City of Beverly Hills
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Planning Commission Report

Meeting Date: May 8, 2014

Subject: Amendments to the Central Area Single-Family development standards to address concerns related to building scale and mass and parking requirements.

Recommendation: Review Planning Commission Task Force recommendations and provide direction to staff on proceeding with an ordinance.

REPORT SUMMARY

A set of draft recommendations from the Planning Commission Task Force was presented to the Planning Commission on March 27, 2014. The key amendments to the Zoning code put forth by the Task Force for discussion included:

Prohibit lightwells from being located in front or side setback areas to allow for additional landscaped areas between properties;

Require porte cocheres to be set back from the front façade of the house to break up the mass;

Extend the required nine-foot setback on one side of the house South of Santa Monica Boulevard the entire length of the property to create more visual separation between buildings as viewed from the street and to provide more light/air and privacy;

Additional landscape standards including required landscaping in side yards and the planting of mature trees;

Relating the ability to achieve maximum basement floor area to reductions in, or modulation of, above-grade scale and mass; and,

Requiring additional parking spaces for additional bedrooms.

The Consultant's recommendations also included strengthening the relationship of zoning code modulation standards to the Residential Design Style Catalogue. The Task Force has not recommended specific modulation standards in the interest of maintaining maximum design flexibility but the Task

Attachment(s):
1. Recommendations Report, October 2013
2. March 27, 2014 Staff Report

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Force expressed support for recommending to the City Council a review of the Design Review regulations and Residential Design Style Catalogue.

March 27, 2014 Planning Commission Study Session

Commissioners supported most of the recommendations with concerns expressed about the following:

- Requiring an additional side setback for the porte cocheres by requiring a landscaped buffer would require the property owner to reduce the width of the house in the location of the porte cochere and that may be a problem.

- Some commissioners expressed concern about tying the ability to maximize the basement to above-grade floor area.

- Commissioners expressed support for any measures that could help remove cars from the front of properties including reviewing the front yard paving and landscaping standards and supporting changes that would eliminate parking spaces in front yards that are not part of a driveway.

The Commission had a brief discussion about hedges and hedge heights and did not recommend changes at this time. The Commission also discussed tying side setbacks to height where greater height would require deeper side setbacks and this suggestion was forwarded to the Task Force for additional review.

At the meeting on March 27, 2014, a public speaker recommended allowing greater height for homes with sloped roofs north of Santa Monica Boulevard (this is already the case for homes south of Santa Monica Boulevard) and further recommended requiring properties to include an entrance/exit to the alley (that exists behind most homes) so there is the ability to move cars through both the front and rear of the property. This may help to remove cars from the front of properties. The Task Force is not recommending greater total height at this time and has not as yet made a recommendation regarding requiring alley access; the Planning Commission may wish to discuss this.

Task Force Meetings

The Task Force has had two meetings since the March 27 Planning Commission Study Session. At the first meeting, the Task Force focused on the proposed landscaping standards with the assistance of Architectural Commissioner Andrea Gardner Apatow who is a landscape architect. The Task Force is recommending modifications to the landscape standards as presented by the City's consultant (Recommendation 9 in the consultant's report).

The Task Force is now recommending a minimum two-foot wide landscape requirement the length of each property rather than a five-foot wide landscape requirement so it takes into consideration the need for paths in these areas (there is no side setback landscape requirement now). The Task Force further recommended requiring one mature tree in the front yard of new homes built south of Santa Monica Boulevard and two trees in the front yard of new homes north of Santa Monica Boulevard, consistent with the consultant's recommendation, but determined that requiring mature trees in the

side and rear yards could have unintended consequences and is not directly related to reducing the appearance of scale and mass as viewed from the street.

The second Task Force meeting included the City's Urban Designer and focused on overall scale and the issue of basements and whether regulation of basement floor area could be helpful in achieving some of the Council's goals. As a result of comments from the public and commissioners at the March 27 meeting, the Task Force moved away from the idea of tying basement square footage to above-grade floor area; instead, the Task Force is recommending the Planning Commission discuss tying basement floor area to the provision of covered parking spaces. Specifically, if a property owner provides all of the required parking for the site in a garage at the rear of the property or in a subterranean garage, the property owner may have the maximum basement square footage allowed by code today. For every required parking space the property owner does not provide in a garage, the owner's basement would be reduced by some percentage, possibly 25 percent, for each parking space. This would likely assist with the goal of reducing the number of cars parked in front of residences.

Discussion

Three of the consultant's recommendations have either not as yet been discussed in depth by the Task Force and Commission or require additional discussion:

Recommendation 4. Consider Adjustments in Height Standards

This recommendation proposed lower plate heights and lower overall height related to roof slope and the provision of true roof ridge lines (e.g. not mansard roofs) to achieve structures more compatible with existing structures in neighborhoods. The Task Force has had extensive discussion about this issue and has also explored whether height or plate height should be tied to side setback depth. This relates directly to the points made by the City's Urban Designer at the March 27 Planning Commission meeting wherein he discussed creating a volumetric building envelope template that captures the City's traditional single family structure proportions and applies these proportions to new homes. The Task Force expressed interest in understanding these proportions while still being clear that it did not wish to impede architectural design flexibility. Pursuant to a recommendation by the City's Urban Designer, the Task Force requested that staff measure the amount of street-facing façade on existing typical streets north and south of Santa Monica Boulevard to gain an understanding of what the equivalent street-facing façade area would be for a two-story structure with similar proportions. Staff will provide information on this effort at the meeting.

Recommendation 9 c: Recommendation for Greening Standard for Street Facing Fences and Walls

The consultant recommended requiring street facing fences and walls above 18" in height to be set back a minimum of two feet from the property line on lots South of Santa Monica Boulevard and three feet from the property line on lots north of Santa Monica Boulevard to allow space to provide landscaping to soften the appearance of fences and walls and contribute to the garden quality of the City (see the example below). The larger fence/wall setback is proposed north of Santa Monica Boulevard in acknowledgment of the larger lot sizes in that area.

The Design Review Commission often discusses front walls and fences and how they can contribute to the sense of bulk and mass of a structure. It is because of this concern that the current Code allows certain architectural projections on a house only if front fences or walls are limited to three feet in height or, if higher, are approved pursuant to Design Review (BHMC 10-3-2408 F). The Task Force discussed whether walls and fences should be subject to some kind of design review process and the Planning Commission may wish to continue this discussion. Currently, only walls and fences that are submitted as part of single-family house project that requires Design Review are reviewed as to design. Walls and fences proposed as a stand-alone project and not associated with a new or substantially remodeled house are not subject to Design Review.

Recommendation 11: Consider Standards to Reduce the Visibility of On-Site Parking from Streets.

The consultant proposed considering limiting the placement of driveway ramps and stairs providing access to basement parking in front yards and street side yards. The consultant noted that such front yard ramps are not in keeping with the City's traditional residential built-form patterns in the Central Area. This recommendation potentially creates a conflict between the City Council's desire to ensure sites have adequate parking and the desire to screen parking from the public right of way so as not to detract from neighborhood character and the garden quality of the City. Limiting ramps in front yards could make it more difficult to place required and/or needed parking underground which means required parking would be placed above ground in side yards and rear yards. Many residents and guests will also continue to park in front yards.

Currently, the Zoning Code prohibits any portion of a driveway to a garage to be below the natural grade within the front yard (front setback area), unless such driveway would not slope below the elevation of the adjacent public right of way and a Minor Accommodation is granted. The Commission may wish to discuss whether limitations on ramping, if appropriate, should apply to certain lot sizes that can better accommodate the ramping without detracting from the streetscape.

Another alternative that was discussed in the most recent Task Force meeting is to change the Code to allow owners the ability to cover the ramp in the side setback area (a new encroachment in the side setback). This would allow owners to plant this area, creating a better appearance as viewed from the street and a better experience for neighbors. This would also be consistent with the previously described recommendation that a certain amount of landscaping should be required in the side setbacks.

The Consultant further recommended the following code change in the areas south of Santa Monica Boulevard: if the vehicular entrance to a garage is located less than 46 feet behind the front setback line (currently the code reads, "38 feet"), the garage entrance shall be perpendicular to the front lot line. It is very rare that applicants use this Code section as it is currently written and likely that almost no applicant would use the Code section as proposed at 46 feet. Applicants considering placing a garage entrance that far back on a property would typically build a detached garage in the rear, taking advantage of the alley to the rear of most (but not all) homes in the Central Area. Staff believes this particular amendment would have little effect on development so staff would not recommend moving forward with this change. The Task Force did, however, discuss whether the Code should be changed so that properties north of Santa Monica Boulevard may not have three-car garages that face a street and the Planning Commission may wish to discuss this.

Next Steps

Staff and the Task Force will be presenting the draft recommendations as they currently stand to the Design Review Commission at its May 1, 2014 meeting and will report back to the Planning Commission at the May 8 meeting. The Task Force also requested that staff provide information about how the City's current floor area maximums have different results based on different lot sizes and staff will provide that information at the meeting.

Staff requests direction from the Commission on preparing a draft ordinance to revise the Zoning Code to address issues of single-family scale, mass, and parking.

Report Prepared By:

Michele McGrath
Principal Planner

Attachment 1

Recommendations Report

City of Beverly Hills

DRAFT
Reducing Single-Family Mass and Bulk Recommendations Report

October 22, 2013

DRAFT

Reducing Single-Family Mass and Bulk Recommendations Report

October 22, 2013

prepared by
John Kaliski Architects
in consultation with
Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners

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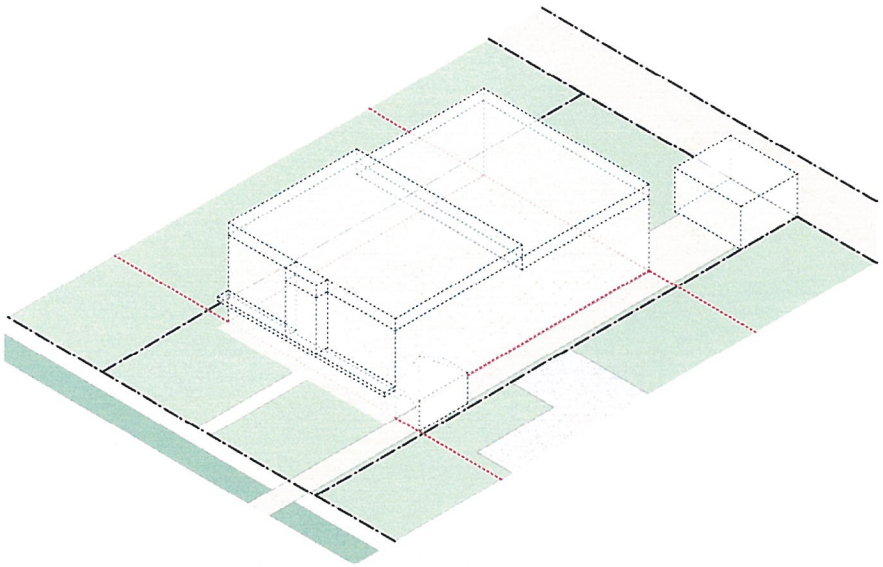

Figure A: Existing City of Beverly Hills Zoning requirements facilitate box-like forms that foster perceptions of excessive bulk and mass in Central Area residential neighborhoods.

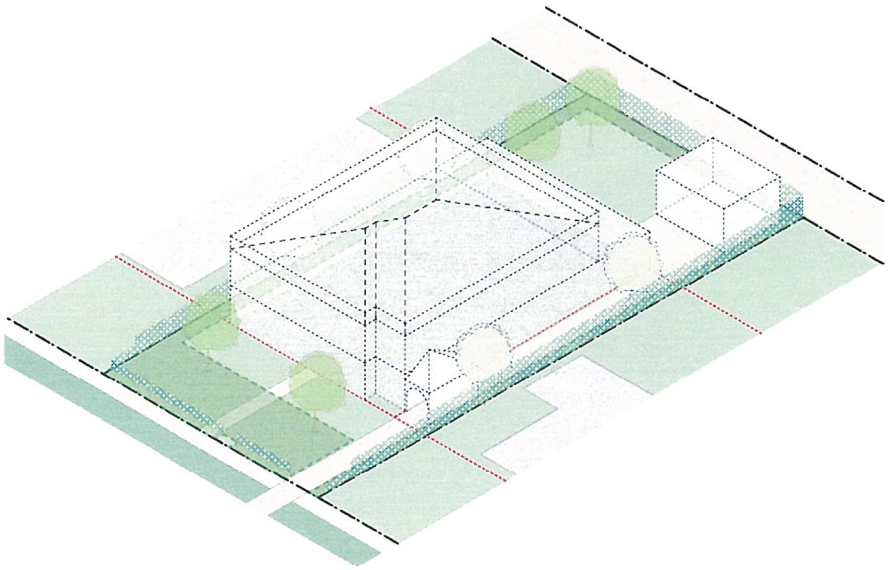

Figure B: The recommendations of this report propose changes to existing zoning that introduce a baseline of modulation to encourage less boxy architecture and a reduced sense of bulk and mass.

1.0 Introduction

John Kaliski Architects (JKA), working with Dyett and Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners (D&B), was retained by the City of Beverly Hills to review existing built-form conditions and recent residential construction and design in Central Area single-family residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods span both sides of Santa Monica Boulevard from the southern City border to certain areas north of Sunset Boulevard (see Figure 1 on next page).

The analysis of existing conditions in Central Area neighborhoods was previously submitted to the City by JKA and D & B in a report titled Central Area Single-Family Dwelling Bulk and Mass Study Issues and Options Paper (Options Paper). This report also provided a broad framework of options and regulatory controls to reduce residential bulk and mass in keeping with the City's residential character and garden quality in relationship to the requirements, standards, and guidelines of the *City of Beverly Zoning Code* (Zoning Code), and the *City of Beverly Hills Residential Style Catalogue* (Style Catalogue).

Utilizing the Options Paper as a framework for further discussion, City staff, the City's Single Family Residential Bulk and Mass Standards Task Force (Planning Commissioners Rosenstein and Corman - Task Force), and JKA met during the months of July and August 2013 to further review concepts and ideas for reduction of single-family residential mass and bulk. In addition, JKA and D & B received additional input and direction at a meeting of the Planning Commission held on July 11, 2013.

Based upon the framework established in the Options Paper, and the input received from the Planning Commission, the Task Force, City staff, and Consultant collaboration, this *DRAFT Reducing Single Family Mass and Bulk Recommendations Report* (Recommendations Report) outlines goals, objectives, and recommendations for the evolution of existing Central Area single-family construction. The recommendations of this report provide a tool box of standards and guidelines to address bulk and mass concerns, have the potential to shape future residential construction to realize better relationships between adjoining homes, and reinforce the City's residential garden quality that defines the character of Beverly Hills' single-family Central Area neighborhoods.

