

CANYON AREA PRESERVATION

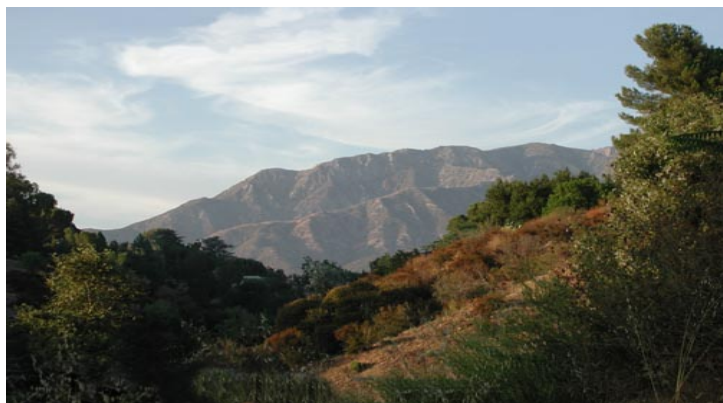
Information about preserving our canyons, hillsides, and the foothills.

Late Summer 2004

Volume 1, Issue 13

VIEWS

LOCAL INPUT / LOCAL CONTROL



Concert Raises \$7,000+ To Fight Canyon Hills

A fantastic concert organized by local residents raised over \$7,000, donated to V.O.I.C.E. – Volunteers Organized In Conserving The Environment. The money will help pay for educational activities and professional representation in a growing grassroots effort to fight the proposed Whitebird Canyon Hills development.

Over 300 people attended throughout the day to listen to 13 musical groups, enjoy the bake sale, and learn more about the issues raised by this controversial plan.

The concert was staged by Lari and Chuck Kunze, founders of Canyon Area Preservation. Dozens of volunteers helped set up the show, run the sound, hand out info, sell the baked goods, collect donations, and tear down at the end.

Special thanks go to the hundreds of people who graciously gave donations large and small. Many gave \$500 and \$1,000 to help put us over the top. This is a



BIG THANKS to the musicians who donated their talent!

Dan Fitz and Friends
Dave Strauss
The Hideways
Banshee In the Kitchen
Pure Ground
Dave Wulff
Tanya Winch & One Real
Severin Browne &
James Coberly Smith
Andy Hill & Renee Safier
Bob Malone
Karen Nash
Claudia Cusani
Charlie White

Producers:

Lari and Chuck Kunze
Sound: Dave Atherton

Bake sale:

Lucy Berger, Lien Seesee
Photos: Anja Schaefer

huge indicator of the strong feelings people have about the negative impacts of this proposed development. The majority of donations were in the \$20-\$100 range, and the pastries cooked up hundreds more.

We're well on our way to raising the \$30,000 to \$40,000 needed to pay for professional help and publicity of our efforts over the course of this campaign. Our lawyers will do much more than what they will be paid to do, and many people are using their own money to pay for printing, but it will still cost a lot to counteract Whitebird's multi-million dollar PR effort.

Please continue to do what you can to help. More info on Page 2.



Canyon Area Preservation

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Comedy Fundraiser Sunday Sept. 19 At Giggles

Glendale-Crescenta V.O.I.C.E.
Comedy Night

Sunday, Sep. 19, 2004
7:30 PM

Giggles Night Club
215 N. Brand Blvd, Glendale
Tickets \$20

This will be a great night of comedy, with 3 world-class comedians plus our own Master of Ceremonies Charlie Marko (formerly of the Ice House in Pasadena).

The audience will be jam-packed with supporters of open space in the Verdugos. This is a fund-raiser for fighting Canyon Hills, so come with your friends and help us sell the place out.

Get advance tickets (through Sep. 12) by mailing your check for \$20/ticket with a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

Night of Comedy Tickets
P.O. Box 4242
Sunland, CA 91041.

Please make sure to write "Canyon Hills" on the back of your ticket, so that proceeds benefit our fight against this development. You can also buy tickets at the door, but it will help us plan the event if you buy them in advance. There are only 125 seats, so get your tickets early.

Our last fundraising concert in July was a smash success, and this night promises to be even more fun. We don't just ask for money from you – we give back as much as we receive because we care!

Bumper stickers and yard signs are now available. To get your bumper sticker, send a self-addressed manila envelope and a donation (minimum \$1) to: Friends of the Verdugos, P.O. Box 4242, Sunland, CA 91041. To obtain a yard sign (size: 24" X 48"), email your request to: yardsigns@verdugohills.net. Please include your phone number and a good time to call. Yard signs are available thanks to a generous grant from the Sierra Club.



