

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 10:01 AM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: We oppose the construction of the Bulgari Hotel in Benedict Canyon. The construction of such a commercial project will greatly degrade the flow of traffic, create bottlenecks to a narrow canyon street that is one of the main routes from the valley to the city. Traffic is already a problem huge problem as is, and in the case of any emergency, further bottlenecking would create dire situations. Such a construction will make entering and exiting the homes along the Canyon difficult and more dangerous than it already is to do so. A hotel in the middle of the Canyon (or anywhere else in this Canyon), is inappropriate to the residential nature, traffic, and beauty of the Canyon. There is no good or acceptable reason to impose such an inappropriate use of land there.

Communication from Public

Name: Benedict Canyon Association

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 01:01 PM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: September 19, 2022 Re: BENEDICT CANYON ASSOCIATION SUPPORT FOR CITY COUNCIL MOTION CF 21-0777

Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee: On behalf of the Benedict Canyon Association, we would like to voice our strong support of Councilmember Paul Koretz' motion CF 21-0777 regarding the pending application to change the zoning of Benedict Canyon from residential to commercial. For 75 years, The Benedict Canyon Association, a voluntary neighborhood homeowners association, has been around to actively promote, advance, and protect the community interests and general welfare of the homeowners and other residents residing in the Benedict Canyon Drive area, between the City of Beverly Hills on the south and Mulholland Drive on the north. There are more than 2,700 households in Benedict Canyon, providing home for decades-long residents as well as those coming here more recently. What they all have in common is a love of the natural beauty, flora and fauna of our neighborhood, which provide not only an aesthetic aspect, but also maintains the balance of nature with the deer, racoons, hawks, native oak trees and a multitude of other living things. There is now an existential threat to Benedict Canyon with a pending application to change its zoning from residential zoning to commercial so that a developer (in tandem with an international-branded corporation (Bulgari) can build a huge 58-room hotel and suites, restaurants, a 10,000-square-foot spa, gym, a cinema and eight private estates with parking for 270 cars off narrow roads in the middle of our very high severity fire zone. The impact of this project on the Canyon and its residents (human, plant and animal) would be monumental: years of construction, thousands of dirt haul trips and construction workers pre-construction and during it, the parking issues, 24/7 coming and going of workers and guests, the delay on first responders in emergencies. And the more commercial projects that would follow from others wishing to commercialize the area. Please, NO HOTEL IN BENEDICT CANYON. Sincerely, Benedict Canyon Association /s/ By David Kadin, President



P.O. Box 1265
Beverly Hills, California 90213-1265

www.benedictcanyonassociation.org

September 19, 2022

Re: SUPPORT FOR CITY COUNCIL MOTION CF 21-0777

Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee:

On behalf of the Benedict Canyon Association, we would like to voice our strong support of Councilmember Paul Koretz' motion CF 21-0777 regarding the pending application to change the zoning of Benedict Canyon from residential to commercial.

For 75 years, The Benedict Canyon Association, a voluntary neighborhood homeowners association, has been around to actively promote, advance, and protect the community interests and general welfare of the homeowners and other residents residing in the Benedict Canyon Drive area, between the City of Beverly Hills on the south and Mulholland Drive on the north.

There are more than 2,700 households in Benedict Canyon, providing home for decades-long residents as well as those coming here more recently. What they all have in common is a love of the natural beauty, flora and fauna of our neighborhood, which provide not only an aesthetic aspect, but also maintains the balance of nature with the deer, racoons, hawks, native oak trees and a multitude of other living things.

BENEDICT CANYON ASSOCIATION

Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee
September 19, 2022

Page two

There is now an existential threat to Benedict Canyon with a pending application to change its zoning from residential zoning to commercial so that a developer (in tandem with an international-branded corporation (Bulgari) can build a huge 58-room hotel and suites, restaurants, a 10,000-square-foot spa, gym, a cinema and eight private estates with parking for 270 cars off narrow roads in the middle of our very high severity fire zone.

The impact of this project on the Canyon and its residents (human, plant and animal) would be monumental: years of construction, thousands of dirt haul trips and construction workers pre-construction and during it, the parking issues, 24/7 coming and going of workers and guests, the delay on first responders in emergencies. And the more commercial projects that would follow from others wishing to commercialize the area.

Please, NO HOTEL IN BENEDICT CANYON.

