



Draft Minutes

Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council Virtual Planning & Land Use Committee Meeting Wednesday November 12, 2025 7:00 P.M.

Name	P	A	Name	P	A
Jamie Hall, Co-Chair	X		Michael Kemp Co-Chair	X	
Leslie Weisberg Vice-Chair	X		Stephanie Savage*	X	
Robin Greenberg	X		Robert Schlesinger	X	
Nickie Miner	X		Patricia Templeton	X	
Maureen Levinson	X		Stella Grey	X	
Jason Spradlin		X	Steven Weinberg	X	
			Travis Longcore <i>ex officio</i> **	X	

Co-Chair Hall called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Following the recitation of the flag salute, the roll was called with quorum met. *Member Savage was present for the third project on 2166 N Stanley Hills Drive. **Dr. Longcore was noted to be present at 8:09 PM.

1. November 12, 2025 Agenda was **approved** 10-0-0, as moved by Member Greenberg.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
 - i. The September 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes (Attachment A) were **approved** 9-0-1, with abstention from Member Templeton, as moved by Kemp.
 - ii. Approve the October 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes (**Attachment B**) - Deferred
3. **General Public Comment:**

Alina - Bel Air Park Homeowner asked for procedures.

Marlene H noted that any work we do towards the brush clearance issue along the 405 corridor, the Skirball area specifically would be appreciated. She noted that they had been talking to the city to request they do biannual clearing. She mentioned the brush fire by the temple and stated that anything we all do towards trying to prevent further fires in that area would be appreciated.

Svetlana asked if one person could give public comments on behalf of a group of various people present. They prepared and have assigned a group speaker to save us time and energy. One person will speak on that topic. Co-Chair Hall thanked her.

Sarah Drobis was called several times. She took her hand down at this time.

4. Chair Reports:

Jamie Hall, Co-Chair, related that he discovered that the City is collaborating, specifically the Mayor's office, with UCLA, to sell off small lots in the City of Los Angeles for development, and have issued an RFP, sponsored by Councilmember Raman and seconded by Councilmember Blumenfield - an RFP request for proposal to develop 12 lots, two in the VHFHSZ within the Santa Monica Mountain zone, and he believes that they are putting more than one dwelling unit per parcel (complicated parcels). He reached out to the Mayor's and Councilmember Raman's office because by state law and the administrative code, the SMMC has the right of first refusal on all excess property. He expressed concern about adding density in the VHFHSZ. Hall noted that he has asked for a meeting with the mayor's office.

Michael Kemp, Co-Chair, thanked everyone for attending, noting that this is true participation that makes the process work.

Leslie Weisberg, Vice-Chair, pointed out the LA City Council capped the RSO rent hikes and surcharges, which she noted is a major step in trying to sustain affordable housing in the City of LA. She commended CD 5 Councilmember, Katy Yaroslavsky, for her leadership on this issue.

Projects & Items Scheduled for Presentation, Discussion & Possible Action:

5. **9566 W HIDDEN VALLEY RD ZA-2025-2164-CU1-DRB-SPPC-MSP ENV-2025-2165-CE** **<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumbr/ZA-2025-2164-CU1-DRB-SPPC-MSP>**

Case Filed: 04/10/2025 & Assigned: 05/15/2025; Staff Assigned: Jude Hernandez

Applicant/Owner: Gholamali Lak Khosravi hilla.gottlieb@gmail.com 213-595-5001

Representative: Chabeli Hernandez [Dosala Inc] info@dosaladesign.com 424-341-8301

Project Description:

Major remodel and addition to (e) 1-story, 3,251 sf SFD resulting in (N) 2-story, 6720 sf SFD; (N) detached pool cabana; (N) pool with spa; (N) 8' FY fence; and four (N) retaining walls.

Requests:

- Class 1 CUP to allow for the construction of an over-in-height fence in the front yard.
- Class 1 CUP to allow for the construction of retaining walls on properties located in hillside areas which will result in more than (2) retaining walls total on the lot.
- Design Review Board, Specific Plan Project Compliance, Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance, Mulholland Specific Plan.

Chabeli Hernandez, representative for the applicant, provided a screen-shared presentation of the project. She was asked about the over-in-height fence, which she noted is to match what is existing, so they don't have to demo all of the fence going down to an "alley" and that they need to make modifications there and to rebuild it to match the existing fence, so it is one fence and not two separate designs. She noted that the client doesn't want to have two separate fences, and it is important that he has privacy that this offers. She clarified that the alley is more of a driveway. Asked about the retaining walls, she noted that it is purely to facilitate the garage, the stairs and to hold back some soil (pointing). She noted as to the slope, once they hit a section it is less than 3', kind of like a robust garden wall, 3' in height, as a retaining wall. Now, she doesn't have the plan for the haul route.

