

Joseph Nosrat

Subject: RE: Meadows project

-----Original Message-----

From: H A [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 3:06 PM

To: PlanningCommission <PlanningCommission@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: Meadows project

CAUTION: This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER - be CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I live at [REDACTED]. I am writing this letter on behalf of my mother Colleen Allen as well as myself. (My mother is the home owner and has resided here for almost 50 years.)

Resident Claire McLean spoke during Public Comment time at the 7/7/22 meeting. She quoted the EIR:

“Noise from the construction is exempt between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm everyday, except for Sundays and holidays, and there exempt from 10 to 6.”

This is excessive. It is an egregious assault on the peace and quiet of our neighborhood. On weekends, the current traffic and noise from the hikers at Bailey Canyon are already oppressive.

Please advocate for a noise exemption of 7:30 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Friday. Additionally, please require no construction on weekends and holidays.

Developers do not have the right to excessively infringe on the residents’ right to peace and quiet.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Heather and Colleen Allen

Joseph Nosrat

Subject: FW: New Urban West/Meadows at Bailey Canyon Monastery Development: 501 Crestvale Drive, Sierra Madre, CA 91024: Unresolved Critical Issues and Request to Stay a Decision

Attachments: Photos of Small Water Pipe Leak and Erosion Flow onto Crestvale Drive.pdf

From: Jessica Sarber [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2022 7:34 AM

To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsierramadre.com>; PlanningCommission <PlanningCommission@cityofsierramadre.com>

Cc: Vincent Gonzalez <vgonzalez@cityofsierramadre.com>; Aleks Giragosian <agiragosian@chwlaw.us>; Blonde and Brunette Productions <[REDACTED]>; Natalie Peterson <[REDACTED]>

Subject: New Urban West/Meadows at Bailey Canyon Monastery Development: 501 Crestvale Drive, Sierra Madre, CA 91024: Unresolved Critical Issues and Request to Stay a Decision

CAUTION: This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER - be CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Dear Commissioners,

We request an immediate stay of all consideration for approval of the Meadows at Bailey Canyon project due to what we consider negligence and failure to follow through by the Developer. We have reached out numerous times to the Developer, as recommended by the Commission and the City Attorney. Just yesterday, August 16th, the Developer responded in writing, so we now have something concrete to review.

Meanwhile, we remain extremely concerned about the serious impacts set forth below that extend to much of our neighborhood beyond 501 Crestvale Drive.

We find the lack of a structural engineering assessment of the retaining walls directly beside where utilities and water drainage systems will be placed to be negligent. An assessment by an independent licensed structural engineer must be completed to protect the existing homes, properties, and residents along the southern boundary from unintended consequences during and after construction. Currently, the Specific Plan, the EIR and the developer have omitted or neglected to review whether the existing structures will bear the increased load from heavy construction equipment, utility placement, and increased water flows redirected to this lower elevation. Just last week, a small leak in a water system in the field resulted in erosion and considerable runoff of silt onto Crestvale Drive. The leak required repair crews to block the street and driveways to clean up dirt and debris flowed down on each side of the street. (See attached photos).

This is particularly troubling given the foreseeable hazards raised in a July 30, 2020, letter from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District available in the EIR documents. If unaddressed, these risks include mudslides and debris flows from rains following wildfires, regardless of whether flooding rises to a 500-year level. This threatens all Crestvale Drive residents and could also put neighboring residents and homes in harm's way. This situation will be exacerbated by the Developer's intended use of impermeable paving and surfaces throughout the development, which is a known contributing factor in forcing water run off to the lowest elevation, instead of permeable and porous surfaces. The

Developer has represented that impermeable surfaces were chosen to prevent the underlying infrastructure from shifting. This explanation raises concerns that the ground may not be stable enough or at risk of erosion should the site be developed. We request that the use of permeable surfaces be addressed by a third-party expert and presented to the Planning Commissioners for review before any consideration of furthering the project.

Next, we find the conceptual depictions of proposed landscaping along the southern boundary continue to seriously misrepresent the area between the proposed parkland and existing homes. Although the Developer has improved the conceptual drawing for 501 Crestvale Drive, the renderings for homes on Sierra Keys Drive and Sunnyside Avenue remain grossly inaccurate. The Planning Commission has required accuracy and reliable to-scale drawings for many other items depicted in the Specific Plan. These conceptual drawings should be held to the same standard.

We also ask that the Planning Commissioners also hold the Developer accountable for the following:

1) The Planning Commission specifically instructed the Developer to contact the residents on Crestvale Drive and to reach out to the community. The Developer has failed to perform here. This past weekend, our family reached out to more than 100 residents along Crestvale, Sierra Keys, Key Vista, Sunnyside, Grove, Fairview, and Carter. About 20 residents were home and available to speak directly with us. All but one said they have not spoken with nor been contacted by the Developer. As previously stated by the Planning Commission, community outreach is essential to the project.

2) To the best of our knowledge, the only evidence of community input is 12 comment cards from three small meetings identified in Appendix 1B of the Specific Plan. If there has been additional outreach, the Developer should produce the details to confirm the community engagement requirement has been satisfied. We request that the Planning Commissioners require a true accounting that is not based on images of people standing around as proof of community engagement. Three small community meetings held during the height of the pandemic expressly excluded a meaningful number of people from attending and should not be considered a fair representation of the community.

3) The Planning Commission has suggested that the Developer and the Resident should be able to work out some specific concerns. The Developer has offered to name the property owner and the property at 501 Crestvale Drive as additional insured on the development's certificates of insurance.

Regarding the Specific Plan, we again request that the Planning Commissioners and Developer replace the wording "shall include" with "may include" in all references to the proposed parkland and its amenities. This will clarify that the Sierra Madre Community Services Commission is empowered to decide the design and features of the parkland.

We remain concerned that the failures cited above will be wrongly baked in as tacitly approved by the City if they are not resolved prior to formal action.

Sincerely,

Jessica Shore Sarber



Photos of Small Water Pipe Leak and Erosion Flow onto Crestvale Drive



Runoff and Erosion from Water leak at end of Crestvale showing patterns of erosion directed onto the street on 08/11/22 to 08/13/22.



Water and Erosion Runoff at 501 Crestvale Drive. A boulder and brush were removed to repair; additional loose soil is now exposed. Flow pattern after the leak was repaired. 08/14/22.



Water and Erosion Runoff at 502 Crestvale Drive. Flow pattern after the leak was repaired. 08/14/22.



Water and Erosion Runoff at 492 Crestvale Drive. Flow pattern after the leak was repaired. 08/14/22.

Joseph Nosrat

Subject: FW: For Tonights Planning Commission meeting
Attachments: PC re conversations with County.docx; Answer to Commisioner Hutt's question.docx; Concerns of Flooding.docx; Re Storm Drain and Carter.docx; PC SERIOUS CONCERNS OF FLOODING.docx; New Drainage Plan in Specific Plan.docx

From: Barbara Vellturo [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2022 12:35 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsierramadre.com>; Barbara Vellturo <[REDACTED]>
Subject: For Tonights Planning Commission meeting

CAUTION: This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER - be CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Although I sent the attached articles for the previous meeting they were not posted as a public comment. Please include for tonights meeting.

They have been sent to the Planning Commission Members

Barbara Vellturo
Protect Sierra Madre

To the Planning Commission

Re: NUW "Offsite Improvement" plan

Commissioners,

I am sure you will have received the same information from the City Attorney, but we have learned some important information from the LA County Department of Public Works, that raises some interesting issues pertaining to the Developer's planned "Offsite Improvements"

In May of 2022 I had a phone conversation with Dayna Rothman, Head of Real Estate at Los Angeles County Department of Public works concerning the Developer's intent to acquire land or an easement from the County for their Offsite Improvement.

I asked about any contacts the Developer had with her department regarding their plan; she told me that she had a conversation with Jonathan Frankel in December of 2021 and again in January of 2022. She said she had discussed with him the procedure for seeking an easement on County land.

