

Hillside Federation Newsletter July, 2016



www.hillsidefederation.org

Baseline Hillside Ordinance Revisions at City Planning Commission on Thursday, July 14

The Hillside Federation will have a final discussion of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance revisions at our meeting Wednesday. The staff report and revised ordinance were released to the public by the Planning Department on July 7, only one week prior to consideration by the City Planning Commission on Thursday, July 14. The proposed revisions include changes to both the Baseline Hillside Ordinance and Baseline Mansionization Ordinance. The staff recommendation report and ordinance are available at: <http://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/baseline/StaffReport.pdf>.

Following consideration by the CPC, the BHO and BMO revisions will move on to PLUM and the full City Council. It is vital that all interested persons review the proposed ordinance and provide their input to the Planning Commission.

The Hillside Federation submitted comments to both the first and second versions of the document (see newsletter, p. 2). At our meeting Wednesday we will consider whether to provide any additional comments based on the City Planning staff report and recommendations.

Agenda

July 13, 2016

7:00 pm

Pinz Bowling Center, 2nd Floor
12655 Ventura Blvd., Studio City

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of minutes
- III. Officers' Reports
 - A. President's Report
 - B. Treasurer's Report
- IV. Old Business
 - A. BMO/BHO Update - Marian Dodge
 - B. 2471 Nalin Dr. - Robin Greenberg
- IV. New Business
 - A. Support for Friends of Runyon Canyon - Yvonne Hessler
- VI. Adjournment

Next meeting - September 7

Note – There is *no* meeting in August

Hillside Federation mission: *To protect the property and the quality of life of the residents of the Santa Monica Mountains and other hillside areas of Los Angeles and its environs, and to encourage and promote those policies and programs which will best preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles.*

Hillside Federation Comments to April Revision of Baseline Hillside Ordinance

City Planning released its staff recommendation report for revisions to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance and Baseline Hillside Ordinance on July 7 (see link on p. 1). Planning also released a Q&A document about the ordinance and staff report, available at: http://planning.lacity.org/ordinances/docs/baseline/QandA_3.pdf. The City Planning Commission will consider the ordinance at its meeting on Thursday, July 14. We urge everyone to review the draft ordinance and testify before the CPC to share their comments and concerns.

The Hillside Federation submitted a letter on the April 21, 2016 revision to the Director of Planning, Vince Bertoni, on May 11, 2016. The substantive portion of our comments were as follows:

At its meeting on May 4, 2016, the Federation voted to support the letter from Councilmembers Paul Koretz and David Ryu. The Councilmembers' letter requested that proposed amendments to the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO) revert to the original goal of protecting neighborhoods. With respect to hillside areas, these requests include:

- Removal of increased 'by right' grading allowances;
- Reducing FAR for R-1 lots below 7500 square feet to 0.45;
- Elimination of the guaranteed 1,000 sq. ft. minimum residential floor area in designated Hillside areas; and
- Seeking additional community input on FAR exemptions and basement exemptions.

As addressed in the Hillside Federation's January 9, 2016 comment letter on then-proposed BHO amendments, the spirit and intent of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance is to use natural hillside terrain to determine the appropriate scope of development on hillside parcels. The Federation's letter requested the closure of the loopholes in the original BHO, which came to light only after its adoption in 2011. The originally proposed BHO amendments, drafted after a long series of public hearings/meetings, helped to close those loopholes. The Hillside Federation's January letter also urged the City to:

1. Map all hillsides with a 1:1 or greater slope in hillside areas; and
2. Prohibit development of 1:1 or greater slopes unless a Zoning Administrator's Determination is obtained.