Co-Chair Hall asked, with the retaining walls and the front yard fence, why they are keeping and doing an over-in-height fence. Co-Chair Kemp thanked Chabeli Hernandez for an excellent

presentation. He noted that the existing front wall is over in height, asked if that was permitted, with a ZA approval at some point. She noted that she would get back to us about it, and that retaining wall #2, the existing wall, is at the back of the tennis court. She was advised to count that when proposing it because they want to know the total number of retaining walls that this project will have after it is built. Chabeli confirmed that the one retaining wall discussed was existing. Asked if the exterior stairwell is required for egress from the basement, she replied that it is not required but it is a wish list of the project. Co-Chair Kemp noted that normally when we see four retaining walls, alarms go off but hers are in the spirit of the code, to create the entrance to the garage, facilitate the stairs on the side, and not to manipulate major grading, etc. He appreciated this and thanked her for an excellent presentation.

Member Schlesinger asked how deep the shallow end of the pool is because it looks much deeper than normal, to which she said she will get back to us, but the area is a foot deep to get into the water. He noted that he asked because if you have children, the depth of the shallow end can be a question. She will get back to us on that. The floor was open for public comment, of which there was none. The public comment period was then closed and the floor opened to the committee. Chabeli was asked and noted that there was no input from the neighbor. While she had a DRB hearing, notice went out and there was no comment. Member Miner and Co-Chair Hall expressed appreciation of her presentation.

Motion to approve the project was moved by Mike and seconded by Weinberg.

Co-Chair Hall noted that the applicant's representative can provide the information to Ms. Palmer and speak about this at the full neighborhood council who will vote, and consistent with the Brown Act, she can only provide that information to Mr. Schlesinger, to which she agreed. Member Weinberg thinks this is a perfect example of exercise to allow these variances, the existing wall to be consistent with the wall in the driveway, the additional retaining walls are not nefarious, designed small. A perfect example of why we should say yes.

There were none opposed and the motion **passed** 10-0-1 with Member Schlesinger abstaining. Co-Chair Hall clarified that we make recommendations to the full NC. After this meeting there will be an agenda meeting for the full board who will consider the PLU Committee's recommendations. He invited her to attend to answer questions and speak.

6. **2785 N CASIANO ROAD; 2791 N CASIANO ROAD; 2845 N CASIANO ROAD
Milken Community School E Campus (Also commonly known as 15600 Mulholland)
CPC-2025-3449-CU3-SPPC-DRB-MSP ENV-2025-3450-CE
<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumbr/CPC-2025-3449-CU3-SPPC-DRB-MSP>**

Case Filed: 06/18/2025 & Assigned: 07/22/2025; Staff Assigned: Tiffany Corrales

Applicant: Tarryn Breskal [Milken Community School] tbreskal@milkenschool.org

Rep: Mark Armbruster [Armbruster Goldsmith & Delvac Llp] mark@agd-landuse.com

Project Description:

Class 3 CUP for Proposed High School. Interior Renovations with Minor Exterior Alterations

Action Requested:

- Class 3 CUP to permit change of use for the operation of a religious high school;
- No construction proposed
- MDRB & Specific Plan compliance

Milken presenters included Sarah Shulkind – Head of School, Milken, Carlos Sanchez – Head of Security, Mark Armbruster – Land Use Attorney, and Sarah Drobis – Gibson Transportation

Sarah Shulkind introduced herself and provided a little background on the Milken School project. They purchased the AJU property in January 2024 and are in the very early preliminary stages, looking to renovate the interior of the academic and student union buildings. They applied for a new CUP as a religious high school, with a goal to increase their enrollment by 360; no boarding students.

Carlos Sanchez shared his work background, including working through many emergencies including evacuations at his previous school. Their partnership with the community is a top priority. He discussed their 24/7 security team, which also helps cover Merman's campus. Their site is also used as a training facility for police. He discussed their security features and their own weather station. He noted that they cancelled a trip this weekend because of the atmospheric rain coming in, have closed schools in case of fire, mentioned the Palisades, and that they are also mindful of the homeowners. They take care of the campus, do biannual brush clearance, tree trimming, and anything to help the community, e.g., put a perimeter fence around, AI cameras, license plate readers, etc., and want to be an asset to the community for any emergency. He related that they had two accidents and their security were the first there. They'll help with traffic control; they have three nurses, EMTs, and concluded that theirs is a partnership between the community and Milken.

Sarah Shulkind reiterated the importance for security and safety. Their operations will primarily occur during the day, and they have no residential component; evening activities will be limited to after school. The FAR is adequate; they are not expanding square footage, the transportation report reports that the onsite queuing will be 7:45-8:05 am, which partially overlaps with Casiano traffic. They've included a designated lane for the neighborhood. Traffic flow will be mostly in the opposite direction, and pickup is staggered, from 3:00 pm, getting most off campus before the neighbors get home. They are preparing for increased enrollment in the demand for greater Jewish education.

Mark Armbruster noted that they are simply applying for a change of use. The current AJU CUP on the property was to allow college and high school students and adult education, and they are filing this CUP just for a high school. They are not asking for any new buildings. They changed it for no exterior improvements; 100% of the activity will be interior, all of which fits well within the existing academic building. He noted that most schools are proposing an expansion, usually ask to build additional buildings or facilities. This is entirely different. The buildings are already there and in place. They are just changing the use from multiple use – just for high school. They followed their traffic consultant's advice, moving the drop off and pick up point further down the lot; they think they'll be able to accommodate all onsite without parking moving to the Casiano areas. Sarah Drobis was present to answer questions re transportation.

