inadequate. Mitigations, it says, such as hydrants and standard fire resistant Building Code requirements including a 100 foot buffer zone to native brush, will mitigate impact to less than significant. The project will have 2 entrances/exits on La Tuna Canyon Road. However, with the number of people who will actually inhabit 229, 4 and 5 bedroom homes, which are densely located, the potential panic to escape a rapidly moving, wind-driven brush fire, from various adjoining steep hillside locations on the west and north will create a safety nightmare. Both Tujunga Canyon Road and La Tuna Canyon Road are basically 2 lanes with Honolulu being the only safer escape route. But the 210 Freeway could conceivably be shut down also with firefighting. Escaping down La Tuna Canyon Road could become a fire trap without people even knowing. These potential impacts have NOT been addressed and need to be.

Traffic – The Summary report only addresses additional traffic concerns from the La Tuna Canyon Road entrances/exits west to the 210 Freeway and NO traffic west on La Tuna Canyon Road. As this is a daily route from Tujunga to the San Fernando Valley for both jobs and Village Christian Schools, it is absurd to believe that no one living in the project will use this street. The Summary also notes that La Tuna Canyon Road is primarily a 4-lane street. However, as of July 19, 2009 it will be ONLY a 2-lane street due to new resurfacing and restriping. Stakeholders on and near the intersection of La Tuna Canyon Road and Wheatland Avenue, state that at least 80% of the auto accidents on that corner numbering about 1 every 6 weeks, are not reported to the police. It would be logical that the same can be said for the rest of the accidents which happen to the east and up the Canyon.

These are 3 reasons that the DEIR is incomplete regarding traffic impacts and new studies need to be made.

It is the sincere hope of the FTDNC that this project DOES NOT PROCEED and that the previous negotiations to purchase the Golf Course by municipal entities be renewed for the Community's interest.

Sincerely,

Dale Gibson, President FTDNC

cc.

Council District 2 Planning Deputies Dale Thrush and Jim Dantona
VOICE

City Controller Wendy Greuel

Sierra Club, Dean Wallraff

STNC