

## PALOS VERDES ESTATES

# Proposal to re-route fire trail has some residents steaming

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Residents of Via Elevado are proposing to relocate a portion of the Paseo Del Sol asphalt fire road popular with hikers and bikers in order to reduce noise.

Jim D'Angelo, one of seven Via Elevado homeowners requesting the change, will represent the homeowners when the issue goes before the Parklands Committee Sept. 10.

In a letter attached to the application, the Palos Verdes Homes Association is supporting the proposal and willing to provide financing. However, a recent court ruling might complicate approval.

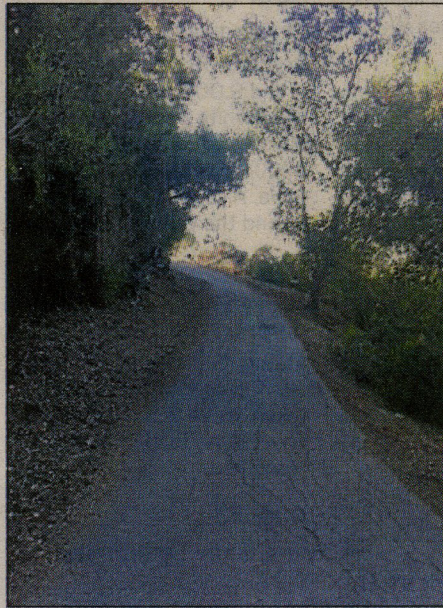
The fire trail, as it is known, begins at Paseo Del Sol and stretches near the backyards in the 2700 block of Via Elevado. Although officially meant for emergency vehicles, the road has become so popular over the years that

D'Angelo said the regular ruckus from crowds on the trail has chased some residents out of their own backyards.

The homeowners have requested closing a portion of the fire trail to pedestrians. Five are offering \$10,000 each for a total of \$50,000 to relocate 1,900 feet of the trail and establish a new pedestrian pathway above the current fire road. The alternative trail would be professionally designed and constructed, requiring the removal of vegetation to create a four-foot wide trail that includes 135 timber box steps.

The work is estimated to cost \$78,285 and take six weeks to complete. Any action taken by the Parklands Committee must also be approved by the city council.

D'Angelo said he and his neighbors began speaking to each other about the loud noise from the trail in 2013, soon after city residents complained that



Residents of Via Elevado are proposing to relocate a portion of the Paseo Del Sol fire trail.

PHOTO BY FRANK PONCE

their quality of life would be hurt by proposed trail expansions at the time. In April 2014, the city's Parklands Use Policy was established, calling for a reasonable expectation of privacy for adjacent residents.

"We want this properly planned so the activity on the trail does not result in a public free-for-all that takes away from the quality of life of residents," D'Angelo told the *News*.

Residents opposed to the proposal also are expected to attend the Sept. 10 meeting.

"There is something magical about walking along that ridge where the rest of the world appears distant and you are immersed into an almost silent world," said Frank Ponce. "How fortunate we are to have this gift here in our city."

Jeff Lewis, who successfully represented a group of residents against the city for transferring Via Panorama parklands property to two residents, sent a letter to the city and homes association opposing the proposal on Via Elevado.

Lewis said the fire trail

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— Jim D'Angelo, Via Elevado homeowner

is located on land deeded to the city in the 1940s, which makes it subject to the same land use restrictions a Los Angeles Superior Court judge ruled on in late June.

"Should the city choose to close this segment of the trail to the public, that would be a violation of the land use restrictions," Lewis wrote.

The Parklands Committee meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. Sept 10 at city hall.