As you know, since the passage of the BHO in 2011, hillside communities in the City of Los Angeles have experienced a dramatic increase in development. Engineering and construction techniques not contemplated when the BHO was first adopted have resulted in many unintended consequences. For example, the recent trend of expansive 'habitable basements' in hillside area (many twice the square footage of the above-ground home) cause enormous harm. The massive amounts of grading for such projects causes substantial degradation of natural terrain in hillside areas. Corresponding negative impacts include the loss of open space, negative environmental impacts including substantial loss of wildlife connectivity, negative impacts to public safety of our hillside communities, failure of infrastructure that is unable to support the increase in volume and scale of development, and destruction of neighborhood character.

One need only look to recent development applications such as the 82,000-square-foot single family residence previously proposed at 10101 Angelo View Drive to understand the urgent need to close BHO loopholes and adopt more stringent regulations to protect the steepest, most prominent slopes in our hillsides.

The Hillside Federation urges the Department of City Planning to follow the recommendation of the May 4, 2016 letter from Councilmembers Koretz and Ryu to revert to the objectives of City Council motion 14-0656, and to include the Hillside Federation's request to map and further regulate development of slopes of 1:1 or greater. Adopting these recommendations will strengthen the Baseline Hillside Ordinance, allowing it to live up to its original spirit and intent.

Small Lot Subdivision Revisions Released in Response to Public Input

The Department of City Planning announced on June 7 that it has refined the language of the Small Lot Code Amendment and Design Standards in response to comments received during the public hearing and outreach process. Planning has added new documents for public review, including a Summary Sheet, Revised Frequently Asked Questions, and an Overview of the Draft Map Standards. The documents are available on the Department of City Planning's website, at planning.lacity.org, under "News" and "Small Lot Code Amendment and Policy Update."

The Small Lot Code Amendment and Design Standards are being issued for an additional round of public review and comment. Written comments or questions may be submitted via email until August 8, 2016 to:

- Simon Pastucha, Senior City Planner, at simon.pastucha@lacity.org,
- Connie Chauv, Planning Assistant, at connie.chauv@lacity.org, and
- Elaheh Kerachian, Planning Assistant, at elaheh.kerachian@lacity.org.

Bringing an Issue to the Federation

If your organization would like to bring an issue to the attention of the Federation, please complete a Request for Action form (available at the website www.hillsidefederation.org) and send it, along with supporting documents, to president@hillsidefederation.org no later than 10 days prior to the meeting. This will help you organize your presentation so that our meetings can flow efficiently, while providing the necessary information to allow the Federation to consider your organization's request.

LA Area Helicopter Noise Coalition

The LA Area Helicopter Noise Coalition (LAAHNC) sent an email on June 26 announcing that the FAA had implemented new helicopter routes along LA County's coastline at only 750 feet offshore. The FAA's announcement came only days after LAAHNC filed an appeal to have the FAA reconsider its earlier dismissal of LAAHNC's proposal for helicopters to fly at least a half mile offshore.

LAAHNC states that "routes only 750 feet offshore would be counterproductive to reducing noise on coastal noise-sensitive areas. For comparison, the mandatory shoreline route for noise abatement in Long Island, New York is one mile offshore. Also, the FAA's own flight analysis data . . . [shows] how the new routes are likely to bring many helicopters closer to shore."

The FAA claims that routes were developed in consultation with local stakeholders, but LAAHNC says it represents community stakeholders and was never consulted. Moreover, LAAHNC believes that "[n]one of the impacted coastal cities or members of the impacted public were given any advance notice of these routes or any opportunity to make input prior to implementation." The Daily Breeze released an [article on the new helicopter routes](#) including the FAA's comments and a video of a coastal helicopter flight.

LAAHNC invites community members to go to its [Mobilize page](#) to send comments to Senators Boxer and Feinstein and members of Congress, and reminds everyone to use the Helicopter Noise Complaint System. See LAAHNC's [complaint page](#).

Hillside Federation
June 1, 2016
Draft Minutes

I. Call to Order

President Charley Mims called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Guest speaker: Cindy Montañez

Cindy Montañez, CEO of TreePeople, introduced herself and gave members background information about herself, the mission of TreePeople, and how TreePeople intersects with the Hillside Federation and our membership.