She told me that he had been advised that the first step would be an application through EPICLA, then the various County departments would consider and discuss the application. She said that nothing could be done until the EIR for the Project had been certified.

Because the Planning Commission has now raised the issue that, if the project were approved and then the Easement not granted, the City could not easily revoke the zoning changes, I wrote again to Ms Rothman to be sure that I would be restating correctly what she had told me. She called me, saying it was easier to answer my questions that way.

She said that the information posted above was as she had told me - several departments would "weigh in" on the proposal once the application had been submitted.

I then asked about the CEQA process which was VERY interesting, and we think could be problematic for the developer. I asked if the CEQA review would only be of the proposed widening. She said it would not - that the City of Sierra Madre is "Lead Agency" in reviewing the FEIR, but the County would become a "Responsible Agency" and would make an independent review of the adequacy of the entire document, including alternatives and mitigations.

§ 15096. Process for a Responsible Agency.

There are MANY issues in the EIR for the Meadows Specific Plan that may cause the County, as a Responsible Agency, to find that document unacceptable.

Our Attorney previously submitted a letter pointing out many deficiencies in the EIR as a whole, and the late inclusion of the Offsite improvement, after all studies and comments had been submitted, in particular. Attorney Palmer stated that the document should be revised to include necessary notices and studies and to correct some of the inconsistencies and irregularities in the document - and that the FEIR should then be recirculated for comment.

The "responsible agency" will certainly consider the fact that the EIR failed to acknowledge or address the comments submitted by the County Public Works Department for the County Flood Control District - the owners of the land needed for the offsite improvements. Those comments asked that the EIR address their environmental concerns, and concerns to impacts to their facilities and identify the County as a permitting agency in the DEIR. That was not done.

The late inclusion of the widening plan with no information or studies on what will be done to the road beds, no slope analysis, no arborists report as to required mitigation of potential impacts to COUNTY trees, no notice to clearly interested parties, can be considered as contrary to CEQA. NO notice of the proposed widening was even sent to the County agency that owned the land to be acquired! All interested Agencies were only notified of the release of the FEIR and its availability on the City website - but not notified of this significant addition.

Sierra Madre, as Lead Agency, found the EIR acceptable despite these issues, based on its attorney's assessment, but the County's INDEPENDENT analysis may not. If the EIR IS found inadequate, by an impartial agency, that agency very well MAY refuse to allow the easement.

The Planning Commission has expressed the opinion that it could be a problem to approve the project without reasonable assurances that the easement will be granted.

Unless they have full confidence that an independent CEQA review would not recognize any of the same issues as our land use attorney outlined, the granting of the easement is far from assured.

Barbara Velturo
Protect Sierra Madre

Planning Commission members

We previously wrote to you about our concerns about the sudden changes in the Developer's Hydrology plan, not included in the DEIR or FEIR and not studied. We are also greatly concerned with the plan to send all storm water overflow directly onto the street, on Crestvale.

This attached, very early (5 months after the MOU was signed) meeting notes by Winnie Tham, the developer's engineer who explained to the Commission why a berm was essential for drainage, is very telling. Long before the EIR all parties were well aware of the fact that diverted storm water on the East side of the project should go to a 72" County Storm Drain on Lima.

The engineer's notes say that this would require a hydraulic analysis to verify "that the pipe can accept the diverted flow"! (this is the same flow they Plan to allow via a 24" surface pipe to Crestvale - but with the addition of all the flow from the west side of the project as well!)

Their original plan would also have required review and permits from both the City and the County. It is presumed that those studies and permits would have been to ensure the safety of their hydrology plans. If the diverted flow might be too much for a 72 inch storm to handle, surely it would be too much to pour onto our City streets for the duration of a storm.

Both the Developer and the City knew, well before the DEIR was drafted, what SHOULD be done to divert excess downhill stormwater in the project.

The fact that, to handle the Hydrology of the project correctly would have required studies, analyses and permits TO BE CERTAIN THAT IT WAS DONE RIGHT resulted in the Developer entirely changing its drainage plans in the EIR. And now they have entirely changed the plan studied in the EIR by adding elements not in the CEQA documents at all - a Berm, a sunken park, and rerouting all water from Sunnyside into the detention basin.

The only thing in the EIR that they did not change was the requirement by GeoTech that the detention basin be set back from properties to avoid "adverse impacts" to them. They ignored it then and are still ignoring it, something designed to protect the Citizens.

Our City, as lead agency for the EIR, approved the document. If there is an adverse impact or a damaging flood, who will be responsible?

To the Planning Commission

Re: Offsite Improvement - Widening of Carter Avenue

Answer to Commissioner Hutt's question at the August 4 meeting.

The draft development shown at the August 4 Planning Commission Meeting proposed that if the Developer was unable to get County approval for the widening of Carter Avenue in 2 years, the City could then have 2 years to try to get the approval.

Commissioner Hutt asked - "Why do we think the City will have any better luck than the applicant?"

The City Attorney replied that - the city could exercise its existing connections with the county...

The previous City Manager HAD exercised his connections with the County - even contacting the Board of Supervisors office on behalf of the Developer. Although the City, County and the developer did have at least one meeting about the proposed widening that was shown in the NOP to CEQA, at his final contact with the County, the Developer and the City Manager were rebuffed. Vincent Gonzalez was copied on the emails saying that the County had told them to "call back in 5 years", so he and Jonathan Frankel are well aware of the fact that the city doesn't have any special connections with the County that would allow them to bypass the rules.

At that time, the present Director of Planning and the present City Attorney were in the same positions as they are now. Unless our present City Manager has "existing connections with the County" that Gabe Engeland did not, there is no reason to expect that the County would respond to the City any differently now.

The County departments that I spoke to indicated that the decision would be based on an unbiased review by the various departments AND the independent review of the FEIR that would have to find that document in compliance with CEQA. No "contacts" would be likely to override those findings.

If the plan is rejected based on the FEIR which the City as Lead Agency has deemed acceptable, that decision would remain no matter who applied.

See emails below: (Note - The MOU was signed in April 2020)

From: Gabe Engeland <gengeland@cityofsierramadre.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 3:03 PM

To: Moore, Savannah <[REDACTED]>

Cc: 'Jason Han' <[REDACTED]>; Adam Browning <[REDACTED]>;
'jonathanf@newurbanwest.com' <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Contact Assistance

Hi Savannah,

Congratulations on your promotion and appointment! We've heard nothing but positive things about you and the work you do. I look forward to working with you moving forward.

There is a proposed development in Sierra Madre from New Urban West. The development requires information and approvals from the County's Public Works Department. The developer and the City have sent a few requests to the Public Works office, both through email and phone calls, in an attempt to schedule a meeting to discuss the steps that need to take place. I have CC'd the development team on this email. They will provide you with a bit more information, but could you please work to get us in touch to the correct person or team for County Public Works? We are nearing some important time thresholds and having someone on your team working with us would be very helpful.

Thanks,

Gabe

Gabriel L. Engeland City Manager

City of Sierra Madre

From: James Yang <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 10:34 AM

To: asonh@newurbanwest.com; Adam Browning <[REDACTED]>; Jonathan Frankel <[REDACTED]>

Subject: FW: Contact Assistance

This is James Yang with County Public Works. We understand that you are seeking information and approval from our Department concerning your proposed development in Sierra Madre. Please let me know what assistance you are seeking and I am happy to facilitate.

James Yang
Senior Civil Engineer
Los Angeles County Public Works

On Sep 24, 2020, at 12:12 PM, Jonathan Frankel <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Thanks for your help.

We are working on a project where there is a County-maintained debris basin and access easement immediately to the east of the project site. The City of Sierra Madre is requesting the project take access from that side of the property, and our improvements may need to be coordinated with the improvements in the County easement.

We also have an existing County Storm Drain facility within the proposed development area and need to coordinate the potential relocation of that pipe.

If you can coordinate a meeting with Aracely Lasso and Vilong Truong we think that is a good place to start. Let me know if there are other individuals you think should be involved in the meeting.

