

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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Agenda Item 10(a)

SMMC

October 29, 2012

June 21, 2012

Mulholland Design Review Board
City of Los Angeles
6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite 351
Los Angeles, California 91401

DIR-2009-837-CU-SPE-DRB-SPP-SPR-DI-ZV, Curtis School, 15800 Mulholland Drive

Dear Design Review Board Members:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) offers the following comments and recommendations for the above-referenced proposed project. The subject property is located less than 300 feet from the recently constructed Mulholland Drive bridge over the 405 Freeway, and also within the boundaries of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

Caltrans is currently negotiating with National Park Service and Conservancy staff on where and how to place sidewalks on this newly built bridge to facilitate nocturnal wildlife movement. These negotiations include provisions for a gap to allow animals to cross behind the school on the Caltrans right-of-way and make their way to open space above the Sepulveda tunnel.

Recent ongoing wildlife studies have shown the presence of large mammals on the undeveloped land located to the north and east of the subject property. This undeveloped land facilitates wildlife movement between the public and private open space east of the 405 Freeway and public and private open space located west of Sepulveda Canyon. (Please see attached diagram of wildlife movement corridor.)

As currently proposed, the subject project would not adversely affect this wildlife movement corridor or the surrounding natural habitat. However, due to the sensitivity of this corridor, the Conservancy recommends that City and the applicant consider all potential impacts to the surrounding habitat and wildlife movement in any proposed reconfigurations to the current project or future proposed developments. Any changes to the current project, or future proposed projects must be sited to avoid impacts to this critical habitat linkage.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 310-589-3200, ext. 128. The applicant should also feel encouraged to contact our agency. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



PAUL EDELMAN

Deputy Director

Natural Resources and Planning