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Vince Bertoni  
Director of Planning  
Department of City Planning  
200 North Spring Street, 5th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

May 11, 2016

**Re: Baseline Hillside Ordinance Amendments  
CPC-2015-3484-CA  
CPC-2015-4197-EAF**

Dear Mr. Bertoni:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc, founded in 1952, represents 45 resident and homeowner associations with approximately 250,000 constituents spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. At its meeting on May 4, 2016, the Federation voted to support the letter from Councilmembers Paul Koretz and David Ryu (attached as Exhibit A). The Councilmembers' letter requested that proposed amendments to the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO) revert to the original goal of protecting neighborhoods. With respect to hillside areas, these requests include:

- Removal of increased 'by right' grading allowances;
- Reducing FAR for R-1 lots below 7500 square feet to 0.45;
- Elimination of the guaranteed 1,000 sq. ft. minimum residential floor area in designated Hillside areas; and
- Seeking additional community input on FAR exemptions and basement exemptions.

As addressed in the Hillside Federation's January 9, 2016 comment letter on then-proposed BHO amendments, the spirit and intent of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance is to use natural hillside terrain to determine the appropriate scope of development on hillside parcels. The Federation's letter requested the closure of the loopholes in the original BHO, which came to light only after its adoption in 2011. The originally proposed BHO

amendments, drafted after a long series of public hearings/meetings, helped to close those loopholes. The Hillside Federation's January letter also urged the City to:

1. Map all hillsides with a 1:1 or greater slope in hillside areas; and
2. Prohibit development of 1:1 or greater slopes unless a Zoning Administrator's Determination is obtained.

As you know, since the passage of the BHO in 2011, hillside communities in the City of Los Angeles have experienced a dramatic increase in development. Engineering and construction techniques not contemplated when the BHO was first adopted have resulted in many unintended consequences. For example, the recent trend of expansive 'habitable basements' in hillside area (many twice the square footage of the above-ground home) cause enormous harm. The massive amounts of grading for such projects causes substantial degradation of natural terrain in hillside areas. Corresponding negative impacts include the loss of open space, negative environmental impacts including substantial loss of wildlife connectivity, negative impacts to public safety of our hillside communities, failure of infrastructure that is unable to support the increase in volume and scale of development, and destruction of neighborhood character.

One need only look to recent development applications such as the 82,000 square foot single family residence previously proposed at 10101 Angelo View Drive (see Hillside Federation letter of June 22, 2015, attached as Exhibit B) to understand the urgent need to close BHO loopholes and adopt more stringent regulations to protect our City's steepest, most prominent slopes.

The Hillside Federation urges the Department of City Planning to follow the recommendation of the May 4, 2016 letter from Councilmembers Koretz and Ryu to revert to the objectives of City Council motion 14-0656, and to include the Hillside Federation's request to map and further regulate development of slopes of 1:1 or greater. Adopting these recommendations will strengthen the Baseline Hillside Ordinance, allowing it to live up to its original spirit and intent.

Sincerely,

*Charley Mims*

Charley Mims

Encls.

Cc:

Honorable Mayor Eric Garcetti

Honorable Councilmembers: Council President Herb Wesson, Paul Koretz, David Ryu,

Jose Huizar, Mitch Englander, Gilbert Cedillo, Mike Bonin, Paul Krekorian

Dept. of City Planning: Tom Rothman, Nicholas Maricich, Phyllis Nathanson, Erick Lopez