Figure C: The combination of a vertically offset front building plane, recessed second story balcony element, and shadow line created by the overhang of a pitched roof, combine to modulate the front building plane and reduce the perception of mass and bulk at this recently completed residence in the Central Area just south of Santa Monica Boulevard.

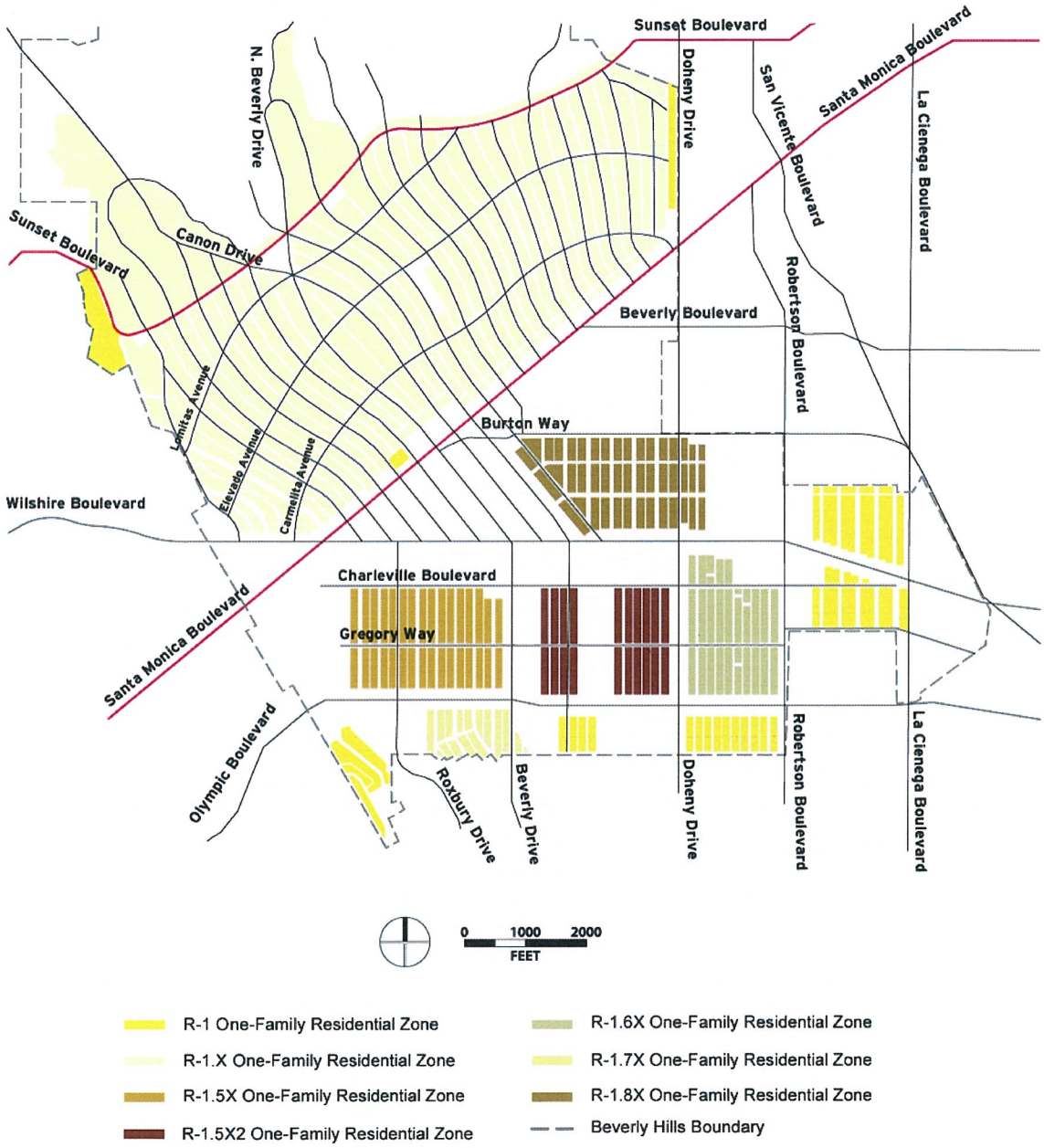

Figure 1: The Central Area Single-family land use designations and neighborhoods establish the unique residential context and landscape quality of the City of Beverly Hills.

2.0 Guiding Goals

Two key goals shape the recommendations of this report as follows.

1. **Reduce the perceived and actual mass and bulk of single-family homes as experienced from the street, to ensure adequate separation between residential structures, and conserve the traditional garden quality of Central Area residential neighborhoods.**
2. **Ensure the provision of adequate residential parking and reduce the impact of this parking on residential streetscapes to ensure the endurance of the character of Central Area residential neighborhoods.**

3.0 Guiding Design Principles

The City of Beverly Hills has long recognized the unique quality of its Central Area residential neighborhoods. These existing qualities include "generous setbacks, gracious architecture, and careful attention to detail" [1]. Perhaps most important in terms of understanding the special design character of Central Area residential neighborhoods, the City notes a goal of "maintaining the garden quality of the City of Beverly Hills" [2] (see Figure 2).

The City, per the Zoning Code, has also noted, a "trend...to homes that greatly overpower the general 'lot to house size' ratio", and stated, "overbuilding will degrade and depreciate the character, image, beauty, and, reputation of the city's residential neighborhoods with adverse consequences for the quality of life of all residents" [3]. Based upon the Guiding Goals above, and an appreciation for the existing context of Central Area neighborhoods north and south of Santa Monica Boulevard, design principles were developed to focus recommended design standards and guidelines to ensure enhancement of recognized neighborhood qualities.

Figure 2: Street trees and generous front yard setbacks create a strong sense of place and a garden quality along Linden Drive, just south of Wilshire Boulevard.

1. City of Beverly Hills Zoning Code Article 44, Section 10-3-4401
2. ibid. Section 10-3-2423
3. ibid. Section 10-3-4401

Five design principles guide the recommendations of this report as follows.

1. **Reinforce the existing character-defining garden-quality identity of Central Area residential streets and neighborhoods.**
2. **Ensure new residential construction is compatible with and enhances existing Central Area neighborhood character and quality.**
3. **Preserve the opportunity to realize present residential floor area allowances in the Central Area.**
4. **Develop recommendations that could be required standards or could incentivize single-family residential bulk and mass reductions and additional on-site residential parking that is not visible from the street.**
5. **Consider means to relate the construction of basement area to reductions of residential bulk and mass in Central Area neighborhoods.**

In summary, this Recommendations Report is based upon an appreciation of the existing neighborhood context and character of Central Area neighborhoods in combination with an understanding that excessive bulk and mass degrade the quality of community life and residential values in these communities. These understandings led to the development of Guiding Goals and Design Principles, which in turn informed 13 recommendations for the evolution of existing City of Beverly Hills zoning and design standards and guidelines. The implementation, as appropriate, of the recommendation of this Report, will lead to desired reductions of single-family residential mass and bulk in the Central Area.

4.0 Draft Recommendations To Reduce Single Family Mass and Bulk

1. Consider Adding Definitions for 'Principal Residential Building' and 'Architectural Projections' To The Zoning Code

a. Recommendation To Add 'Principal Residential Building' Definition

Recommendation language: The buildings and structures that sit within the Principal Building Area (see Figure 3).

Consultant commentary: The existing zoning code refers in several locations to a "Principal Residential Building" but never explicitly defines what it is, where it is placed within the site, or whether or not it is distinguished from accessory structures. Provision of a definition for the main building(s) on a site will further clarify the meaning, place of, and design requirements for thesebuilding(s).

b. Recommendation To Add Residential Architectural Projections Definition

Recommendation language: Residential building components and elements such as window bays, porches, and non-enclosed overhangs that encroach into front, side, and rear yards.

Consultant commentary: The existing zoning code provides numerous exceptions for the encroachment of building elements into required yards, leading to a type of gradual architectural 'creep' that enhances residential bulk and mass over successive generations of building. By clearly defining architectural projections, the City can begin to better control their use in a clear manner.

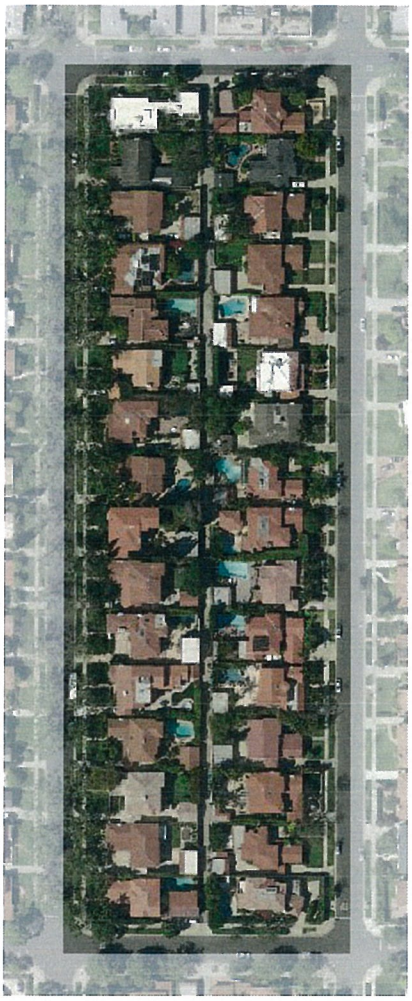

Figure 3: The main houses or "Principal Residential Buildings" of a Central Area neighborhood south of Santa Monica Boulevard are clearly visible in this aerial view.

2. Consider Adjusting Definition Of Height For Single-Family Residential Zones In The Central Area Of The City

a. Recommendation To Adjust Central Area Height Definition

Recommendation language: Height shall mean the distance between the highest element of a building or structure and the average point of ground level at the perimeter of the building or structure.

Consultant commentary: Height in single-family zones in the Central Area of the City is presently measured as the "distance between the highest element at a building or structure and the highest point of ground level at the perimeter of the building or structure". To limit excessive residential height the City already recognizes that the height of buildings on sloped sites should be measured based upon average ground level. Utilizing the average ground level requirement on all Central Area lots will recognize that all sites, including 'flat' sites, have minor variations of height, better relate the maximum height of individual structures to the singular topography of individual lots, and result in new construction that more closely follows existing topography.

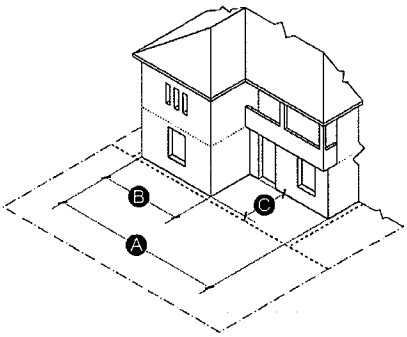

Figure 4: The front yard-facing building plane 'B' shall be offset by a dimension of 'C' from other front yard-facing building planes and shall not exceed 50% of 'A', the Maximum Potential Facade at the front setback line.

3. Consider Adding Standards For Modulation Of Front Yard- Facing Building Planes

a. Recommendation To Provide South Of Santa Monica Boulevard Front Yard-Facing Building Plane Modulation Standard

Recommendation language: A front yard-facing building façade plane shall not exceed 50% of the length of the maximum potential facade and shall be offset a minimum of eight (8) feet from other front yard-facing front building planes (see Figure 4).

Consultant commentary: Observation of existing Central Area residential construction south of Santa Monica Boulevard indicates that a majority of older homes offset portions of the front façade so portions are at the setback line and portions are set back from the front setback line. This pattern has gradually diminished with recent buildings, leading to flatter front facades and fewer front-yard facing courts and terraces. Introducing a specific modulation standard, in the form of an offset, based upon an interpretation of traditional building patterns, will embed a built-form characteristic in future residential construction that builds upon traditional building design seen in the Central Area. It is noted that the maximum floor area that can be achieved today can be achieved if this change is adopted.

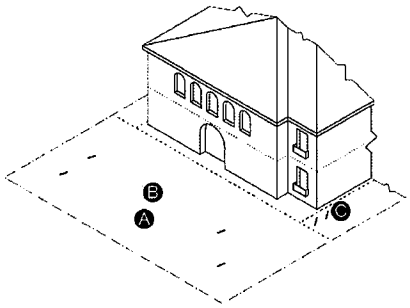

Figure 5: The "front yard-facing building plane 'B' shall be offset by a dimension of 'C' from other front yard-facing building planes and shall not exceed 80% of 'A', the length of the Maximum Potential Facade at the front setback line.

b. Recommendation To Provide North of Santa Monica Boulevard Front Yard-Facing Building Plane Modulation Standard

Recommendation language: A front yard-facing building façade plane shall not exceed 80% of the length of the maximum potential facade and shall be offset a minimum of eight (8) feet from other street-facing front building planes (see Figure 5).

Consultant commentary: Observation of existing Central Area residential construction north of Santa Monica Boulevard also indicates that a majority of older homes offset portions of the front façade back from the front setback line. In contrast to areas south of this boulevard, the offsets observed are not as great. Additionally, given the predominance of wider lots, perception of bulk and mass is less defined by the presence of front building plane offsets in this sector of the City. Introduction of front façade modulation on wider facades will introduce visual variety and plays of light and shadow that will reduce the perception of bulk and mass. Introducing a specific but lesser modulation standard north of Santa Monica Boulevard, based again upon an interpretation of traditional building patterns, will embed a built-form characteristic in future residential construction that builds upon traditional building design.

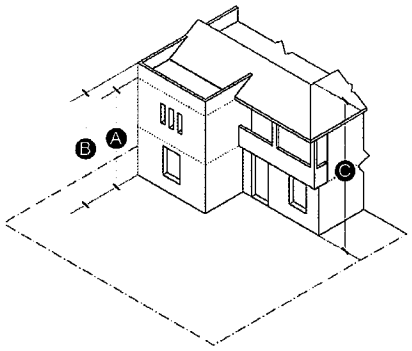

Figure 6: Plate height 'A', maximum height of flat roofs 'B', and the maximum height of pitched roofs without a linear horizontal ridge line formed by the juncture of two sloping roof structures 'C' are each addressed by the recommendations language.

4. Consider Adjustments in Height Standards

a. Recommendation To Adjust South of Santa Monica Boulevard Maximum Height

Recommendation language: The maximum height of a Principal Residential Building as measured to the top plate closest to a property line shall not exceed 20'. The maximum height of a flat-roofed portion or parapet of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 23'. The maximum height of any portion of a Principal Residential Building with an inward from the property line sloping roof without a linear horizontal ridgeline formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces shall not exceed 27' and the slope of such a roof shall not exceed a roof pitch of 1:1. The maximum height of any portion of a Principal Residential Building with an inward sloping from the property line roof with a linear horizontal ridgeline formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces shall not exceed 30' (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).

