



July 7, 2017

The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission
Doug Smith, Chair
David W. Louie, Vice Chair
Laura Shell, Commissioner
Elvin W. Moon, Commissioner
Pat Modugno, Commissioner

Re: **Project No. R2015-01232-(2) – “The View” 88-Unit New Condo Development**

Honorable Commissioners:

On behalf of United Homeowners’ Association II (“UHA II”), which represents the 11,000+ residents of the unincorporated communities of Windsor Hills, View Park & View Heights, we wish to thank you for allowing several of our members to provide testimony at the May 31, 2017 hearing regarding the above-captioned project (the “Project”). As noted during our testimony that day, UHA II opposes the Project for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- The Project exceeds the 35-foot height limit for the C-1 zone by more than 30 feet, and all other nearby structures are lower than the 35-foot height limit.
- The Project would exacerbate existing hazardous traffic conditions along Overhill Drive south of the Stocker/Overhill/La Brea intersection, which was designed to serve free-flow, high speed regional traffic.
- The developer’s traffic study calls for the installation of a two-way left turn lane on Overhill Drive to provide full access to the Project’s driveways, but these road improvements are not required as part of the Project’s off-site improvements.
- The Project is too dense to be compatible with the single-family neighborhood it abuts, and several nearby homes will experience a significant loss in property value as a direct result of the Project dominating the hillside and blocking backyard views that include the Hollywood sign, Griffith Park and the Getty Museum.
- Most of the 352 daily estimated vehicle trips will exit the Project and either turn left onto Northridge Drive, a local road that goes thru the heart of View Park/Windsor Hills, or turn onto Slauson Avenue, which is already heavily congested.
- Considering the Project’s location within an earthquake fault hazard zone, a geologic fault investigation must be done to analyze the possibility of a surface fault rupture that could result in substantial property damage and put the new residents of the Project and other nearby residents at risk in the event of a major earthquake.

Zoning & Land Use History

UHA II would like to share some additional details on the Project's history that may not appear in the Initial Study or other documents submitted as part of the staff report and recommendations. Although UHA II is a relatively new nonprofit corporation, our predecessor organization United Homeowners' Association ("UHA") opposed a nearly identical proposal in 2004 by the same developer to build 72 condos and 17,000 square feet of office space on the same site, ultimately resulting in the developer withdrawing its application (see Project No. 03-189 for more information). The developer's initial entitlement request for the Project included a zone change from CPD/Low Density Residential (1 to 6 du/acre density) to R-4 (see Attachment 1), but both the zoning and land use designation were modified by the County as part of the General Plan Update to C-1/General Commercial (0 to 50 du/acre density) and the developer subsequently dropped the zone change from their entitlements. This occurred around the time UHA was dissolved and prior to the formation of UHA II, thus we are very concerned about the fact that such a substantial land use change was approved by the County as part of the General Plan Update apparently without any public input or discussion about how this change would impact the developer's application that was pending at the same time.

Both the target site at 5101 Overhill (the "Site") and UHA are referenced in DRP's November 1999 Stocker Street Zoning Study (see Attachment 2), which alludes to the "constant onslaught of development proposals for the subject properties that are incompatible with the neighborhood character of the View Park community." Notably, page 10 of the Study concludes that "[c]ompatibility with the neighborhood should mean that densities should be similar to the View Park area southerly of the subject properties, which is zoned R-1," and further states that "[w]hile the General Plan designates the property as residential, the location at the intersection of several major through routes renders it undesirable for that purpose." Page 10 of the Study also notes that "the current C-3 zoning is too intense and inappropriate due to the traffic conditions and access limitations at the Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea intersection." DRP staff concluded in the Study that the Site's zoning should be changed from C-3 to CPD, a proposal that was subsequently approved. Notwithstanding the fact that DRP's staff concluded over 17 years ago that a dense, multifamily development at the Site is incompatible with the surrounding community, and updated the Site's zoning and land use designation to reflect that limitation, our community has had to respond to multiple out-of-scale, poorly planned and potentially dangerous proposals by the same developer. Now, as a direct result of the County's apparent reversal of its own clearly stated policies & conclusions reached in the Study, it appears that DRP staff is on the verge of recommending approval of the Project, which contradicts the Study's conclusion in 1999 that this type of dense development is unsuitable for the Site.

The Project Will Significantly Impact Our Community

As cited in our May 8, 2017 letter to DRP staff, there are multiple inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the Project's Initial Study. The Initial Study concludes that the Project will have a less than significant impact on the visual character of the Site and its surroundings despite the fact that the developer proposes to exceed the by-right height limit by more than 30 feet and construct a new

65-foot tall building that would reduce several neighbors' property values by completely blocking their existing views of the Hollywood sign, Getty Museum and Griffith Park among other LA landmarks. Furthermore, the huge size and scale of the Project would completely dominate the entire hillside at one of the main entrances to our neighborhood and transform the character of an historic single-family community to something totally different (Attachment 3 includes before & after renderings showing how the Project would tower over the adjacent residential street). The Initial Study claims that the Project will have less than significant impact on traffic congestion and hazards notwithstanding the fact that the developer's traffic study was completed in 2015 and fails to consider any traffic impacts from the redevelopment of the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Mall, the development of 74 new apartments at 3831 Stocker just east of the Site, and the proposed high-rise transit-oriented developments at La Cienega & Jefferson. Critically, the developer's traffic study concludes that the installation of a two-way left turn lane on Overhill Drive "will be required in order to provide full access at both project driveways."

