

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

570 WEST AVENUE 26, SUITE 100, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90065

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WCCA
Agenda Item X
1/20/21

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January 8, 2021

County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits East Section
320 West Temple Street, 13th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90012

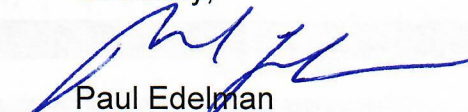
Hsi Lai Monastery Site Project (PN 2018-000207) Notice of Preparation Comments

Dear Ms. Hui:

The Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) staff offers the following comments on the above referenced Notice of Preparation in Hacienda Heights. Any multi-acre development in the Whittier Hills would result in an unavoidable significant adverse impact on the ecological carrying capacity of the Whittier Hills. When the by-right development of most of the remaining undeveloped hillside lots is factored into that equation, the existing ecological carrying capacity of the Whittier Hills will continually decline over time. The proposed project is further located in a constricted section of the ecosystem and that is bisected by a busy arterial road. Further constraints include that it is located on the more-mesic north-facing slope and that the whole site is part of a County-designated Significant Ecological Area (SEA). In addition, it is adjacent to public open space acquired for wildlife purposes.

Any project on the site should maximize clustering all development and lighting as far northward as possible. Habitat loss and fuel modification zone square footage must be minimized to the maximum extent possible. In general, the scale of the proposed project with hundreds of parking spaces, which means thousands of headlights on any given night, is totally incompatible with the ecological constraints and with acceptable land use intensity within an SEA. Concentrating a significant additional amount of traffic at this site with no substantial mitigation for safe wildlife movement under Hacienda Boulevard is another significant unavoidable impact. The construction of an adequately located, minimum 12 by 12-foot box (or equivalent openness arch structure) culvert is necessary to mitigate these permanent proposed wildlife movement impacts.

Sincerely,



Paul Edelman
Chief of Natural Resources