Thanks again,

Jonathan P. Frankel *Vice President, Forward Planning*
New Urban West, Inc.

San Diego, CA 92127

From: James Yang <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 12:25 PM
To: Jonathan Frankel <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Adam Browning <[REDACTED]>; Jason Han <[REDACTED]>;
Moore, Savannah <[REDACTED]>; Gabe Engeland
<gengeland@cityofsierramadre.com>; CCimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: Re: Contact Assistance

Can you please provide me a location map of your project and it's relationship to the flood control basin and storm drain? Once I have your map, I can determine who need to be at the initial meeting.

From: Jonathan Frankel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 12:58 PM
To: James Yang <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Adam Browning <[REDACTED]>; Jason Han <[REDACTED]>;
Moore, Savannah <[REDACTED]>; Gabe Engeland
<gengeland@cityofsierramadre.com>; CCimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: RE: Contact Assistance

The existing stormdrain is in Sunnyside Avenue and will need to be relocated. It conveys flow from the debris basin to the northwest closest to Park Vista Drive.

From: James Yang <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 2:13 PM
To: Dayna Rothman <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Winnie Tham <wtham@fuscoe.com>; Jonathan Frankel <jonathanf@newurbanwest.com>; CCimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: FW: Contact Assistance **Importance:** High

Hi Dayna:

We (myself and staffs of stormwater maintenance and LDD) had a productive meeting with City of Sierra Madre and New Urban West (developer) regarding a proposed development in the City (see attached location maps). The City is requiring the developer to widen Cater Avenue just east of proposed development. This reach of Carter Avenue is sitting on 5761003905, owned by the City. Immediately north of City's parcel 5761003905 is Flood Control owned parcel 5761003906. It appears flood control may have leased the southern portion of 5761003906 to the City for Bailey Canyon Park. In order to widen Carter Avenue, approximately 15 to 20 feet of right of way is needed from most southern portion of Flood Control parcel 5761003906. Can you please advise what are the option(s) and associated timeline for the City to acquire the necessary roadway rights from flood control for the widening? I copied the City and the developer's team on this email to start the conversation.

Thanks.
James

From: Dayna Rothman
Sent: Monday, October 5, 2020 1:45 PM
To: James Yang <[REDACTED]>; Olivia Moreno <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Winnie Tham <[REDACTED]>; Jonathan Frankel <[REDACTED]>; CCimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>; Eden (Mulu) Berhan <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Bailey Debris Basin - Grant of Easement of Sierra Madre

James,

As discussed, I suggest the City submit their plans along with a request for an easement to LDD. Their plans should clearly identify the limits of the easement or they can provide a separate map of the easement area. LDD will circulate the request for review and approval from operating divisions.

The City will also need to provide SMP with a legal description, calculations, map for our use in preparing the documents, and an appraisal supporting their offer and value for the easement they want to purchase. If the City has any questions, they can contact Olivia Moreno who is copied on this e-mail.

Thank you

Dayna Rothman
Head, Real Estate
Los Angeles County Public Works

From: Chris Cimino **Sent:** Tuesday, March 09, 2021 9:52 AM

To: Gabe Engeland <gengeland@cityofsierramadre.com>; Vincent Gonzalez <vgonzalez@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: FW: Bailey Debris Basin - Grant of Easement of Sierra Madre

I received a call from a resident that lives next door to the proposed project. He happens to be a County Employee that is responsible for land management for the County. He would have to involve the Flood Control because of the use of the land but he has allot of pull. He said the Developers comment of it would not be feasible to acquire the land from the County baffled him when he never heard about it in his office. I think we need to have the Developer revisit the access to the property from the East. Putting all that traffic on Sunnyside will be a mistake.

From: Gabe Engeland

Sent: Tuesday, March 09, 2021 9:55 AM

To: Chris Cimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>; Vincent Gonzalez <vgonzalez@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: RE: Bailey Debris Basin - Grant of Easement of Sierra Madre

I am 100% fine with asking them to revisit it. The County would not meet or discuss or even respond to inquiries. This is the first I have heard there was any progress and at my last discussion they said "call back in 5 years."

If this contact is willing to be responsive we are happy to convene a meeting with the developer and the County and do whatever our part is.

Thanks,
Gabe

Gabriel L. Engeland
City Manager
City of Sierra Madre

From: Chris Cimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 11:27 AM

To: Jim Sparks [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Bailey Debris Basin - Grant of Easement of Sierra Madre

Jim this is CM Gabe's response. He says he was on the call when the developers were told to call back in 5 years. He said at first they were not getting any response so they contacted the Supervisors office and she had a division call them back about it. So I don't know how was on the call.

From: Jim Sparks [REDACTED]
Date: 4/22/21 5:54 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: Chris Cimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>

Subject: Carter Ave Expansion

I just got off the phone with our Stormwater Planning folks discussing the availability of the Flood property and I think we can make it work. They're now looking for a formal request to move it along and are willing to commit to a definitive yes or no within a couple of months. I'll ask my staff to resend the email requesting a formal request. If they determine they can offer the property (probably as an easement) we should be able to get it process done within a year.

James T Sparks
Assistant Deputy Director
Los Angeles County Public Works

(Note to Planning Commission – Jim Sparks retired in 2021 – no one at Stormwater knew anything about this project – they referred me to Dayna Rothman – head of Land Use – she knew nothing about this other than discussions with Jonathan Frankel in Dec 2021 and Jan 2022.

Interestingly, Jim Sparks owned the very large house directly adjacent to the Meadows at 501 Sunnyside. He was clearly concerned with the possibility of all traffic from the project coming onto Sunnyside. That house was sold in June of 2022 – the listing included their view of the open meadow - to be developed with the largest house.)

Barbara Vellturo

Protect Sierra Madre

To the Planning Commission

Re: Serious Concerns of Drainage and Flooding

An important purpose of an Environmental impact report is to identify potential adverse impacts of the Developers planned project.

A report in the DEIR of the original Detention Basin plan identified the need for a study of the location of that basin TO AVOID ADVERSE IMPACTS to adjacent homes. No study has been done and the location remains the same in the present Plan, with more water potentially reaching the basin than in the studied plans. The drainage and hydrology of the Meadows project has been significantly changed since the EIR and there is no oversight for the current plan. .

Concern #1

Emails received through a Public records request show that Sierra Madre's Public Works Director objected to the Developer's plan for overflow to be directed to Crestvale via a surface pipe onto the street several feet below the proposed park. He said then that [The easterly storm drain will need to be connected to the storm drain on Lima St.](#)

The Developers engineer objected because that plan **“requires analysis and verify capacity of all the impacted drainage systems as a result of the diversion”** and that they would like to avoid that.

(Emails included #1 Below)

We would like to think that analysis of and verifying capacity of all impacted drainage systems would be EXACTLY what the City should require for protection of all citizens living below the planned development!

Any future discussions with our Public Works director and our City Engineer were apparently not documented as they were not provided in public document requests.

Current plans include even more water to be diverted to the Detention Basin, as the proposed “term sheet” for the first time suggests diverting all waters from the pipes on Sunnyside, to the Retention Basin located immediately above a home below, on Crestvale.

Concern #2

In its original comments to the NOP (Notice of Preparation) of the EIR, in 2020, the County Flood Control District through its department of public works, identified Flooding and debris flow concerns for the project, based on the Hillside terrain.

"The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) has reviewed the NOP and offers the following comments for your consideration:

1. Project components affecting the LACFCD's facilities or right of way will require a flood permit, storm drain plans approval, and hydrology study approval from the LACFCD through EPIC-LA at epicla.lacounty.gov. The LACFCD should be disclosed and included as a responsible permitting agency in the DEIR.

2. The hillsides above the proposed housing project are highly erosive and subject to severe burn from wildfires. Debris flows can result afterwards due to storm water run-off. Flood and debris control facilities may be required to protect the proposed housing project.