Sincerely,

Benedict Canyon Association

/s/

By David Kadin, President

Communication from Public

Name: Shelley L Billik

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 01:15 PM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: To the PLUM Committee, I strongly object to the proposed commercial hotel project in Benedict Canyon (“The Retreat in Benedict Canyon”), recently affiliated with Bulgari Hotels, and officially referred to as 9712 Oak Pass Road. This project falls under the Bel Air-Beverly Crest Community Plan (“Community Plan”) which specifies minimal grading and requires a development plan that preserves the existing topography and natural resources. This proposed plan would require extensive grading, the removal of over 700 protected and significant trees, devastation of wildlife corridors, and a significant negative impact on fire safety in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The developer’s effort to circumvent the zoning, grading and construction restrictions imposed by the current residential zoning, Baseline Hillside Ordinance and Overlay District through the use of a so-called Specific Plan, is not only contrary to established policies and good zoning practices, it would also establish an irreversible precedent for future commercial development of the Santa Monica Mountains – a key resource and habitat critical to wildlife and biodiversity. Any action by the city for an amendment and specific plan shall and must; “be good zoning practice; in conformity with the public interest, necessity, convenience, and welfare; compatibility with surrounding neighborhood; and appropriate development in harmony with the objectives of the General Plan” – and this project and proposed change clearly does not fulfill any of these requirements. We stand with Councilmembers Koretz and Blumenfield’s in their clear objection to the proposed project and fully support their motion CF-21-0777 rejecting the application for a General Plan update. Sincerely, Shelley Billik CFAC, Chair

Communication from Public

Name: Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife
Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 01:38 PM
Council File No: 21-0777
Comments for Public Posting: Please accept the attached CLAW letter of SUPPORT for this Koretz/Blumenfield Motion.



CITIZENS FOR
LOS ANGELES
WILDLIFE

PO Box 50003 Studio City, CA 91614
(818) 821-6000 info@clawonline.org www.clawonline.org

September 19, 2022

Chair Marqueece Harris-Dawson,
& Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM)
c/o City Clerk
200 N. Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Support for Motion to Rescind a General Plan Amendment Request for “The Retreat in Benedict Canyon” (CF 21-0777)

Honorable Chair Harris-Dawson and PLUM committee members:

Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife (CLAW) is a non-profit environmental organization concerned with the wellbeing of wildlife and wildlife habitat for the City of Los Angeles and beyond. A citizenry of more than 5,000 individuals support our organization’s multiple calls for biodiverse practices and policy to benefit LA City, County, California and the globe. Our wildlife is negatively affected by any project that would brazenly upzone and deviate from established planning policies in one of the most biodiverse regions of our city, which is exactly what *The Retreat in Benedict Canyon* is attempting to do. We urge you to support Motion CF 21-0777 to rescind the initiation of a General Plan Amendment for this project.

An initial study of this project found that it would have a significant impact on the environment. This project would exacerbate tenuous routes for medium or large sized mammals (mule deer, bobcat, mountain lion, and others) to travel eastward in Benedict Canyon. Essentially, the Project property is the only habitat hub that currently allows east-west habitat connectivity between Benedict and Peavine Canyons in the Santa Monica Mountains. We believe this Project will sever connectivity and create a significant biological impact without mitigation, and a full EIR would be needed to properly evaluate its impact. This project would also remove many native trees, including those designated as having protected status in Los Angeles. Furthermore, the site of this project is known to be habitat for at least one mountain lion, which currently receives protection as a candidate under the California Endangered Species Act.

Allowing this project to go forward would set an unwelcome precedent of upzoning in this ecologically sensitive area. It would also be a dangerous contradiction to the many other recent planning and policy efforts to protect the natural resources and habitat connectivity within this area. Please vote to support this Motion and rescind the initiation of this General Plan Amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony T.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tony Tucci, Chair

CLAW is a public benefit non-profit 501(c)(3) environmental organization that works to protect and restore the environments of wildlife of Los Angeles and California from dwindling open spaces. Our mission is to promote, educate and protect the fundamental importance of wildlife, wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors everywhere.

Communication from Public

Name: Marian Dodge

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 07:42 PM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: The Hillside Federation supports CF 21-0777.