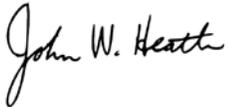
As currently conceived, the traffic study indicates that the Project will generate up to 704 vehicle trips during a typical weekday, half of which would exit the Site and travel south on Overhill to Slauson Avenue which is already heavily congested, or turn left onto Northridge Drive which will divert additional traffic onto a local road through the heart of our community which constantly battles traffic safety issues related to speeding drivers and shortcut seekers. Furthermore, Windsor Hills Magnet School which is just north of Northridge Drive generates an inordinate amount of traffic during the school year. The proposed traffic impact will also necessitate a pedestrian safety study for students walking to and from the Windsor Hills school. The high speed of vehicles traveling south on La Brea and Overhill is well documented, and we are very concerned that without proper mitigation measures the Project will cause serious accidents due to vehicles slowing to enter the Site. The Commission should require the developer to update the traffic study to properly consider current traffic conditions and at a minimum the developer should be required to complete all required work to install a two-way left turn lane installation on Overhill Drive, or the Project should be delayed until the County can complete these necessary improvements. The Commission should also require that the developer provide additional traffic safety measures to help mitigate the effects of additional vehicles that will be traveling on Northridge Drive as a direct result of the Project.

Finally, the Site is squarely located within the Newport-Inglewood Earthquake Fault Hazard Zone, and earth cracks have been identified at the Site and immediately adjacent to the Site along Overhill Drive (vehicles driving in either direction on Overhill currently encounter one of these active fault cracks that feels like a speed bump). Considering the close proximity of the Project to nearby homes and an elementary school and the fact that the developer is proposing to build such a large structure with multiple levels of subterranean parking, we urge the Commission to require the developer to undertake a more detailed geological fault investigation study and analysis prior to approving the Project to avoid unnecessary property damage and loss of life in the event of a major seismic event (Attachment 4 is a June 2015 LA Times article describing increased scrutiny of similar projects by other public agencies in the region).

Conclusion

UHA II opposes the Project because it vastly exceeds the 35-foot height limit applicable to all other structures in our community, is too dense and too large for the Site, is incompatible with our historic single-family community, and would create dangerous traffic and earthquake fault hazard conditions that could cause serious injuries or fatalities and will certainly diminish the property values of many residences along Onacrest Drive, Brea Crest Drive and Dawn View Place. Approving the Project as presented would contradict DRP staff's findings and recommendations from the 1999 Study that the Site is not suitable for this type of intense, high density development due to traffic conditions, access limitations and incompatibility with the surrounding single family residential community. On behalf of the more than 11,000 residents of our community, we strongly urge the Commission to vote against approving the Project and require the developer to implement design changes and undertake additional studies sufficient to eliminate the adverse effects on the health & welfare of nearby residents of Windsor Hills and View Park. Thank you for your attention and we look forward to seeing you again at the August 2nd hearing.

Sincerely,



John W. Heath, Esq.
President

c: Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor, 2nd District
Richard Bruckner, DRP Director
Kim Szalay, DRP Land Divisions
Steven Jones, DRP Lead Planner
Baldwin Hills Estates Homeowners Association
Ladera Heights Civic Association
Park Mesa Heights Community Council
Windsor Hills Block Club
UHA II Land Use Committee
UHA II Members

Attachments



Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

PROJECT NUMBER **HEARING DATE**
R2015-01232 TBD

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS
Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 073082
Plan Amendment No. 201500004
Zone Change No. 201500005
Conditional Use Permit No. 201500052
Yard Modification No. RPP201500385
Environmental Assessment No. 201500089

SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE REPORT

OWNER / APPLICANT

Peak Capital Investment LLC/The Bedford Group

**MAP/EXHIBIT
DATE:**

09/08/15

**SCM REPORT
DATE:**

10/08/15

SCM DATE:

10/22/15

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Eighty-eight new residential condominium units

Plan Amendment: To amend the Countywide General Plan Land Use Category from 1 to 4.

Zone Change: To change the existing RPD Zone to the R-4 Zone.

Yard Modification: To allow less than the required 20 foot front yard setback and 20 foot setback for properties that front primary or secondary highways.

CUP: Development Program Zone.

MAP STAGE

Tentative: Revised: Amendment: Amended :
Exhibit %A+ Modification to : Other:
Recorded Map

MAP STATUS

Initial: 1st Revision: 2nd Revision: 3rd Revision (requires a fee):

LOCATION

5101 S. Overhill Drive, Windsor Hills

ACCESS

South Overhill Drive and South La Brea Avenue

ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBER(S)

5009-007-022

SITE AREA

80,150 square feet (gross)/77,216 square feet (net)

GENERAL PLAN / LOCAL PLAN

Countywide General Plan

ZONED DISTRICT

View Park

SUP DISTRICT

2nd

LAND USE DESIGNATION

1-Low Density Residential (1 to 6 du/ac)

ZONE

CPD . Commercial Planned Development None

CSD

PROPOSED UNITS

88

MAX DENSITY/UNITS

10

GRADING

19,000 cy (Cut)/ 200 cy (Fill)/ 18,800 cy (Export)

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION (CEQA)

Pending

SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE DEPARTMENT CLEARANCE

<u>Department</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Regional Planning	Hold	Edward Rojas (213) 974-6433 erojas@planning.lacounty.gov
Public Works	Hold	Henry Wong (626) 458-4961 hwong@dpw.lacounty.gov
Fire	Hold	Juan Padilla (323) 890-4243 juan.padilla@fire.lacounty.gov
Parks & Recreation	Cleared	Clement Lau (213) 351-5120 clau@parks.lacounty.gov
Public Health	Cleared	Michelle Tsiebos (626) 430-5382 mtsiebos@ph.lacounty.gov

SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE STATUS

Reschedule for Subdivision Committee Meeting:

Reschedule for Subdivision Committee Reports Only:

PREVIOUS CASES

R1ST201400040

CUP No. 03-189 . Denied due to inactivity

Plan Amendment No. 03-189 . Denied due to inactivity

Zone Change No. 03-189 . Denied due to inactivity

Tract Map No. 060002 . Denied due to inactivity

CUP No. 85093 . Denied by RPC

REGIONAL PLANNING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND HOLDS

Case Status/Recommendation: At this time, Regional Planning does not recommend approval of the tentative tract map. Please read below for further details.