Member Miner asked about the parking structure to the west, described as a steep and windy area with a very dangerous kind of a building and asks if it will stay the same and be used for parking. Sarah and Carlos acknowledged having had the same reaction as to the sharp turn. Carlos thinks they'll probably use it for faculty parking. They went through a drop-off and pick-up plan, and that will be an area that they'll have the employees use. Member Miner asked about physical education to which Sarah noted that there is another building across the dorms, the student union building, a site for physical activity. She noted that high schools do not require PE but there will be a weight room, meeting rooms for teams within the building; they are not changing the

exterior. Sarah noted that their baseball team practices at Encino Little League and cross-country practices at Balboa Park.

Vice-Chair Weisberg asked why there were no pictures, to which Sarah noted that they are very early in the process. Because their work is just improvement inside the building, they are coming for a revised CUP request. They will upgrade the classrooms built in the '60s to the '80s, and are happy to come back with specifics, within the confines of the walls of the building.

[Dr. Longcore was noted to be present at 8:09 PM.]

Mark Armbruster noted that they are finalizing the site plan as to pick up and drop off, working with their traffic consultant. They can submit those to us when they are ready. Vice-Chair Weisberg noted the importance of this community being able to look at some visuals.

Co-Chair Kemp asked about bus service and traffic issues, to which it was noted that this is a new CUP about what type of students can be here.... They already have students parking on the site, their junior class, and they have commuter shuttles that brings them back over... Asked about impact from the traffic studies of Mulholland to the Freeway, Sarah Shulkin noted that the junior and senior students drive. Sarah Drobis of GTC noted that these are great questions; they haven't done the traffic analysis, but they will be looking at the issues that were raised, e.g. getting on and off the freeway during peak congestion times. They'll be looking at that as part of the entitlement request.

Co-Chair Hall asked what's happening with the dorms and was told that they haven't gotten that far and don't know what the plans are yet. The focus is now on the renovation of the academic building. Enrollment is up significantly impacting their current campus, so, they can move. Their current grades are 6th through 12th grade; right middle school and left upper school. All the high school kids will be at the old AJU and the younger at their current campus. They discussed the anticipation of increased interest in attending a Jewish day school. We were told that you don't have to be Jewish to attend but the program is based on Jewish values; about 95% students have at least one Jewish parent but not all, and that parents value that it is a safe space. They will go to 900 students, and probably over the course of time will increase from 300 to 400-425 students within the scope of the CUP.

Member Greenberg asked and she was told that they will still allow the people at Stephen Wise to use their parking for the High Holidays and when Curtis and Skirball needs that. They have a close relationship with Stephen Wise and want to work closely with all the schools on the corridor. It was noted that Mulholland sometimes has cars parked on it, and to keep an eye on it. Sarah noted that they are not afraid to take away parking privileges, the HOA knows that if issues they act on it immediately. The city planning commission makes the decision. They are trying to get an exemption, a couple of class exemptions that they fall into; they are in the process of getting reports regarding noise, air quality and they're working on it.

Public Comment:

Fariba Nahamou asked a question about traffic, for her being able to get out to go to work. She does not see it as being realistic and noted the need for traffic control at least to start with. She asked what else they have done regarding security concerns, to ensure students won't be loitering within the neighborhood, and added that if this can occur, the least that the school can do is to provide a gate for the neighborhood as 900 students is a lot.

Sunny Rad and Daryoush Rad live in Beverly Crest and had kids that attended Milken, which she said has been more than a school but a bridge to the larger community. She noted that her children have learned to give back and stay engaged and sees how the school invests in being good community partners, noting their commitment to safety, EP and managing traffic, examples of how their presence benefits everyone who lives here. She supports the project.

Sally Triphon did not respond to being called.

Sara Kashani lives a few blocks away, and considers the approach as thoughtful, prioritizing safety, communication and respect for the neighborhood; appreciates the outreach; coordinating with the HOA and making sure there is always someone available to answer their questions She noted that they operate responsibly. Proud to support.

Deborah Arden noted that she is a longtime resident of Bel Air Crest, living here for 15 years and thinks there is no question that Milken is an asset to the area, citing measures that they have taken to improve fire safety, noting their security presence is visible, communication with the neighbors very consistent and responsive. She fully supports the CUP request.

Armen Vartany noted that they are proposing 900 from 200 and thinks an EIR is necessary to know what the impact will be on noise, air quality and to the neighborhood. A question of public transparency, and the community and decision makers need to know what kind of enrollment changes will happen. The current CUP is from 1966, and he thinks a new EIR is essential to understand the full impact on the community.

Alina Vartany mentioned the elephant in the room - Categorical Exemption, Class 1 that the applicant claims as an existing facility - the significant effect exception. A categorical exception shall not be used if there is a reasonable possibility that there will be an unusual effect of unusual circumstances. She noted that we are talking about transforming a campus that operated carefully staggered... going to 5 days a week high school serving 900 teenagers from adults to teens. Traffic alone is extraordinary. The AJU students were conditioned to operate during peak hours. Applicants offer a second campus that have never been evaluated. We need an EIR.

