



Pacific Palisades Community Council

October 5, 2023

VIA EMAIL: apcwestla@lacity.org; juliet.oh@lacity.org

West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission
200 N. Spring St.
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: DIR-2019-[6352, 5584, 5571, 5524]- CDP-MEL
ZA-2019-[5585, 5574, 5525]-ZAD
17538, 17544, 17550 Tramonto Drive; 17532, 17540, 17523, 17529, 17533, 17537, 17541,
17547 Revello Drive

Honorable Commissioners:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) has been the voice of the community for more than forty years. PPCC recognizes and respects property rights and the ability of property owners to use and develop their property in accordance with the law. However, the safety and security of the community must remain a priority and when impacted, be addressed.

PPCC has always insisted, as a matter of principal, that all laws be scrupulously applied to development projects. We specifically ask that excavation and consultation practices be meticulously implemented in hillside streets located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs), of which Pacific Palisades is a part.

At our public board meeting on April 13, 2023, our members expressed their unequivocal concern about the magnitude of excavation associated with the development project proposed for Tramonto and Revello Drives (see addresses above), on the site of a landslide where a compromise of the slope would result in great adverse impact to public safety. We voted then to urge the City of LA to take all necessary precautions to protect the community from any breach of public safety and to ensure all building regulations are scrupulously followed in these very high fire hazard hillside streets, that are narrow and difficult for ingress and egress. We also requested an EIR for the project.

Since that time, we have learned the following additional information concerning this proposed development:

- The developer's own geological report states that proposed caissons and tie bars will **not** prevent earth movement on 2/3rds of the existing active landslide. Residents feel that construction activity and grading requiring over 3,000 dump truck trips could trigger landslides that will damage nearby homes and potentially block Pacific Coast Highway and Tramonto Drive. Those two roads provide the only access to the entire community of over 300 homes.

- The 200-foot paved extension of Revello as well as landscaping associated with this development will add additional water to the landslide, further increasing the possibility of earth movement that could damage roads and existing homes.
- Most of the trucks and equipment required by the development must traverse a substandard 12-foot-wide stretch of Revello which is already cracked, in poor condition, and was never designed to support that level of activity.
- This proposed development of four 10,000+ square foot houses requiring over 30,000 cubic yards of grading violates the Brentwood-Palisades Community Plan which stipulates that no development occur in geologically sensitive areas; that excessive grading be avoided; and that new development be in scale with existing homes.

As such, at our board meeting on September 28th, the board of the PPCC again discussed the alarming scope of this proposed construction and agreed to again urge the City to require a full EIR for this project, which stands to compromise an unstable hillside, risk the well-being of many residents and their homes and set a dangerous precedent for overbuilding on unstable hillsides, in small VHFHSZs, where wildfire risks are high and evacuation can be perilous for all.

In addition, Pacific Palisades has a Community Plan which expressly states the need to “minimize grading, limit land use intensity, and preserve natural topography in hillside areas.” It goes on to call for the protection of “environmentally sensitive areas, scenic views and scenic corridors.” It further cites the need to “restrict building on geologically sensitive areas”; “preserve open space and the natural character of mountainous areas”; and “improve visual environment through the development of appropriate design criteria and controls.” Among the stated objectives of the Community Plan are “to limit the intensity and density in hillside areas to that which can reasonably be accommodated by infrastructure and natural topography.” Among the stated policies of the Community Plan are to “limit development according to the adequacy of the existing and assured street circulation system with the Plan Area and surrounding areas.” The Community Plan policies also require consideration of the steepness and stability of the geology in any proposal for development, and additionally requires that the availability of adequate sewers, drainage facilities, fire protection services and other public utilities to support development within hillside areas be ensured.

Castellammare residents are legitimately concerned that this development will have significant negative impacts on their safety, their quality of life, their right to enjoy their property, and the safety of thousands of people who use Pacific Coast Highway every day. Indeed, building on a known active landslide could be life threatening if vital roads are blocked by earth movement during emergency situations. Additionally, this project will adversely impact environmentally sensitive areas, scenic views and scenic corridors.

In light of the language of our Community Plan, the sense of the board, the concern of the immediate neighbors and the obvious violation of the tenets that the Community Plan has sought to protect and preserve in these geologically and environmentally sensitive areas, we renew our call for a comprehensive EIR which would impartially examine these issues and provide crucial information necessary to make the correct determination regarding this proposed development.

Best,
Maryam Zar, PPCC President

Maryam Zar

Executive Committee:

Sue Kohl (VP), Jenny Li (Treasurer), Beth Holden-Garland (Secretary), David Card (Chair Emeritus), Joanna Spak (Elected Rep.), John Padden (Organizational Rep.)