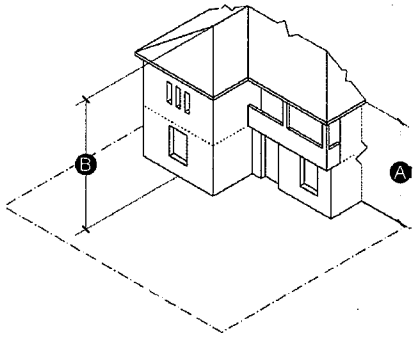

Figure 7: A ridgeline 'B' is formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces.

Consultant commentary: By pushing maximum allowed height further towards the center of a site, inward sloping roof planes reduce the sense of mass and bulk in comparison to flat roofs with equal height. Currently flat roofs shall not exceed 25' and sloped roofs shall not exceed 30' and all homes south of Santa Monica Boulvard have an allowed maximum plate height of 22'. The sense of bulk is also determined in part by the height of the "plate" or spring point

of roof planes, flat as well as sloped. In comparison to existing standards, the recommended maximum height standard for south of Santa Monica Boulevard lowers the allowed maximum plate height by 2' and lowers the allowed maximum flat roofed height by 3'. The recommended maximum height for a Principal Residential Building with an inward sloping roof with a linear horizontal ridgeline formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces would remain 30', thereby incentivizing slopd roof structures, but not strictly preventing flat roof structures. Given that second floors can be placed under sloped ceilings, one outcome of these proposed changes is to encourage use of inward sloping roofs in instances where more interior height is desired. To encourage the design of roofs with real ridgelines, roofs attached to parapets and/or mansards are not incentivized by recommendations for changes in height. These latter types of roofs are limited by the recommended introduction of height and slope requirements. Finally, to further encourage the use of inward sloping from the property line roofs with ridgelines, the existing maximum height allowance of 30' is maintained for these roof types.

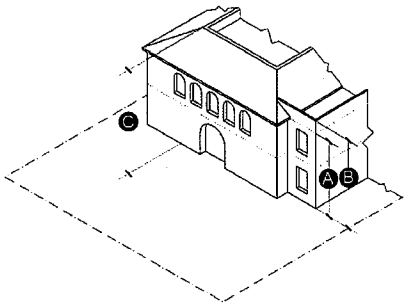

Figure 8: Plate height 'A', maximum height of flat roofs 'B', and the maximum height of pitched roofs without a linear horizontal ridge line formed by the juncture of two sloping roof structures 'C' are each addressed by the recommendations language.

b. Recommendation To Adjust North of Santa Monica Boulevard Maximum Height

Recommendation language: The maximum height of a Principal Residential Building as measured to the top plate closest to a property line shall not exceed 24'. The maximum height of a flat-roofed portion or parapet of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 28'. The maximum height of any portion of a Principal Residential Building with an inward from the property line sloping roof without a linear horizontal ridgeline formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces shall not exceed 31' and the slope of such a roof shall not exceed a roof pitch of 1:1. The maximum height of any portion of a Principal Residential Building with an inward sloping from the property line roof with a linear horizontal ridgeline formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces shall not exceed 34' (see Figure 8 and Figure 9).

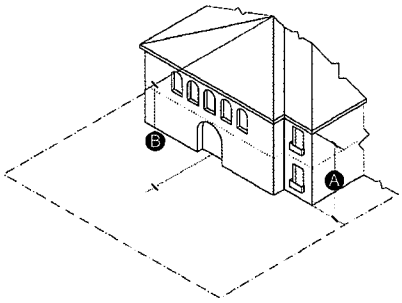

Figure 9: A ridgeline 'B' is formed by the juncture of two sloping surfaces.

Consultant commentary: The objectives of the incremental reductions in residential height in the Central Area north of Santa Monica Boulevard are similar to those described in 4.a above; to 1) reduce mass and bulk through introduction of adjustments in plate heights and 2) encourage more use of inward from the property line sloped roofs. In this case the recommendations replace the existing height limits allowing an average maximum roof height of 30' with defined height allowances for plate heights, control of roof types without ridgelines and encouragement of inward sloping roof planes with ridgelines with a maximum allowed height of 34', the same as is presently allowed. While the recommendation of this section would replace the existing requirement for the applicant to prepare a Minor Accommodation request when height in excess of 28' is desired, projects would still be subject to the required R-1 Design Review process.

5. Consider Limiting The Size Of Second Floors To Constrain Residential Building Volumes

a. Recommendation to Constrain Residential Building Volume At Second Floors South Of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: The second floor of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 70% of the Principal Building Area and 110% of the first floor area of the building. Structures south of Olympic Boulevard and east of Doheny Avenue shall remain subject to the mass and bulk restrictions of Section 10-3-2403.C (see Figure 10).

Consultant commentary: While the City of Beverly Hills regulates maximum floor area of residences within the Central Area of the City, there are no explicit quantitative constraints other than yard setbacks and height allowances that limit building volume. Observation of existing conditions in Central Area residential neighborhoods indicates that the second floors of traditional pre-1970s character-defining structures are consistently smaller than the first floors, creating massing modulation between these stories (see Figure 11). Newer structures, in comparison to older architecture, are observed to have reduced massing modulation between first and second stories, creating a sense of increased volume and contrasts between new and older homes that contributes to the sense that bulk is increasing. The introduction of a massing modulation requirement that relates the maximum second story size to the Principal Building Area, as well as to the first floor area, will maintain opportunities for generous second floor areas, preserve residential square foot allowances, in some cases encourage larger first floors in relationship to second floors, still permit realization of structures where first floors exceed the area of second floors, and constrain volume that contributes to excessive mass and bulk.

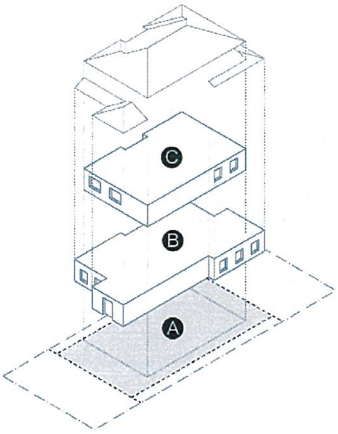

Figure 10: The maximum size of the second floor 'C' is related to both the Principal Building Area 'A' and the size of the ground floor 'B' to control the volume and consequent mass and bulk of the building.

Figure 11: Many traditional Central Area homes evidence a mix of scales, bulks, and masses, and in particular differences in first and second floor sizes, contributing to a varied and intricate residential streetscape.

b. Recommendation to Constrain Residential Building Volume At Second Floors North Of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: The second floor of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 55% of the Principal Building Area and 110% of the first floor area of the building (see Figure 10).

Consultant commentary: Observation indicates that the second story of homes north of Santa Monica Boulevard have a lower ratio of these stories to the Principal Building area than those south of this same street; hence the lower percentage. For additional Consultant commentary see 5.a above.

6. Consider Eliminating Encroachment Allowances For Architectural Projections

a. Recommendation to Limit Encroachment Of Architectural Projections Beyond The Principal Building Area

Recommendation language: Architectural projections at Principal Residential Buildings shall not encroach into required front yards, side yards, street side yards, and rear yards (see Figure 12). Light wells attached to a Principal Residential Building are allowed to encroach into rear yards (see Figure 13). Porte-cocheres attached to a Principal Residential Building are allowed to encroach into side yards subject to the requirements of 7.a. and 7.b below.

Consultant commentary: The existing Zoning Code provides for numerous types of projections into required yards. As building trends result in larger homes, there is a consequent loss of landscape opportunities at yards, leading to an incremental bulking up of residential structures. Limiting projection encroachment will better ensure opportunities for full landscape buffers at yards and better separation at adjoining homes.

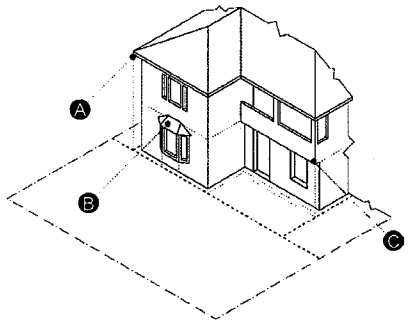

Figure 12: A structure where all architectural projections, including but not limited to bay windows ('A'), roof eaves ('B') and porch coverings ('C') are placed within the Principal Building Area.

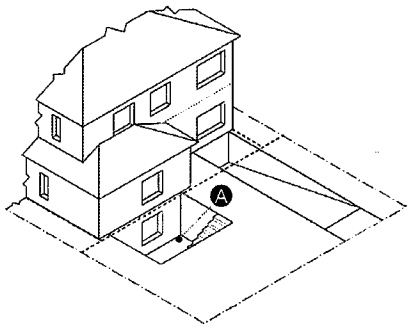

Figure 13: A structure where light wells ('A') project into the rear yard.

7. Consider Modulation Standards for Porte-cocheres

a. Recommendation For Additional South of Santa Monica Porte-Cochere Design Standards

Recommendation language: A minimum 3' landscaped side yard setback shall be provided adjacent to any porte-cochere placed within a side yard. Porte-cocheres shall be offset a minimum of 4' from the adjacent front building plane (see Figure 14).

Consultant commentary: Porte-cocheres are an ever-present architectural component seen in Central Area residential neighborhoods and a unique character-defining element of the Beverly Hills residential scene. At the same time, numerous recent instances are observed of porte-cocheres on adjacent properties being built next to each other with no separating landscape. Additionally, when porte-cocheres are placed in the same plane as the front façade, the sense of residential built-form separation between properties is eroded (see Figure 15). Design standards that ensure provision of landscape buffers when porte-cocheres are built, and further break their continuity with front building planes, will reduce the sense of continuous facades that are sometimes seen along Central Area street frontages and allow for incorporation of additional side yard landscape that enhances the City's enduring garden quality.

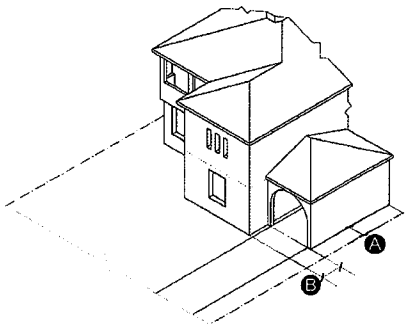

Figure 14: Porte-cocheres are set back from sideyards ('A') to enhance building separation and reduce the sense of overcrowding. Porte-cocheres are offset ('B') from front building planes to enhance modulation and further create separation between adjoining residences.

b. Recommendation For North of Santa Monica Porte-Cochere Modulation Design Standard

Recommendation language A minimum 4' landscaped side yard setback shall be provided adjacent to any porte-cochere placed within a side yard (see Figure 16).

Consultant commentary: Given the wider lots observed north of Santa Monica Boulevard continuous street walls are not as much of an issue as south of the Boulevard and a porte-cochere offset, as recommended in 7.a above, is not needed. North of Santa Monica Boulevard the key consideration, from a bulk and mass point of view, regarding design of porte-cocheres visible from the street, is to ensure separation from adjacent residences. Implementation of a landscape buffer standard associated with porte-cocheres will ensure this desirable quality.

Figure 15: While both illustrated houses provide setback second story mass and bulk with projecting one-story elements, pitched roof forms, and front plane modulation, the small separation between the adjoining porte-cochere elements leads to a sense of street-wall continuity that is in contrast to the more traditional landscape separation between structures seen at residential side yards.

8. Consider Additional Side Yard Standards For Residences South Of Santa Monica Boulevard

a. Recommendation For Depth Increase For Wider Side Yards South of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: The larger nine-foot wide side yard setback shall extend a minimum depth of 46' from the front setback line towards the rear yard and for the remainder of the site shall be a minimum of 5'. (see Figure 17)

Consultant commentary: The introduction of a front building plane offset as recommended in 3.a above needs to be factored into the requirement for a wider side yard depth. Increasing this required depth from 38' to 46' will further ensure that two cars parked in a wide side yard will adjoin side yard-facing building walls, and be continued behind the front building plane.

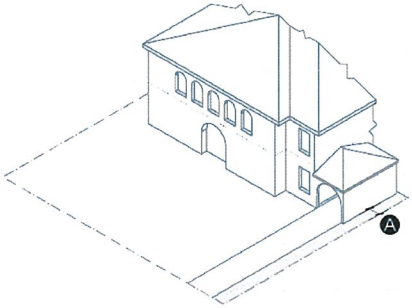

Figure 16: A landscaped buffer 'A' in relationship to a porte-cochere.

b. Recommendation For South of Santa Monica Boulevard Side Yard Modulation Standard

Recommendation language: In side yards less than 9' in width, an additional open-to-the-sky side yard open space with a minimum depth inward of 4' from the nearest side yard line, placed a minimum of 8' from either the front yard or rear yard setback line, and a minimum of 24 square feet in area, shall be placed adjacent to the narrower of the required side yards. (see Figure 18)

Consultant commentary: Observation of recent residential construction south of Santa Monica Boulevard indicates that many newer homes have unbroken and unmodulated lengths of two-story building planes adjacent to narrow side yards, creating a sense of crowding and lack of separation between adjacent homes. The introduction of an additional side yard requirement at the narrower of the two required side yards will provide for modulation of long side yard-facing building facades and increase the sense of light and air between structures on adjacent properties.

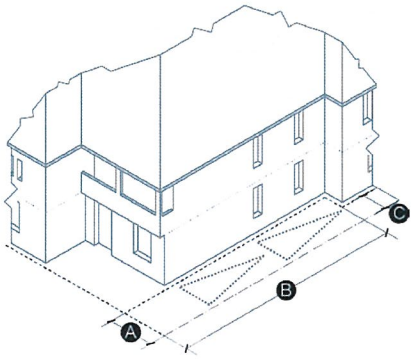

Figure 17: 'B' represents the depth of the wider side yard. 'C' is the minimum side yard allowed for the remainder of this yard.

9. Consider Additional Landscape Standards

a. Recommendation For Planted Landscape Buffer At Side and Rear Yards

Recommendation language: In any portion of a required side or rear yard that is not utilized for allowed accessory structures or driveways, a planted landscape buffer with a minimum planting depth of 4' with no portion of the base of the planting area more than 18" above natural grade and with a minimum width of 5' shall be placed along and abutting any adjacent side and/or rear lot line (see Figure 19). The 5' width of the landscape buffer in side yards and rear yards may be reduced to 3' when adjoining any allowed accessory structure or at-grade access driveway (see also Figure 16, 'A')

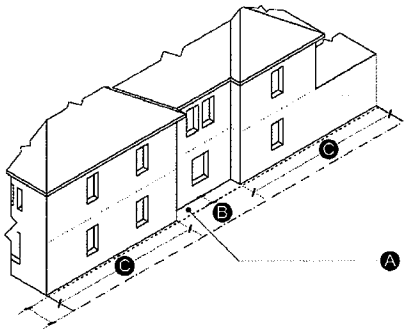

Figure 18: An additional side yard open space 'B' results in the modulation of side yard-facing building planes.