P.O. Box 27404
Los Angeles, CA 90027
www.hillsidefederation.org



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Benedict Canyon Association
Brentwood Hills Homeowners
Brentwood Residents Coalition
Cahuenga Pass Property Owners
Canyon Back Alliance
Crests Neighborhood Assn.
Dixie Canyon Assn.
Doheny-Sunset Plaza NA
Franklin Ave./Hollywood Bl. West
Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
Highlands Owners Assn.
Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
Hollywood Heights Assn.
Hollywoodland HOA
Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn.
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
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Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
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N. Beverly Dr./Franklin Canyon
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Oaks Homeowners Assn.
Outpost Estates HOA
Pacific Palisades Res. Assn.
Residents of Beverly Glen
Save Coldwater Canyon!
Save Our Canyon
Shadow Hills POA
Sherman Oaks HOA
Silver Lake Heritage Trust
Studio City Residents Assn.
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Jason McCrea
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
221 N. Figueroa Street, Room 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

December 5, 2020

Re: **Scoping Comments for The Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project —
OPPOSE**
Case Number: ENV-2018-1509-EIR

Dear Mr. McCrea:

The Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations, Inc., founded in 1952, represents 46 homeowner and resident associations with approximately 250,000 constituents spanning the Santa Monica Mountains. The Federation's mission includes protecting the property and quality of life of the residents of the Santa Monica Mountains and other hillside areas of Los Angeles and its environs, and encouraging and promoting those policies and programs which will best preserve the natural topography and wildlife of the mountains and hillsides for the benefit of all the people of Los Angeles.

The Federation strongly opposes the proposed Retreat at Benedict Canyon. This commercial venture would (1) replace two single-family homes in a minimum-low density residentially-zoned neighborhood in the Santa Monica Mountains—a designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone—with a 59-room hotel, spa, restaurants and bars, with rooftop dining, a screening room, subterranean parking, funicular railway, and (2) develop eight single-family residences on approximately 33-acres of mostly undeveloped open space.

The project would require an amendment to the General Plan to up-zone the area from low residential to high residential which will commercialize the hillsides. The proposed development project violates zoning restrictions designed to protect the character of the surrounding low-density hillside residential community, sets a dangerous precedent for commercialization and intensification of use, exacerbates fire risks in this fire-prone hillside area, and is grossly inconsistent with the state's climate change policy. The project is therefore inconsistent with the Federation's mission and violates policies and programs that support consistency with zoning for public health and safety in the hillsides, that support maintaining lower densities to preserve wildlife habitat and connectivity, flora and fauna and protect the hillside environment from devastating wildfires.

To make matters worse, this precedent-shattering project is being streamlined for passage during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic—while public attention is necessarily diverted from the important long-term public policy concerns implicated by the project.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the fire risks as our state is experiencing the largest and most destructive wildfire season recorded in California's modern history—with more than 4 million acres burned in 2020 so far. Experts warn this is the “new normal” due to (1) Climate Change producing hotter, drier, and more intense wildfires and (2) increased human intrusion into fire-prone areas like the Santa Monica Mountains. The project is flatly inconsistent with California Governor Newsom’s April 2019 report “Wildfires and Climate Change: California's Energy Future,” recommending that local governments begin to deprioritize new development in areas of the most extreme fire risk.

The project also creates significant emergency-access risks. Primary ingress and egress to the hotel portion of the project would be via Hutton Drive, while Wanda Park Drive would provide primary access to the project’s residential component. Both are narrow substandard hillside streets. Each would provide inadequate secondary emergency access for the development and would expose residents to the risk of bottle-necking their means of evacuation in an emergency.

Constructing high-density projects like this in the Santa Monica Mountains moves us further from California’s climate goals mandated by Governor Newsom in an executive order issued on October 7, 2020, committing the state to a goal of protecting 30 percent of California’s land and coastal waters by 2030.

For all of the reasons stated above, the Hillside Federation opposes The Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project. Please add the Hillside Federation to the notification list for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charley Mims". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charley Mims

cc: Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti
Councilmember Paul Koretz
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Planning Director Vince Bertoni

Communication from Public

Name: Marian Dodge

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 07:55 PM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: The Hillside Federations supports CF 21-0777.