Marcia Mankoff noted that she and her husband have lived in Bel Air for 25 years and raised family. She spoke in favor of the project, noting that she is also a proud Milken parent, sensitive to the needs of Milken, the neighborhood and residents, and stressed their shared values.

Sharona Hanasab spoke in favor. She encouraged approval of the application and to trust that they know how to do what they are good at - raising good Jewish kids into grownups/safe adults.

Sharona Shenassa Bel Park Resident noted that the city records are clear. AJU was approved decades ago for a maximum enrollment of 500 students. The cap reflects the limits of the site, its hillside access, and its small campus design. But AJU never came close to that number, as you may well know. City filings show that in 2008, the university had less than 200 students. For the past 20 years, total enrollment has hovered around 100 students, not 500. This means the 900 figure that Milken is now referencing has no factual basis in the property's historical use or its entitlements. The site has operated for decades as a small academic campus, not a large-scale institution. And what might have been tolerable traffic-wise in 1966 is simply not sustainable today. The bottom line, AJU was designed and approved for 500. It's always been close to 100.

There's no justification for multiplying the number by nearly 10 times without the full environmental impact report, and a hard look at what this neighborhood can realistically handle.

Svetlana Kasman introduced herself as a homeowner at Bel Air Park. She will speak for three minutes on behalf of two others. Traffic around Milken School is already heavy congestion. Commuters unable to leave the neighborhoods, compounding traffic on Mulholland (naming various schools in the area). Milken's proposal to add up to 900 would turn this into a complete disaster. One lane in and one lane out. No room for emergency vehicles. The original CUP up to 500 college age students, in 1966 before any residential neighborhoods or other schools. 900 high school students will all be here at the same time. Historically, we had a most about 100 students. She doesn't think we could handle the 500 students we are allowed. She is happy that Milken is here; noted that we were unhappy at EF hearings... However, the city must require a traffic study to prove it is an unsustainable expansion. They mentioned that partnership with the community as a top priority but that is not her experience. There is no transportation report that they are aware of. She mentioned that there is planning to demolish the dorms and to build a stadium instead of the dorms; the stadium would be right next to the residences. The drop off and pick up is moving into their residential area. There needs to be more and more meetings like this before things an move on.

At this point in the meeting, Co-Chair noted that it is 8:45 PM and we haven't had committee deliberation yet, and we have another project on the agenda, he started to share his screen with a timer with one minute.

Marlene doesn't understand how they're filing for a CEQA exemption and is terrified of traffic.

Alex Raminfar shared his support for the school CUP application, thanked the reps at Milken for their continued transparency, recommended the school keep the neighborhood access from being interrupted. He doesn't believe it is 900 additional students but up to 900.

Mona Shargani has concern regarding the proposed CUP and improper CEQA exemption filing. She noted that there were no more than 500 students at any given time. She noted that it was staggered and cannot sustain the number of students they are asking for. She is happy that Milken is here, but we must address the numbers they are asking for.

Janine Kolodny commended Hall for running an efficient meeting. She is a very proud neighbor and proud alumni parent; past president of Stephen Wise Temple and speaks firsthand of the excellence of Milken and knows they'll take care of all of us. She echoes all the positive comments said before her. Hopes we can appreciate that we will have an outstanding neighbor on Casiano that will benefit the entire neighborhood.

Ameet Keny corroborated the positive statements but at the same time need to address 900 and how can you know what traffic will be like with increased number of students. He thinks we will need a traffic study and not allow a CEQA exemption.

Karen Furie noted that it is Milken's duty to keep children safe; need to talk about fire that can happen during the daytime. It would be a feat to get 900 students off the campus... Need to talk about evacuation... should see if practical to get neighbors out if there is a fire.

Jila Golbahar has lived off of Casiano for 35 years; said we need a good security system, and a gate, and because 900 kids will walk down Casiano Road, we don't know what will happen to

us. For the people in Bel Air Crest, he asked if they would mind opening their gate? It is very crowded here; we need more security. Maybe cameras and your own fire department for us.

Bahara noted that no one is questioning Milken or their values; she is happy that they are coming here but terrified of the traffic, which factors she detailed, and noted that we are going to have teenage drivers. It is a fire zone. We must have a traffic report done.

Dora Manavi is a 29-year-old resident of Bel Air Park who noted that the Eaton and Palisades fires are fresh in our memories. We have learned that we can't trust the Fire Department to protect us, and to remember the Paradise Fire in 2018. As to evacuation routes, we'd have to open the gate to Bel Air Crest and can't see how we can have thousands of people coming through this road. City Planning failed the City of Paradise, and we need you to protect us.

Omid Kashani is a resident a few blocks from Milken's east campus. They've lived here for over four years. A longtime Milken parent, he has observed their moving into the former AJU site and how carefully and considerately they have handled their move into the AJU site. He values their ongoing engagement with the community. He and his family fully support their efforts and wish them all the best.

Sharon Janks urges the committee to support the request for CUP and noted that safety and EP are very real concerns for everyone here. She applauds Milken for their proactive steps, brush clearance, evacuation planning, the detailed emergency preparedness and willingness to protect the school but make the whole neighborhood safe. She feels we can all find a way to be proactive and let this pass, a very big yes for their plans.