II. Approval of Minutes

The May minutes were taken up during Old Business and approved as submitted.

III. Officers Reports

A. President's Report - Charley Mims

The MRCA announced that the Los Angeles River Recreation Zone is now open. The public is welcomed to kayak, walk, and fish on the two sections of the River managed by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority in Elysian Valley and the Sepulveda Basin in Encino.

A settlement has been reached in the lawsuit by Friends of Griffith Park regarding the ballfields in the Crystal Springs Picnic Area, which includes a blueprint for improving and enhancing future access for underserved Los Angeles children in the event a ballfield is developed in the park. The Heritage Western Sycamore, along with 44 other trees including many native trees, will be preserved for picnickers to continue to enjoy.

Carol Sidlow reported that the public meeting on the FEIR for the large development at 8150 Sunset at the corner of Crescent Heights was held. The Hillside Federation took a position regarding this development in November 2015. Recently Councilmember Ryu of CD 4 and the City of West Hollywood have weighed in with letters with specific mitigations.

Marian announced the ceremony for the completion of the 67-mile Backbone Trail and its

nomination as a National Recreation Trail on Saturday, June 4 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at Will Rogers State Historic Park in Pacific Palisades. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to: samo_superintendent@nps.gov.

B. Treasurers Report - Don Andres

All Hillside Federation bills have been paid.

IV. Old Business

A. Second Dwelling Units - Mitch Menzer (Outpost Estates)

Mitch described the impacts of the proposed repeal of the Second Dwelling Unit (SDU) Ordinance on R-1 properties. It would basically end R-1. The existing ordinance bans “granny flats” in hillside areas and on substandard streets. If the ordinance is repealed, the City would default to the State standards which do not exclude any areas. The Department of City Planning staff report was issued and a hearing held before the City Planning Commission. The CPC voted to move the repeal forward to the City Council’s Planning and Land Use Management Committee. If approved it will go to the City Council for a vote.

There has been little community outreach or input from neighborhood groups and stakeholders in the City. We discussed other alternatives and concerns that were not fully addressed by the Staff report included lack of information provided to the CPC and the impacts to residential neighborhoods. Carol suggested that the Hillside Federation re-send its May letter to Planning Deputies in all Council offices. It was also suggested that a meeting with Councilman Huizar,

**Upcoming Hillside Federation
Meeting Dates**

The Hillside Federation does not
meet in August.

September 7

October 5

November 2

including a Hillside Federation representative, might be a good idea.

B. Hollywood Community Plan Update - Carol Sidlow

Carol attended the May 17 Department of City Planning meeting on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Hollywood Community Plan. There were strong protections for hillside areas in the 2012 Hollywood Community Plan (HCP), although other elements of the plan were problematic. Hillside Federation member groups in the Hollywood Community Plan area were encouraged to participate. George Abrahams read a list of items he would like studied in the DEIR.

The Hillside Federation supported the hillside land use policies in the 2012 HCP. The Federation’s position letter will be recirculated and our member organizations in the HCP area encouraged to submit letters. We should look at what needs to be updated, i.e., paper streets. The comment period for the DEIR ends June 15, 2016.

C. BHO/BMO Amendments – Carol Sidlow

Carol announced a new round of public meetings for the second draft proposed Baseline Hillside Ordinance/Baseline Mansionization Ordinance Amendments. The Federation supports Councilmember Koretz’s original motion.

V. New Business

A. 2501 & 2505 Carob Drive – Joan Cashel (Upper Nichols Canyon)

Joan alerted the Federation to the 19,000-square-foot house on two lots being proposed on Carob Drive. It would replace a 2,500-square-foot house. There will be a hearing on the proposed project before the Mulholland Design Review Board on Thursday, June 2. Mark Stratton suggested that the neighbors familiarize themselves with the Mulholland Specific Plan with respect to this development.

