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Zoning Administrator Lourdes Green
City Hall, Room 763
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

September 25, 2015

Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood
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Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners
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Brentwood Residents Coalition
Cahuenga Pass Property Owners
Canyon Back Alliance
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Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
Highlands Owners Assn.
Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
Hollywood Heights Assn.
Hollywoodland Homeowners
Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn.
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
Lake Hollywood HOA
Laurel Canyon Assn.
Lookout Mountain Alliance
Los Feliz Improvement Assn.
Mt. Olympus Property Owners
Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
Nichols Canyon Assn.
N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon
Oak Forest Canyon Assn.
Oaks Homeowners Assn.
Outpost Estates Homeowners
Rancho Verdugo Estates
Residents of Beverly Glen
Roscomare Valley Assn.
Save Coldwater Canyon!
Save Sunset Blvd.
Shadow Hills Property Owners
Sherman Oaks HO Assn.
Silver Lake Heritage Trust
Studio City Residents Assn.
Sunset Hills Homeowners Assn.
Tarzana Property Owners Assn.
Torreyson Flynn Assn.
Upper Mandeville Canyon
Upper Nichols Canyon NA
Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

Re: **ZA 2014-3721(ZAD)(ZAA)**
ENV 2014-3722-MND
8904 Crescent Drive

Dear Zoning Administrator Green:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., founded in 1952, represents 45 resident and homeowner associations spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. The Federation's mission is to protect the property and quality of life of its over 200,000 constituents and to conserve the natural habitat and appearance of the hillside and mountain areas in which they live. The Federation opposes the applicant's request for a waiver from the required improvement of the substandard roadway to 20 feet, and opposes the applicant's request for a reduced rear yard setback.

The request by the applicant to be exempted from Section 12.21 of the Hillside Ordinance with respect to roadway improvements would be precedent-setting. Over the years, there have been several other applications for development along this stretch of Crescent Drive and waivers of the Hillside Ordinance which have been denied. Those cases are ZA-2007-0779; ZA-2007-0766; ZA-2007-2032; ZA-2010-6034 (Appeal upheld by the Area Planning Commission).

In the Zoning Administrator's determination regarding ZA - 2007-0779 - 9001 Crescent, the Zoning Administrator states:

"One of the key purposes of the Hillside Regulations is to provide safe vehicular access for residents, visitors, and most critical, for emergency vehicles in case of fire or other emergency. The subject property is located in a designated Mountain Fire District and in a Very High Fire Severity Zone. Any impairment to Fire Department access to the site would expose the residents of the properties as well as other dwellings located in the area to an increased risk of fire as well as other emergency situations."

In 2008, the owner of this property and another individual died in a traffic related accident at this very location. The survivors/Plaintiffs sued the City of Los Angeles claiming a "dangerous condition" and the City settled for a large sum of money. The Council File is 11-0147. To date, Crescent Drive has not been improved and the question of future liability remains.

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The condition of West Crescent Drive is fragile as this roadway has no curbs; no berms; no gutters; no lights, no guard rails and is without infrastructure. It is an asphalt roadway covered in a layer of slurry and is 8 - 15 ft in width which is the definition of "substandard roadway." It remains unclear whether Crescent Drive could withstand the bombardment of trucks; drilling rigs; concrete pouring trucks and other construction related impacts without further exacerbating a "dangerous condition", and if the request is in compliance with the Hollywood Community Plan which states:

"The Hollywood Community Plan objectives include ensuring the availability of paved streets, adequate sewers, drainage facilities, fire protection services and facilities and other emergency services and public utilities to support development in hillside areas. The Plan includes broad land use objectives including: To encourage the preservation and enhancement of the varied and distinctive residential character of the Community.

"In hillside residential areas to: A) minimize grading so as to retain the natural terrain and ecological balance. B) Provide a standard of land use intensity and population density which will be compatible with street capacity, public service facilities and utilities, and topography and in coordination with development in the remainder of the City."

Geographically, a large part of Wonderland Avenue lies below this area. If West Crescent is not improved and widened as per the Code, the potential for roadway failure or a truck falling over onto Wonderland Avenue is a real public safety concern. In addition, the access to this location will be Wonderland Avenue which itself is one lane; very substandard and in need of repair.

The Hillside Federation has consistently opposed waivers from the Hillside Ordinance from street widening to the minimum requirement of the Los Angeles Municipal due to our concern for public safety and the importance of upholding the Code. Those cases are: ZA-2011-0627 – 9115 Wonderland Avenue; ZA -2012-1026 – 8401 Grandview Drive; ZA -2010-634 - 9169 Crescent Drive.

The Hillside Federation respectfully urges that the Hillside Ordinance be enforced and that both the applicant's request for a waiver from the improvement of the roadway to 20 feet and the deviation from code to reduce the required setback be denied.

Thank you for your consideration of this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Marian Dodge
Marian Dodge

cc: Michael LoGrande
ZA Linn Wyatt
Councilmember David Ryu
Renee Weitzer
Julia Duncan
Steven Poster
Carol Sidlow