1. The proposed zoning under the Countywide General Plan update for the project site is C-1(Restricted Business Zone). The proposed project would be permitted in this zone with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).
2. The proposed land use category under the Countywide General Plan update for the project site is CG (General Commercial). Residential uses are permitted at a density of 0-50 du/net acre. A net area of 77,216 square feet would permit a maximum of 88 units.
3. A Hillside Management (HM) CUP is required for the proposed project under the current countywide General Plan. Please submit a HM CUP burden of proof. An open space dedication of 25% of the net area is required for urban areas.
4. Subject to the development standards for R-4 if the project proceeds with the proposed zone change.
5. Provide a lot table with the gross and net area information. Verify the net area. Only deduct the easements that will remain to calculate net.
6. Parking:
 - a. 88 condominium units require 176 parking spaces (2 per unit) and 22 guest parking spaces (1 for every 4 units), for a total of 198 parking spaces. Since only 193 parking spaces are provided, a parking deviation is required, as long as all proposed spaces meet the development standards for parking.
 - b. Parking spaces are shown with a width of 8 feet. The required width is 8 ½ feet. Please redesign to meet this requirement. If you are unable to meet this requirement, a parking permit will be required. Approval of the parking permit is not guaranteed.
 - c. Ensure all parking spaces have the required 26 feet of backup space.
 - d. Handicap accessible parking shall be provided at a ratio of 1 for every 25 spaces and 1 for every 50 spaces after 100 spaces. If 198 parking spaces are provided, 6 will need to be handicap accessible. One will need to be van accessible.
 - e. Parking note state 18 parking spaces are located in the courtyard. Identify the 18 parking spaces.
 - f. Number all parking spaces.
 - g. Please provide a parking layout plan for the subterranean parking.

7. Provide permits for the billboard. If the billboard is not legal it will need to be removed prior to public hearing.
8. As previously stated, please provide a list of building materials.
9. As previously stated, please provide a viewshed study showing the impact the proposed structure will have on the view of existing residences, if any.
10. Provide renderings/streetscape plan of the project from La Brea Avenue and Overhill Drive showing building height simulations.
11. Project is subject to the Healthy Design Ordinance.

RESUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

If a map revision is required, please submit the following items:

- *A completed and signed Land Division application,*
- *A signed and dated cover letter describing all changes made to the map,*
- *Six (6) folded and collated copies of Tract/Parcel Map and Exhibit Map/Exhibit "A,"*
- *A digital (CD or Flash drive) copy of the map/exhibit in PDF format,*
- *Revision fee payment (for the 3rd revision and thereafter), and*
- *Other materials requested by the case planner.*

NOTE: An appointment is required for resubmittal. **You must call the Land Divisions Section at 213-974-6433 to schedule the appointment.** Prior to scheduling, you are encouraged to contact the case planner for a preview of your next SCM submittal.

ATTACHMENT 2

MEMORANDUM

November 29, 1999

TO: File

FROM: Countywide Planning Section

SUBJECT: **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION FOR PROPOSED
REZONING OF PROPERTIES ALONG STOCKER STREET**

This Zoning Ordinance amendment is proposed to regulate the use of certain C-3, R-3, and RPD-1-15U zoned properties in the County's unincorporated View Park and Baldwin Hills Zoned Districts. The C-3 properties, located on the east, south, and southwest corners of the intersection of Stocker Street, Overhill Drive, and La Brea Avenue, are proposed to be changed to CPD. The RPD-1-15U and R-3 zoned properties, located on the southerly side of Stocker Street between Overhill Drive and a point approximately 110 feet westerly of Presidio Drive, are proposed to be changed to RPD-1-4U and R-1, respectively. The new CPD and RPD zoning designations require review of environmental documents, public hearings and approval of conditional use permits, with specified findings and conditions, prior to any new construction or additions to existing development on these certain properties. The R-1 change is necessary to bring rear yards into conformity with the development of the remainder of existing single family residential properties. The purpose of the changes is to assure that any development will be compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Presently, development can take place on the R-3 properties at a density of up to 30 dwelling units per acre, and on the RPD-1-15U either at a density of one dwelling unit per net acre or 15 units per acre, with approval of a conditional use permit. Development can take place on the C-3 properties at a level commensurate with a region serving commercial facility

The staff has reviewed this zoning amendment to determine the appropriate environmental document and it is our opinion that the subject activity is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the provisions of state Public Resources Code Section 21065 and Section 15061 of the CEQA Guidelines. That is, this amendment cannot be described as or result in a development project, nor will it induce the development of land. It will not result in the approval or issuance of any ministerial or discretionary entitlements, and no construction activities or any physical change will be undertaken as a result of this amendment. In addition, the potential for indirect change due to future development will be reduced below levels possible today by implementation of standards in the proposed, more restrictive zoning. There is no possibility that the action will have a significant effect on the environment.

