

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

RAMIREZ CANYON PARK
5750 RAMIREZ CANYON ROAD
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA 90265
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3207
WWW.SMMC.CA.GOV



April 29, 2015

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

DIR-2015-1419-DRB-MSP-P, 3003 Runyon Canyon Road

Dear Design Review Board Members:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) has reviewed the submitted package for the proposed inholding project in the City's Runyon Canyon Park and offers the following comments.

Given that this lot is located dead center in the City's most heavily used natural park outside of Griffith Park, the site of any and all improvements within the lot is critical. The ultimate house site must minimize visibility from all usable portions of Runyon Canyon Park and from any adjoining public parklands and Mulholland Drive. The ultimate site must minimize direct and indirect impacts to the park's ecology and watersheds. The design of the house must also blend into the landscape.

The proposed house is in the worst possible location for minimizing impacts to public parkland. The proposed house would introduce adverse lighting and permanent fuel modification impacts where currently there are none. The proposed house design and form do not blend into the landscape.

We encourage the applicant to choose a location well away from the prominent nose of a prominent ridgeline. It is improbable that a new house of anywhere near the proposed dimension can be sited in this general vicinity of the property without resulting in unavoidable significant adverse visual and ecological impacts.

It takes a lot of water to hide a large house with landscaping. That objective is even tougher when most of the dirt is at a much lower elevation than the house. The water demands to establish and maintain such landscaping on an exposed ridge with extremely well drained rocky soils would be substantial.

Mulholland Design Review Board
DIR-2015-1419-DRB-MSP-P, 3003 Runyon Canyon Road
April 29, 2015
Page 2

In short the proposed project falls very far short of meeting the objectives and policies of the Mulholland Specific Plan.

Lastly we encourage the applicant to make a conservation easement to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority an integral and inseparable part of the project proposal. The approximately 4.5-acre property has lots of viewshed, watershed, and habitat that is integral to Runyon Canyon Park's resources. Every square foot of a proposed project that is not part of the development footprint should be protected by a conservation easement. That conservation easement would only allow fuel modification as required by the Fire Department and the cultivation of plants native to the eastern Santa Monica Mountains.

If either the staff or applicants have any questions, please contact me at 310-589-3200 ext. 128 or by e-mail at edelman@smmc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Edelman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL EDELMAN
Deputy Director
Natural Resources and Planning