Tell Everybody!

Every Councilmember, the Mayor, and the Planning Department needs to hear from you about Canyon Hills. They really do listen! Please be factual with your input:

Los Angeles City Council, 200 N. Spring St., LA, CA 90012

CD1: Ed Reyes, Rm 410, reyes@council.lacity.org
CD2: Wendy Greuel, Rm 475, greuel@council.lacity.org
CD3: Dennis Zine, Rm 450 zine@council.lacity.org
CD4: Tom LaBonge, Rm 480, labonge@council.lacity.org
CD5: Jack Weiss, Rm 440, weiss@council.lacity.org
CD6: Tony Cardenas, Rm 455, Cardenas@council.lacity.org
CD7: Alex Padilla, Rm 465, Padilla@council.lacity.org
CD8: Bernard Parks, Rm 460, parks@council.lacity.org
CD9: Jan Perry, Rm 420, perry@council.lacity.org
CD10: Martin Ludlow, Rm 430, Ludlow@council.lacity.org
CD11: Cindy Miscikowski, Rm 415, miscikow@council.lacity.org
CD12: Greig Smith, Rm 405, smith@council.lacity.org
CD13: Eric Garcetti, Rm 470, garcetti@council.lacity.org
CD 14: Tony Villaraigosa, Rm 425, villaraigosa@council.lacity.org
CD15: Janice Hahn, Rm 435, hahn@council.lacity.org
Mayor: James Hahn, Rm 303, MayorHahy@mayor.lacity.org
Planning Dept., Con Howe, 5th Fl., chowe@planning.lacity.org

Canyon Hills Update

The Final Environmental Impact Report is **NOW AVAILABLE**. There will be a 10-day comment period, mainly for responses by City agencies. Then the proposal will move rapidly through the Planning Department process of approval (see chart next page).

The Deputy Advisory Agency is expected to hold a public hearing in October or November. We'll keep you informed.

Viewing copies are available at the Municipal Building. CDs can be purchased for \$7.50.

www.lacity.org/PLN - Click on "Environmental/Final EIRs."
www.verdugohills.net/canyonhills - Local activist site.
www.canyonhills.info - This is the developer's web site.
www.gcvoice.org - Glendale-Crescenta VOICE.
www.savetheverdugos.com - New site with a great song!

What Are We FOR?

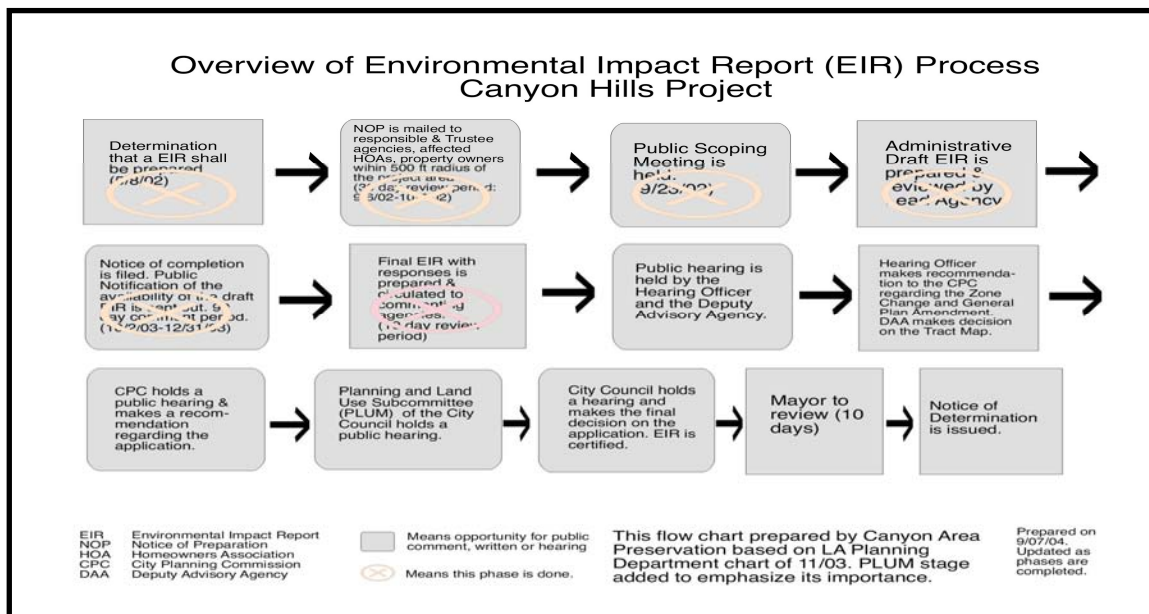
- o Enforce current land use laws
- o Support the Community Plan
- o Obey zoning laws
- o Protect the open space that defines our community
- o Encourage horsekeeping and add trails
- o Democracy – everybody's voice heard
- o The 15% Slope Plan Amendment – lowers building density, prevents destruction of hills
- o Wildlife and the environment that supports it
- o Community leaders empowering local voices
- o The Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council Design Advisory and Residential Land Use Committees.
- o Sunland-Tujunga Vision 2020
- o Wendy Greuel when she says developers should follow the rules – at the Vision 2020 unveiling in June

