

## Communication from Public

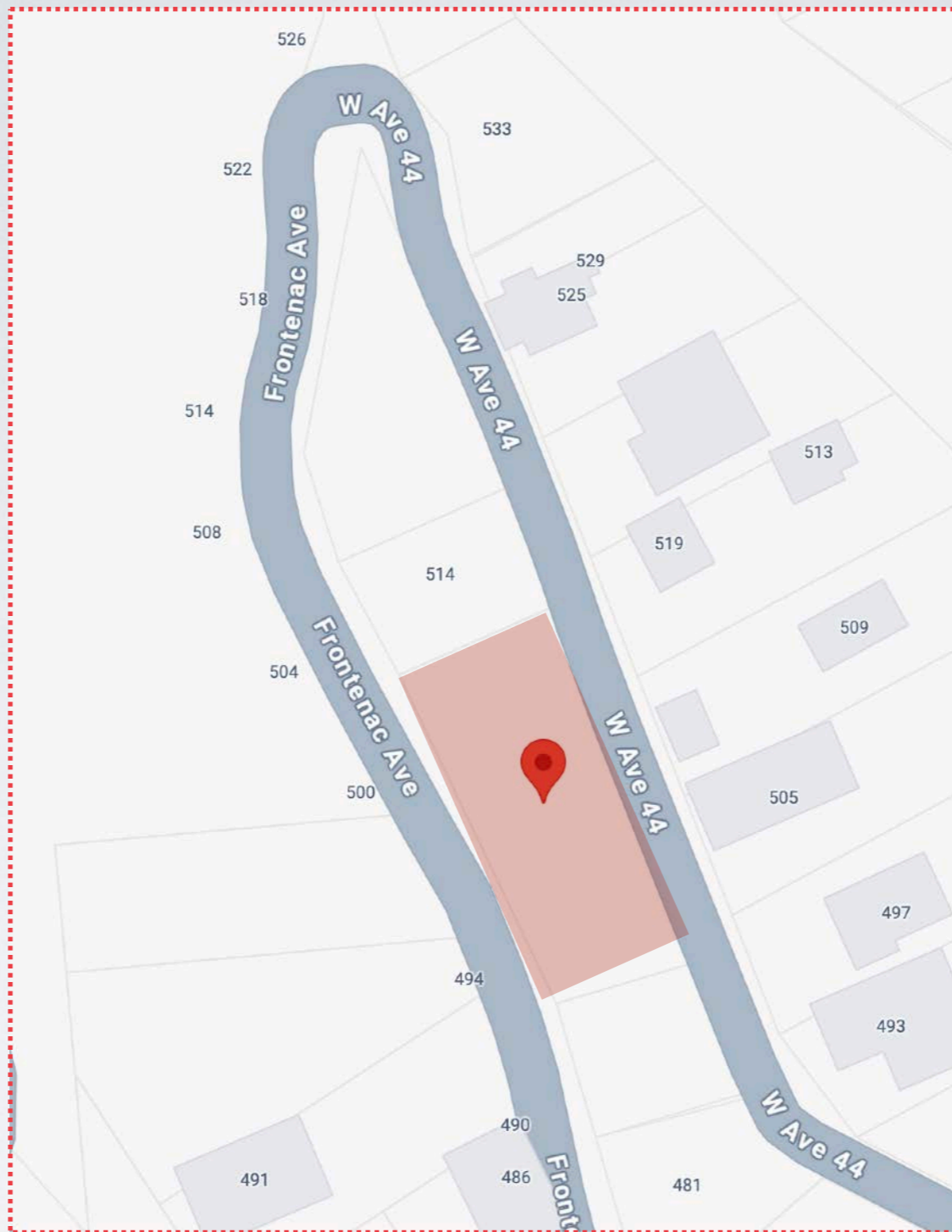
**Name:** Yael Pardess

**Date Submitted:** 02/21/2025 08:27 PM

**Council File No:** 24-1570

**Comments for Public Posting:** Subject: Grant the Appeal for 504 W Avenue 44, ENV-2022-7296-CE, at PLUM Hearing on Tuesday the 25th. Council File 24-1570 Dear Council Members, Frontenac Avenue must be widened and strict adherence to the Hillside Ordinance must be enforced. The proposed project at 504 W Avenue 44 puts the public in great danger from fire. LAFD cannot adequately service this location nor any property in this area due to the narrow streets and the excessive distance to any secondary access location. This is not my opinion but rather is crystal clear from the evidence in the record before you including the loss of our neighbor Frank Hernandez who died in 2014 from a fire at his home at 533 W Avenue 44 (the intersection of W Avenue 44 and Frontenac Avenue). In light of the recent tragedy and disaster in Pacific Palisades I would encourage the entire City family to take more seriously its obligations and laws adopted specifically to protect its citizens from these types of events. The examples provided by the Planning Department of similar projects where widening was not required do not apply here because in those cases the projects met the minimum standard of the Fire Code. Here the project violates at least three parts of the Fire Code including minimum fire lane width and secondary access within 700 feet. The project is located on a through lot between two city streets (W Avenue 44 and Frontenac Avenue). Both are substandard hillside streets. W Avenue 44 is 17 feet to 18 feet wide. Frontenac Avenue is 10 feet wide, while improved and paved in the past, due to mud and dirt slides now appears as a dirt road. The City is requiring the widening along the property boundary on W Avenue 44 but has approved a variance to NOT widen Frontenac Avenue along the property boundary. If Frontenac is not widened then an already hazardous, dangerous situation will be made worse because it would mean that Frontenac could never be made compliant to the fire code. I support reasonable development at this location. A house here would improve our community. But I do not support any project that puts me, my family, and the community at great risk from fire danger. And I ask you to grant the appeal so that the danger posed by this project can be corrected. The project was granted a CEQA Class 3 Exemption as would seem reasonable in most cases. However, in this