NOT ONE of the County's concerns (including other requests that the DEIR address traffic impacts to their ability to maintain their Bailey Debris Basin) were ever even mentioned let alone mitigated in the DEIR or the FEIR, nor was LA County Flood Control District disclosed as a permitting agency, as they stated they should be.

Rather the Developer, in its email to the City's Public Works Director said that they wanted to avoid the oversight of the County Flood Control District.

The County's Concerns include a possibility of a Debris Flow, a subject not addressed in the EIR. Some residents remember the deaths of a Sierra Madre father and son in a sudden debris flow in Bailey Canyon - adjacent to the proposed development. There are signs in the park now, warning of that danger. The mountains above the retreat center are dry and a fire danger. After a fire those areas would be very prone to mud and debris slides from rain events in the mountains. The Sierra Madre Hazard Map identifies that area as a "landslide zone"

(County Comments included #2 Below)

The Hydrology plan before the Planning Commission now bears no semblance to what was included in the DEIR and FEIR. The Berm, the Sunken Park and sending all Sunnyside water to the detention basin are entirely new elements of the project and its critical drainage plan. They were never presented or studied in the DEIR or by the City or County and are contrary to the Hydrology design and maps in the DEIR and FEIR.

The Developer's consultant has presented figures to assure the committee that their NEW plan is adequate for the safety and protection of the City. But it was the SAME consultant that presented the Hydrology Plan in the EIR without the berm they now say is essential for drainage. Their current (revised) plan acknowledges that it is subject to presenting an LID (Low Impact Development) plan which must be reviewed and accepted by the City Engineer. They have not shown that the City Engineer has seen, reviewed and accepted their present plan to send all excess storm waters, from the entire development, that are not held in the ground or the "retention basin", down Crestvale (or any city Streets at a lower elevation than the park.)

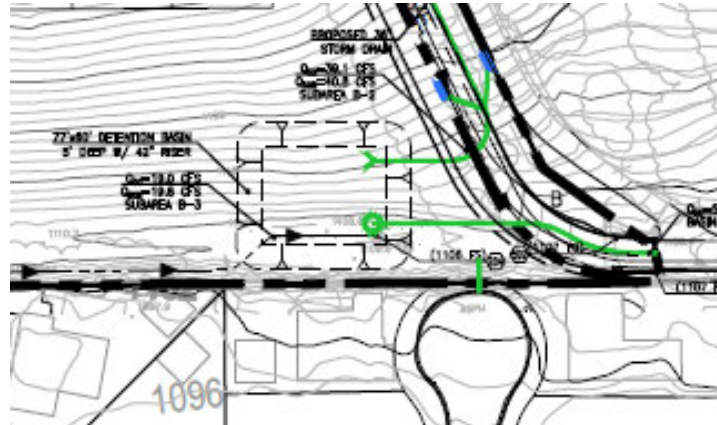
Concern # 3

The DEIR included a Geo Tech study which presented concerns of potential adverse impacts to adjacent properties, based on the placement of the planned retention basin.

The DEIR GeoTech study required "Any infiltration systems shall be setback a sufficient distance from proposed structures and adjacent properties to avoid adverse impacts. These distances shall be determined with future studies."

The DEIR states that "Stormwater that is not retained and cleaned in the storage gallery or infiltrated into the ground will be routed to the southeast corner of the park and exit to Crestvale drive via a 24-inch surface culvert."

Despite having had that Geotech report (that the system should be setback a sufficient distance fromadjacent properties") for many months before the release of the DEIR, the developer's current proposed design, in the DEIR and the FEIR **still** shows the detention basin located directly adjacent to nearby homes on Crestvale and still plans to divert all excess water to Crestvale via a surface culvert. There is no reference in any NUW document of a plan to study what the potential impacts might be, or to relocate the setback of the infiltration system to avoid the POSSIBILITY of adverse impacts to the homes below.



The potential for “Adverse Impacts” could easily be diminished, or removed entirely, by moving the retention basin to the Northern side of the park area and including a connection with the County Storm drain on the Corner of Carter and Lima which would also allow drainage from any significant storm BEFORE it flooded the public park and before it flooded any City street. It would also remove the berm as an impediment to the views of the homes below, as it would be at the base of an existing planned slope.

If the County approves the Developers plan to widen Carter Avenue, the Developer would already be required to move the existing Storm drain at the intersection of Carter, Lima and Oak Crest. The plan already is to connect water lines from the project to a pipe running under West Carter Avenue to a drain on Lima, and the City Manager has said that the Developer would be responsible for all repairs to the existing West Carter road.

The ONLY impediment to their making this change which would protect the existing citizens of Sierra Madre is the statement by the Developers consultant that connection to the County Storm Drain: **“requires analysis and verify capacity of all the impacted drainage systems as a result of the diversion... If possible, we would like to match existing hydrology boundaries as much as possible to avoid diversion.”**

If the Developer is confident in its latest (new) plan to keep from flooding the park and the rest of the City, he should easily be able to comply with the requirements of a Storm Drain connection to convey that water that would otherwise flood City Streets.

The Developer's statement that they plan a "Sunken Park" has also raised a question, as that term has never been previously used. How much of the Park will be sunken and how deep? If only a portion will be sunken, where will it be located?

The Question of one of the Commissioners as to how much the planned berm would take from the usable portion of the park is reasonable - we would likewise like to learn how much is sloped towards the first tier of homes. The depiction shows a strip of land, developed with walkways and other amenities. Please ask the developer how many acres of the 3 acre park will be developed with those features.

RE Concern #1

From: Winnie Tham
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 9:18 AM
To: CCimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>; John Olivier [REDACTED]
Subject: Sunnyside - Proposed Storm Drain

Hi Chris,

In our call last Monday, you had noted that you did not want us to continue taking storm water to Crestvale Drive (cul de sac), rather divert the storm water to an new county drain to Lima. Is there a reason we cannot continue to drain towards Crestvale Drive? Our intention is to detain the proposed flow onsite and only outlet the same existing Q to Crestvale Drive, under the proposed condition. Based on this concept, is there a reason we can't continue to outlet to Crestvale Drive? Typically County frowns upon diversion to the drainage areas and requires analysis and verify capacity of all the impacted drainage systems as a result of the diversion, as indicated by Vilong in the Tuesday conf. call. If possible, we would like to match existing hydrology boundaries as much as possible to avoid diverstion.

From: Winnie Tham [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 09, 2020 3:25
To: Chris Cimino <CCimino@cityofsierramadre.com>; John Olivier [REDACTED] >
Subject: RE: Sunnyside - Proposed Storm Drain

Hi Chris,

I forgot to ask in my earlier email, if you can review the attached exhibit and confirm the County vs. City storm drain system. Per Vilong, he said that since this project is in the City jurisdiction, then the County will review the "overall" hydrology and City will review the "subdivision" hydrology. Based on this, I've marked up the proposed storm drain system, with what I think would be County owned and maintained, vs. City. Can you please confirm if this is accurate?

Also at the entitlement level, will the hydrology report need to be approved by County for approval of the TTM?

Cris Cimino's Response

Good morning Winnie,

The reason I do not want you to design the storm water to go to Crestvalle is there is no storm drain on Crestvalle. Currently the storm water sheds to the street. The easterly storm drain will need to be connected to the storm drain on Lima St.

I am including our contract Engineer Kev Tcharkhautian, he will be able to answer all you question related to Storm drain and LID for this project.

(No further emails were provided based on Public Records Requests)

RE Concern #2

(On June 24, 2020, weeks after the MOU was signed, the City of Sierra Madre sent a Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report - NOP - to CEQA. One of the agencies required to be given notice, Los Angeles County Flood Control District, responded with their concerns, to be addressed in the EIR) Among the Comments

"The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) has reviewed the NOP and offers the following comments for your consideration:

1. Project components affecting the LACFCD's facilities or right of way will require a flood permit, storm drain plans approval, and hydrology study approval from the LACFCD through EPIC-LA at epicla.lacounty.gov. The LACFCD should be disclosed and included as a responsible permitting agency in the DEIR.

