

Old Glory

Tree 419, Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381

(310) 927-3013

Open Letter To Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

December 1, 2002

Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Fifth District
869 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisor Antonovich,

I respectfully appeal to you on behalf of the citizens of Los Angeles County and most especially the young children, to use your authority to direct the County Public Works Department and John Laing Homes to redesign the County mandated widening of Pico Canyon Road. The current road plan unnecessarily impacts the site of the 400 year old California live oak now known as "Old Glory." There are several ways to build the road without harm to the site, and there are opportunities to enhance the county with additional open space that will be appreciated by generations to come.

The county will be deeded the parks, streets and improvements by John Laing Homes only when the roadway is completed, so time is of the essence.

At your suggestion John Laing Homes has at their expense contracted to extract the tree, box it and transport it to a hillside location a quarter of a mile to the east. This would clear the site for the currently approved alignment, but it will most certainly kill "Old Glory." I am sending statements by the state's most qualified experts to support this conclusion, and invite you to contact them directly to acquaint yourself with the fact of 95% mortality of transplanted Valley Oaks of all ages.

John Laing Homes has posted signs stating that starting Monday December 2, 2002 "No Parking" will be allowed on the half mile of streets surrounding "Old Glory." Valley Crest Tree Service is expected then to begin to cut the tree from the ground where it has stood for centuries. Once trenching has begun, the tree can no longer be saved and John Laing Homes and the County will have wasted much more than the \$250,000.

Our volunteer efforts to save "Old Glory" have resonated throughout Los Angeles County and beyond. It has become a national symbol of our natural heritage. We have received many visitors to the site, from all walks of life, whose overwhelming emotions are best expressed by the young children who look up with awe at this magnificent tree in its spectacular setting. How cruel it will be, if shortsighted thinking causes this heritage oak to wither and die in their sight.

Mr. Antonovich, please, for the well being of the children, take the immediate steps necessary to "Save Old Glory" *where it stands*.

Sincerely,

John Quigley