Consultant commentary: Providing a minimum required planted landscape buffer at rear yard and side yard property edges will create additional opportunities to screen yards and homes from each other and enhance residential privacy.

b. Recommendations For On-Site Tree Standards

i. **Recommendation language:** A minimum of one (1) deciduous or evergreen tree with a minimum 36" box size shall be planted in a front yard provided that the lot width at the front yard is less than or equal to 60' in width, and a minimum two deciduous and/or evergreen trees with a minimum 36" box size shall be planted in the front yard if lot width at the front yard exceeds 60'. Palm trees may not be utilized for required front yard trees. (see Figure 20)

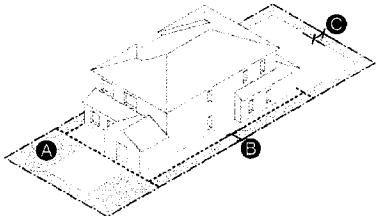

Figure 19: Buffers 'B' at side yards and 'C' at the rear yard ensure opportunities for landscape screening between properties.

Consultant commentary: The required placement of deciduous and/or evergreen trees in front yards will provide a specific landscape material requirement that contributes to an enhanced tree canopy in residential neighborhoods, compliments and screens built forms, and enhances the City's garden character and quality. Palm trees are still allowed, but only in addition to any required trees.

ii. **Recommendation language:** A minimum of one (1) deciduous or evergreen tree with a minimum 24" box size shall be planted in side yards, street-facing side yards, and/or rear yards for each 80' of side yard length. Palm trees may not be utilized for required side yard trees. (see Figure 20)

Consultant commentary: The required planting of additional deciduous and/or evergreen trees in residential side and rear yards will contribute to the City's tree canopy, further screen adjacent properties from each other, and enhance the City's garden character and quality. Palm trees are still allowed, but only in addition to any required trees.

iii. Recommendation language: A minimum of one (1) deciduous or evergreen tree with a minimum 24" box size shall be planted in a rear yard provided that the lot width at the rear yard is less than or equal to 60' in width, and a minimum of two (2) deciduous or evergreen trees shall be planted in a rear yard if the lot width at the rear yard exceeds 60'. Palm trees may not be utilized for required rear yard trees. (see Figure 20).

Consultant commentary: The required planting of additional deciduous and/or evergreen trees in residential rear yards will contribute to the City's tree canopy, further screen adjacent properties from each other, and enhance the City's garden character and quality. Palm trees are still allowed, but only in addition to any required trees.

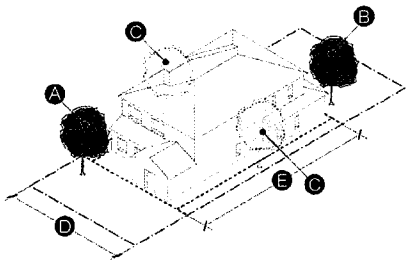

Figure 20: On-site Trees
A: Trees in front yards
B: Trees in rear yards
C: Trees in side yards (may be placed at side or rear yards)
E: Side yard length along property boundary

c. Recommendation For Greening Standard For Street-Facing Fences And Walls

i. Street-Facing Offset For Fences and Walls South of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: Street-facing fences and walls above 18" in height shall be set back a minimum of 2' from any street-facing lot line and this area shall be provided with an automatic irrigation system. (see Figure 21).

Consultant commentary: A setback from the property line for allowed fences and walls will ensure that landscape opportunities are maintained for low plants and climbing vines.

ii. Street-Facing Offset For Fences and Walls North of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: Street-facing fences and walls above 18" in height shall be set back a minimum of 3' from any street-facing lot line and this area shall be provided with an automatic irrigation system (see Figure 21).

Consultant commentary: An increased fence and wall setback adjacent to the public right-of-way in areas north of Santa Monica Boulevard, in comparison to the lesser setback noted in 9.c.i above, will acknowledge the larger size of lots in this portion of the community.

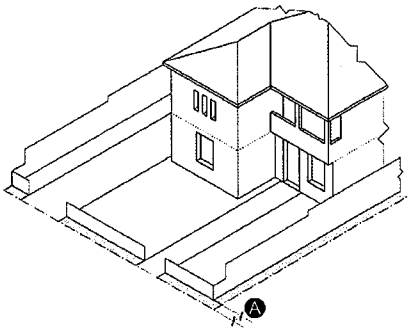

Figure 21: Street-facing walls are set back to ensure opportunities for greening of allowed garden walls adjacent to public right-of-way.

10. Consider Standards to Incentivize Mass And Bulk Reduction Through Increased Utilization Of Basement Area

Figure 22: Construction of basements is increasing and creates opportunities to provide additional areas for parking and relating mass and bulk to intensity of residential use.

a. Recommendation For General Standard Exempting Some Basement Uses From Maximum Residential Area Allowances

i. **Recommendation language:** Any area in a basement that is utilized for parking spaces, access drives, or ramps to those spaces, as well as basement area that is utilized for mechanical equipment or rooms, or shafts and stairwells to floors above, shall be exempt from the determination of residential basement floor area. Basement area not exempt per these criteria, shall be counted as floor area, unless exempted per 'b' below.

Consultant commentary: Home owners, builders, and designers of residences should be encouraged to place parking and utility spaces underground where feasible, and areas for these types of uses should not be counted towards floor area limitations.

b. Recommendation For Basement Area Allowances and Standards For South of Santa Monica Boulevard

i. In addition to exempt basement area as defined in 11.a.i above, and an allowance of an additional 150 square feet of basement area that may be utilized for any habited use, when a project meets the following modulation standards any additional basement area shall be exempt from the determination of residential floor area.

(1) Meet front yard-facing building plane modulation standard per 3.a

(2) Meet height requirements per 4.a

(3) Meet maximum second floor area requirements per 5.a

(4) Meet architectural projection requirements per 6.a

(5) Meet porte-cochere modulation requirements per 7.a

(6) Meet side yard separation requirements per 8.a and 8.b

If all of the modulation standards above are not met, for each square foot of non-exempt basement floor area, 50% of such non-exempt area shall count towards the calculation of the maximum allowed residential floor area.

Consultant commentary: To incentivize the use of basements and encourage the design of new homes in the Central Area that explicitly address base standards for mass and bulk as proposed in this Recommendations Report, recommended bulk and mass standards are related to basement area as well as residential floor area allowances. The proposed standards allow an applicant to fully realize above-grade floor area allowances and maximize below grade use if bulk and mass standards are met. If bulk and mass standards are not met, a percentage of habited non-exempt basement area counts towards floor area limitation to control the intensity of residential use and consequent above-grade bulk and mass.

c. Recommendations For Basement Area Allowances and Standards For North of Santa Monica Boulevard

i. **Recommendation language:** In addition to exempt basement area as defined in 11.a.i above, and an allowance of an additional 300 square feet of basement area that may be utilized for any habited use, when a project meets the following modulation standards any additional basement area shall be exempt from the determination of residential floor area.

(1) Meet front yard-facing building plane modulation standard per 3.b

(2) Meet height requirements per 4.b

(3) Meet maximum second floor area requirements per 5.b

(4) Meet architectural projection requirements per 6.a

(5) Meet porte-cochere modulation requirements per 7.b

If the modulation standards above are not met, for each square foot of non-exempt basement floor area, 50% of such non-exempt area shall count towards the calculation of the maximum allowed residential floor area.

Consultant commentary: The north of Santa Monica standard that relates use of non-exempt basement area to modulation of above-grade construction is the same as that for South of Santa Monica Boulevard, with the exception that increased exempt habited basement area is provided, acknowledging the increased sizes of lots and homes in this portion of the Central Area.

11. Consider Standards To Reduce The Visibility Of On-site Parking From Streets

a. Recommendation For Standard For Proscription Of Ramps and Stairs In Front Yards

Recommendation language: Ramps and stairs providing access to basements, including basement parking, shall not be placed in front yards.

Consultant commentary: The placement of vehicular ramps and stairs in front yards providing access to basement parking is not in keeping with observed residential built-form patterns seen in the Central Area and is contrary to the maintenance of the City's garden quality.

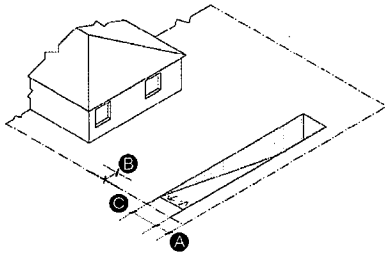

Figure 23: Ramps and stairs at side streets shall not be placed in front of yards, shall be perpendicular to the side street and setback 'B' from the property line.

b. Recommendation For Standard To Limit the Placement of Ramps and Stairs In Side Street-Facing Yards

Recommendation language: At corner lots, any ramps and stairs at side street-facing yards providing access to basement parking and basements shall be placed perpendicular to the street, shall be located such that the descending ramp or stair portion begins a minimum of 5' from the street-facing property line, and in the case of ramps shall be limited to a maximum of 19' in width, and in the case of stairs be limited to 5' in width. (see Figure 23)

Consultant commentary: Limiting the visual and physical impact of side street-facing ramps and stairs will enhance landscape opportunities and maintain traditional residential street character.

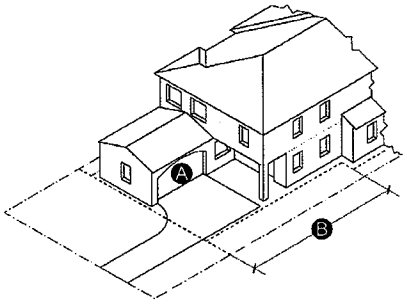

Figure 24: A garage 'A' located less than a prescribed distance 'B' from a front property line with an entry perpendicular to the front lot line.

c. Recommendation For Standard To Adjust Garage Entrance Restriction South of Santa Monica Boulevard

Recommendation language: If the vehicular entrance to a garage is located less than 46' behind the front setback line, then the garage entrance shall be perpendicular to the front lot line (see Figure 24).

Consultant commentary: Increasing the required distance of garage entries from 38' to 46' will align this requirement with recommendation 8.a above.

12. Consider Strengthening The Relationship of Zoning Code Modulation Standards to The Residential Design Style Catalogue

a. Recommended Relationship of Modulation Standards to Track 1 Design Review Projects

Recommendation language: In addition to consistency with the requirements of the Residential Design Style Catalogue, a proposed project may be granted a building permit without further design review if it meets the following modulation standards.

i. South of Santa Monica Boulevard
(1) Meet front yard-facing building plane modulation standard per 3.a
(2) Meet height requirements per 4.a
(3) Meet maximum second floor area requirements per 5.a
(4) Meet architectural projection requirements per 6.a
(5) Meet porte-cochere modulation requirements per 7.a
(6) Meet side yard separation requirements per 8.a and 8.b

ii. North of Santa Monica Boulevard
(1) Meet front yard-facing building plane modulation standard per 3.b
(2) Meet height requirements per 4.b
(3) Meet maximum second floor area requirements per 5.b
(4) Meet architectural projection requirements per 6.a
(5) Meet porte-cochere modulation requirements per 7.b

Consultant commentary: At present all Central Area projects including construction and projects where changes are made to the exterior of a home as viewed from the public right-of-way, are subject to design review by either staff (through a 'Track 1' process) or the Design Review Commission (through a 'Track 2' process). The Track 1 design review process of the Style Catalogue requires conformance to a 'pure architectural style' and design by a licensed architect. The present Track 1 design process does not require any explicit mass or bulk modulation standards. Requiring that base standards for mass, bulk, and modulation be met by Track 1 Style Catalogue projects will incentivize use of these modulation standards and reduce the processing time for these projects. Projects that do not meet these standards may still proceed to present alternative designs through the Track 2 Design Review Commission process (see also Zoning Code Article 44).

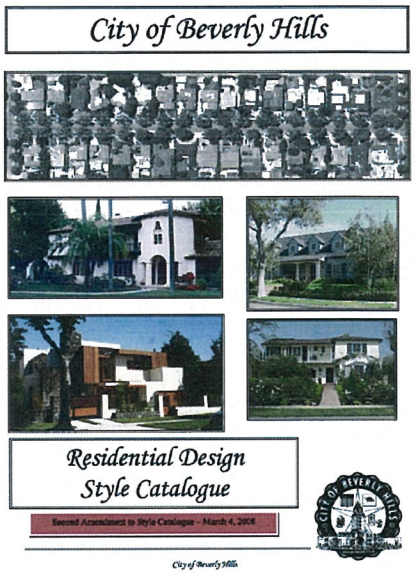

Figure 25: Recommendations for bulk and mass reduction can be related to the Style Catalogue guidelines for the development of 'pure architectural' styles.

13. Other Recommendations

a. Recommendation To Increase The Parking Requirements For Single-Family Residences In The Central Area

Recommendation language: Two (2) parking spaces shall be provided for each single-family residential site area in the Central Area of the City that contains no more than four (4) bedrooms. Three (3) parking spaces shall be provided for each single-family residential site area in the Central Area of the City that contains no more than five (5) bedrooms. Four (4) parking spaces shall be provided for each single-family residential site area in the Central Area of the City that contains no more than six (6) bedrooms. Five (5) parking spaces shall be provided for each single-family residential site area in the Central Area of the City that contains seven (7) or eight (8) bedrooms. Single-family residential sites in the Central Area of the City that contain nine (9) or more bedrooms shall provide a minimum of six (6) parking spaces on site behind front setback line.

Consultant commentary: Present regulations require two (2) parking spaces for each single-family home in the Central Area with no more than four (4) bedrooms, three (3) parking spaces for each home that contains five (5) bedrooms, and four (4) parking spaces for each home in the Central Area that contains six (6) or more bedrooms. No additional on-site parking is required for homes with more than six bedrooms. Staff has noted that homes are being built with additional bedrooms including the ones in basements; and observation of Central Area residential neighborhoods indicates that many homes do not have adequate on-site parking.

Often times these cars are parked in front yards and their visibility decreases the garden character of Central Area residential neighborhoods. Increasing parking requirements for new construction will ensure that additional on-site parking is provided at homes with more than six bedrooms. The impact and visibility of on-site parking of cars will at the same time be reduced by placing them deeper into the lot with respect to front yards (see 8.a above), screening them from adjacent properties with landscape buffers at side yards (see 8.b above), and encouraging their placement underground by reinforcing the exemption of underground parking from floor area allowances when projects meet the above-grade modulation standards of these recommendations. (see 11.b and 11.c above).