Send in more ideas to CAPViews@comcast.net

What Are We Against?

- o Setting legal precedents that weaken our laws
- o Building on hillsides and slopes
- o Actions and attitudes that divide our community
- o City agencies changing and amending laws without a public vote
- o Sound walls that obstruct views of the hills
- o Land speculators

Send in more ideas to CAPViews@comcast.net



Donations Needed

Several groups and many individuals in our community are concerned about the impact of the Canyon Hills project.

Please make a tax-deductible donation to help us with the costs of responding to this project. The future of our community is at stake, and your donation could make the difference:

Glendale-Crescenta V.O.I.C.E.

PO Box 273

Montrose, CA 91021

818-249-0900

www.gcvoice.org

www.SaveTheVerdugos.com

Craig Durst has created a web site with beautiful photos of our area, a sign-up list to register your concern, and he's written a poignant anthem for our area! Visit the web site today to hear the song.

www.verdugohills.net

Dean Wallraff's wonderful site, one of the first to put out information about Canyon Hills. He has background on who's behind Whitebird that you won't find anywhere else, certainly not in the mainstream media!

Vesting Tentative Tract Maps Now Available

These maps, along with the Final EIR document, are Whitebird's official submission to the Planning Department showing the details necessary for making decisions about the proposal. The proposal will now pass or fail on its merits. Below are some examples of the dozens of maps included in the FEIR.

Everyone concerned should make the effort to study the documents. They're not difficult to understand but they are tedious to go through. CAP Views will help explain the facts in this and future editions.

As you go through the EIR, send CAP Views anything you notice that needs to be pointed out.



The Duke Ridge in Area A

This detail shows just some of the "cut and fill" grading that will alter the lower portion of the Duke Ridge as it runs along the 210. The upper portion of this ridge is a Prominent Ridgeline according to the Scenic Plan.

It appears the road will run on top of the flattened ridge, and canyons will be filled to even out the path. Not good!

Area B – Hill south of 210 along La Tuna Canyon Road

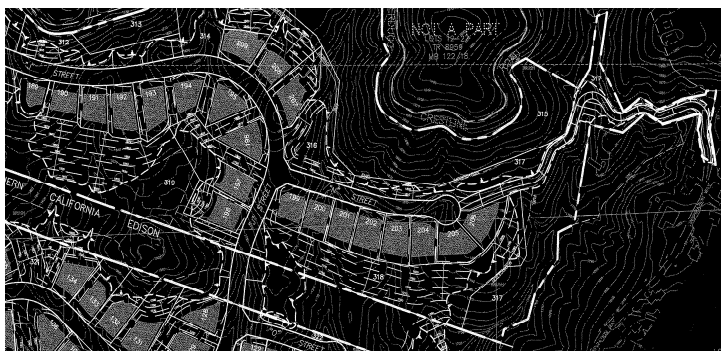
Area B has been modified since the Draft EIR was released. Many people in La Tuna Canyon and Shadow Hills wanted to see a lot of changes.

The layout of the lots is essentially unchanged, but many have been expanded from ~16,000 ft² to ~20,000 ft². How did the developer do that without altering the grading plan or layout?

Easy. They extended the lot lines either further up or down the cut slopes to make the lots larger and took land out of the "homeowner association" allotment.

Can you recognize how much of this hill will remain after all this grading? – Not much! And this hill contains a Prominent Ridgeline but it's not identified.

This development area is easily visible when driving east up La Tuna Canyon Road. It would be the first hill-side development allowed in the Canyon if it goes through.



Emergency Access Road Area A

According to the maps, the developer chose Inspiration Way as the secondary emergency access road. This is a dirt road on a ridge with houses on both sides. The road goes down to Alene Drive and connects to Hillhaven heading down to Foothill Blvd. No word if any of these streets will be improved to handle the task. It's doubtful whether there's enough right-of-way to widen the roads.