If you have any questions regarding the above determination, please contact Dave Cowardin, Regional Planner of the Countywide Planning Section at (213) 974-6410.

STOCKER STREET ZONING STUDY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Board of Supervisors instructed the Department to initiate a zoning study of the undeveloped properties along Stocker Street in the View Park and Baldwin Hills zoned districts, and to recommend that the Regional Planning Commission consider changing the zoning of these parcels to an appropriate designation which would insure that any future development would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. (See attached motion.) For the purpose of continuity and to insure compatibility with neighborhood residential patterns, the commercial properties at the intersection of Stocker Street, Overhill Drive, and La Brea Avenue have been included in the study.

STUDY AREA

The study area is part of an area commonly referred to as the Stocker Corridor, a narrow valley that originates in the east near the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, at Crenshaw Boulevard and Martin Luther King, Junior Boulevard, and terminates in the west on the top of a ridge at the intersection of Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea. The subject properties include vacant residential parcels on the southerly side of Stocker Street and vacant and underutilized commercial properties at the intersection of Stocker Street, Overhill Drive, and La Brea Avenue, all in the unincorporated area of the County (See the attached map.)

The residential properties consist of four vacant lots located on the southerly side of Stocker Street generally between Presidio Drive on the east to the intersection of La Brea Avenue and Overhill Drive to the west. These steeply sloping properties constitute a continuous, one mile long strip of land, only bisected by Valley Ridge Avenue. The shallow depth strip varies from about 30 feet deep to portions that are slightly more than 300 feet deep. The total size of the properties is about 32 acres with parcel sizes being 5.3 acres and 6.6 acres, east of Valley Ridge, and 11.0 acres and 8.9 acres, to the west. Also included in the study is a variable width strip of land which consists of the steeply sloping backyards of more than 20 single family residences that front on Mount Vernon Drive, located up hill and to the south of Stocker Street, as well as a portion of the playground of the local elementary school that lies southerly of the commercial property at the corner of Stocker and Overhill, but takes access on Mount Vernon Drive.

The commercially zoned properties include the lots in the unincorporated County area at the five corner intersection of Stocker Street, Overhill Drive, and La Brea Avenue.

These include 1.7 acres located on the easterly corner between Stocker and Overhill, 0.6 acres located on the southerly corner between Overhill and La Brea and 2 lots totaling about 5.0 acres are located on the southwesterly corner between La Brea and Stocker. All of these parcels have building pads that are reasonably level, but generally have steeply sloping land adjacent to the street and highway frontages which makes access difficult.

EXISTING ZONING

Subject Properties:

The residential properties fronting on Stocker east of Overhill are zoned RPD-1-15U (Residential Planned Development, one acre minimum lot size, or 15 dwelling units per acre with approval of a conditional use permit.) To the rear of these properties is a narrow strip of R-3 (Limited Multiple Residence) zoned property which is a remnant of the original R-3 zoning in the area which was not included the designation of RPD-1-15U in 1985. The current RPD zoning was established based on the boundary of the frontage properties. The R-3 zoning boundary was established in 1947 and includes the rear yards of the lots at the top of the hill to the south.

The commercial properties are zoned C-3 (Unlimited Commercial Zone).

Surrounding Properties:

Properties located to the south and west of the subject properties are zoned R-1 (Single Family Residence Zone) and A-2 (Heavy Agriculture Zone), respectively. Properties to the north of Stocker Street, and easterly of La Brea are located in the City of Los Angeles and are zoned R1-1 (One-Family Dwelling Zone), RD1.5-1 (Restricted Density Multiple Dwelling Zone), and R3 (Multiple Dwelling Zone). Properties to the east in the unincorporated County area are zoned R-3.

EXISTING LAND USES

Subject Properties:

The RPD zoned properties are vacant. However, the R-3 remnant overlays the steep downhill backyards of single family residential (R-1) properties that front on Mount Vernon Drive. The R-3 properties also include all of Ruben Ingold Park on Mount Vernon Drive, as well as a strip of land developed as a part of the playground of the neighborhood elementary school.

The commercial corner between Stocker and Overhill is vacant, while that between Overhill and La Brea is developed with a small retail shopping center and vacant land.

and the final unincorporated County corner between La Brea and Stocker is developed with a 23-room motel and retail store.

Surrounding Properties:

Parcels on the View Park bluff southerly of and above the subject properties are exclusively developed with single family residences built in the late 1940's, with the exception of the neighborhood elementary school located on the easterly side of Overhill Drive, immediately south of the commercially zoned corner property. In addition, Ruben Ingold Park is located easterly of the school on the bluff above Stocker Street with frontage on Mount Vernon Drive. Properties easterly of the residentially zoned subject properties in the County unincorporated area are developed with apartments fronting on the southerly side of Stocker Street. Properties in the City of Los Angeles, northerly of Stocker Street and fronting on the service road Don Tomaso Drive, are developed with one- and two-story apartments ranging from 5 to 10 dwelling units on 8,000 square foot lots on average. The area to the north of these frontage lots is developed with single family homes. Properties to the west of the commercial properties are developed with an oil field.

PREVIOUS CASES/ZONING HISTORY

Despite their zoning potential and apparent desirability as infill lots, these properties have remained vacant or underutilized even though they have been the subject of numerous development proposals.