2. The hillsides above the proposed housing project are highly erosive and subject to severe burn from wildfires. Debris flows can result afterwards due to storm water run-off. Flood and debris control facilities may be required to protect the proposed housing project.

6. The DEIR should address the project impacts to the operation and maintenance of Bailey Debris Basin and include all required mitigations including, but not limited to the following:

6.1. Potential complaints from current and future residents about the impact from work at the

basin such as cleanout activities and trucking.

6.2. Increases in traffic affecting operation efficiency during basin cleanout.

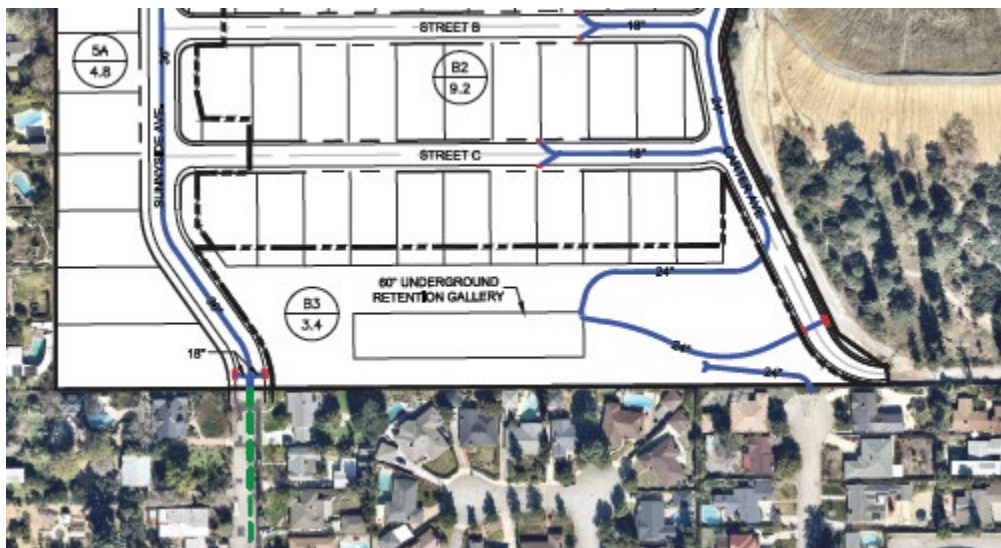
(NOT ONE of their concerns were ever even mentioned let alone mitigated in the DEIR or the FEIR, nor were they disclosed as a permitting agency, as they asked“

RELEVANT EXHIBITS FROM THE EIR

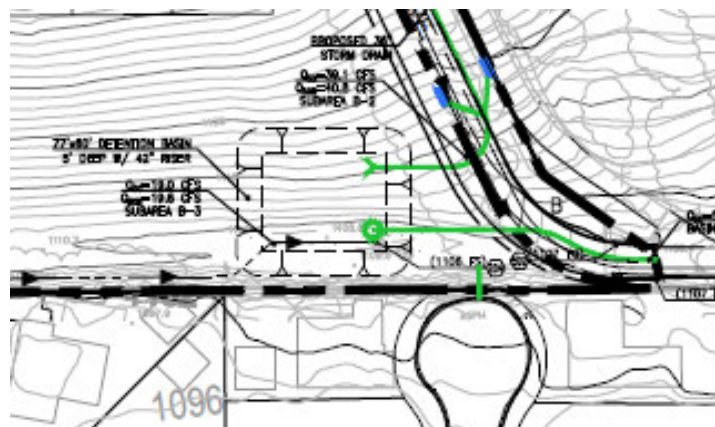




Page 54 FEIR



Page 55 FEIR



We Citizens have tried to keep up with all the thousands of pages of relevant documents - not an easy task. The DEIR and all its attached studies, the FEIR and its hundreds of redlined changes, the amendments Volume 1 and Volume II and all the Agenda Packets and the Staff Reports - and now the Development Agreement, the Term Sheet and the Redlined Specific Plan. The Specific Plan no longer matches what was studied in the EIR.

It is a Gargantuan, constantly shifting "target" of information. Much of what exists now is entirely in conflict with the plan presented by the DEIR. We do not even know if we have all the information. Their current "plan" includes references to the LID (have they submitted a plan, has it been reviewed?)

The "proposed Specific Plan" by law, can not be adopted unless it is found consistent with the City's existing General Plan. The Developer has an analysis saying that it is consistent - the Citizens from two groups have submitted analyses that say it is not. The "independent reviewer" MIG, hired by the City for Peer Review of the Developer's documents, in many instances, said that elements did NOT show consistency, but their comments too, were often ignored. (Interestingly, a comment from the City to an early draft version of their plan requested that parking be moved to the north side of the streets - the Developer declined)

Many times our requests to the City have been met with the response that we need to do a records request. Most times the requested documents are not provided until several weeks later than allowed by law.

We are VERY appreciative of the Planning Commission's thorough review of this very complex project and ESPECIALLY grateful to feel that we are being "heard".

At the Joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the City Council, in March, Commissioner Dennison asked if you would be able to do a "deep dive" into the Specific Plan when it came before you. We are happy (and relieved to see that you are doing just that) Thank you

Barbara Vellturo
for Protect Sierra Madre

To the Planning Commission and the Citizens of Sierra Madre

The Meadows Project - Concerns about flooding – Developer's changes

There are serious concerns that the Developer's current drainage plan for the Meadows project could lead to flooding of the homes and streets below.

During the last few Planning Commission meetings we learned that New Urban West has entirely changed their drainage plan for the project from that presented in the EIR. They have added an 18 foot buffer with a large berm along the southern edge of the park and have stated that it will be a "sunken park". They have changed their drainage plan to divert all stormwater flow on Sunnyside, as well as that from the East, to the detention basin.

The concept of the berm was first presented as a buffer to protect the views of the residents below. Some of those residents stated that they did not want the huge berm above their homes. Commissioner Pevsner was concerned that the large berm along the length of the park would limit the amount of park space available for amenities. Commissioner Dallas asked if the developer could just plant shrubs instead of the berm.

At that point, the Developer's engineer consultant admitted that the berm was NECESSARY "for drainage". Jonathan Frankel also said that was why it was a "sunken park" - or else the detention basin would need to be deeper in the ground.

We wonder why their experts didn't realise that drainage was inadequate without a berm when they drafted the EIR!

Commissioner Hutt asked that the developer capture 100% of stormwater for the development, which led to an additional change. Current changes to the Specific Plan (which also invalidates part of the EIR) does so by diverting stormwater from the west (Sunnyside), as well as from the East, to the detention basin. This NEW Hydrology plan, to send all stormwater from both sides of the project to the basin and to direct all overflow to city streets drastically alters the FEIR for the Meadows Specific Plan that the PC and CC will be asked to "certify", and raises additional concerns.

Documents show that the developer originally planned, almost 2 years ago, to connect any overflow to a County storm drain - until they learned that would require additional studies and permits. They also show that our City director of public works told them in an email that "[The easterly storm drain will need to be connected to the storm drain on Lima St.](#)"

The Developers engineer objected because that plan **“requires analysis and verify capacity of all the impacted drainage systems as a result of the diversion”** and that they would like to avoid that.

A DEIR GeoTech study required "Any infiltration systems shall be setback a sufficient distance from proposed structures and adjacent properties to avoid adverse impacts". NUW ignored that expert's requirement and designed the large basin to be directly adjacent to a house on Crestvale. That made an easier connection to the above ground 24 inch pipe - which would send all excess stormwater to pour directly onto the street below.

There may be another option to protect City residents from flooding. But not an option that the developer would like.

IF they are able to move the detention basin, and the berm above it, to the back of the park, close to the slope, AND connect the overflow to the County's storm drain on Lima, as originally planned...

The developer could collect 100% of the stormwater and direct it all to the detention basin, except for any overflow.

It would conform to the Geotec requirement in the EIR of setback, to protect the homes below.

It would do what our City Dept of Public Works asked them to do 2 years ago, to connect to the storm drain on Lima, which was their original Plan.