case there is plenty of evidence in the record of

both significant, cumulative impacts from the 18 recent and proposed projects before the City and the environmental impacts from the unusual circumstances created by the project (VHFHSZ, Red Flag, violations of Fire Code Sections 503.1.5, 503.1.6.1, 503.1.6.4, not widening Frontenac along a lot in the middle of the unimproved portion of the street) that make granting of an Exception per CEQA Section 15300.2 not only reasonable but the only way to protect the public's safety. At a minimum further CEQA analysis needs to be performed so that the public and the City can be better informed about the environmental impacts of the proposed project. I urge you to grant the appeal, send the project back for further analysis, and protect the safety for all who live in the hillsides. Thank you Yael Pardess- Long time resident of Mount Washington



504 AV 44

ZA-2022-7295-ZAA-ZAD-SPP-HCA

# Condition of the existing road

Only Access  
Going in and out in reverse



16 feet approx substandard street

10-13 foot dangerous dirt roads

## Finding letter page 8

4

necessary to avoid an adverse impact on emergency vehicle street access and circulation.

However, to require Adjacent Minimum Roadway improvement for the portion of Avenue 44 in front of the subject property is an impractical and unnecessarily strict application of the Code because Avenue 44 and Frontenac Avenue do not provide the required vehicular access. To improve Adjacent Minimum Roadway on Avenue 44 and Frontenac Avenue will also require a massive amount of grading which is not an environmentally sound planning practice.

Fact : We are a high severity fire zone and under no circumstances should ANYONE receive a waiver not to widen their substandard streets. It is the law. Saying it is "impractical" or "environmentally unsound", when you build a larger than usual home, dig an enormous cavity in the earth and destroy a natural landscape- that is environmentally unsound. Not protecting yourself and other residents from fire or mud slides- that is beyond unsound.

# End of Av 44 and start of Frontenac

View going downhill



View going uphill



Not a proper turnaround

Frontenac is a dirt / muddy crumbling street.  
It must be improved with a proper curb and up to code with watershed mitigation



Looking North

Property



Looking south

# Frontenac during rain

A truck sliding in muddy Frontenac, almost  
Going down the steep hill.  
Owners should improve this street if they care about  
protecting their house

