



Catherine Palmer <council@babcnc.org>

Fwd: OPPOSITION to Zone Variance Case . ZA-2024-1881-ZV

clairewillenson <clairewillenson@aol.com>
To: Catherine Palmer <council@babcnc.org>

Mon, Feb 9, 2026 at 1:40 PM

From: clairewillenson <clairewillenson@aol.com>
Date: February 4, 2026 at 12:38:27 PM PST
To: jordann.turner@lacity.org, sidney.liss@lacity.org, andres.gutierrez@lacity.org, tlongcore@babcnc.org

February 3, 2026

Letter of Opposition to Zone Variance for Mulholland Tennis Club

To: Los Angeles City Planning and Zoning Administrator
Attn: Associate Zoning Administrator Jordann Turner

Jordann Turner jordann.turner@lacity.orgSidney Liss sidney.liss@lacity.org

Andres Gutierrez, Planning Assistant

andres.gutierrez@lacity.org (213) 682-6399

cc: Bel Air–Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council (BABCNC)

Travis Longcore, tlongcore@babcnc.org

RE: Case No. ZA-2024-1881-ZV
Environmental Case No. ENV-2024-1882-CE
Project Location: Bel Air–Beverly Crest / Council District 4
Zone: A1-1XL-HCR | Land Use Designation: Open Space
Applicant: Mulholland Tennis Club (MTC), Troy Pade, Chair

Dear Mr. Turner, Mr. Gutierrez, Mr. Liss and Mr. Longcore,

My name is **Claire Willenson**, and my home is at **8335 Skyline Drive**. My property line is directly adjacent to the Mulholland Tennis Club. I am a retired Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and a long-time member of the MTC, having joined in 1995. I play tennis two to three times per week and join in on many activities at the Club.

I value and support the Mulholland Tennis Club. However, I strongly oppose the request for a zone variance to construct an outdoor, open-air bar, which would fundamentally damage the tranquility, safety and character of our historic residential neighborhood, Laurel Canyon.

Shortly after I moved into the neighborhood, I met Bill McClellan, principal engineer and one of at the founders of MTC. Bill assured me that there are provisions to protect the neighborhood from any noise, disturbances or intrusions into our homes from the MTC. This document was called the **Conditional Use Permit**, and it never expires. I am asking for that protection today.

In reviewing the MTC Zone Variance application, I am particularly concerned by false statements, mistakes and a lack of transparency in **all five responses to the City's required questions**.

Question #1 – Unnecessary Hardship

MTC is asked if there are any unnecessary hardships that it faces with current zoning.

MTC writes: “it would be an **unnecessary hardship** to not be able to access alcoholic beverages on the Terrace at the proposed outdoor bar.”

To illustrate how frivolous and unnecessary the request for an Open-Air Outdoor Bar is: It takes **32 seconds** to walk from the Club’s beautiful existing **indoor bar** to the proposed outdoor bar location. That 32-second walk is simply across the dining room and exit through to the breezeway. Members already have full access to alcoholic beverages and may take them outdoors.

Respectfully, a **32-second walk** from an existing indoor bar does not constitute a hardship under any reasonable interpretation of zoning law.

Question #2 - Special Circumstances

MTC is asked about special circumstances that impact this property.

MTC writes: “Since the club was built in 1966, the surrounding neighborhood has been developed around it and persons purchasing their homes were aware of its existence.” This statement is completely false!

The Tennis Club was built AFTER most of the homes in the neighborhood. At that time, there was a Public Hearing of those surrounding homes, and that is why a Conditional Use Permit was required for the construction of MTC.

Question #3 – Presenting Comparable Properties

To justify the zoning variance, MTC cites Mountaingate Country Club and Porter Valley Country Club as comparable properties. These facilities are **not at all comparable** in scale or context.

- Mountaingate Country Club includes a 27-hole golf course, 22 tennis and PickleBall courts, and is not located in a residential neighborhood.
- Porter Valley Country Club is another large private country club and wedding venue with an 18-hole golf course.

By contrast, **Mulholland Tennis Club has only seven tennis courts** and is located in a **small, canyon setting in a residential neighborhood** with narrow, winding streets, modest sized homes, and very limited outdoor space. It is not a country club and has no golf course.

A truly comparable facility is the **Beverly Hills Tennis Club**, located at [340 N. Maple Drive, Beverly Hills](#). It has five tennis courts, a pool, fitness facilities, and a restaurant, all within a residential neighborhood, which it treats with upmost respect.

I personally spoke with the BHTC General Manager, who confirmed:

- Noise complaints at BHTC are extremely rare
- BHTC does not host loud or large parties, nor rent their facility
- PickleBall is prohibited due to noise concerns
- An outdoor open-air bar would be inappropriate for the neighborhood context

Question #4 - Explain why the zoning change would not be detrimental to public welfare

MTC writes: “The existing liquor license, which provides a grandfathered indoor bar, allows for alcohol to be served outdoors.” This is also a false statement.

The liquor license provides for **consumption of alcohol outdoors**, if it is purchased indoors, or prepared indoors. It is the central debate at hand. An open-air outdoor bar where alcohol will be served outdoors will be very detrimental to public welfare and inappropriate in a quiet canyon setting.

Question #5 - Explain why granting the variance would not adversely affect any element of the General Plan.

MTC writes: “The request is in harmony and not in conflict in any way....” Not true.

The neighborhood has attempted to address very serious problems with noise, traffic, light pollution, parking and late night hours for many years in an open and cooperative manner. The recent Board of Directors have dismissed and ignored the concerns. Therefore, the follow up statement written by MTC, “without any problems due to the strict supervision and control of the club” is also, sadly, not true.

Mischaracterization of Existing Use

The application by MTC repeatedly claims that the proposed project is “within the scope of the current, grandfathered use allowed at the property.” This is incorrect.

An outdoor bar and outdoor alcohol service are not currently permitted, which is precisely why MTC is seeking a zone variance. MTC has sent several letters soliciting support from the MTC membership and similar outreach materials to our neighborhood asking for support of an outdoor bar that inaccurately state many of the above mistakes.

In closing, I respectfully ask that the **Neighborhood Council** and the **City of Los Angeles** **deny the requested zone variance**. The existing facilities already meet member needs, and the proposed outdoor bar would impose an unjustified burden on one of Los Angeles’ cherished and storied residential neighborhoods, and our home, Laurel Canyon.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please save Laurel Canyon.

Sincerely,

Claire Willenson

8335 Skyline Drive