It would require the developer to do the Hydrological studies required by the County and to get permits from the City and County, to ensure that the plan was adequate and safe.

It would cost the developer time, ONLY because they chose NOT to do what they knew was correct 2 years ago. But would protect our City from potential flooding, while collecting all stormwater possible within the development.

We know what the Developer would choose.

What will our City require?

To the Planning Commission for their August 18 Meeting

There are several concerns with the Current version of the Specific Plan as it pertains to the Park. The latest iteration of the Specific Plan includes an entirely new drainage system for the park that will be at the base of the rest of the Hillside development.

1. The Specific Plan states that

The shrubs, groundcover, vines, and trees along the southern border of the public park will provide a landscape buffer between the Plan area and the existing adjacent homes to the south. However, to preserve views and privacy for existing homes south of the Plan area, there will be an 18-foot buffer between the property line of existing residences and the public park, which will include a berm on which trees will not be planted and shrubs will be used for landscaping. On the north side of the 18-foot buffer area, a six-foot view fence is proposed to maintain the berm as a buffer area. Conceptual sections of the park buffer are enlarged and shown in **Appendix 3C, Conceptual Park Buffer Sections**.

This is inaccurate. The Developer's engineer has admitted that the Berm was a necessary part of their new drainage plan.

The neighbors to the south do not want a large berm, possibly behind a concrete wall, blocking their view. Council member Dallas asked why a berm was necessary when shrubs might suffice. At that time the engineer for the Developer explained that the Berm was **NECESSARY** for drainage!

The Specific Plan must state clearly the actual reason for any **ESSENTIAL** elements of their planned drainage system and **NOT** classify it as an (unwanted and unneeded) benefit for the neighbors. It is not.

The Walls and Fences Plan says that a Slump Block Wall (up to 6 ft high) will be on the perimeters of the Development. Is a slump block fence planned on the southern border as well as a berm?? Their attachments don't show it.

2. Jonathan Frankel stated that it would be a "sunken park" also for reasons of drainage. No depiction explains how much or which parts of the park will be sunken. Will the sunken portion of the park be at the ground level of the adjacent houses that right now are below the ground level of the Property?

The EIR requires the removal of "5 to 18 feet" of fill throughout the development area. The developer should explain how far below current ground level the walking paths and amenities will be (the usable area of the "sunken park") And how far below the first tier of Meadows houses those amenities will be in case of runoff from any strong or extended storm.

3. The plan shown in the latest version of the Specific Plan raises more questions. It is entitled "Required 50 year retention volume for Crestvale Drainage Area = 128,880"

On the west side of the plan is the beginning of an "above ground storage" 1' deep detention basin which continues for most of the length of the "Below Ground Storage" Both the above and below ground drainage areas cover almost all of the walking paths and amenities of the proposed park and appear to extend north to the retention walls to the first tier of houses.

It appears that the entire park area is a large (essential) bioswale that would have been required for the houses on the sloped hillside in any case, and that land would not have been buildable.

The Specific Plan includes this information:

The southern portion of the Plan area is to be developed into park space with a drainage area of approximately 3.4 acres (see Drainage Area B3 in **Figure 4-6a**). Runoff generated from this area drains via sheet flow and natural concentrated flow to the southeastern portion of the Plan area and discharges to Crestvale Drive via a 24-inch surface culvert. Portions of the approximately three-acre park will be depressed to promote additional above ground storage and infiltration. Runoff that is not retained and treated on-site will be conveyed to the southeast corner of the park and exit to Crestvale Drive via 24-inch surface culvert and to the MS4 downstream to Arcadia Wash.

In other words, the 3.4 acres (the Park) is a drainage area that will receive all of the flows from the Hillside above, both from storms and outdoor watering etc., that isn't directed into the pipes (designs show a diversion for only a portion of the east sides of each road. As we know, Stormwater is not simply rainfall. It is runoff from the impervious features of the properties:

driveways, walkways, buildings, or anything that gets in the way of rain's natural path where it can be filtered naturally. When water runs off roofs or roadways, it carries with it debris, sediments, toxins, and pollutants.

The sunken areas of the park are not shown. How wet may the amenities be after any significant rains? How will the restrooms, sheds etc handle a regular flow downhill into the Park? Will the debris remain and build up in the park and play areas? Is there a liability issue?

The City Low Impact Development Ordinance requires a submitted plan to be approved by the City Engineer

https://library.municode.com/ca/sierra_madre/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT15BUCO_CH15.58LOIMDEPL

The purpose of this ordinance is:

The provisions of this chapter contain requirements for construction activities and facility operations of development and redevelopment projects to comply with the current "municipal NPDES permit," lessen the water quality impacts of development, and integrate LID design principles to mimic predevelopment hydrology through infiltration, evapotranspiration and rainfall harvest and use. LID shall be inclusive of SUSMP requirements.

We think it is critical that the Planning Commission see a copy of that approved plan and have an opportunity to ask questions of the City Engineer before they adopt something that may have negative impacts on the park and the streets below.

Since we citizens have never had the opportunity of a question and answer session with the developer, we would also appreciate the Planning Commission asking the questions we can't

The "Necessary" berm is not shown on this map. Where does it begin and end (we assume the 18 feet previously given is the length, what is its width and height)?

The "Above ground storage" is labeled one foot deep. You have said that the park will be sunken - how far below present grade are the paths and amenities of the park? Will this above ground storage be higher than that grade? How much higher will the berm be?

What is the remaining usable length and width of the park? (Land not sloped to the north and not covered by the berm)?

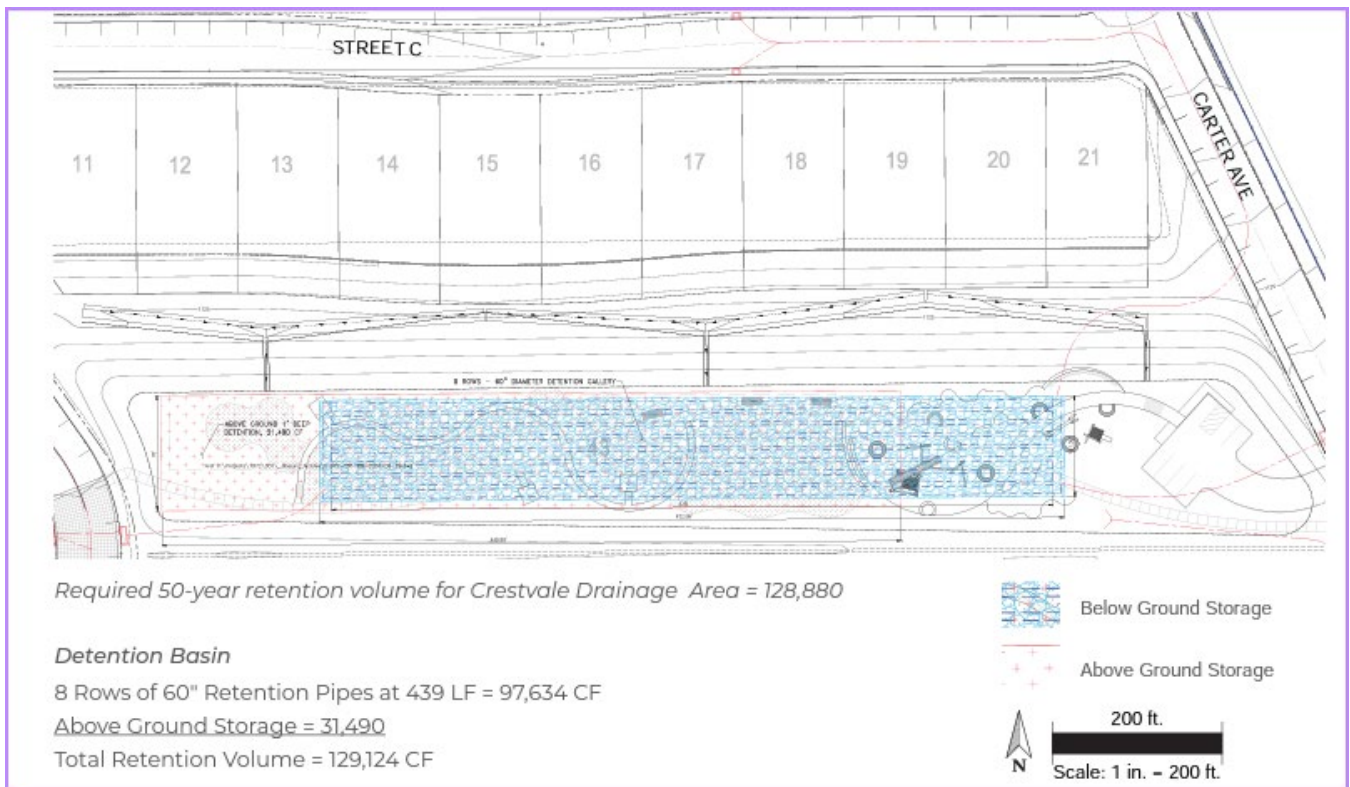
Will there be any aboveground structures, maintenance buildings or sheds, or equipment, other than restrooms within the park.

