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The Honorable Paul Koretz
Los Angeles City Hall, Room 440
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

June 22, 2015

Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood
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Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
Lake Hollywood HOA
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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
Rancho Verdugo Estates
Residents of Beverly Glen
Roscomare Valley Assn.
Save Coldwater Canyon!
Save Sunset Blvd.
Shadow Hills Property Owners
Sherman Oaks HO Assn.
Silver Lake Heritage Trust
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.

Re: **10101 Angelo View Drive**

Dear Councilmember Koretz:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., founded in 1952, represents 44 resident and homeowner associations with approximately 200,000 constituents spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. The mission of the Federation is to promote those policies and programs that will best preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles.

The Federation voted unanimously to express its concern about the Angelo View Drive project and emphasize that this grossly out-of-scale project dramatically illustrates why the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (“BHO”) must be amended as soon as possible to close the gaping loopholes being exploited by developers.

1. The Project is the type of mega-mansion the BHO was intended to preclude

The Angelo View Drive Project is an 82,050 square foot single family home proposed for 10101 Angelo View Drive. If built as planned, the construction would be in and on top of a prominent hillside, and would result in excess of 50,000 cubic yards of grading export. According to the applicant, the slope band analysis for the project provides for a Residential Floor Area under the BHO of 34,479 square feet. Moreover, the applicant claims to be eligible for a 20% “green building” bonus under the BHO, which would raise the total RFA to 41,375 square feet. The project as designed uses virtually all of this “bonus” for a total RFA of 41,206 square feet.

The applicant’s graphic of the planned 82,000+ “single family home” makes clearer than any data how BHO loopholes can be used to undermine the ordinance’s purpose.

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The applicant's use of the "basement" exemption is particularly offensive. The first three stories of the proposed structure, amounting to 40,849 square feet of floor area, are deemed exempt as "basement" space that is not included in the BHO's FAR limitation. This "basement" includes 19,500 square feet of "habitable" space, 1,201 square feet of covered porches, 13,189 square feet for parking, and 4,928 square feet for mechanical spaces and platforms. The basement loophole thereby allows the applicant to invoke the "green" building bonus, resulting in a mega-mansion with an actual floor area of over 82,000 square feet, almost 50,000 square feet above the BHO's already generous 35,000 limit.

We cannot imagine a more inappropriate hillside project or a better illustration of the need to fill the BHO loopholes immediately—before such developments permanently degrade the natural hillside environment that the BHO was enacted to protect.

Councilmember Koretz
10101 Angelo View Drive
June 22, 2015
Page 3

2. The Project cannot be approved

The Project itself cannot be approved, regardless of whether the BHO would otherwise authorize a multi-story mega-mansion that is over 50,000 square feet above the BHO limit. First, the Project would require the destruction of many trees that cannot be cut-down without violating the City's Protected Tree Ordinance.

Second, the Project renderings also depict a private helicopter landing pad. A private helicopter pad, with the substantial noise impacts, would be grossly inconsistent with the residential character of the surrounding hillside neighborhoods. The adverse impacts of private helicopter use in residential areas has been well-documented by the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition, a group whose work we support.

3. The Project also demonstrates the urgent need to protect wildlife corridors

The Federation enthusiastically supported City of Los Angeles Council File #14-0518, your motion to protect wildlife habitat and corridors in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains, the precise location of the Project. The Federation was not alone in supporting your motion. Six neighborhood councils voiced their support (five of them unanimously), as well as numerous organizations and members of the public.

This massive Project, which is located amidst several potential wildlife movement routes between Benedict Canyon and Beverly Glen Boulevard, would significantly impact those routes. Unfortunately, your motion, which was presented to the Council well over a year ago and seconded by four councilmembers, is still pending at the Planning and Land Use Management committee. The potential impacts of the project on wildlife habitat and movement strongly suggests that the City must move forward on your motion as soon as possible.

The Federation urges you to take action to close the BHO loopholes that the Project applicant here seeks to exploit, notify the Planning Department of your opposition to this project, and make known to the PLUM Committee the pressing need for action to protect wildlife habitat and corridors.

Sincerely,

Marian Dodge
Marian Dodge