Sally Triphon believes security will be taken, the 900 students are not all drivers, and asked for support of their plans.

Saul R. Smith is a long-term resident on Beverly Glen Dr., four children graduated, and he is a proud parent. He noted they have demonstrated their commitment to being a good neighbor who listens to feedback, plans, and follows through on their commitment and wished them success.

Alan Shargani supports them but doesn't believe in having more than 500 people on the campus. In 1966 nobody was up here. It looks like they are trying to not do any studies and not do CEQA; at some point facts and studies need to dictate what will happen up here.

Beth Gal has been a homeowner in Bel Air Park since 1966. She wanted to go over the math. In the event of an earthquake or fire, the Casiano thoroughfare cannot handle the following populations: You've got 150 homes in Bel Air Park with about 3 people average per home. That's 450 people. Then you have 550 students, faculty, and staff from Wise. You've got 1,140 students and faculty with the proposed CUP by Milken. Plus, depending on the direction of the fire, about 1,000 from Bel Air Crest and 763 people from Mountain Gate all trying to get down Casiano at once, depending on the direction of the fire; then you have a total of 4,000 people trying to get out during a fire. It took some of us an hour to get out of here. It is absolutely a fire hazard and a safety hazard. She asked the committee to deny the CUP they are requesting.

Shana Kahen is a resident of Bel Air Park. She cited traffic impact and asked if the Bel Air Crest residents will be using the back gate that they have access to, to bring the students, if so, wants to address that to make sure that won't be the case.

Deborah Arden lives in Bel Air Crest and assured that we cannot go through the back gate unless an emergency and if it is opened by their HOAs, they don't have the option to drive through there. Public comment period on this item was closed. Co-Chair Hall asked if the applicant's rep would like to respond to the comments.

Mark Armbruster noted that they are aware of the traffic and emergency evacuation concerns, which is why they are having a traffic study done. It is helpful to hear the further comments, and they made note of them. They have a meeting with the community and will continue to meet with the community addressing a lot of these comments. They are not here to compare AJU with what we are doing. It is a CUP for a high school that stands on its own. The community should rest assured that we take the traffic comments seriously.

Sarah Shulkind noted that they took note of everything everyone said and it is not 900 additional students but that there are already 540 upper school students, over half of whom already park at the property as well. They purchased the property to increase the enrollment overtime by an additional 360 students.

Co-Chair Hall asked what form of continued community engagement they are planning to have; a lot of data has not yet been collected; how will you present it to the community? Sarah Shulkin noted that they are and want to be in direct conversation with the neighborhood. Their plan is to continue to do meetings like this... so that we are good neighbors and partners going forward. Mark Armbruster thinks that they think they'll get a CPC hearing possibly in February 2026. Member Miner related that she believes Milken will be able to figure it out. She didn't hear carpools mentioned, noting the carpool rule, 900 divided by 3 is 300. Miner believed they have the common sense to figure it out. She wouldn't want to change anything but would go along with the plan, approve the CUP, get it going and have this excellent situation go forward. Member Templeton noted their great intentions and that they could be an excellent partner for the neighborhood, but the residents have raised serious concerns, e.g., traffic, kids loitering, fire evacuations, potential sports arena, seeking a CEQA exemption, and Casiano a public street that cannot be gated. These are serious questions that need to be answered.

Motion to table this; have them come back at some future unspecified time when Milken has had further discussions with the neighbors, has a transportation/traffic study, an evacuation plan or a shelter in place plan, and additional response to issues the community raised was moved by Templeton and seconded by Weisberg. Member Levinson asked if you have dry high wind red flag days would they consider not having school that day, in case there were evacuations. Templeton noted that the last evacuation was not on a high wind day; and even with low wind there could be a need for a rapid evacuation.

Hall expressed that the neighborhood council would like to be a vehicle to allow this conversation to occur, fulfilling our role in the charter. He thanked all the attendees for coming tonight; invited the applicant to come back; request a PowerPoint with actual plans along with the data, if you bring our experts to go over these things; and we have a board who are experts in this, in hillside communities, and know how to read and evaluate these kind of plans. Hall noted that he is in support of the motion.

The motion to table this **passed** by 8 yeses, 1 no from Schlesinger, and 3 abstentions from Greenberg, Miner and Dr. Longcore.

7. **2166 N STANLEY HILLS DR (Parcel 2) ZA 2025-1386-CUI-HCA (Returning)**
<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumbr/ZA-2025-1386-CUI-HCA>
2172 N STANLEY HILLS DR (Parcel 1) ZA-2024-6711-CU1-HCA
<https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/search/casenumbr/ZA-2024-6711-CU1-HCA>
(2166 - 2172 N STANLEY HILLS DR ENV-2024-6712-EAF [Environmental])
Applicant: Rouzbeh Zarrinbakhsh [Stanley Family Residence LLC] rouzbeh@ggclawco.com
Representative: Sami Kohanim [Entitle and Permits] entitleandpermits@gmail.com
Case Filed 03/07/2025 & Assigned 03/26/2025 Staff Assigned: ALEXANDER TRUONG

Project Description:

Construction of a new SFD with a two-car garage.