With respect to the RPD zoned land, several conditional use permit applications have been filed to focus clustered development on the least sloping portions of the properties nearest Valley Ridge Drive. This type design has been utilized to solve the problem of developing narrow parcels on sloping terrain with adverse geologic and soils conditions. Also, these developments have been required to address inadequate infrastructure and public services, including sewer and water facilities. Past proposals also have unsuccessfully dealt with traffic and access problems. Notwithstanding the physical constraints, developments have failed to meet the strict "exceptional design" test of the RPD designation, choosing instead to present bulky, apartment-like profiles, with insufficient open space and recreational amenities. These projects have been denied or have been withdrawn in the face of opposition.

The commercially zoned lands have also been subject to many development proposals over the last 20 years. The parcel on the easterly corner of Stocker and Overhill has never been the subject of development. The only building permits of record have been for retaining walls that have never been built.

The properties on the southerly corner between Overhill and La Brea have been the subject of two developments and several proposals. The top parcel adjacent to the

corner has most recently been developed with a small shopping center. The southerly part remains vacant, but was proposed variously as follows: 1) 40 condominium units approved in 1980 as a tract application; 2) a conditional use permit application for a 168 room motor inn denied in 1986; and 3) a follow-up 109 room motel also denied in 1987. Finally, the property on the southwesterly corner between La Brea and Overhill has remained developed with the original 23 unit motel. A motel expansion was requested in a conditional use permit filed in 1988, but was subsequently denied. The retail center in a building located adjacent to the corner has been used most recently as a fast food restaurant and market.

GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan depicts the subject properties in the study area in the following designations: (There is no community or area plan for the View Park area.)

Medium Density Residential

The residentially zoned portion of the subject properties is designated Medium Density Residential in the County General Plan, with an allowable density of 12 to 22 dwelling units per gross acre.

Low Density Residential

The commercial properties at the intersection of Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea are designated Category 1, Low Density Residential, intended for detached single family residences. However, the Plan makes provisions for local serving commercial services which are generally not shown, but could be accommodated under the residential designation subject to the following criteria:

1. Local serving commercial uses are small-scale providing neighborhood convenience goods and services, minor highway or roadside services, and neighborhood serving office and professional services.
2. Uses should be easily accessible and situated at community focal points, major intersections and established shopping facilities, but should not disrupt existing residential neighborhoods.
3. Scale of development should be limited, not exceed, in aggregate, 10 acres, and should be in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. Building heights should not exceed that of the existing residential development.
4. Setbacks, landscaping, lighting, and buffering should be arranged to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood. Projects should respect local architectural

themes and enhance community character. Signs should be subdued and freestanding signs should be discouraged.

5. Local service uses should be limited so that anticipated traffic does not adversely affect conditions on neighborhood streets. Access, egress, and parking should be provided to maximize safety and convenience and minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

Other Applicable Policies

It would appear that the subject properties could be characterized as undeveloped "bypassed land," suitable for "infill" that would include well designed multi-family projects at higher densities in this urban area, according to General Plan policy. However, while the Plan encourages infill, it requires that infill projects:

- not disrupt nor adversely affect the character of sound, established residential communities
- be of sufficient size to accommodate design features necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses
- not overburden existing public services and facilities
- not disrupt or adversely impact local traffic and parking conditions
- be compatible with surrounding uses in terms of scale, intensity, and design, all of which are assured by a specific site discretionary permit.

Due to topography the site is also subject to the General Plan Urban Hillside Management policies which encourage clustering development techniques in so far as they preserve, protect and enhance the visual character of hillside landforms, using innovation building techniques, retention of 50 percent open space, etc.

CONSTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT

Residentially zoned area

As noted previously, there are significant constraints on development:

- Topography

The residential properties contain very little level land, with slope categories summarized as follows: 7 acres, or 22 percent, below a slope of 25%; 12 acres, or 38 percent, 25 to 50% slope; 12 acres, or 38 percent, in slopes of 50% and up. At its steepest section, the property rises from Stocker Street more than 125 feet to the back fence lines of the properties on the ridge to the south.

- Geology and Soils

The westerly 1,800 feet of the subject property are within an earthquake fault zone, designated under the state Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The zone contains branches of the Newport-Inglewood Fault. Faults near the subject property have been located as shown on the official map that was produced under authorization of the Act. In addition, the site is almost completely covered by areas where previous landslide movement exist, indicating a potential for earthquake-triggered ground failure and permanent displacements, as shown on official maps prepared under the state Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.

Because of the topographic and configuration limitations of the residential properties, a safe building site at a minimum of 50 feet from a trace of a fault may not be possible. Further, a safe building site outside landslide areas may not be feasible. Finally, alterations of these slopes may undermine home sites uphill from the project

- Visual Impacts

Any development on these properties will alter an open area and hillside in an urbanized area. The hillside is mostly grass land but also is comprised of naturally occurring vegetation. Unless carefully designed, a high-density development may not be compatible with adjacent single family areas which are typically single story structures. Project roofs and mechanical equipment will be visible from home sites southerly of the site. Past developments have proposed contemporary structures that are highly visible from all points of view.

- Traffic

Stocker Street is designated a major highway on the County Master Plan of Highways. Access to and from the subject properties from Stocker Street may be unsafe because of the speed cars travel along this section of roadway that is designed to handle 60 miles per hour traffic. In past proposals, the Department of Public Works has restricted access along Stocker, preferring that all access be taken from Valley Ridge, which serves as a local collector street. Traffic signals exist at the intersections of Stocker with Don Miguel and Valley Ridge. These signals are intended to dictate traffic right of way and serve the developments in the City of Los Angeles to the north and the View Park development to the south. The signal at Don Miguel may not assist in access to the subject property due to the height differential between the Stocker roadway and a building pad on the subject properties.

