



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: October 7, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(i): Consideration of resolution authorizing entering into an agreement with the owner of APNs 4490-010-003 and 4490-010-001 regarding the MRCA conditionally withdrawing opposition to Los Angeles City Planning case no. DIR-2013-3020-DRB-SPP-MSP, and conditionally taking a neutral position toward future improvements on said parcels, in exchange for funding to acquire property in the Big Wild area, City of Los Angeles.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing entering into an agreement with the owner of APNs 4490-010-003 and 4490-010-001 regarding the MRCA conditionally withdrawing opposition to Los Angeles City Planning case no. DIR-2013-3020-DRB-SPP-MSP, and conditionally taking a neutral position toward future improvements on said parcels, in exchange for funding to acquire property in the Big Wild area.

Background: APN 4490-010-003 is a 6.5-acre parcel located on the south side of Mulholland Drive in Encino near the eastern terminus of the dirt portion of Mulholland Drive. APN 4490-010-001 abuts the larger APN 4490-010-003 and the MRCA's Canyonback fire road trail. Both parcels are located along the northern edge of the 20,000-acre Big Wild area. The same owner controls both parcels.

The MRCA objected to both City Planning and the Mulholland Design Review Board (MDRB) about the proposed siting of the applicant's house next to MRCA parkland. The MDRB moved the house a slight distance to reduce permanent fuel modification on MRCA land. The MRCA also asked the MDRB to condition a permanent wildlife corridor through the property to connect to MRCA land on the north side of Mulholland Drive. The applicant said no and is adamant about maintaining a perimeter security fence around the entire property including APN 4490-010-001. The MDRB conditionally approved the project pending a cooperative agreement between the applicant and the MRCA. The alternative to entering into an agreement with the applicant is to appeal the project to the South Valley Area Planning Commission.

Negotiations have gone on for seven months. The framework of an agreement and a draft agreement are in place. In exchange for the MRCA withdrawing all opposition to Los Angeles City Planning case no. DIR-2013-3020-DRB-SPP-MSP and taking a neutral (non-opposition) stance on the remainder of the applicant's future projects on APNs 4490-010-001 and 4490-010-003 the applicant will provide the following to the MRCA and the public.

First, to compensate for the loss of habitat and connectivity, the applicant has agreed to make a \$100,000 payment to be used specifically for land acquisition and acquisition expenses in the Big Wild area which includes the subject parcels along with 20,000 public and private open space acres including Topanga State Park. The applicant also agreed to not remove, or make application to remove, any City of Los Angeles Protected Trees from either APN 4490-010-001 or the larger APN 4490-010-003.

The applicant will also lower a portion of his perimeter fence that affects public views from the Canyonback fire road trail. On the applicant's smaller parcel he has agreed to lighting and landscaping restrictions next to public lands. Those restrictions can also be enforced by a future condition through a MDRB approval of the proposed guest house. Staff has seen plans for the proposed guest house. Lastly the MRCA agrees to erect its standard park post and rail fencing across a steep trail leading to an MRCA restoration below the fire road and next to the applicant's lot and to sign such fencing to show that the trail is not an official trail.

Time will tell, but the applicant, totally outside of this agreement, promises to donate an adjacent 3.0 acre property to the MRCA when various ownership timing issues expire in approximately three years.