

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

RAMIREZ CANYON PARK
5750 RAMIREZ CANYON ROAD
MALIBU, CALIFORNIA 90265
PHONE (310) 589-3200
FAX (310) 589-3207



February 25, 2013

Travis Seawards
Department of Regional Planning
Los Angeles County
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California

**The Canyon at Triunfo Comments
Project No. R2012-00482**

Dear Mr. Seawards:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy offers the following comments on The Canyon at Triunfo project proposed along Triunfo Creek on a 47-acre property in a Resort and Recreation zoned area.

Our agency is heartened any time a project is limited to the reuse of existing building and road footprints. The project's considerable traffic generation and location next to an important tributary of Malibu Creek and abutting the 1500-acre Ladyface Mountain habitat block warrant this type of design sensitivity. To ensure that the contributing onsite resource areas are permanently protected, we urge the County to require the applicant to prepare metes and bounds legal descriptions for specific open space areas on site and to provide for permanent protection mechanisms to be firmly put in place before any permits are issued. Conservation easements to public agencies--such as the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) are the preferred and only truly permanent protection mechanism. Deed restrictions are the second preference.

Over ninety-percent of the proposed project uses would occur on the Triunfo Canyon Road side of Triunfo Creek. We urge the County and the applicant to agree to a single large conservation easement footprint that encompasses all of Triunfo Creek and all property east of the creek. The easement language could be written to fully accommodate all of the existing structures east of the creek and all proposed and anticipated uses. That conservation easement must preclude corrals, stables, fences and vineyards.

The terrain available on the subject property may provide a superior alignment for a short portion of the proposed Zuma Ridge Trail to Westlake Village that has been addressed in project comments from the National Park Service staff. This would be a regionally

Mr. Travis Seawards
The Canyon at Triunfo Comments
February 25, 2013
Page 2

significant trail that ties a whole community into the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The conceptual trail alignment is now routed upslope from the subject property in exceptionally steep and rocky terrain. We urge the County and the applicant to agree to a floating public trail easement across the eastern most 1,000 feet of each parcel.

That spatial separation should provide a good measure of site privacy from trail users because much of the project is buffered by the oak canopy along Triunfo Creek.

The Conservancy staff has consulted with the MRCA staff regarding acceptance of the proposed conservation and trail easements if they are made available from an approval of the proposed project.

Please direct any questions to Paul Edelman of our staff at 310-589-3200 ext. 128 and send all future correspondence to his attention at the above letterhead address.

Sincerely,

IRMA MUÑOZ
Chairperson