Have the current plans for drainage and stormwater retention been approved by the City Engineer?

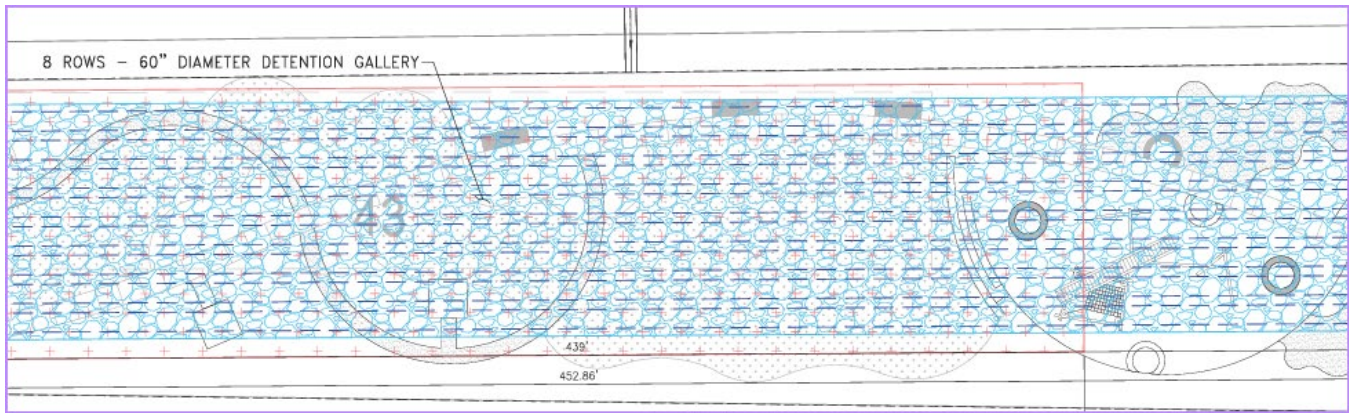
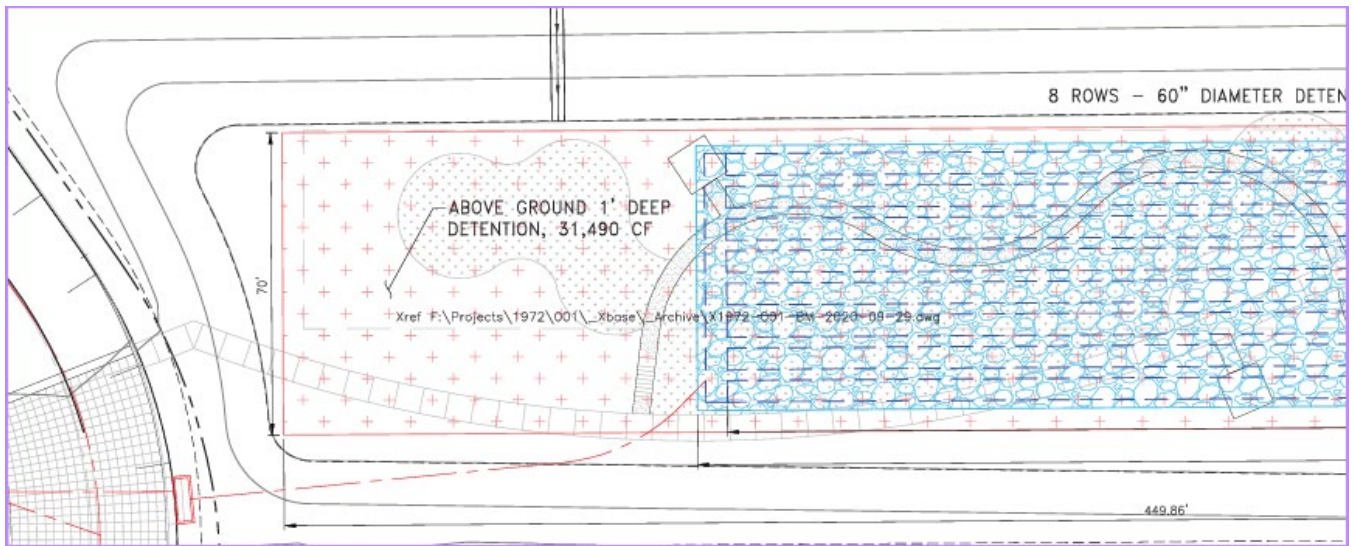
Why was this "necessary Plan" not included in the EIR so it could have undergone an expert analysis?

Why did the Engineer for the Developer not not recognize, when their drainage plans were included in the EIR, that a berm and an above ground storage was essential for the project?

Why has the developer chosen NOT to apply to the County for connection to the storm drain at Lima as was originally planned by his engineers? Is there a concern that these plans might not be acceptable to the County?



It appears that the planned walkway from Sunnyside will go through the above ground storage area



PLEASE ask the Questions that we can't

As always, thank you all for your diligence.

Barbara Velluro

Protect Sierra Madre

Joseph Nosrat

Subject: FW: Please include as public comment
Attachments: PC PRETTY PICTURES - AND QUESTIONS.docx

From: Barbara Vellturo [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2022 12:46 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsierramadre.com>
Subject: Please include as public comment

CAUTION: This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER - be CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Please include the attached as Public Comment for tonight's Planning Commission meeting.

PRETTY PICTURES - AND QUESTIONS

New Urban West put together a presentation for the July 7 Planning Commission meeting, allegedly showing a row of houses in the planned Meadows development. While it did show that the developer had a better idea of what would be an acceptable plan, there was much that it did not accurately show.

The depiction did not include gross square footage of the houses and the sizes of the lots “building pad” each was on.

They included mature trees on either side of the houses. However a previous slide to the PC showed one of the buildings including the angle plane and showed that, with the 5 foot side setbacks, there was no room for either tree. Also, fire standards say that tree branches should not overhang the roof. Unless there is a much larger side setback than 5 feet, no house will accommodate those lovely mature blooming trees between lots. Their tree plan shows “Street trees” and “Slope trees” and “Park trees” but no trees on the lots.

Section 3.7, Wall and Fence Plan. of the Specific Plan includes the Developer's fence and wall plan and a rendering of the walls. The Specific Plan says that there will be a "slump block wall" (up to 6 ft high) between all houses in the development and around the perimeter. The diagram also shows slump block walls between the houses and the landscaped acre which protects the Retreat Center from the sight and sounds of the development. (Those walls may be up to 8 feet high) None of the “Pretty Pictures” include those walls or disclose how much the concrete walls would encroach on the side setbacks and the angle plane.

Nor do they show how much these concrete walls throughout the 9 acres would impact the aesthetics of the development.

During the EIR process, the EIR and the proposed Specific Plan were reviewed at intervals by MIG, a “Peer Review” consultant hired by the City but paid by the Developer. As well as MIG, the City also made an occasional comment on the drafts of the Specific Plan. Vincent Gonzalez made this comment below on the section on Walls and Fences. His comment would have made the development better but clearly the Developer chose not to do what the City said “shall” be done. Didn't want to spend the money on the extra aesthetics? And apparently our City is now okay with the “Prison” look.