Requests:

Allow construction of a new SFD in R1 Zone on a substandard hillside street without improving otherwise required Continuous Paved Roadway of < 20 feet.

Additional link provided by the applicant:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mbh1Fb_3J8JqBoQW2E-eWq9qx_mguZ6?usp=sharing

Co-Chair Jamie Hall recused himself, noting that he will not be participating, would turn off his camera, mute himself, and ask to not be made a panelist, and Mr. Kemp would take over chairing the rest of the meeting. Hall noted, for the record, he is recusing himself because he is the president of a nonprofit that has a prospective ownership interest near the project site. He left the meeting for the rest of the evening, and handed the gavel to Michael Kemp who asked the presenter to address the questions from the August 12th meeting:

Questions for continued project 2166 & 2172 Stanley Hills Drive

1. Did you have an AQMD permit associated with the demolition permit?
- Sami answered yes, it's not in his possession but he can get it to us.
2. Grading exceeds 1000 CY (or 750 CY for streets less than 20' wide). When properties are under common ownership they are considered (1) site under LAMC Section 91.70003, haul route is required. See attached grading correction sheet, code 70006.7. And if a ZAA or other entitlement (to exceed allowed grading) is needed it must be filed with the current ZA case. R-1 allows 750 CY on streets less than 20'. And do you have grading calculations for each project?
- Sami answered that they are not going above 1000 CY export.
- Co-Chair Kemp asked for streets less than 20' wide, the limit is 750 CY. From his conversations, it is 1,000 or more.
3. Side yard setbacks... based on height, vary, seem to vary, seems would be 6' on either side. Please verify building height & each side yard setback. And R-1 encroachment plane applies to side yards as well, verify compliance.
- Sami noted that it is not an issue; their starting point is 3 feet, 7 inches; they are above what is required.
4. Rear yard retaining walls in the backyard show no freeboard on drawing A5.01. Will the (2) walls be taller than 10' including required freeboard. Provide spot elevations.
- Sami answered no; 5.01 is an illustration. If you look at the grading permits, their walls have freeboard. He will provide. Asked, Sami noted that the elevations of the RWs are in the grading plans that we have access to.

5. The tree removals at front of property would allow road widening has historically been a benefit to the neighborhood. Will trees in the front be removed and if so will there be 1:1 replacement?
- Sami replied that if they are denied the widening in front of the property, then yes, if there are any trees to be removed, they'll replace them 1:1.
6. If he were to improve the road, as the previous owner had been prepared to do, you could eliminate 6' of the 8' of dedication and this would help reduce your grading. Note relief from road improvement along property frontage has been required of (4) recent projects on Stanley Hills Drive & (5) on Groveland Drive, as well as other projects in the area.
- Sami noted that he has been discussing with Bureau of Engineering – they are requesting a 5' dedication which will reduce the grading and export.
7. For each house (2166 & 2172) – of the two houses proposed - please verify the square footage per floor, note only 200 SF of garage is exempt square footage Include square footage for ceilings over 14' high.
- Asked if he updated the square footage, he replied no, they are the same. 2166 has 2091 square feet, (broke it down.) they don't have 14-foot ceilings. They have submitted to B&S and have preliminary zoning approval and Plan Check checked their square footage.
8. Confirm onsite parking spaces - standard & compact. Square footage relates to parking requirements for each house SF over 2400 requires a third parking spot.
- Sami noted that they have one standard and one compact.
9. Provide a parking and staging plan for the various phases of construction.
- Sami replied yes, they have a plan; he tried to upload it into the file. They also went to LADOT and got a construction management plan for both properties. He'll try to share it.
10. Include any updated information on the plans for the next hearing.
11. Minimum State Fire Regulations – for new construction on and/or accessed by roads less than 20' wide have minimum requirement of 20' in width (Cal. Code Rags. Title 14, 1273.01)

Comments from (5) neighbors included: narrow street frontage, wildlife concerns & impact, tree removals, failing infrastructure, concerns for abutting properties and mediation of hillside walls due to large backyard cut in hill, project not reasonable size on small lots, house demolished without AQMD permit, among other concerns.

Asked if he has addressed the State Fire Regulations that he may be required to widen the street, Sami replied, yes. He is working with the ZA and waiting for a response.

Dr. Longcore was interested in the ZA question about fire safe regulations, because it is very clear in the regulations that he needs the full 20-feet with two lanes all the way to the zone and we'll be very curious to learn how the ZA interprets that.

Member Savage related that she made 5 points of major concerns at their hearing and there is a precedent at least 14 cases in the immediate area for widening the roads for new construction. She didn't understand why they were not widening the road in front of the property. She discussed the grading, there is a lot of dirt to be removed from both sites, and anyone can calculate that; that is her item 2. Item 3 was considering the dedication required, pulling the

buildings forwards; if anything, they'll have to remove trees which cover the frontage of the property which prevents access to the houses. She wondered about tree replacement and zone zero requirements. Item 4 she mentioned exceeded retaining wall ordinance in both height and freeboard, based on the drawings that we were provided with from the planning website. Item 5 exceeded the R1 encroachment plane in both the front and side yards, so the building seemed too tall. Even if you were to measure from the shortened side yards, it's too tall according to the R1 encroachment plan; the project is subject to R1 zoning.

