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Jon Foreman, Senior City Planner
Department of City Planning
City Hall, Room 601
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
January 29, 2011

RE: ENV-2007-0254-EIR
NBC Universal Evolution Plan

Bel Air Knolls Property Owners
Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners
Bel Air Ridge Association
Benedict Canyon Association
Cahuenga Pass Neighborhood
Crests Neighborhood Assn.
Encino Property Owners Assn.
Forrest Hills Homeowners 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.
La Tuna Canyon Community Assn.
Laurel Canyon Assn.
Los Feliz Improvement Assn.
Mt. Olympus Property Owners
Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
Nichols Canyon Assn.
N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon
Oak Forest Canyon Assn.
Outpost Estates Homeowners
Residents of Beverly Glen
Roscomare Valley Assn.
Shadow Hills Property Owners
Sherman Oaks H O Assn.
Studio City Residents Assn.
Tarzana Property Owners Assn.
Torreyson Flynn Assn.
Upper Mandeville Canyon
Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

Dear Mr. Forman:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., representing thirty-three homeowner associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains from west of the 405 freeway to east of Griffith Park has numerous concerns regarding the NBC Universal Evolution Plan (the Project). This massive Project requires 17 discretionary approvals plus “any additional actions that may be determined necessary.” By its own admission, it will cause “significant and unavoidable impacts” on air quality, transportation, and solid waste.

NBC Universal must pay for all costs of traffic mitigation.

NBC Universal’s impact on traffic in the immediate area including Cahuenga Pass, Hollywood Manor, Hollywood Knolls and Studio City is already heavily congested. Access in and out of local neighborhood streets is currently unsafe. Building millions more out-of-scale and incompatible square feet when existing hazardous traffic levels are permitted to exist will create a permanent bottleneck that will be overwhelming to the immediate residential communities. With existing traffic congestion unmitigated how can surrounding communities tolerate more development? Hemmed in by the Santa Monica Mountains, historic Campo de Cahuenga, the Los Angeles River, and Griffith Park, there is simply no convenient place for the traffic to go. NBC Universal must pay CalTrans or DOT for any and all costs of traffic mitigations approved by the community.

Retain the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan.

Of particular concern is the intent of the project to remove “a small portion of the Project Site from the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan”(MSPSP) (p. 33 & 37). Residents along the Mulholland corridor worked long and hard to establish design reviews for the corridor to preserve its unique natural topography, native plants, and outstanding views. Although the DEIR claims that the project is consistent with the MSPSP, pages 331-332 clearly describe Sign District 2C and 2D with a barrage of signs including electronic and animated signs thirty feet high. This is not at all consistent with the MSPSP; there should be no billboards.

To simply remove yourself from the Specific Plan makes a mockery of city planning. There is no legal reason why the Project cannot remain within the MSPSP and have overlapping specific plans. The Project must respect the guidelines of the MSPSP.

Retain open space.

The statement that the new residential area will provide 35 acres of open space is decidedly misleading since the site currently has 120 acres of open space. The only open space remaining is that which is too steep to develop economically. What will be the impact of the loss of open space on the wildlife that currently exists in the area? The proposed elimination of the entire Back Lot implies that Universal Studios will be taking their filming outside of the City of Los Angeles, a great economic loss to the city.

There are to be hiking trails open to the public in the area. The new North-South Road through the residential development must be dedicated to the City of Los Angeles to assure that it remains open to the public so that they will have access to the open space.

Do not widen Forest Lawn Drive through Griffith Park.

Additionally there is concern over Mitigation Measure B-7 (p. 63) regarding the proposed widening of Forest Lawn Dr. At this point Forest Lawn Dr. goes through Griffith Park, Historic-Cultural Landmark #942. Any changes in Griffith Park – or Campo de Cahuenga – must be approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission. The developers should not be permitted to ease the traffic jam they created by funneling traffic through Griffith Park. To do so is a violation of Col. Griffith's intent when he donated the park land to the city to provide an escape valve for the masses from the hustle and bustle of urban life. The project must not disturb the geography of Griffith Park, its wildlife, or the tranquility of its visitors.

Reduce the height of all buildings to 100 feet to eliminate the need for specialized fire equipment.

The construction of multiple high-rise buildings in the Project requires that the Los Angeles Fire Department acquire specialized equipment to protect those buildings. The existing fire station is not able to accommodate the equipment, nor does it have the land necessary to build an addition to accommodate it. Therefore NBC Universal should be required to provide the land and pay for the construction of a new fire station to meet their needs. It should not be a burden on the tax payers of Los Angeles.

Consider the cumulative impact of all projects.

When evaluating the Project, one must consider the cumulative impacts of the proposed MTA development across Lankershim as well as the proposed expansion of Forest Lawn Cemetery on Forest Lawn Drive. The MTA project in particular will exacerbate the already massive impact on traffic in the area. The Forest Lawn expansion will destroy a large open space. That loss, combined with the loss of open space at NBC Universal will have a devastating impact on wildlife in the eastern section of the Santa Monica Mountains.

This project should be reduced in mass and scale to reduce its impact on an infrastructure which is already strained.

Sincerely,



Marian Dodge, President

cc: Mayor Villaraigosa
Councilmember LaBonge
Supervisor Yaroslavsky