Comment [VG4]: Update information in relevant parts of the SP regarding prohibiting the use of exposed CMU block surfaces. Such surfaces shall be covered with cultured or natural stone that blends into the hillside location.

Their Specific Plan does say that vines should be planted on walls facing the Park and Public areas “to minimize potential for graffiti” Apparently those vandals will deface a stone wall but not pull down a vine to do it.

An appropriate rendering with only actual elements present and all dimensions included should be required of the developer. If it is part of the Specific Plan it should be included in the presented drawings and the depiction should show what these streets would look like when the development is built, with saplings and not with 15 year old trees. And with the large “concrete?” wall between every home and separating the development from the rest of the community.

Please ask that all "pretty pictures" show what the citizens (and the buyers) will actually see, with concrete walls and saplings along each road. And not between houses.

Joseph Nosrat

To: Vincent Gonzalez
Subject: RE: The Meadows project

From: Vincent Gonzalez
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 9:54 AM
To: Clare Lin <clin@cityofsierramadre.com>
Cc: Joseph Nosrat <jnosrat@cityofsierramadre.com>
Subject: FW: The Meadows project

Commissioners:

Please see attached public comment from Jim Walsworth regarding The Meadows at Bailey Canyon Specific Plan project.

The Commission has been bcc to avoid Brown Act violations.

Vincent Gonzalez, Director | Planning & Community Preservation

City of Sierra Madre

232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd.

Sierra Madre, CA 91024

VGonzalez@cityofsierramadre.com

626.355.7135 (Office)

626.355.4239 (Direct)

Hours: Mon. -Thurs. 7:30am - 5:30pm

From: Jim Walsworth [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2022 3:09 PM
To: PlanningCommission <PlanningCommission@cityofsierramadre.com>
Subject: The Meadows project

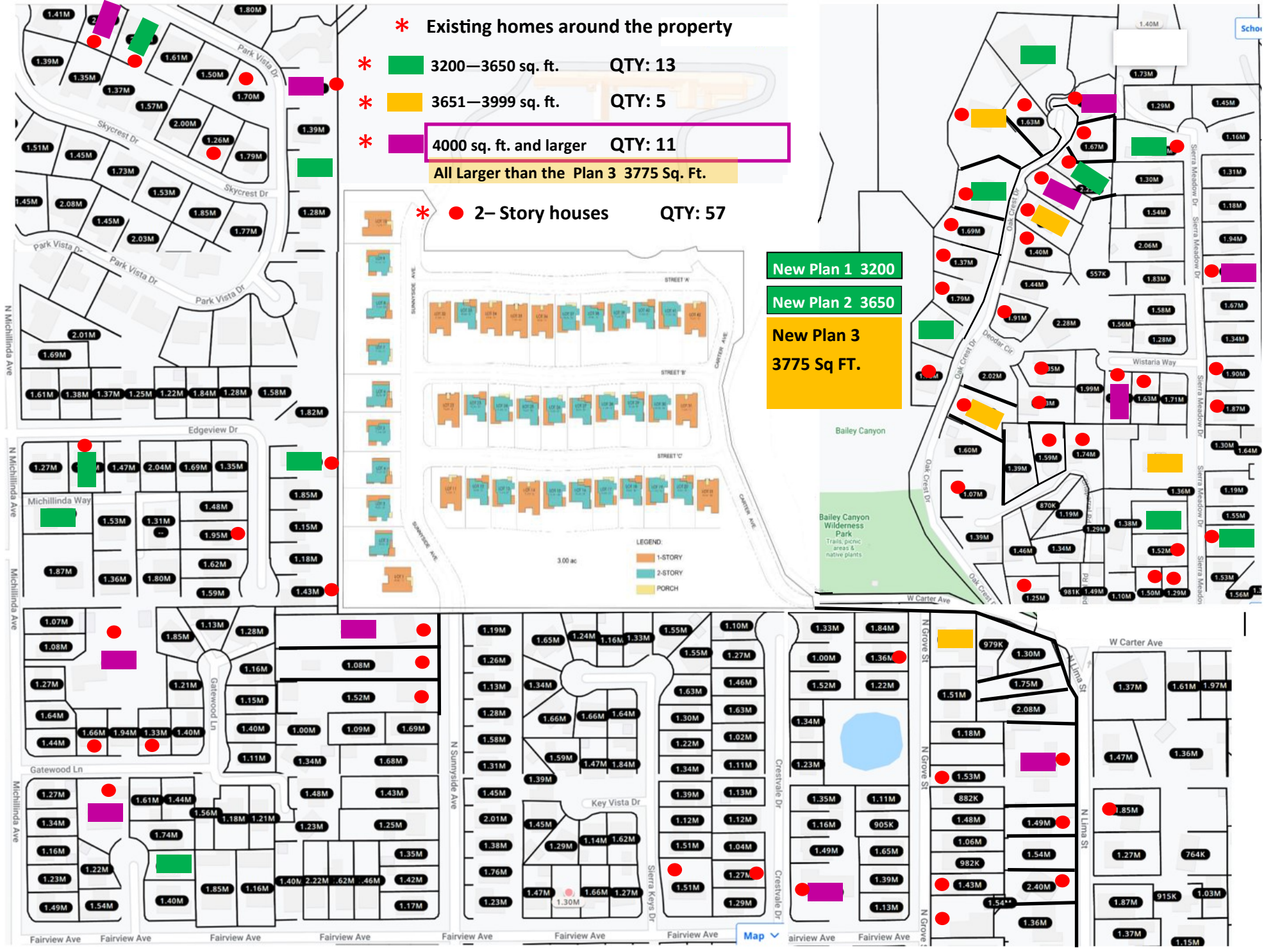
CAUTION: This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER - be CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Please forward a copy to each planning commissioner

Thank you

Jim Walsworth

[REDACTED]
Sierra Madre, CA 91024
[REDACTED]



* Existing homes around the property

* ■ 3200—3650 sq. ft. QTY: 13

* ■ 3651—3999 sq. ft. QTY: 5

* ■ 4000 sq. ft. and larger QTY: 11

All Larger than the Plan 3 3775 Sq. Ft.

* ● 2- Story houses QTY: 57

New Plan 1 3200

New Plan 2 3650

New Plan 3
3775 Sq FT.

LEGEND

1-STORY

2-STORY

PORCH

3.00 ac

School

Map


Dear Planning commissioners:


I apologize for giving you another couple of pages, (to go with the thousands you have already had to read) and maybe the staff has already given you this information, but I felt it might be of some help.


At the last meeting Mr. Arrieta gave you a sample of homes around the meadows project. He stated the surrounding homes were much smaller in size, and out of the 50 homes in his study, he stated were within 300 sq. ft from the project, that there were only (5) 2– story homes in the area.


50 homes around a 20 acre parcel seems a little small an area to compare, so I have given you a map showing a little bigger, and in my opinion more accurate look at the surrounding homes.

As you will see from my map:

13—homes are, **3200 - 3650** sq ft. Same size as the Meadows Plan 1 & 2. Marked with the 

5—Homes are, **3651 - 3999** sq. ft. Same range as the largest plan 3 @3775 sq ft Marked with the 

11— Homes are larger than **4000** sq ft. All larger than the meadows plan 3 Marked with the 

57—homes in this same area are **2– story** Marked with 

** just a side note:

Mr. Arrieta’s house is one of the 2– story houses on the west property line @3400 sq ft

(*sorry that might not have been appropriate*)

Thank you for all the time and effort you have had to endure (and will still have to endure) through this process. We are confident in your ability and the City Council, to negotiate this project to make it the most beneficial to the city as a whole.

Sincerely,

Jim Walsworth

Jim Walsworth



Sierra Madre, CA 91024

Just to be transparent My wife and I are part of Neighbors for Fairness