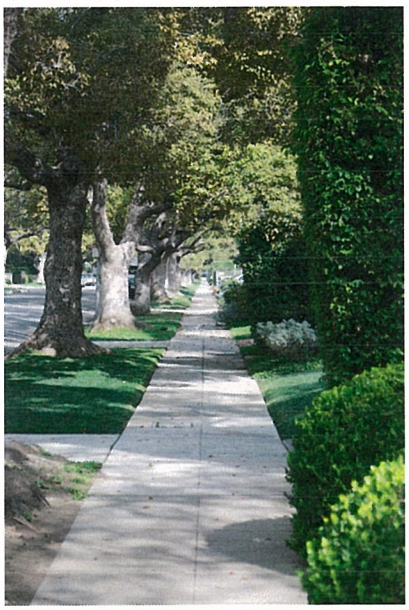

Figure 26: The goal of recommendations to reduce single-family mass and bulk is first and foremost to conserve and enhance the garden quality of Central Area residential communities.

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Reducing Single-Family Mass and Bulk Recommendations Report

Appendix A

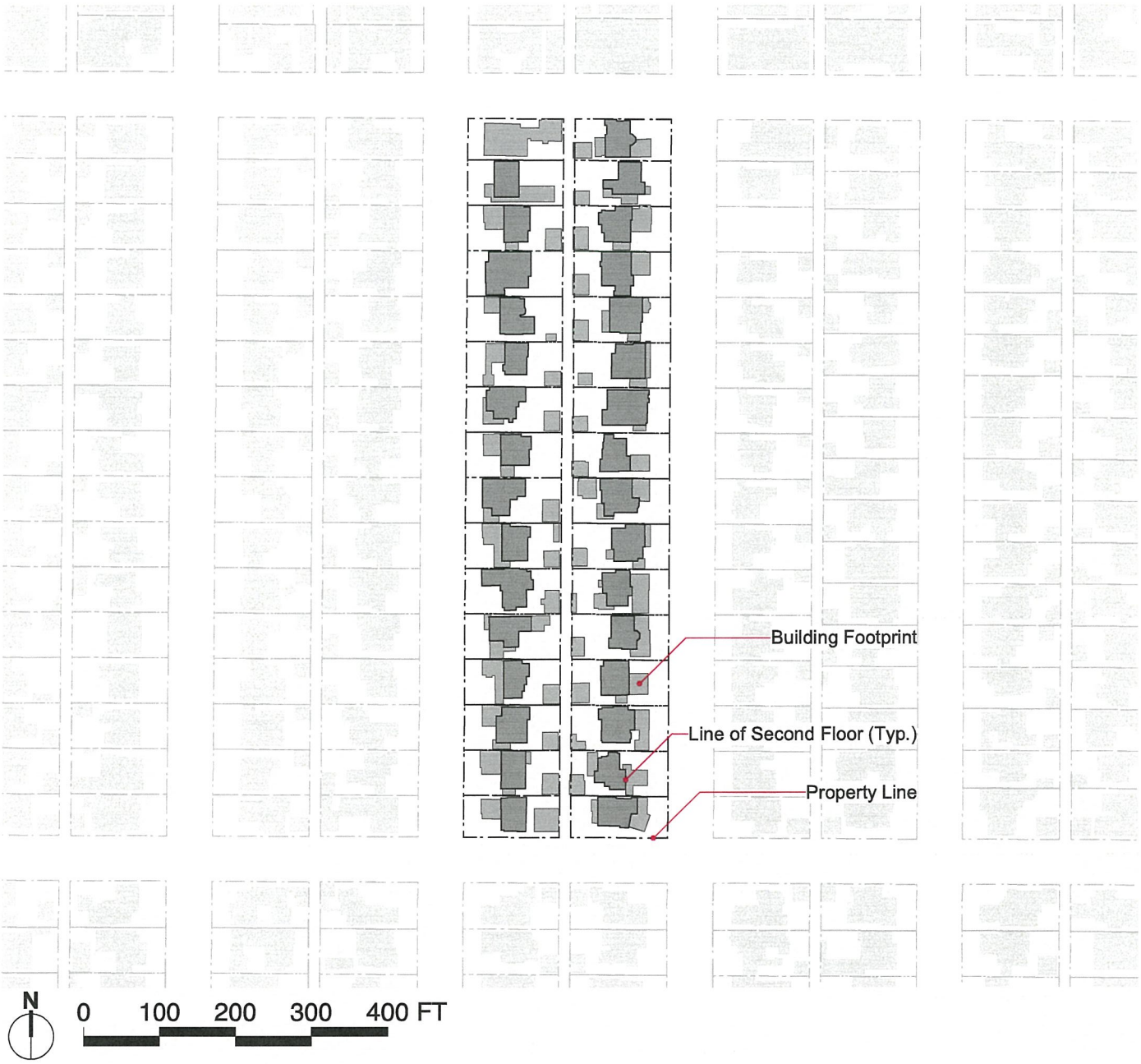
South of Santa Monica Boulevard Analysis Exhibits

October 22, 2013

prepared by
John Kaliski Architects
in consultation with
Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners

This block of single-family homes south of Santa Monica Boulevard exemplifies the design parameters that the City seeks to conserve and is used as a basis for developing and testing residential development standards that reduce perceived bulk and mass.

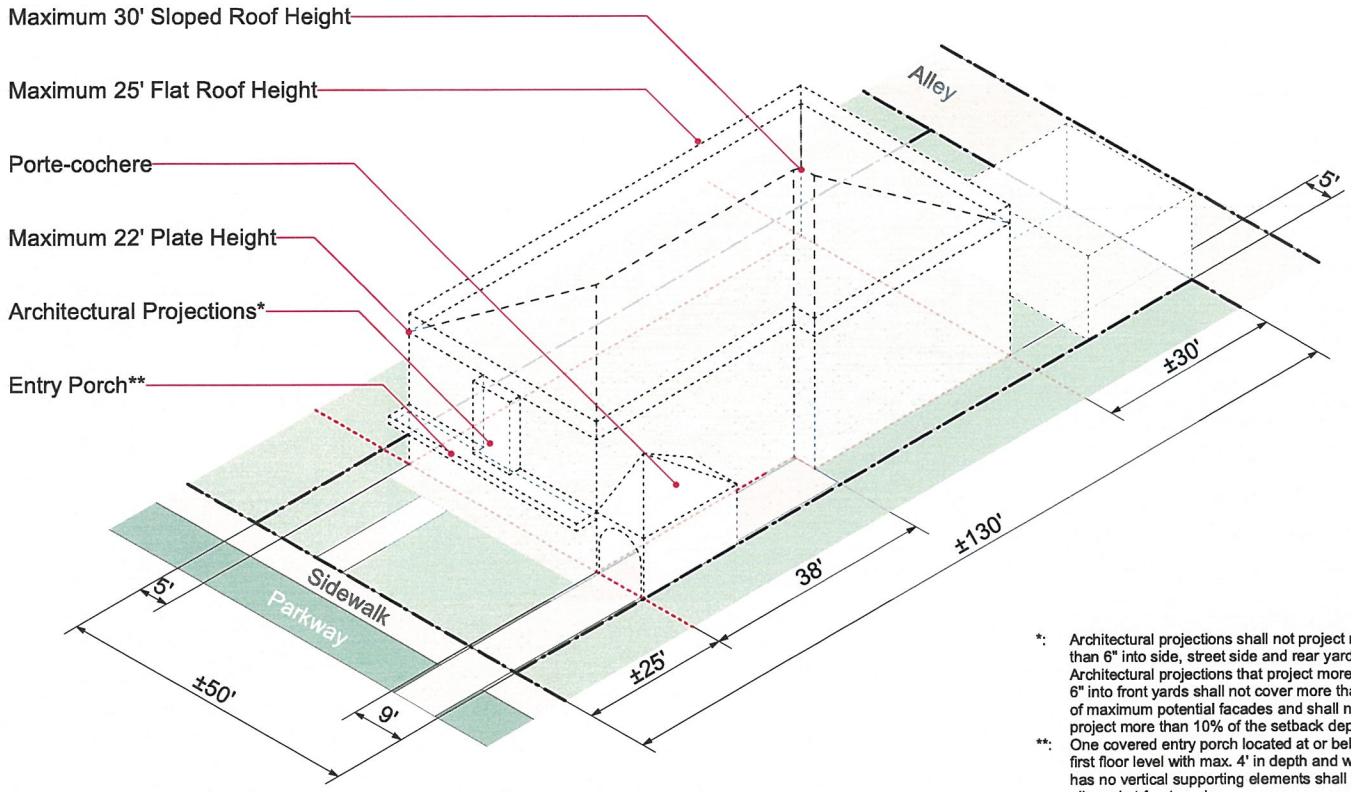
A-1 Aerial Map - Existing Conditions
Typical Block South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013) **John Kaliski Architects**



This figure-ground representation of buildings in relationship to property lines was developed from Los Angeles County GIS Data Portal, and is used to further develop understandings of building design and amount of lot coverage in relationship to lot configurations. Note that County GIS data does not accurately represent side yard relationships.

Typical Design Parameters for Lots South of Santa Monica Boulevard			
Lot Width	±60'0"	Principal Residential Building Height	±26'6"
Lot Depth	±127'6"	Front Yard Set Back	±24'5"
Gross Lot Coverage (in Relation to Lot)	±41%	Percentage of Front Facade at Front Yard Setback	±52%
Net Lot Coverage (in Relation to Principal Building Area)	±89%	Offset from Front Building Plane	±16'8"
Floor Area Ratio	±0.53	Second Floor Area to First Floor Area %	±65%
		Second Floor Area to Principal Building Area	±58%

A-2 Figure-Ground Study - Existing Conditions
Typical Block South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013) John Kaliski Architects



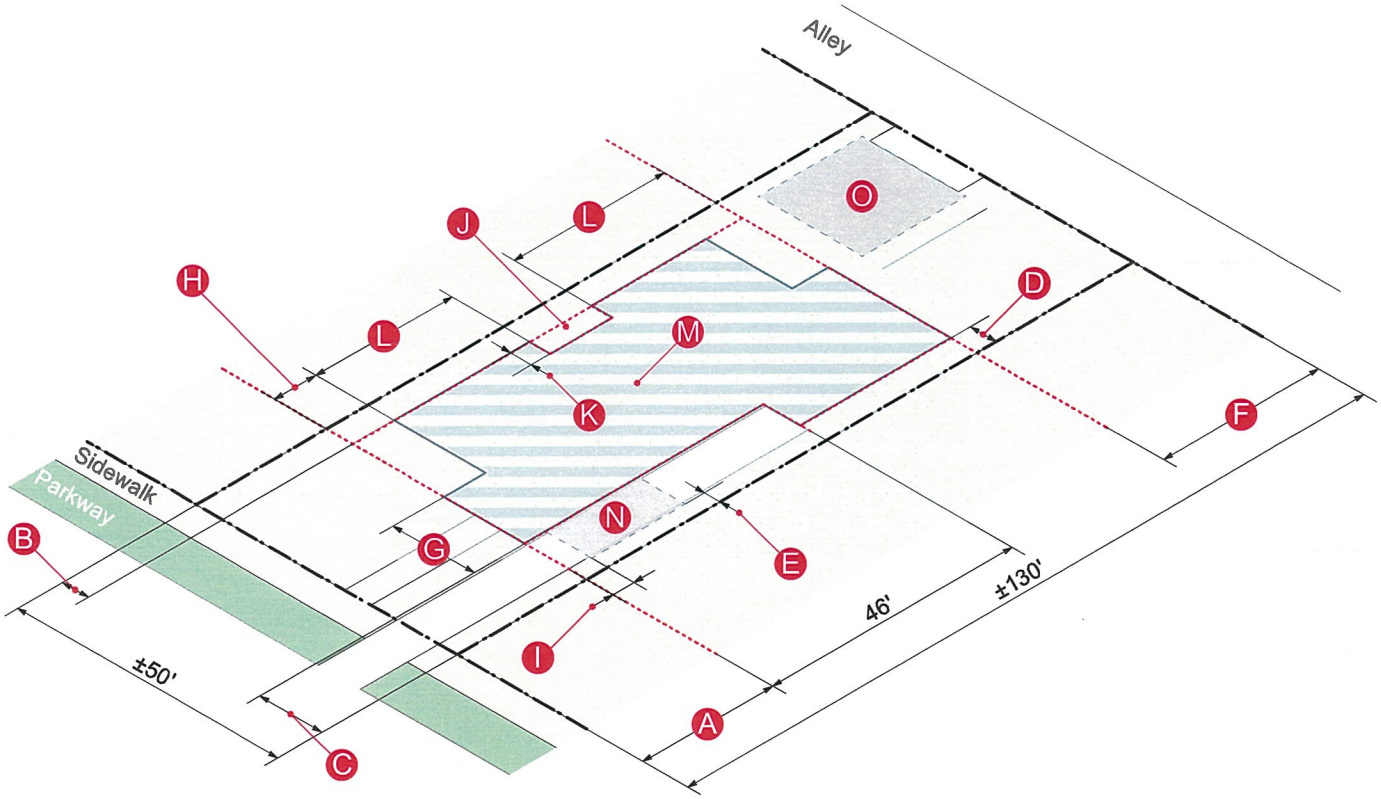
*: Architectural projections shall not project more than 6" into side, street side and rear yards; Architectural projections that project more than 6" into front yards shall not cover more than 20% of maximum potential facades and shall not project more than 10% of the setback depth.

**: One covered entry porch located at or below the first floor level with max. 4' in depth and which has no vertical supporting elements shall be allowed at front yard.

Lot Size (Typical Small Lot)	
Width	±50'
Depth	±130'
Building Form	
Floor Area	Max. Floor Area= 1,500 SF + 40% of Lot Area = ±4,100 SF
Principal Residential Building Height	Max. 22' plate height; max. 25' structure height with a flat roof; max. 30' structure height with sloped roof.
Set Back (Minimum Distance from Property Line)	
Front Yard	±25'
Side Yard	Min. 5' on one side; min. 9' for the first 38' behind front yard setback with min. 5' for remainder of side yard.
Rear Yard	Min. rear yard setback equals 30% of lot depth minus 9' = ±30'm
Miscellaneous	
Walls, Fences and Hedges	Max. 3' height within the first 20% of the front yard measured from front line; max. 6' height within other portion in the front yard; max. 7' height within a side yard but not in a front yard; max. 8' height within 5' of and parallel to a rear lot line.