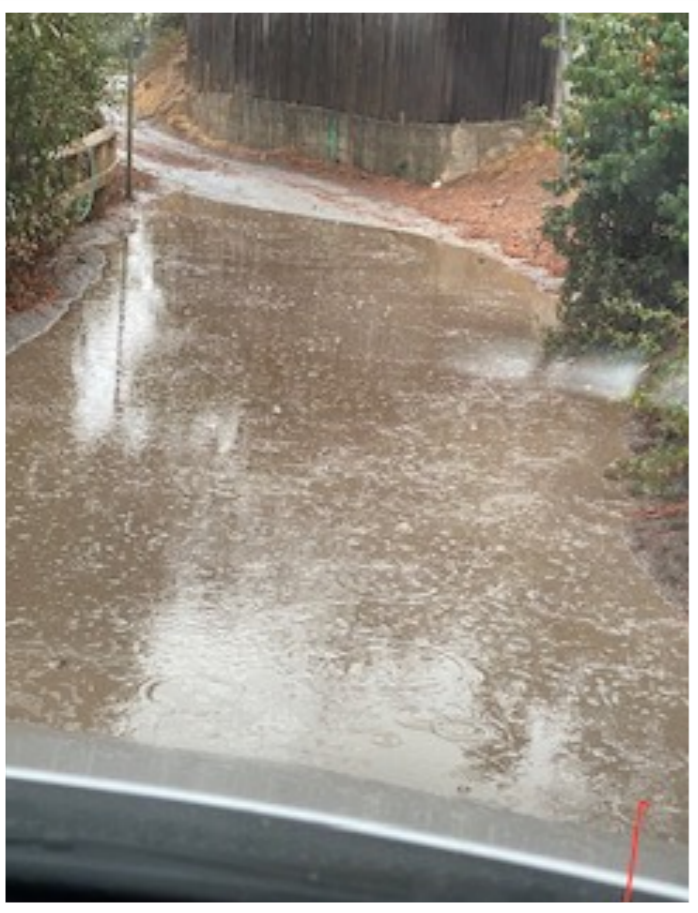


# A sliding truck left its mark

Why would a homeowner want to live under a dangerous muddy narrow street with the danger of trucks falling into his home?



During the winter Frontenac becomes extremely dangerous with mud and standing waters. It is in the developer's benefit to improve that street and make sure it is safe for everyone and that vehicles or water gushes-do not run into their property below



There are no curbs or protective barriers

# Fire on 533 W Av 44



As far as truck could go on dirt Frontenac



Firefighters attached hose to truck and walked in losing precious time

Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA

## Mount Washington house fire kills man, 89

BY CATHERINE SAILLANT

FEB. 22, 2014 12 AM PT



Francisco Hernandez was a fiercely independent man, refusing help from family and neighbors — even firing Meals on Wheels — as he moved into old age at his Mount Washington home.

So it's not surprising that the 89-year-old World War II Purple Heart recipient was home alone with his bulldog, Nero, when a fire late Friday tore through the tiny cottage he lived in for the last 40 years.

Hernandez's body was found Saturday among the charred remains of the structure that sits on a winding, narrow street in the 500 block of West Avenue 44. His dog survived the fire.

LAFD trucks tried to access his house from a Frontenac paper street and then from Frontenac Dirt street, unable to reach him in time and he tragically passed in the fire.

The only way to prevent more tragedies is to have our street improved!  
 City should not grant any more waivers!

<b>LIST OF FIRES IN MT WASHINGTON</b>				
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Facts</b>
1	24-May	1997-00	Elyria Canyon	Entire canyon engulfed evacuations/homes lost and injuries
2	20-Feb	2014-00	533 W Ave 44	home lost, 1 dead
3	7-Nov	2015-00	140 S ave 59	3 story Home lost, 1 injured
4	9-Aug	2015	1800 Alder Dr	Garage Home fire 1 dead
5	20-Oct	2016	4057 Seaview	3 story Home lost, 1 dead, animals and other injured or lost
6	20-Jul	2017	624 Quail /727 Pheasant	Home lost
7	18-Aug	2017	700 Blk Cross Ave	Vacant home lost
	20-Jan	2018	4600 Cleland	explosion & fire, 1 worker injured
8	23-Feb	2018	1114 Oban Dr	large 3 story home damage
9	4-Jul	2019	1300 Cliff Dr	Brush fire
10	4-Jul	2019	4000 Marmion	Brush Fire
11	30-Jun	2020	834 W ave 37	brush fire
12	14-Apr	2022	4649 San Andreas	house lost fire fighter injured
13	27-May	2022	Kite Hill Ave 37	Brush fire
14	march april	2023	multiple locations Mt Washington	Serial Arson/many tree fires
15	1-Apr	2023	4688 E Cleland Ave	Home fire Gas leak Worker injured
16	4-Jun	2023	4430 San Rafael	Brush fire
17	5-Jul	2023	West Point Place	Brush fire
18	3-Sep	2023	4450 Beauvais	Brush fire-fire trucks could not access for 22 minutes
19	20-Jan	2024	100 block E av 39	home burned no injuries