

Communication from Public

Name: Michael Ferguson

Date Submitted: 02/15/2021 11:03 PM

Council File No: 16-1472-S7

Comments for Public Posting: For reasons outlined in the attached letter, please note my opposition to the motion to create an HCR Special Use District for the Mount Washington / Glassell Park Specific Plan. The HCR SUD was implemented to address massive overbuilding of residential estates in neighborhoods like Bel Air and the Bird Streets. These restrictions do not belong in a modestly scaled R-1 community like Mount Washington.

FEBRUARY 15 2021

Los Angeles City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Chair
Councilmember Gilbert A. Cedillo
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember Mark Ridley-Thomas
Councilmember John S. Lee

Via: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org LACouncilComment.com
Cc: Bill.Cody@lacity.org

Re: File 16-1472-S7

Motion to Add Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan Area as a SUD to Hillside Construction Regulations
Hearing Date: February 16, 2021

Dear Council Members,

Please accept this letter in opposition of the Council District 1 motion to designate Mount Washington / Glassell Park as a special use district to be included in the Hillside Construction Regulations (HCR). The HCR ordinance was introduced in 2016-17 to address massive over-building in the Bel Air / Beverly Crest / Bird Streets (i.e. the most exclusive residential areas with multiple RE zones). These communities include estate sized properties, often several acres in size, with massive floor areas, and pricetags.

These restrictions have no business in an almost exclusively R-1 single family district and will radically burden a modest community like Mount Washington / Glassell Park.

The proposed motion is incorrect when stating that *"in recent years there has been an increasing number of large, single family homes being constructed..."*. This statement is mistaken with regard to the assumption of what constitutes a "large" project. At the time when the HCR SUD was introduced to the Bel Air / Beverly Crest neighborhood the proposed regulations were described as such:

"What is the Hillside Construction Regulation "HCR" District? What does it regulate?"

The Hillside Construction Regulation "HCR" District is a SUD that regulates large single- family developments 20,000 square feet or larger (sic)... When applied to a specific area, the SUD looks at the cumulative construction related impacts of large-scale hillside developments."

- (from the Dept. of City Planning Bulletin published 12/18/2016)

By the time the HCR ordinance was approved in 2017 the definition of “large-scale” development was reduced to identify a project **larger** than 17,500 sf of floor area. By contrast the average size of a home in the MW Specific Plan is around 2,000 sf... 11% of the size of a project that the HCR was initially designed for.

I have been a resident of Mount Washington for over 17 years and I believe it is an extremely special community. But the physical challenges relating to Hillside Construction which are referenced in the motion are not in any way exclusive to Mount Washington / Glassell Park. These challenges exist in almost every Hillside neighborhood across the city.

What is unique... is that Mount Washington already has an exhaustive discretionary review procedure for any project over 200 sf in size (as compared with 17,500 sf), with the Planning Dept. procedures taking up to two years in some cases. When combined with revised Hillside Ordinance (which was updated only 3 years ago) Mount Washington is already one of the most challenging areas in the entire city for property owners to improve or develop their properties.

Imposing the HCR restrictions designed for the most elite communities like Bel Air and the Bird Streets onto modest neighborhoods like Mount Washington and Glassell Park would be a permanent burden on all residents. These restrictions would not only apply to the construction of new homes, but will also affect every **current** member of the community who has any future plans to improve their own property which might require a construction permit.

I would like to urge the committee to consider these factors before voting on such a consequential alteration to our community. Mount Washington is not Bel Air.

Sincerely,



Michael Ferguson, Architect

President,
SPACE INT'L, inc.