A-3 Existing Zoning Envelope
Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Setback (Minimum Distance from Property Line)		
A	Front yard	
	Consider transition requirement when front building planes do not align.	
B	Side yard on narrow side	Min. 5'
C	Side yard within 46' behind front yard setback on non-narrow side	Min. 9'
D	Side yard setback for the remainder of the site area	Min. 5'
E	Width of landscape buffer between side lot line and the length of adjacent porte-cocheres	Min. 3'
F	Rear yard	±45'

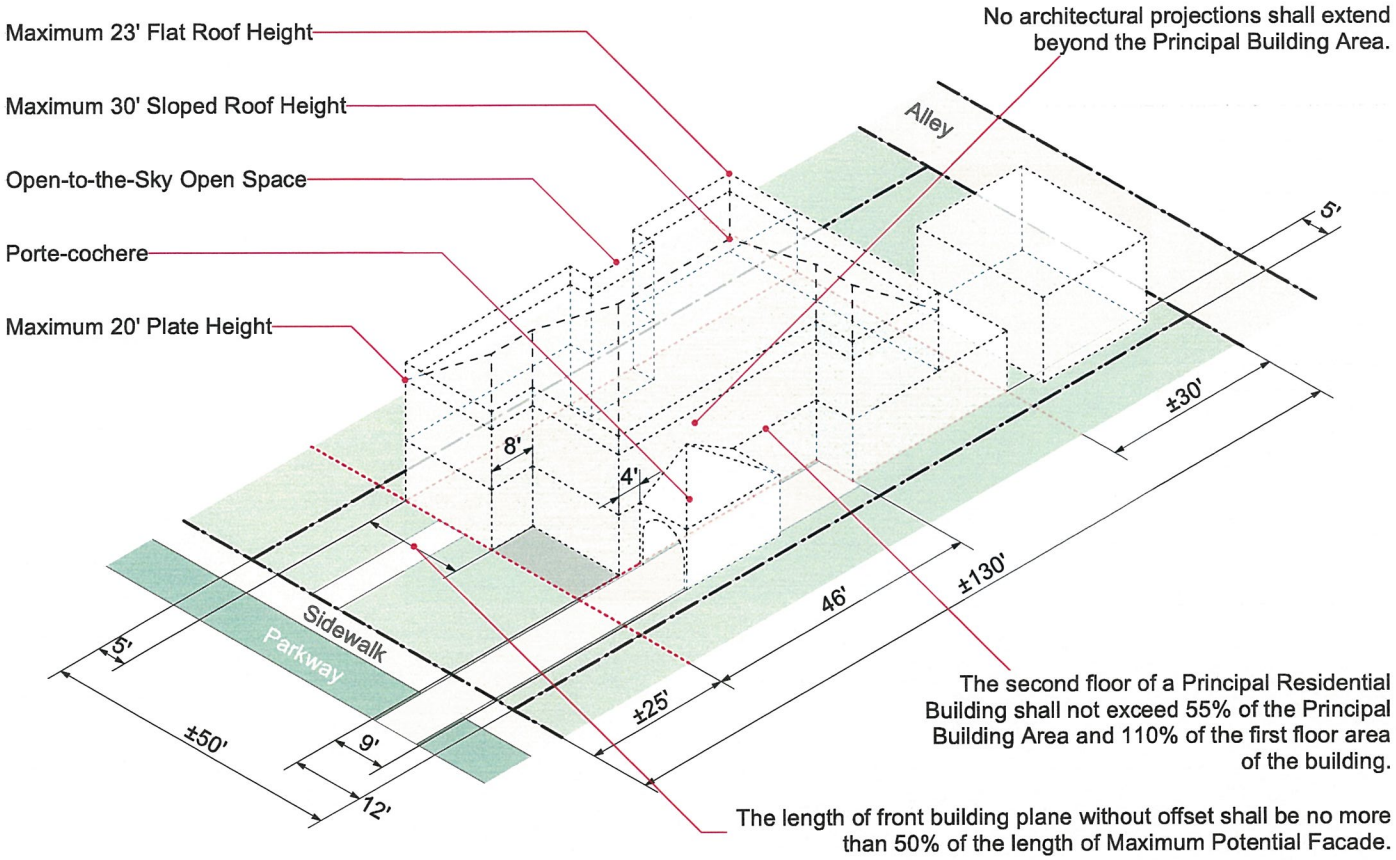
Building Modulation		
G	Front building plane at front setback line (as percentage of maximum potential facade)	Max. 50%
H	Offset at front building plane	Min. 8'
I	Offset between porte-cochere and adjacent front building plane	Min. 4'
J	Additional open-to-the-sky open space area at side yards and street side yards less than 9' in width.	Min. 24 SF
K	Width of open-to-the-sky side yard open space	Min. 4'
L	Distance from additional open-to-the-sky side yard open space to adjacent front/rear building planes	Min. 8'

Permissible Projections and Encroachments	
M	No projections except porte-cocheres and/or accessory buildings shall extend beyond the Principal Building Area.
N	Porte-cochere
O	Single-story, detached garage / accessory building

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

A-4 Recommended Standards - Plan View
Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects

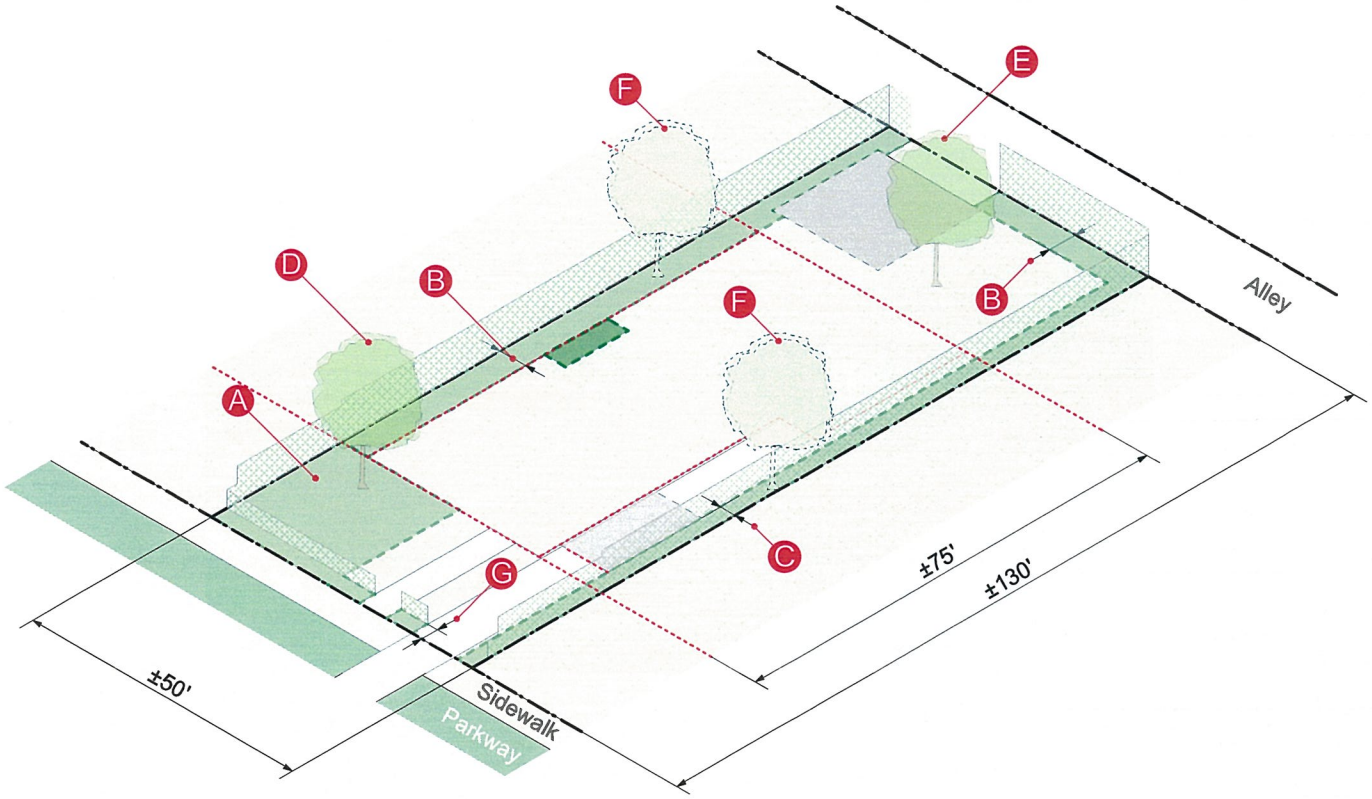


Building Form	
Total Floor Area	Max. Floor Area= 1,500 SF + 40% of Lot Area = ±4,100 SF
Second Floor Area	The second floor of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 70% of the Principal Building Area and 110% of the first floor area of the building .
Principal Residential Building Height	Max. 20' plate height; max. 23' height for the flat-roofed portion of a building; max. 27' height for any portion with a sloped roof without a linear horizontal ridgeline; max. 30' height for any portion with a sloped roof with a linear horizontal ridgeline where two roof planes intersect.
Set Back (Minimum Distance from Property Line)	
Front Yard	±25' typical front yard setback; a minimum 50% of the length of the front building plane shall be offset a minimum of 8' from the front portion of the front building plane; porte-cocheres shall be offset a minimum of 4' from adjacent front building plane.
Side Yard	Min. 5' on one side; min. 9' for the first 46' behind front yard setback with 5' for remainder of side yard.
Rear Yard	Min. rear yard setback equals 30% of lot depth minus 9' = ±30'.
Miscellaneous	
Walls, Fences and Hedges	Max. 3' height within the first 20% of the front yard measured from front line; max. 6' height within other portion in the front yard; max. 7' height within a side yard but not in a front yard; max. 8' height within 5' of and parallel to a rear lot line.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

A-5 Recommended Zoning Envelope Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Landscaped Area		
A	Max. 400 SF of paved area at front yard.	
B	Width of landscape buffer adjacent to any side and rear yard lot line not utilized for an allowed accessory structure or driveway.	Min. 5'
C	Width of landscape buffer adjacent to porte-cocheres	Min. 3'

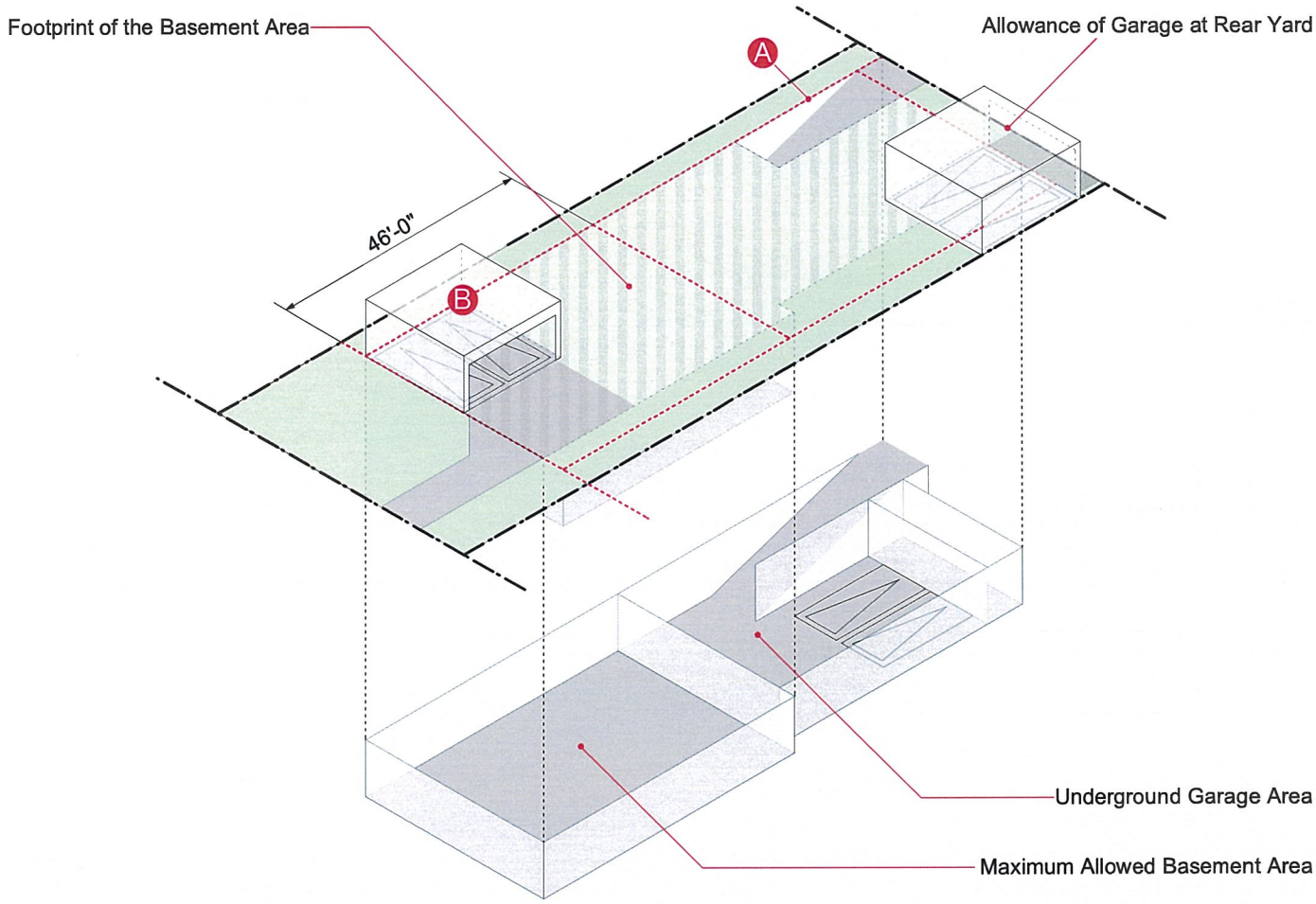
Trees	
D	At front yard, minimum 1 tree for lots 60' or less in width; minimum 2 trees for lots greater than 60' in width.
E	At rear yard, minimum 1 tree for lots 60' or less in width; minimum 2 trees for lots greater than 60' in width.
F	Minimum 1 tree for each 80' of side yard and/or street side yard; minimum 30" from property line or may be placed anywhere on property.

Greening of Walls, Fences and Hedges		
G	Offset of walls from adjacent street-facing lot line	Min. 2'

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

A-6 Recommended Landscape Standards
Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Garage Entries

A	No ramps shall extend into front yards; In corner lots, ramps shall be offset a minimum of 5'0" behind any adjacent street-facing lot line.
B	If the vehicular entrance to a garage is located less than 46' behind the front setback line, then the garage entrance shall be perpendicular to the front lot line.

Parking Requirements

Number of Bedrooms	Required Parking Spaces	Rear Yard Above-Grade Garage Area Exempt
4 or less	Min. 2	400 SF
5	Min. 3	
6	Min. 4	
7-8	Min. 5	
9 or more	Min. 6	

Basement

Any area in a basement that is utilized for parking spaces, access drives, or ramps to those spaces, mechanical equipment or rooms or shafts and stairwells to floors above, shall be exempt from the determination of residential basement floor area.

