

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

RAMIREZ CANYON PARK
5750 RAMIREZ CANYON ROAD
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA 90265
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3207
WWW.SMMC.CA.GOV



Agenda Item VII(g)

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

7-19-2012

June 5, 2012

Mulholland Design Review Board
City of Los Angeles
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite 351
Los Angeles, California 91401

DIR-2012-1316-DRB-SPP-MSP, 16854 Severo Place

Dear Design Review Board Members:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) offers the following comments and recommendations for the above-referenced proposed project. The subject property is located within 30 feet of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's (MRCA) publicly-owned Westridge-Canyonback Wilderness Park to the south.

Currently, the Fire Department-required fuel modification zone (extending 200 feet from any habitable structure) from the existing residence on the subject property, and neighboring residences, extends onto public parkland. The impacts of this fuel modification can be seen from looking closely at aerial photography of the site. The proposed addition to the subject residence would expand the fuel modification "footprint" further onto parkland. This fuel modification on public lands is funded by the public.

To mitigate for the adverse impacts to public lands, the Conservancy recommends that the Design Review Board to require as a condition of this project's approval that the applicant agree to voluntarily dedicate a conservation easement to a public agency over the southern and southeastern portions of the property as depicted on the diagram accompanying this letter. (Please see accompanying Diagram of Proposed Conservation Easement.) At this time, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

Mulholland Design Review Board
DIR-2012-1316-DRB-SSP-MSP, 16854 Severo Place
June 5, 2012
Page 2

(MRCA) is the only public agency actively accepting dedicated conservation easements in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.

As depicted on the attached Diagram of Proposed Conservation Easement, the intention is that the conservation easement encompasses the portion of the property that is unfenced and ungraded. Fortunately, no changes to the residence or retaining walls, as currently proposed, are necessary to accommodate this easement.

The only way to ensure that such an easement is recorded is if the owner, or their authorized representative, verbally or in writing, states to the Mulholland Design Review Board that they will voluntarily accept the following permit condition language, which includes the allowed and disallowed uses within such a conservation easement.

MDRB Condition Language: Applicant shall show proof of recordation and agency acceptance of a conservation easement in favor of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) covering no less area than that shown on the figure accompanying the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's letter dated June 5, 2012. (Said area is depicted on a project site plan map.) No City permits shall be granted without proof of such an easement recordation and a Certificate of Acceptance from the MRCA. Said acceptance shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed by the MRCA.

Applicant shall provide the MRCA with an engineer-stamped recordable easement metes and bounds legal description and plotted map, and a current preliminary title report. Said title report shall demonstrate that the conservation easement is not subordinate to any construction liens and that no new easements or encumbrances after the date of this letter will affect the conservation easement. The entirety of the easement area shall prohibit any fencing, lighting, grading, planting of non-native vegetation, facilities, or hardscape. The easement shall expressly allow for fuel modification and the cultivation and irrigation of plants native to the Santa Monica Mountains.

If you have any questions, please contact Garrett Weinstein of our staff at 310-589-3200, ext. 124, or by e-mail at garrett.weinstein@mrca.ca.gov. You may also feel free to contact me at 310-589-3200, ext. 128. The applicant should also feel encouraged to contact our agency. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mulholland Design Review Board
DIR-2012-1316-DRB-SSP-MSP, 16854 Severo Place
June 5, 2012
Page 3

Sincerely,



PAUL EDELMAN
Deputy Director
Natural Resources and Planning

Attachments: A – Diagram of Proposed Conservation Easement