Selected Excerpts from the Canyon Hills Final Environmental Impact Report

The Final EIR is straightforward but difficult to analyze. It requires you to go back and forth to the Draft EIR to compare changes. It will be helpful when a compiled document is available, but the current format does point out readily where changes have been made.

It will take several weeks to fully review, but in the interest of time here is a first look at some changes:

Corrections and Additions, Page III-11 and Responses to Comments Page IV-612 – Sound Walls:

"The following mitigation measure has been added: Where required sound walls may interrupt views of the surrounding scenery, sound walls constructed of combination of Plexiglas and concrete blocks may be installed." **[Editor's Note: The sound walls will now include picture windows!]**

"As a result, sound wall B7 would be less visible from Interstate 210 because it would be partially masked by sound wall B8 and its height and length would be substantially reduced." **[Editor's Note: One wall hides another, therefore it's not so bad!]**

"The total length of the proposed sound walls would be approximately 2,400 feet (0.45 mile), which would extend over approximately 2,900 feet (.55 mile) alongside Interstate 210. Since the proposed project has approximately 2.7 miles of freeway frontage, the 0.55 miles of initially proposed sound walls would be relatively modest in comparison." **[Editor's Note: A half mile of sound walls in a Scenic Corridor?]**

Corrections and Additions, Page III-78 and Responses to Comments Page IV-31 – The Importance of a Single Word:

[Editor's Note: They recite a section from the Scenic Plan, then respond. Emphasis added below] – "Section 6A.5: Graded slopes should be landform graded where practical in accordance with the provisions of the Department of City Planning's Landform Grading Manual...graded hillsides should have a variety of slope ratios, should not exceed a ratio of 2:1 and should transition to the natural slope in a manner that produces a natural appearance." Consistency Discussion: "The use of the word "should" with respect to these provisions reflect that they are **not mandatory, but instead are permissive** and intended as guidelines only, consistent with the City's policy..."

"There are a few fill slopes over 200 feet high (at a 2:1 slope) in areas that are not highly visible."

"The proposed project also includes some cut slopes that would exceed a 2:1 ratio, up to a ratio of 1.5:1. The purpose of having cut slopes at a ratio of 1.5:1 is to reduce grading and reduce visual impact." **[Editor's Note: But if they didn't have these steep cut slopes to begin with...]**

Responses to Comments, Page IV-38 – Related Projects:

"Based on the evidence compiled to date, it is concluded that Related Project No. 9 does not exist, and that its inclusion in the Draft EIR was an inadvertent error...The second issue regarding the related projects list is the discovery that four related projects were inadvertently omitted in the Draft EIR." **[Editor's Note: This shows the importance of reading the documents thoroughly. They have made factual and logical errors throughout.]**

Responses to Comments, Page IV-156 – Land Use Designation and the 15% Slope Plan Amendment:

"With respect to the concern expressed regarding the consistency of the proposed project with Footnote 4 in the Sunland-Tujunga Community Plan, the slope density formula set forth in Section 17.05C of the LAMC that is referenced in Footnote 4 applies to land designated as Minimum residential, Very Low I Residential and Very Low II Residential in the area covered by the Sunland-Tujunga Community Plan. The **proposed** land use designation for the Development Areas is Low Residential, which would not be subject to the slope density formula." **[Editor's Note: So, by changing the zoning and land use designations, they won't have to follow the slope density formula! Is this what was meant to happen when that law was passed??? What's going on here?]**

More excerpts in the next Canyon Area Preservation Views newsletter...

C.A.P.
PO Box 633
Tujunga, CA 91043



Save postage. See the newsletter in color! Register your e-mail address with us today.
Many e-mail notices have been sent this past year that have not been mailed. Keep
informed. Register your e-mail address with us today!

About Canvon Area Preservation...

Please contribute the names and addresses of people/organizations you think can be important to our cause. Contact the CAP Views editor at CAPViews@comcast.net

Canyon Area Preservation was formed in 1997 by a group of homeowners and citizens to fight a development near La Tuna Canyon Road and the 210 Freeway (Duke Development).

Since then, we have been actively involved with informing citizens, government agencies, and community organizations about threats to the environment and rural quality of life in the Crescenta Valley, San Gabriel Mountains, and Sunland/Tujunga area.

Please join us. We are all volunteers concerned about our environment.

Feel free to make copies of this newsletter to give to neighbors, send in more e-mail addresses of people who want to help or know more, and contact agencies that can provide assistance. Thank you.

.....Important Contact Information.....

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La Tuna Canyon Community Assn.
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Lake View Terrace Homeowners Assn.
Nancy Snyder, President
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