

LETTER 13

May 4, 2004

Sheri Vander Dussen, Planning Director
City of Anaheim
200 S. Anaheim Boulevard
Anaheim, California 92805



Re: Initial comment to Draft EIR 330

1. The proposed change to maximum permitted height in the Scenic Corridor Overlay zone will have significant adverse impacts on the canyon area:
 - a) ~~If the height~~ maximum is changed, hillside residents who now look over rooftops that are uniformly at 25 ft. could lose "views" or parts of views, when neighbors remodel homes, without any opportunity to protest. This affects quality of life and values of homes.
 - b) This change could be problematic to Homeowner Associations who deny architectural changes which are inconsistent with tract appearance, but which will now be allowed by the zoning code, placing HOAs at odds with the zoning code.
 - c) The proposed change adversely impacts residents' and visitors' enjoyment of the view of the hills, as well as from the hills. As homeowners remodel their homes, the new roof height maximum will allow changes to the mass of homes that affects the appearance of neighborhoods and planned communities, and in turn affects the preservation of the scenic nature of the area. It could allow intrusion into scenic public vistas which the proposed General Plan seeks to encourage and preserve.
 - d) There is no reason for this change. After a 1980s revision of the height ordinance, very few waivers have been requested. Those few that have been requested have been administrative adjustments. Please review waivers within the past 7 years. We believe the numbers do not support comments in the staff report. The ordinance does not need revision. It has shaped the "look" of the community at large. Waivers should continue to be looked at on a case by case basis.
 - e) The 25 ft. height maximum has established a scale of mass that keeps the area from being dominated by the homes. The new height maximum does not support the new General Plan's commitment to continued preservation of the uniqueness of the canyon area.

13-1

(continued on page 2)

13-2

2. In keeping with various introductory statements in the proposed General Plan, regarding continuing commitments and preserving integrity of neighborhoods, please include the following wording in the Community Policy Area section: *"The Goals and Policies of the Canyon Area General Plan (1977) is incorporated in full by reference."* Prior revisions to the Anaheim General Plan have included this wording.

13-3

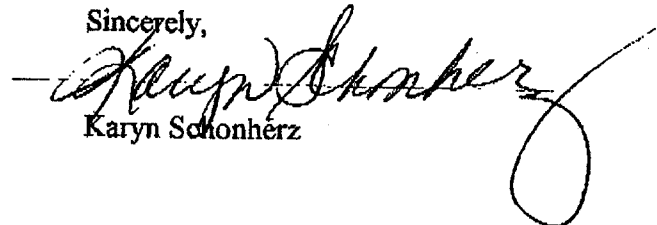
3. A key Policy in the Residential element of the Canyon Area General Plan is missing in the Community Policy Area section. The following should be included: *"Encourage and maintain living areas which preserve the amenities of hillside living and which retain the overall low density, semi-rural, uncongested character of the Santa Ana Canyon."* This Policy describes the community which has been guided by the Canyon Area General Plan and demonstrates commitment to retention of the area's atmosphere.

13-4

Based on my review of the documents so far, I am concerned that the commitments made in the Canyon Area General Plan, although mentioned, are weakly stated by the proposed General Plan, and almost disregarded in some Zoning Code revisions, particularly the maximum permitted height and requirements for freestanding signs. Even the staff report makes several references to bringing canyon area codes closer to provisions for other zones in the City. If there is commitment to preserve the nature of the area, integrity of neighborhoods, etc., current codes should be maintained or strengthened rather than weakened. If development issues in the canyon were no different from other areas, there would have been no need for a separate planning area in the first place. I spent many years on the Hill and Canyon Municipal Advisory Committee (HACMAC) reviewing building permit requests and variances, making sure the integrity of our community was preserved. Now is not the time to change the codes. Anaheim Hills is Anaheim Hills because of the views, trees, low profile building, one sign per business, preservation of Eucalyptus and Sycamore trees etc.

Thank you for your consideration of this input.

Sincerely,


Karyn Schonherz

2. *Response to Comments*

13. **Response to Comments From Karyn Schonherz, Dated May 4, 2004**

- 13-1 As requested in your comment letter, the City is no longer proposing an increase 25 foot height limit within the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone.
- 13-2 Several goals and policies from the Canyon Area General Plan (1977) are currently addressed in the updated General Plan. Staff will continue to work with residents of the area to incorporate appropriate goals and policies which have not been addressed into the updated General Plan.
- 13-3 The following policy will be added to the General Plan to apply to the Canyon Area Community Policy Area: "Encourage and maintain living areas which preserve the amenities of hillside living and which retain the overall lower density, semi-rural, uncongested character of the Santa Ana Canyon."
- 13-4 Comment is hereby noted, included in the official environmental record of the proposed project, and will be forwarded to the appropriate City of Anaheim decision-makers for their review and consideration.



2. *Response to Comments*

This page intentionally left blank