

DATE: April 17, 2010

FROM: Richard Ramirez,
CEG 490
RG 1366

TO: Adel Luzuriaga

REFERENCE: 1650 Hazbeth Lane, Glendale California
Proposed Single-family Residence

SUBJECT: Geotechnical Review of Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
Dated April 8, 2010 by E.D. Michael (PEIF2007 -002) Updated

Based on my review of Mr. Michael's April 8, 2010 report, it is evident that he is not familiar with the City of Glendale development entitlement process. His comments primarily are concerned with the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration which has already been recommended for approval by the City's Staff per the July 29, 2009 Zoning Administrator staff report.

The subject of the April 21, 2010 public hearing before the Glendale Planning Commission is a C.U.P (Conditional Use Permit) for grading exceeding 1500 cys and for development on a site with an average slope exceeding a slope ratio of 2:1 (26 degrees). In this regard, the Zoning Officer was unable to make one of the required 4 findings as required by Section 30.42.080 of the GMC. This finding pertains to the development's affect on: (a) public health, (b) public safety, or (c) the general welfare, and (d) its affect on the natural environment.

After the appeal was filed by the applicant's neighbors there has been close coordination between all the members of the applicant's consulting group, including the design civil engineer and the geotechnical engineer and geologists, the architect and the landscape architect and meetings with the planning staff and the applicant's legal council.

Mr. Michaels indicates that existing graded level pad is buildable, yet acknowledges the presence of up to 21 feet of poorly compacted fill, and more seriously, acknowledges the presence of substantial amounts of loose "spill fill" on the slopes immediately to the east and north of the level pad. Mr. Michael further states that these wedge fills are subject to failure as debris flow, and I agree. Both Geosystems and I do not recommend building on the existing pad since it is affected by potential mudslides, a geologic hazard, that can not be totally mitigated on site.

It is pointed out to Mr. Michael that detailed design plans such as for retaining wall are not required for a C.U.P. Such details will be addressed during the plan check permit process.

Finally, it is noted that Mr. Michael's calculations on the estimated volume of exported earth is grossly exaggerated. The civil engineers estimates are believed to be an accurate estimate based on the latest revised plans. If steeper cut-slopes in bedrock are utilized as Geosystems suggests, the total export volumes will be reduced. It is also noted that only two cut-slopes superjacent to the upper driveway retaining wall are shown on the grading plans (Geotechnical Map). These are proposed in the vicinity of TP-9 and TP-14. Therefore, there will be no need to remove or grade into the existing fill slope other than at these two (2) locations which are limited in size and volume. The upper walls will be designed to support the anticipated lateral loads described in the Geosystems report. A substantial height of wall freeboard is also recommended by Geosystems to contain sloughed materials and water runoff.

In conclusion, Mr. Michaels did not demonstrate that the updated Geosystems report was inaccurate or inadequate in terms of exploration, laboratory testing, data analysis, or in conclusions and recommendations presented.

It continues to be my professional opinion that the overall stability of the property will be substantially improved as a result of the proposed grading, construction of retaining walls and proposed landscaping. Additionally, potential for mudslides and water drainage affecting the existing residences on Hazbeth Lane and on Glenmont Drive will be substantially reduced after the project is completed as currently proposed.

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