Member Savage noted that she hopes her points were heard and that somebody reads them. She noted that we need to see the parking and staging plan; a civil engineer to stamp the CY. He noted that they have a reputable civil engineer, for 30 years. He was asked and shared the screen, with the grading plans; showing 410 CY of export one property and 2172 Stanley grading plan shows 437 CY of export. Total 847 CY, under 1,000. Templeton asked if the rule for under 750 is correct, he agreed that it would be over. He opened that link in question, as to whether it could be opened, which he shared with us. He opened the parking plan prepared by his traffic engineer. Approved by LADOT June 23, 2025. He discussed parking on one property while the other is being built.

Asked if they are doing grading for both at the same time, he noted that is to be determined. He'd talk to the construction team once hired. Templeton asked about the asbestos contamination, based on a transcript of a call. The owner, Rouzbeh, noted that he got a permit and sent it to a licensed contractor but thinks they didn't send it to the South Coast AQMD. Templeton then read the transcript aloud which appears to indicate this seems to say there continues to be there is asbestos contamination. Rouzbeh refuted this, noting that the only notice he received was for the notice requirement, that they are resolving with the authority.

Public Comment:

Kim Gottlieb Walker stated that she lives near the property and daughter across the street. The developer came in the middle of the night and demolished the property, and she did not receive notice about it. She stated that we've all been exposed to asbestos now, and that the builder is under investigation by the attorneys at AQMD. She noted that they continued since July 25th, when they received the notice from the AQMD. This is required by law. Other people who have violated this and exposed neighborhoods to asbestos like this have been punished by a 5-year moratorium and that should be imposed... She noted that there is a reason for the road to be at least 20 feet wide; our road is 18 feet wide and cars park on the other side of the road; so, it is virtually impossible ... when there is an emergency... to have all the trucks required for this construction ... the road is crumbling. There are so many reasons for this project to be denied and they should be punished. To widen the road, they are going to take out two trees that are over 100 feet tall.

Jeff Walker spoke up for the two oldest trees in the canyon that cannot be easily replaced. Two years ago, Terminex found a nest with three eggs, and work stopped for three days because those eggs were protected. Nobody has been here to see the trees to see what lives in them, how important they are to this neighborhood. He has retired since the pandemic and he sees the birds that live there and during this time when the rodent population has exploded since the fires, and to take those two trees which are key parts of the neighborhood and the ecology of the neighborhood, need to be protected. He hopes some protected motion can be put on while this is being deliberated. He referred to a Times article about asbestos exposure associated with the Eaton fires; there is no level of asbestos without risk. He noted that there were also historical artifacts that were also destroyed during the demolition. He concluded that even if the trees are not protected, the birds that live within the trees are protected.

Randy Dodge noted that he has a special relationship with this property, having been born here, was a child here, and had seen these houses when he was one year old. He looked up the requirements for doing a demolition and the law states notice must be on a placard 11 x 17 which is not there; all the neighbors were supposed to be notified but were not. He noted that they did not protect the workers who had no idea who were all exposed to it. We have been exposed to it for about a year now. He spoke on the trees being part of the neighborhood and the applicant is going to clear cut them. He wants us to take a hard look at this noting that the applicant is under evaluation with the AQMD otherwise we would be all clear. Travis brought up the rule about the 20-foot-wide street; it is a known that the state law that we have a 20-foot-wide street. When we had that last fire, we could not get out of Stanley Hills... Our lives and safety are at stake. Think of what we feel like as a community. Co-Chair Kemp noted that there are approximately 5 letters on our website to look at.

Roy Faerber thanked us for taking the time to listen. He is at 2174 Stanley Hills, adjacent to 2172 proposed house. He noted that 2172 and his property were once one property and they shared a retaining wall. Stone wall. They hold up the hillside in a terraced fashion. There are 6 or 7 walls that create a terraced backyard with mature vegetation and fruit trees. He plans to tear out the walls at the 2172 side of the property line. He needs drawings to show how the wall will be rebuilt to affect his property. He has hired an engineer who is familiar with both their properties and if the developer wants to show us something more detailed, otherwise he'll do it on their own. He wants to make sure his property is not damaged when retaining walls get ripped out. His property and 2172 are adjacent, share retaining walls and at the ground level they are at the same elevation. Stanley Hills is increasing in elevation... if you are standing on Stanley Hills, you are looking at 2172, you look down into the property. It is unclear how the plans will address this ... meanwhile, that driveway is like a 5 to 8 foot drop straight down, he doesn't know how if he is elevating the earth underneath, which means there will be another 5-8 feet built up to support the house, then there will be like a 30-foot structure – a 30 foot wall next to his property. He said he has tried to talk to the guy and that it is all baloney.

Sandra Carradine thanked us for hanging in and showing up and for the diligence. She noted that what we have seen so far is disingenuous. There is a complaint she spoke to the AQMD about herself and turned it over to an attorney. She cannot wait to see any permit that they say they have; because if they have one, why would AQMD be prosecuting them? She has not been able to see one thing provided by these applicants and has never been able to access their links.