B. 2471 Nalin Dr. - Robin Greenberg

The South Valley Area Planning Commission approved a house on a substandard lot near Hoag Canyon that appears to be taking advantage of the basement exemption by calling a story a basement. The decision has been appealed to PLUM, but no hearing date has been set. No action was taken because the president had not had the opportunity to circulate the Request for

Action and there was no longer a quorum. If the hearing is held before the next Federation meeting, the Executive Committee will review the request.

Announcement: George Abrahams announced that the revised Neighborhood Integrity Initiative is being recirculated for signatures.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Sidlow, Recording Secretary

Members Present:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Beachwood Canyon | George Abrahams |
| Bel-Air Assn. | Bruce Kuyper |
| Bel Air Skycrest | Mark Stratton |
| Brentwood Hills | Deborah Hockemeyer |
| Canyon Back Alliance | Lois Becker |
| Franklin Ave/Hlwd Bl | Don Andres |
| Franklin Hills Res. | Charley Mims |
| Lookout Mountain | Carol Sidlow |
| | Steven Poster |
| Los Feliz Impvmt. | Marian Dodge |
| N. Beverly/Franklin Can | Robert Levy |
| Oaks Homeowners | Wayne Schlock |
| Roscomare Valley | Steve Twining |
| | RobinGreenberg |
| Save Coldwater Canyon! | Heidi Mackay |
| Studio City Res. | Claudia Freedle |
| Upper Nichols Canyon | Stacy Sillins |

Guests:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| TreePeople | Cindy Montañez |
| Outpost Estates | Mitch Menzer |
| N. Beverly/Franklin Can | Connie Levy |
| Upper Nichols Canyon | Joan Cashel |

What's happening in your neighborhood?

Please send the Federation news of your activities with photos so we can share them with all our members.

**Mulholland Scenic Parkway
Design Review Board**

Meets 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month,
6:30 pm

Marvin Braude Constituents Service
Center 6262 Van Nuys Blvd. Van Nuys
1st floor conference room

The Federation of Hillside and
Canyon Associations, Inc.
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PRESIDENT

Charley Mims

CHAIRMAN

Marian Dodge

VICE PRESIDENTS

Mark Stratton

John Given

SECRETARY

Carol Sidlow

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

John Given

ORGANIZATIONS

Beachwood Canyon

Bel-Air Association

Bel Air Knolls Property Owners

Bel Air Skycrest POA

Benedict Canyon Association

Brentwood Hills Homeowners

Brentwood Residents Coalition

Cahuenga Pass Property Owner

Canyon Back Alliance

CASM-SFV

Crests Neighborhood Assn.

Franklin Ave./Hollywood Bl. W.

Franklin Hills Residents Assn.

Highlands Owners Assn.

Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.

Hollywood Heights Assn.

Hollywoodland Homeowners

Holmby Hills HOA

Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.

Lake Hollywood HOA

Laurel Canyon Assn.

Lookout Mountain Assn.

Los Feliz Improvement Assn.

Mt. Olympus Property Owners

Mt. Washington Homeowners

Nichols Canyon Assn.

N. Beverly Dr/Franklin Canyon

Oak Forest Canyon Assn.

Oaks Homeowners Assn.

Outpost Estates Homeowners

Rancho Verdugo Estates HOA

Residents of Beverly Glen

Roscomare Valley Assn.

Save Coldwater Canyon!

Save Sunset Blvd.

Shadow Hills Property Owners

Sherman Oaks HOA

Silver Lake Heritage Trust

Studio City Residents Assn.

Sunset Hills HOA

Tarzana Property Owners Assn.

Torreyson Flynn Assn.

Upper Mandeville Canyon

Upper Nichols Canyon

Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

CHAIRPERSONS EMERITUS

Shirley Cohen

Jerome C. Daniel

Patricia Bell Hearst

Alan Kishbaugh

Gordon Murley

Steve Twining

CHAIRPERSONS IN MEMORIAM

Brian Moore

Polly Ward