P.O. Box 27404
Los Angeles, CA 90027
www.hillsidefederation.org



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PLUM Committee

September 19, 2022

Argyle Civic Assn.
Beachwood Canyon NA
Bel-Air Assn.
Bel-Air Hills Assn.
Bel Air Knolls Property Owners
Bel Air Skycrest Property Owners
Benedict Canyon Association
Brentwood Hills Homeowners
Brentwood Residents Coalition
Bundy Canyon Assn.
Cahuenga Pass Property Owners
Canyon Back Alliance
Crests Neighborhood Assn.
Dixie Canyon Assn.
Doheny-Sunset Plaza NA
Franklin/Hollywood West Res.
Franklin Hills Residents Assn.
Highlands Owners Assn.
Hollywood Dell Civic Assn.
Hollywood Heights Assn.
Hollywoodland HOA
Holmby Hills Homeowners Assn.
Kagel Canyon Civic Assn.
Lake Hollywood HOA
Laurel Canyon Assn.
LFIA (Los Feliz)
Mountaingate
Mt. Olympus Property Owners
Mt. Washington Homeowners All.
Nichols Canyon NA
Oak Forest Canyon HOA
Oaks Homeowners Assn.
Outpost Estates HOA
Pacific Palisades Res. Assn.
Residents of Beverly Glen
Save Coldwater Canyon!
Save Our Canyon
Shadow Hills POA
Sherman Oaks HOA
Silver Lake Heritage Trust
Studio City Residents Assn.
Sunset Hills HOA
Tarzana POA
Upper Mandeville Canyon Assn.
Upper Nichols Canyon NA
Whitley Heights Civic Assn.

Re: CF 21-0777 Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project Support

Dear Councilmembers:

The Hillside Federation opposed the Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project in 2020 because it was not compliant with any City policies. We were amazed that anyone would propose such an inappropriate development to the Santa Monica Mountains, designated a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The Federation opposed the project in December 2020 and we continue to oppose it.

It goes against the City's General Plan; zoning regulations, the state's Wildfires and Climate Change policy to deprioritize new development in areas of extreme fire risk; city, state and federal goal of preserving 30% of land as Open Space by 2030; lower density in the hillsides to preserve wildlife habitat and connectivity; the Protected Tree Ordinance

It sets a dangerous precedent for intensification of use in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

Unfortunately, wealthy developers expect that they can go to City Hall to change the rules so that they can build whatever they want wherever they want. It's called spot zoning and it's illegal. The Federation supports CM Koretz' motion to rescind the initiation of a General Plan Amendment for the hotel.

Sincerely,

Charley Mims

CHAIRS EMERITI
Shirley Cohen
Jerome C. Daniel
Patricia Bell Hearst
Alan Kishbaugh
Steve Twining
CHAIRS IN MEMORIAM
Brian Moore
Gordon Murley
Polly Ward

Communication from Public

Name: William Harper

Date Submitted: 09/19/2022 05:37 PM

Council File No: 21-0777

Comments for Public Posting: The City Council is urged to support the motion by representatives Koretz and Blumenfield to rescind the request for a zoning change to allow construction and operation of the proposed Retreat at Benedict Canyon Project. Throughout the two- to three-year construction phase of this proposed project the movement of heavy construction equipment would very likely result in significant damage to the narrow, substandard residential streets that provide direct site access, and the operation of heavy vehicles would endanger the lives and property of residents living along the routes to the site. If the facility were to become operational, automobile traffic transporting hundreds of expected attendees to and from scheduled events will represent a frequent, significant danger to the lives and property of residents living on these same streets. Should there be any doubt regarding the claims noted above the City Council is urged to arrange a group tour following the several routes to and from the property. As a minimum, the tour should cover the route up Beverly Glen Boulevard from the San Fernando Valley, the route along Mulholland Drive from the 405 freeway and the route along Benedict Canyon Drive from Sunset Boulevard. Travelling the routes and especially touring the narrow streets that now provide access to the property will make it clear that the proposed location of this facility is ill suited for a major hotel and spa that is expected to host large public and private events. Should the tour be conducted, those who participate will note that the residents of homes on West Oak Pass Road, West Wanda Park Drive and North Hutton Drive will all be seriously impacted. Of the three streets noted above, only Hutton Drive is wide enough permit safe two-way traffic by construction vehicles, and later by automobiles carrying attendees and from events and service vehicles supporting operation of the facility. Wanda Park Drive and Oak Pass Road cannot be widened without removing residences and are too narrow to permit safe two-way traffic. Providing reasonably safe access to the property off Hutton Drive would require demolishing one or more existing homes and the addition of a mid-block stoplight. In summary, the site bordered by West Oak Pass Road, West Wanda Park Drive and North Hutton Drive is an inappropriate location for the proposed hotel and event facility and the Council is urged to rescind the request for the zoning change needed to accommodate it.