Traffic generated by full build out of the subject properties at 15 dwelling units per acre, using standard trip generation factor for condominiums of 8 trips per day per unit, would be about 3,800 daily trips. Peak hour trips would be about 380. These impacts would

mostly be felt at the Valley Ridge Drive intersection with Stocker and at new driveways exiting on this steep street since Valley Ridge is one of only two collectors serving this area of View Park. Also, due to the steep terrain, developers have had trouble providing sufficient level queue for cars exiting the site. Since the northerly boundary of the subject properties is formed by a curved section of Stocker, adequate sight distance may be a problem for egress onto a public road where travel speeds are regularly 50 and 60 mph.

- Noise

The properties are already impacted by traffic noise from Stocker Street, a heavily traveled, high speed through route. In addition, noise generated from parking areas on the subject properties may impact residences on the bluffs above. Further, past proposals that consisted of apartment buildings have required central mechanical equipment located on the roofs of two and three story buildings. This heavy-duty equipment is noisy. Although the noise can be mitigated, this additional expense for sound proofing would add to the already high costs for development of this site.

- Biological Resources

A recent cursory review of the natural resources on the site by our staff biologist revealed that the subject properties contain native grasses, remnants of coastal sage scrub, and four volunteer oak trees which would be subject to an oak tree permit. Representative riparian flora are located on the flatter portions of the site adjacent to Stocker. These areas are not necessarily dependant on irrigation sources or the effluent from failed on-site residential sewage systems above the properties in View Park. Since it contains coastal sage scrub habitat, threatened species could be present. The subject property supports a variety of wildlife including red tailed hawks, blue jays, and western flycatchers, all of which were observed midday. A lizard was seen, gopher holes were profuse, and cats were seen hunting in the area. Development of a such a viable habitat could result in a significant impact and would require an environmental impact report.

- Public Services

It has been reported that water pressure is low in this area. A determination must be made, and a "will serve" letter issued, as to compliance with acceptable standards of water service which, if found substandard, must be upgraded to service development on the subject properties. A developer would be responsible for any conditions that arise out of the "will serve" letter.

Projects on the subject properties may create substantial impacts on fire, sheriff, libraries, and schools due to increased population and demand. Projects could create capacity and pupil transportation problems at the school district level.

There are two options for sewage treatment available to service development of the subject properties. Any proposed development would have to contact the City of Los Angeles to determine if they would be permitted to discharge to Hyperion Treatment Plant, which does not currently have a capacity problem. The other alternative, access to the County system, would require installation of extremely long connection lines and a lift station to get to the nearest areas serviced by the County. Finally, some properties on the ridge overlooking the property are connected to on-site sewage disposal systems which have failed; that is, effluent surfaces downhill on the subject property. This situation would most probably have to be remedied in the new construction and would involve connection of these private lines to the new sewer line.

Commercially Zoned Area

There are also constraints on development of the commercial properties at the intersection of Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea.

- Traffic and Access

The commercial properties are not readily accessible due to the traffic conditions at the Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea intersection. This intersection was designed to limit all turning movements and with the priority of serving free-flow, high speed regional traffic. Access to and from the corner properties must be made by right turns only. Also, the parcels are small and parking availability is limited. The total effect of limited parking and difficult access is to make the current Unlimited Commercial zoning inappropriate. This is exhibited by the minor level of development that has ever taken place on the commercial properties and the lack of success of the one small local serving, shopping center on the southerly corner of Stocker and Overhill that has recently gone into foreclosure.

- Size and shape

As mentioned above, these lots are irregularly shaped and are not of sufficient size to accommodate adequate parking for a major commercial development.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

Staff has determined that the activity is not a project under the provisions of CEQA (PR 21065) since no direct physical change will occur, and that the potential for indirect

change due to future development will be reduced below levels possible today by implementation of standards in the proposed, more restrictive zoning.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PUBLIC COMMENTS

One of the major problems with development in the Stocker corridor has been the failure of proponents to craft projects which are compatible with the neighborhood character. During the last few months, staff has had the opportunity to meet with land owners' representatives to assist them as they try to understand the limitations on development on the subject properties and craft reasonable solutions. In the community, the United Homeowners Association, a consortium of neighborhood watch groups in the View Park area, has had a long term interest in development along the Stocker corridor and at the intersection of La Brea, Overhill and Stocker. The group has brought out strong opposition from the entire View Park community when zoning permits have been advertised for public hearing. To date, staff has had two meetings with this group to elicit opinions from the local neighborhood.

ANALYSIS

Staff has explored a wide spectrum of options for the rezoning of the subject properties based on the needs of the community and the property owners, as well as good planning practice. The community is interested in a permanent solution that will eliminate what, in their view, is a constant onslaught of development proposals for the subject properties that are incompatible with the neighborhood character of the View Park community. It is not surprising that some in the community would like to see the properties as permanent open space, an option that would be difficult to achieve.

On the other hand, property owners continue to struggle to take advantage of what appears to be a good infill development opportunity considering the centralized location of the subject properties in metropolitan Los Angeles. The reality is that the physical, locational, and financial constraints on the subject properties require clustered density, apartment-style construction, and commercial uses that must be compatible with the character of the adjoining neighborhoods.

The many constraints on the properties and the potential environmental impacts dictate that any project must be subject to carefully drawn conditions and public comment. Any change of zone should therefore contain provisions that require approval of a discretionary permit prior to development, such as the RPD, CPD, and -DP (Development Program Zone) designations.