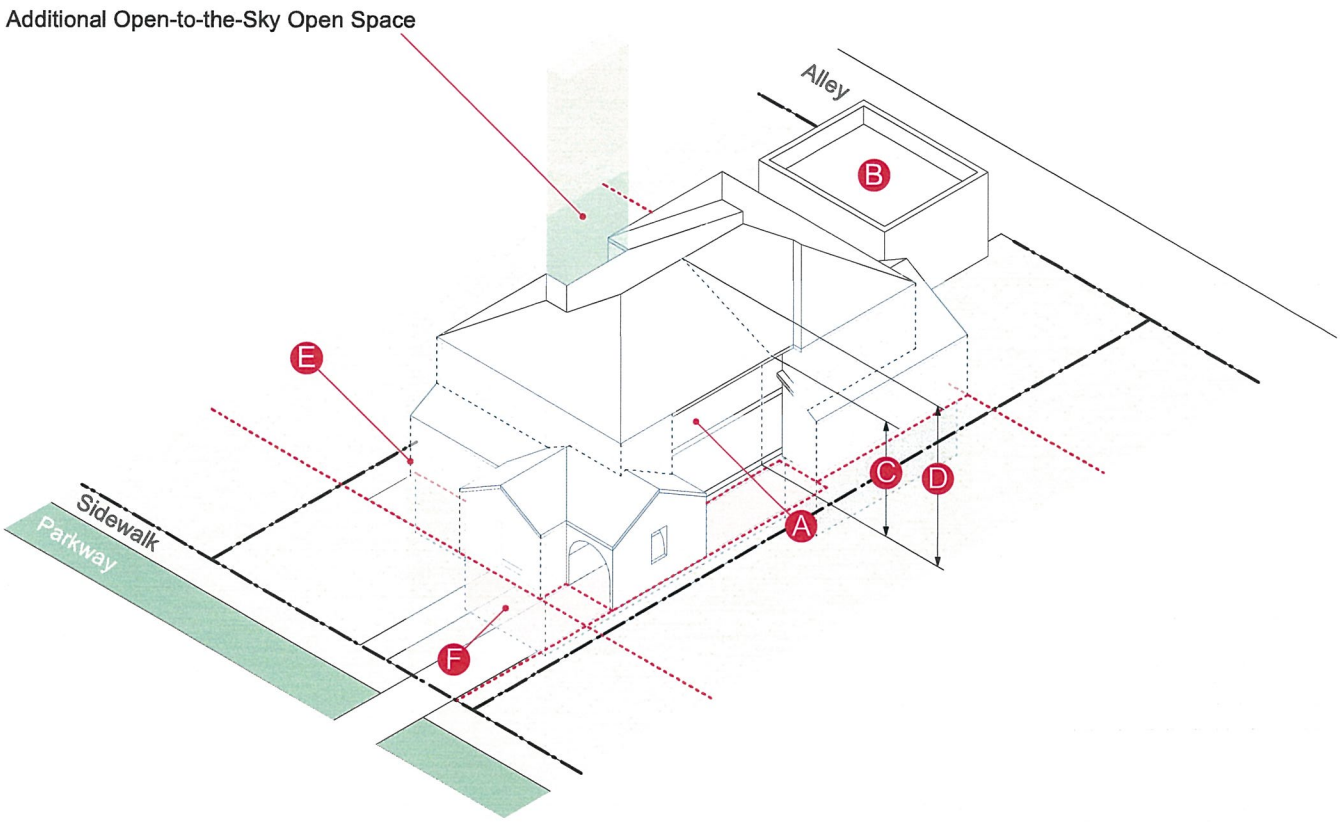
In addition to exempt basement area as defined above, and an allowance of an additional 150 square feet of basement area that may be utilized for any habited use, when a project meets modulation standards, it shall be exempt from the determination of residential floor area.

If the modulation standards are not met, for each square foot of non-exempt basement floor area, 50% of such non-exempt area shall count towards the calculation of the maximum allowed residential floor area.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

A-7 Recommended Parking and Basement Standards Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Maximum Built-Out		
	Total floor area	±4,100 SF
A	Second floor area to Principal Building Area %	Max. 70%
B	Above-grade garage area allowance	400 SF

Building Height		
C	Main building plate height	Max. 20'
D	Main building structure height *Only applicable to a building with sloped roof planes and ridge lines.*	Max. 30'

Projections	
E	No projections except porte-cocheres and/or accessory buildings shall extend beyond the Principal Building Area.
F	Basements shall not extend into front yards and/or side yards.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

A-8 Case Study with Recommendations
Lot South of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects

DRAFT

Reducing Single-Family Mass and Bulk Recommendations Report

Appendix B

North of Santa Monica Boulevard Analysis Exhibits

October 22, 2013

prepared by
John Kaliski Architects
in consultation with
Dyett & Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners

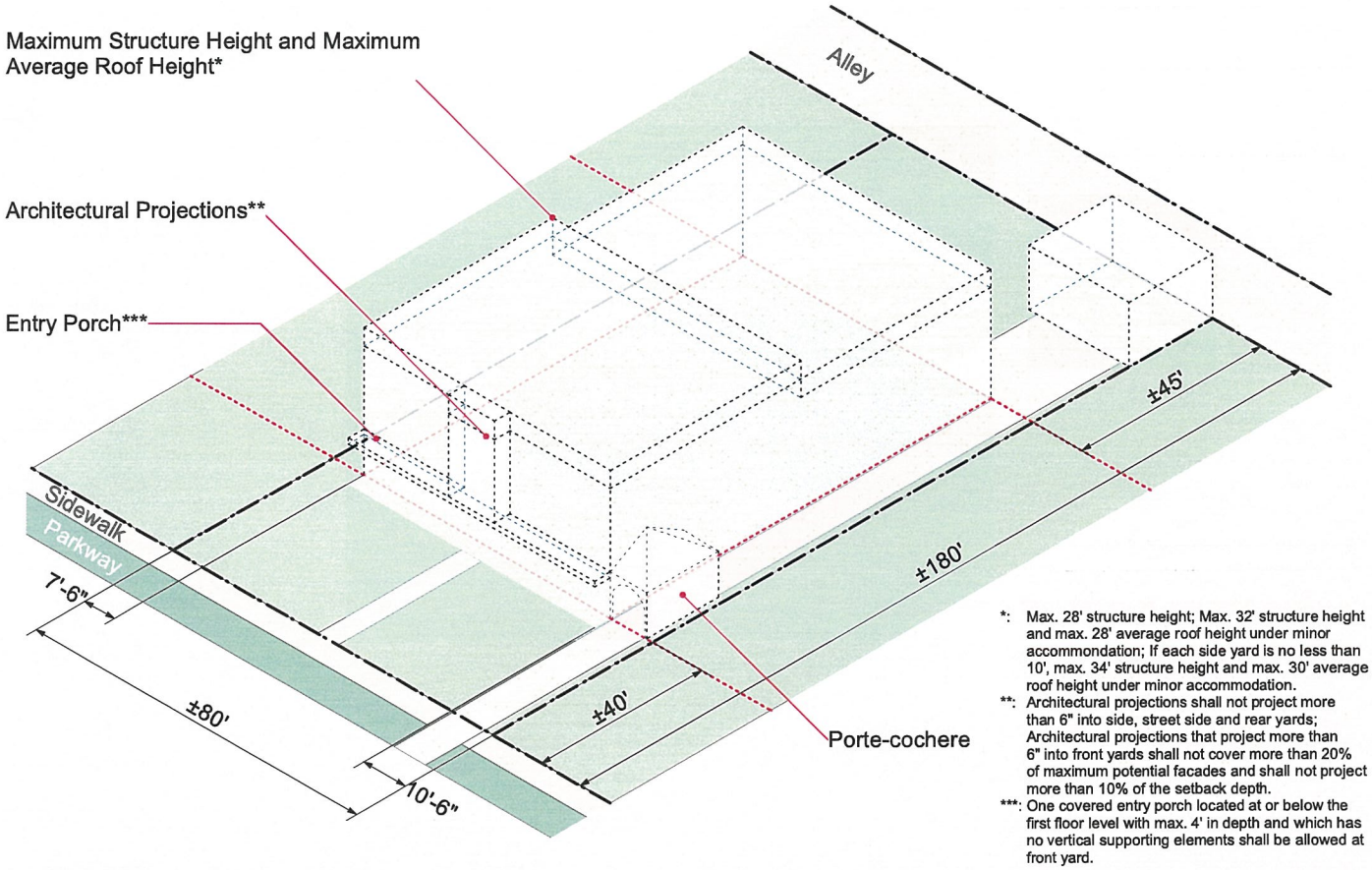
This block of single-family homes north of Santa Monica Boulevard exemplifies the design parameters that the City seeks to conserve and is used as a basis for developing and testing residential development standards that reduce perceived bulk and mass.

B-1 Aerial Map - Existing Conditions
Typical Block North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013) **John Kaliski Architects**

This figure-ground representation of buildings in relationship to property lines was developed from Los Angeles County GIS Data Portal, and is used to further develop understandings of building design and amount of lot coverage in relationship to lot configurations. Note that County GIS data does not accurately represent side yard relationships.

Typical Design Parameters for Lots North of Santa Monica Boulevard			
Lot Width	±83'4"	Principal Residential Building Height	±27'8"
Lot Depth	±177'9"	Front Yard Set Back	±39'9"
Gross Lot Coverage (in Relation to Lot)	±33%	Percentage of Front Facade at Front Yard Setback	±73%
Net Lot Coverage (in Relation to Principal Building Area)	±69%	Offset from Front Building Plane	±7'6"
Floor Area Ratio	±0.40	Second Floor Area to First Floor Area %	±50%
		Second Floor Area to Principal Building Area %	±35%

B-2 Figure-Ground Study - Existing Conditions
Typical Block North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013) John Kaliski Architects



*: Max. 28' structure height; Max. 32' structure height and max. 28' average roof height under minor accommondation; If each side yard is no less than 10', max. 34' structure height and max. 30' average roof height under minor accommodation.

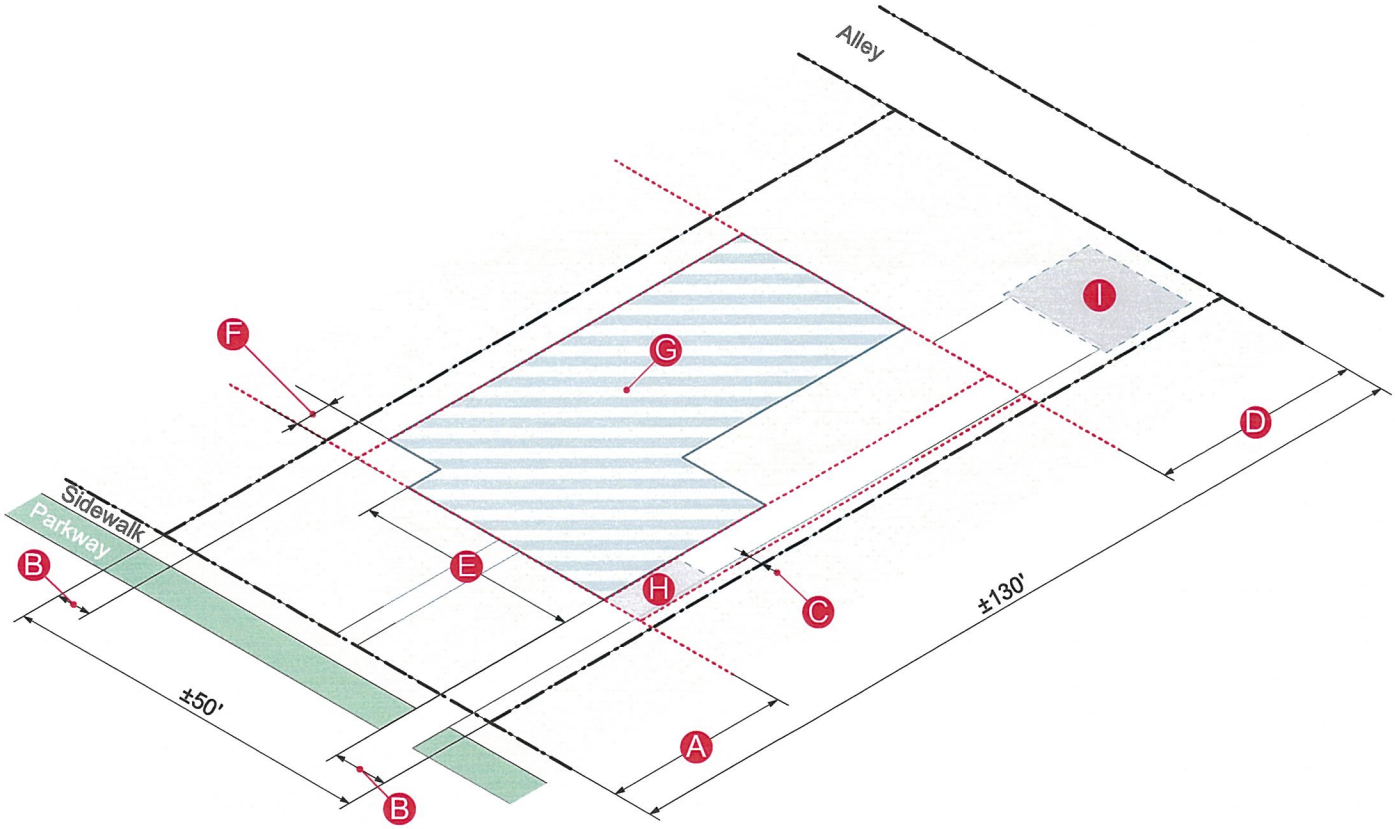
**: Architectural projections shall not project more than 6" into side, street side and rear yards; Architectural projections that project more than 6" into front yards shall not cover more than 20% of maximum potential facades and shall not project more than 10% of the setback depth.

***: One covered entry porch located at or below the first floor level with max. 4' in depth and which has no vertical supporting elements shall be allowed at front yard.

Lot Size (Typical Lot)	
Width	±80'
Depth	±180'
Building Form	
Floor Area	Max. Floor Area= 1,500 SF + 40% of Lot Area = ±7,260 SF
Principal Residential Building Height	Max. 28' structure height (max. 32' structure height and max. 28' avr. roof height under minor accommodation). Exception: Max. 32' structure height (max. 34' structure height and max. 30' avr. roof height under minor accommodation) if each side yard is no less than 10'.
Set Back (Minimum Distance from Property Line)	
Front Yard	±40'
Side Yard	Min. 7'6" side yard setback on each side; the sum of side yard setback shall be at least 15' + 30% of lot width in excess of 70'. Exceptions apply.
Rear Yard	Min. rear yard setback equals 30% of lot depth minus 9' = ±45'
Miscellaneous	
Walls, Fences and Hedges	Max. 3' height within the first 20% of the front yard measured from front line; max. 6' height within other portion in the front yard; max. 7' height within a side yard but not in a front yard; max. 8' height within 5' of and parallel to a rear lot line.