Eugene Hess lives at 2180 next to Roy, with his wife, dealing with the same problems Roy is dealing with. He thinks these builders are bad actors. He noted that they have a lot of doctors and the Wonderland School up the block. At 9:00 AM, a hundred cars are there; 3 PM 500 cars are there. He opined that they have no concern for the community; everybody in the community knows each other. Do it the right way or don't do it.

Leslie Monsour thanked everyone for staying up this late and for the opportunity to comment on these two projects: especially when it comes to the Santa Monica Mountains there is a difference between development and overdevelopment. She and her husband moved into an existing home 50 years ago. She opined that if someone wants to live here with their mother, they can check out the dozens of open houses every Sunday. They saw up close January, house after house up in flames. While Stanley Hills is a vital artery for over 1500 families it is also a substandard 18' roadway with no sidewalks in a VHFHSZ whose infrastructure has not been improved for over a century. That is overdevelopment. She wonders where they will buy their fire insurance as well as the neighbors and pointed out that the applicant wants his mother to live here. She describes

this as overdevelopment. She thanked us for listening and thanked Jamie Hall, who as President of LCA appointed her as Poet Laureate of Laurel Canyon. She mentioned a book just published, called "Before the Forest Burns."

Sami responded that they listened to everyone's concerns, and tried to answer questions, as a land use consultant. He noted that we are not going to come here and build these houses without permits, grading bonds and grading plans. There was a sign for two to three months outside on the gate, he has pictures of it, as to grading. He doesn't understand what's going on. He noted we are building these houses by right, not asking for any deviation for any ongoing requirements for building a house. These were three properties which they brought down to two properties and for his client to get slandered as bad actors, he doesn't know what to say. Rouzbeh refuted the allegations that he heard on this platform and noted that he would respond, and he will talk to Roy a few times; he met his family but will respond to the community concerns which he said are well taken. He noted that of the things he has heard, most of them are not correct.

Member Savage noted that the point is our committee asked for questions to be answered, that they have not been sufficiently answered; there are more questions, it keeps growing. Maybe there is some communication problem with their parties. As far as any kind of motion can be made, we would have to continue this until they answer the questions as to valid calculations showing topography; there is no information about parking, staging or the various stages of construction to two large homes on small lots. There are a lot of logistics that she doesn't think they are providing. It needs to be here if they want to provide this information. It seems to be stonewalling at this stage.

Member Weinberg echoed Member Savage's concerns and reminded the committee that there is a letter from Paul Edelman from the SMMC that was very concerned about demolishing things without permits. He thinks the applicant needs to come back and answer these questions. The permits about the demolitions posted Rouzbeh two permits on the fences. He received multiple calls about the demolitions himself.

Member Levinson echoed Member Savage's concerns as well and even if by right you still must follow the rules, did you follow demo or construction hours? To follow the rules is being professional. She doesn't see professionalism regarding these developers. Rouzbeh responded that he is not a professional developer. He has never developed a property before. He believes the contractor starts at 7 am to 3 pm.

Dr. Longcore referred to the letter from the SMMC that is posted to the website. He noted that given the hour and the productivity of the back and forth, and the ZA hearing has already been held. Co-Chair Kemp acknowledged that there was a request for a 90-day hold. Member Savage would be happy to present the list if there is an extension of 90 days.

Member Templeton recommended that they write down the code: LAMC 12.21.c. as to their max by right grading of 750 which he has exceeded. Dr. Longcore concurred with Templeton if the issue we can respond to now is the request to not widen the street, adding is there any way that you can recommend giving a zoning variance to build on a substandard street? Member Grey asked if we do, we should still in our letter mention all the concerns Savage raised.

Motion: Greenberg moved that based upon our understanding of the applicant's request, we are not able to approve the project based on the street being less than 20 feet, because it has to be 20 feet according to our understanding. The motion was seconded by Savage.

Templeton would clarify in the motion that we don't support their request for a variance to not widen the road to 20' because of fire danger and evacuation risks. Member Miner asked if they did widen, would they have to destroy the two trees, to which Savage noted that those trees are gone if they build those houses and they don't show those on their plan.

Following discussion on the motion, Dr. Longcore clarified that you could recommend denying of the request or recommend to not support the request to have deviation from the rules (requirements) for a continuous paved roadway because of the nature of the project, and cannot support things regarding safety, (include the list of concerns here) that mean the findings couldn't be made, and there should be draft findings for this that would probably argue this is consistent with and makes the neighborhood safer and better and supports the housing element of the city or whatnot. There appears to be an unmitigated asbestos issue, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has expressed concerns about the biological impacts, etc., demonstrating the rationale for why the findings to allow for deviation from code can't be made. Kemp would say that the PLU committee recommends non-approval of the project based on the applicant has not made the findings necessary.

A committee member would also recommend that the project requires a haul route. Dr. Longcore noted the letter be written between now and the board meeting, Jamie could direct Michael and Leslie to prepare a letter to incorporate the concerns of the committee.

The motion **passed** 12-0-1 with the abstention from Dr. Longcore.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M. to December 9; however, the next meeting date was later changed to December 2, 2025, 7:00 P.M.]