Close reading of the infill policy of the General Plan provides guidance as to what the appropriate zone of the properties should be. Past development concepts have

neglected to acknowledge the limitations on infill bonuses, such as the many physical constraints, lack of infrastructure, limited transportation alternatives, and significant distance from community centers. Infill policy requires maintenance of neighborhood character, compatibility with surrounding uses in terms of scale and intensity, and no disruption of local traffic and parking conditions. The Board of Supervisors made a first step in assuring compliance with this concept when it adopted the RPD Zone in 1985 over properties that were formerly zoned R-3. Subsequent applications have shown that the RPD-1-15U zoning density is too intense for the site and misleads potential developers. An appropriate zone for the residential lands would clearly identify constraints on any infill potential instead of relying on an unattainable range of densities, as is the case with the existing zones. Compatibility with the neighborhood should mean that densities should be similar to the View Park area southerly of the subject properties, which is zoned R-1 (Single Family Residence Zone with minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet) and situated on the level land south of the ridge above Stocker. Parcel sizes generally run between 5,000 and 8,000 net square feet in size.

The zoning of the commercial properties also must be sensitive to the constraints of the sites. While the General Plan designates the property as residential, the location at the intersection of several major through routes renders it undesirable for that purpose. The General Plan recognizes that such properties may exist but would not be depicted due to the scale of the Plan maps and provides for their use as local serving commercial. However, the current C-3 zoning is too intense and inappropriate due to the traffic conditions and access limitations at the Stocker, Overhill, and La Brea intersection. Also, the parcels are small and parking availability is limited. The total effect of these constraints is to stifle significant commercial development. This is exhibited by the minor development that has taken place on the commercial properties. All developments should require approval of a discretionary permit which would include a detailed traffic analysis satisfactory to the Department of Public Works and consideration of compatibility with adjacent residential uses and community character.

In a previous zoning action, the Board adopted the CPD zone for the southerly portion the vacant parcels on the southerly corner of Stocker and Overhill. That zone was found to be appropriate under the same conditions that exist today and should be the model for the other corner lots in the unincorporated County area.

Based on a review of the factors discussed above, staff has made a preliminary conclusion that the following zone changes would be appropriate for the Stocker corridor:

- Change of Zone from RPD-1-15U to RPD-1-4U
- Change of Zone from R-3 to R-1
- Change of Zone from C-3 to CPD on other corners

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- Authorize the staff to set a public hearing before the Regional Planning Commission to consider the changes suggested above
- In light of the pending zone changes, recommend to the Board of Supervisors that an interim urgency ordinance be adopted requiring a Conditional Use Permit for all development in the study area consistent with the zone classifications outlined above until the zoning hearings are completed.

SUGGESTED MOTION

MOVE to authorize staff to advertise a public hearing before the Regional Planning Commission on January 26, 2000, to consider a draft report and recommendation to change zones in the study area to reflect uses that will be compatible with the physical constraints of the subject properties and with community and neighborhood character and, **to further recommend** to the Board of Supervisors that an interim urgency ordinance be adopted requiring a Conditional Use Permit for all development in the study area consistent with the recommended zone classifications until the zoning hearings are completed.



ATTACHMENT 3



PHOTO TAKEN FROM BREA CREST DR AT 7PM

before



after

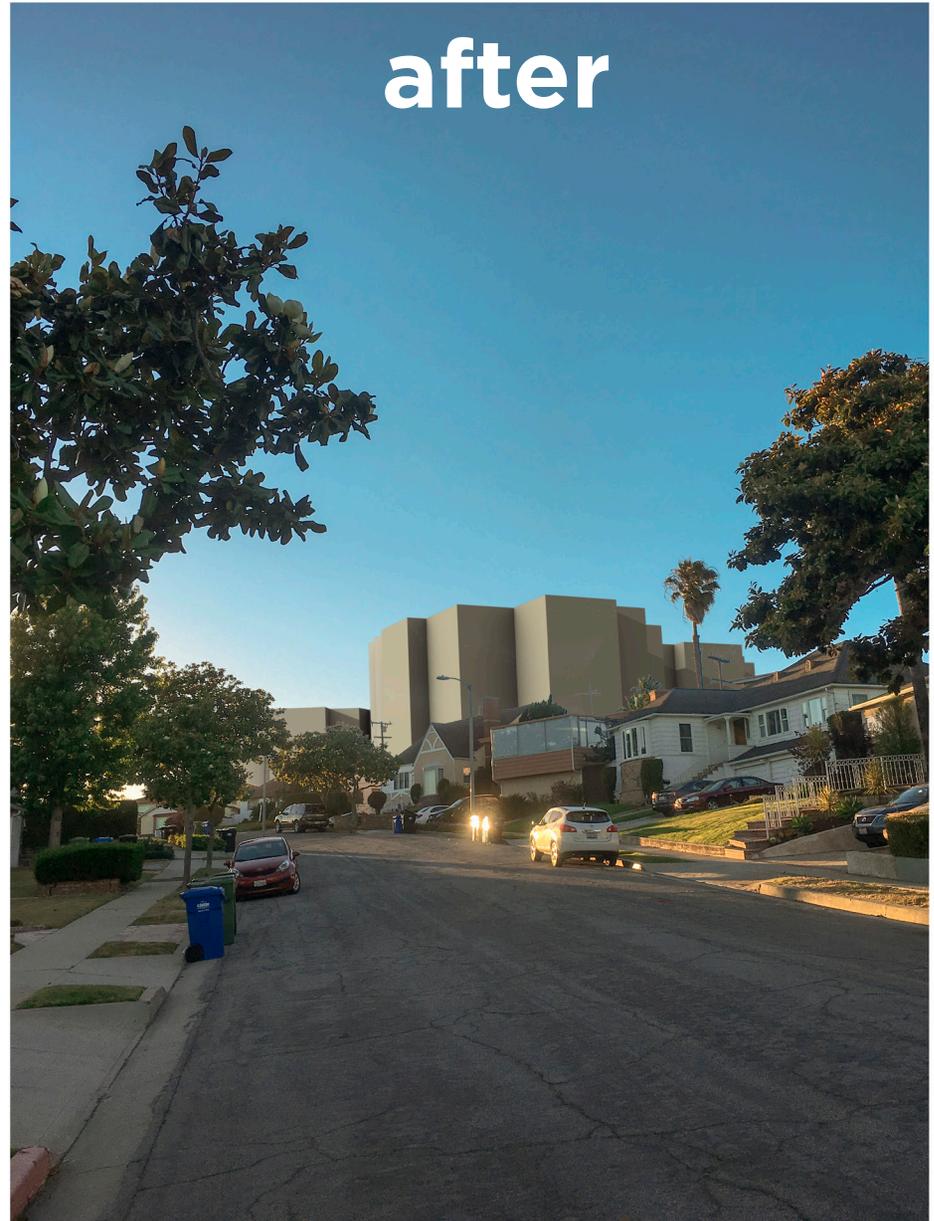


PHOTO TAKEN FROM ONACREST DR AT 7PM

ATTACHMENT 4

Los Angeles tightens regulations on new building near quake faults



Millennium Hollywood would be anchored by 35- and 39-story buildings flanking the Capitol Records tower. City officials last month agreed with the developer that a fault probably runs under the site but is too old to be active.

(millenniumhollywood.net)

By **Rong-Gong Lin II and Rosanna Xia**

JULY 18, 2015, 3:00 AM

Los Angeles Mayor **Eric Garcetti** announced Friday that the city has begun more extensive scrutiny of new developments proposed near earthquake faults on the Westside, in the South Bay and in Northeast L.A.

Under the new rules, the city is requiring developers to study whether faults run under their projects. The regulations apply to parts of the Santa Monica, Hollywood-Raymond and Palos Verdes fault systems. Other faults are already subject to this level of scrutiny.

The announcement comes after a **Times investigation in 2013** found that Los Angeles officials approved more than a dozen construction projects on or near well-known faults without requiring seismic studies to determine whether the buildings could be destroyed in a major temblor.

At the time, Los Angeles building officials said they were not required to order comprehensive seismic studies because the state had not yet officially designated the area as an official earthquake fault zone. Critics, however, argued that the city wasn't doing enough to make sure these new buildings were safe.

In general, California law bans construction on top of faults and requires extensive studies before approving projects within about 500 feet of faults zoned by the state. But decades of state budget cuts delayed the mapping of crucial fault zones in Los Angeles.

If there's no state zone, cities aren't required to enforce the law.

But scientists have identified many earthquake faults across Los Angeles that the state has not officially mapped. Cities have the power to use existing data to draw their own fault zones and require fault studies, but many don't.

On Friday, Garcetti said the new rules are part of his larger seismic safety campaign, which includes seeking mandatory retrofits of thousands of wood and concrete buildings at risk of collapse during a big quake.

"It's important that new buildings be as safe as they can be, and this new measure helps ensure our buildings are built on solid ground," Garcetti said in a statement.

“

It's important that new buildings be as safe as they can be, and this new measure helps ensure our buildings are built on solid ground.

— Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti

California geology officials welcomed the city's new zones.

"It definitely is a good step, because we want to make sure that the public is protected," California Geological Survey engineering geologist Brian Olson said. "That's not only the job of the state, but also local government as well."

With new funding granted to state geologists in 2014, Olson and his colleagues are now working on drawing state earthquake fault zones for the Santa Monica and the Hollywood-Raymond fault systems. Drafts could be released as early as this fall.

Building on top of an active earthquake fault is dangerous, state officials said. During the 1971 Sylmar quake, one side of the San Fernando fault shifted as much as eight feet. About 80% of the buildings along the fault suffered severe to moderate damage.

"Why would one risk constructing multimillion-dollar investments on ground that is known to be of very high

hazard, and place in jeopardy the lives of those who inhabit the building?" John Parrish, the state geologist, asked in 2013.

Other cities have taken the initiative to draw their own earthquake fault zones where the state has not.

After the Northridge quake hit in 1994, the city of West Hollywood, expecting a boom in development along Sunset Boulevard, created a fault precaution zone.

Since 1997, developers have conducted more than 25 detailed geology studies and redrawn some designs so that buildings would be constructed away from the fault, West Hollywood planning officials said.

California officials praised West Hollywood for ordering those studies.

"It really helped them and their community ... especially when CGS didn't have the funding," Olson said. "To just allow and wait for one agency to come up with these maps is not helpful."

The new push to map earthquake faults in Los Angeles came as officials questioned whether a fault existed beneath the Millennium Hollywood project, a proposed development of 39- and 35-story skyscrapers in the heart of Hollywood.

City officials last month agreed with the developer that a fault probably runs under the site but is too old to be active. Project opponents say that conflicts with the state geologist's conclusion last year that the fault is active.

ron.lin@latimes.com

Twitter: [@ronlin](https://twitter.com/ronlin)

rosanna.xia@latimes.com

Twitter: [@RosannaXia](https://twitter.com/RosannaXia)

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T : [Eric Garcetti](#)