B-3 Existing Zoning Envelope
Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Setback (Minimum Distance from Property Line)		
A	Front yard	
	Consider transition requirement when front building planes do not align.	
	Sum of side yard setbacks	Min. 18'
B	Side yard setback on narrow side	Min. 7'6"
C	Width of landscape buffer between side lot line and the length of adjacent porte-cocheres	Min. 4'
D	Rear yard	±45'

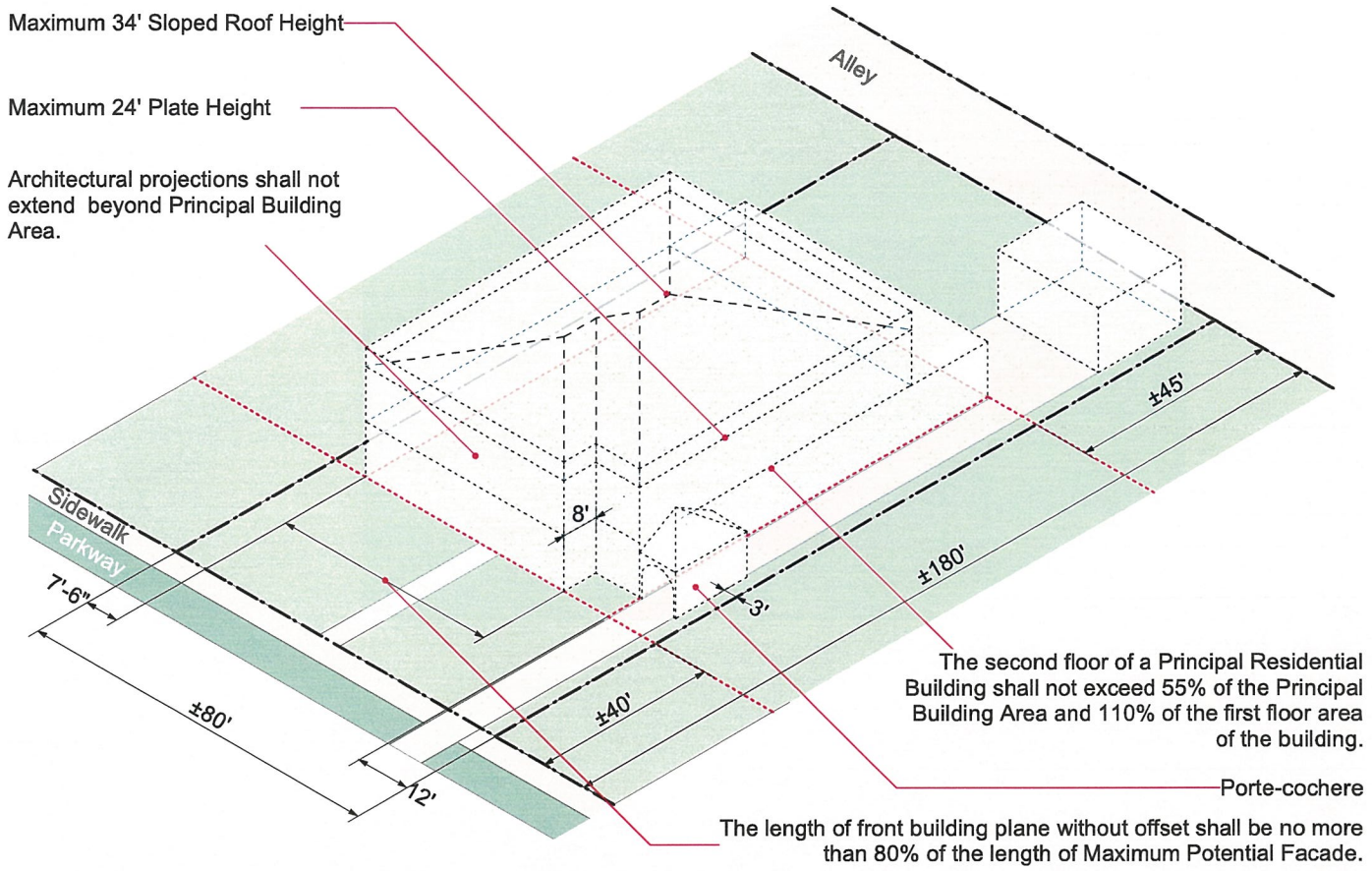
New Building Modulation		
E	Front building plane at front setback line (as percentage of maximum potential facade)	Max. 80%
F	Offset at front building plane	Min. 8'

Permissible Projections and Encroachments	
G	No projections except porte-cocheres and/or accessory buildings shall extend beyond the Principal Building Area.
H	Porte-cochere
I	Single-story, detached garage / accessory Building

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

B-4 Recommended Standards - Plan View
Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects

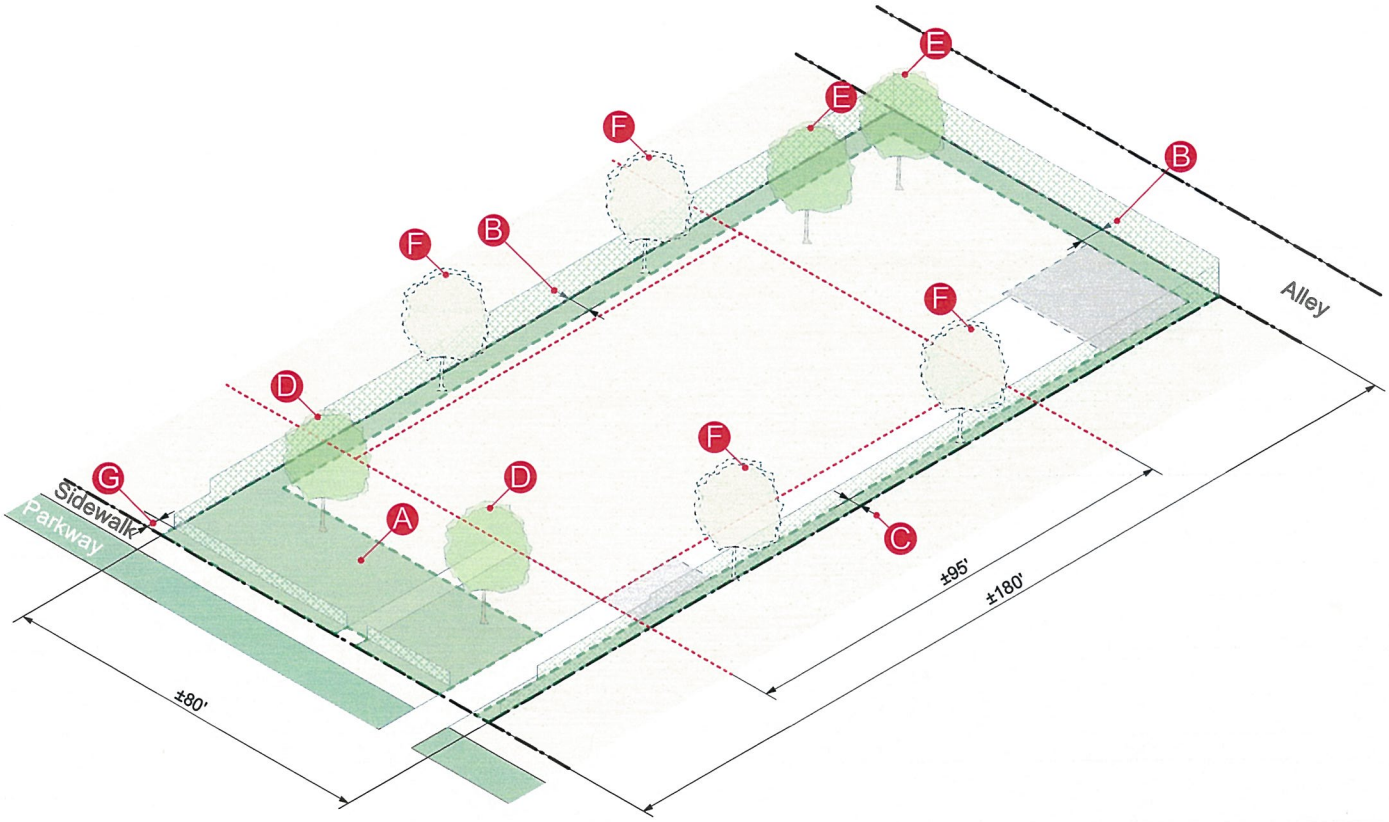


Building Form	
Total Floor Area	Max. Floor Area= 1,500 SF + 40% of Lot Area = ±7,260 SF
Second Floor Area	The second floor of a Principal Residential Building shall not exceed 55% of the Principal Building Area and 110% of the first floor area of the building .
Principal Residential Building Height	Max. 24' plate height; Max. 28' height for the flat-roofed portion of a building; Max. 31' height for any portion with a sloped roof without a linear horizontal ridgeline; Max. 34' height for any portion with a sloped roof with a linear horizontal ridgeline where two roof planes intersect.
Set Back (Minimum Distance from Property Line)	
Front Yard	±40'0" typical front yard setback; A minimum 20% of the length of the front building plane shall be offset a minimum of 8' from the front portion of the front building plane.
Side Yard	Min. 7'6" side yard setback on each side; The sum of side yard setback shall be at least 15' + 30% of lot width in excess of 70'; An additional 3' between the length of driveway or porte-cochere and the adjacent side lot line. Exceptions apply.
Rear Yard	Min. rear yard setback equals 30% of lot depth minus 9' = ±45'
Miscellaneous	
Walls, Fences and Hedges	Max. 3' height within the first 20% of the front yard measured from front line; max. 6' height within other portion in the front yard; max. 7' height within a side yard but not in a front yard; max. 8' height within 5' of and parallel to a rear lot line.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

B-5 Recommended Zoning Envelope
Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Landscape Area		
A	Max. 400 SF of paved area at front yard.	
B	Width of landscape buffer adjacent to any side and rear yard lot line not utilized for an allowed accessory structure or driveway.	Min. 5'
C	Width of landscape buffer adjacent to porte-cocheres	Min. 4'

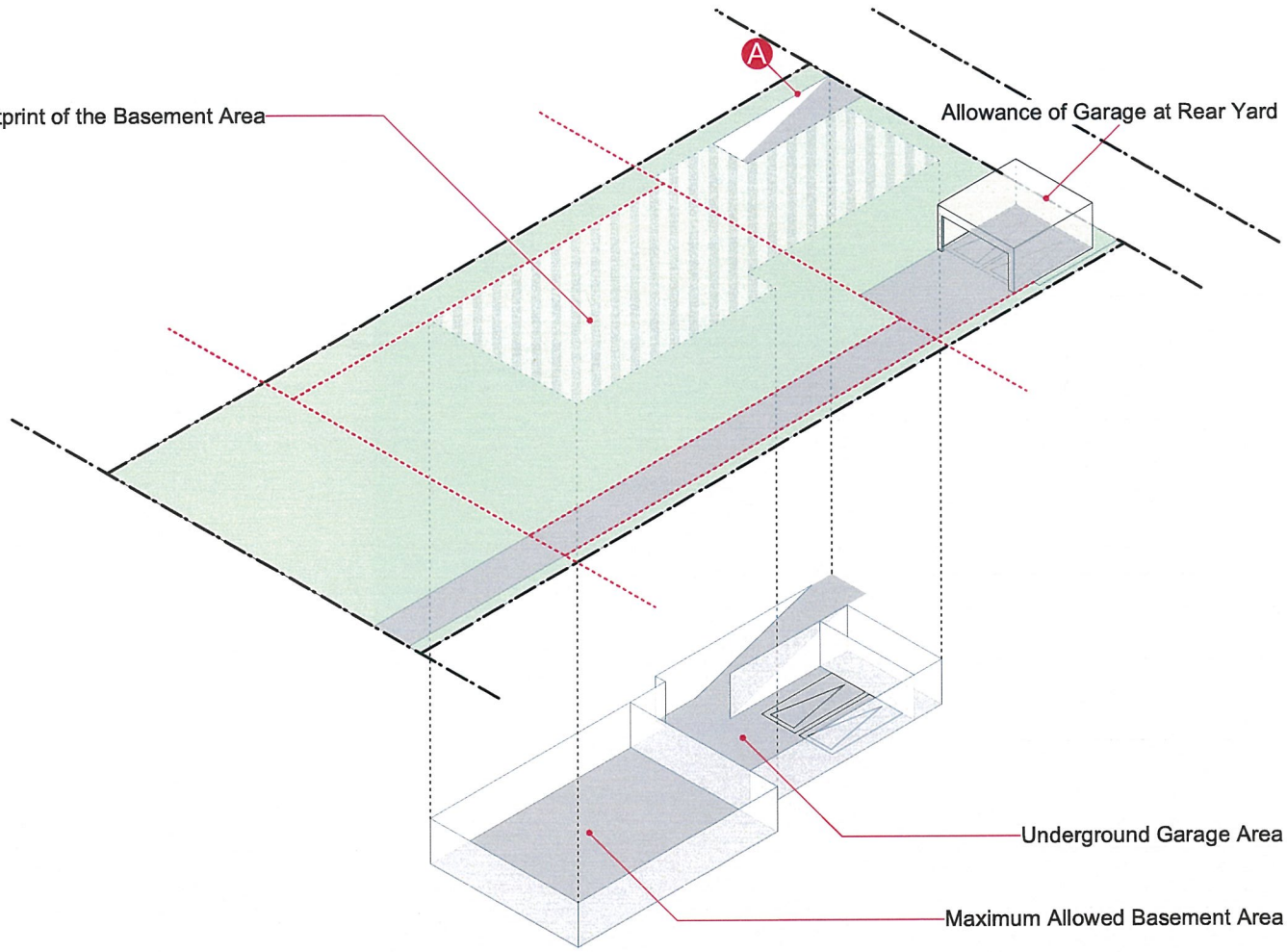
Trees	
D	At front yard, minimum 1 tree for lots 60' or less in width; Minimum 2 trees for lots greater than 60' in width.
E	At rear yard, minimum 1 tree for lots 60' or less in width; Minimum 2 trees for lots greater than 60' in width.
F	Minimum 1 tree for each 80' of side yard and/or street side yard; Minimum 30" from property line or may be placed anywhere on property.

Greening of Walls, Fences and Hedges		
G	Offset of walls from adjacent front lot line	Min. 3'

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

B-6 Recommended Landscape Standards
Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Garage Entries

A No ramps shall extend into front yards; In corner lots, ramps shall be offset a minimum of 5'0" behind any adjacent street-facing lot line.

Parking Requirements

Number of Bedrooms	Required Parking Spaces	Rear Yard Above-Grade Garage Area Exempt
4 or less	Min. 2	400 SF
5	Min. 3	
6	Min. 4	
7-8	Min. 5	
9 or more	Min. 6	

Basement

Any area in a basement that is utilized for parking spaces, access drives, or ramps to those spaces, mechanical equipment or rooms or shafts and stairwells to floors above, shall be exempt from the determination of residential basement floor area.

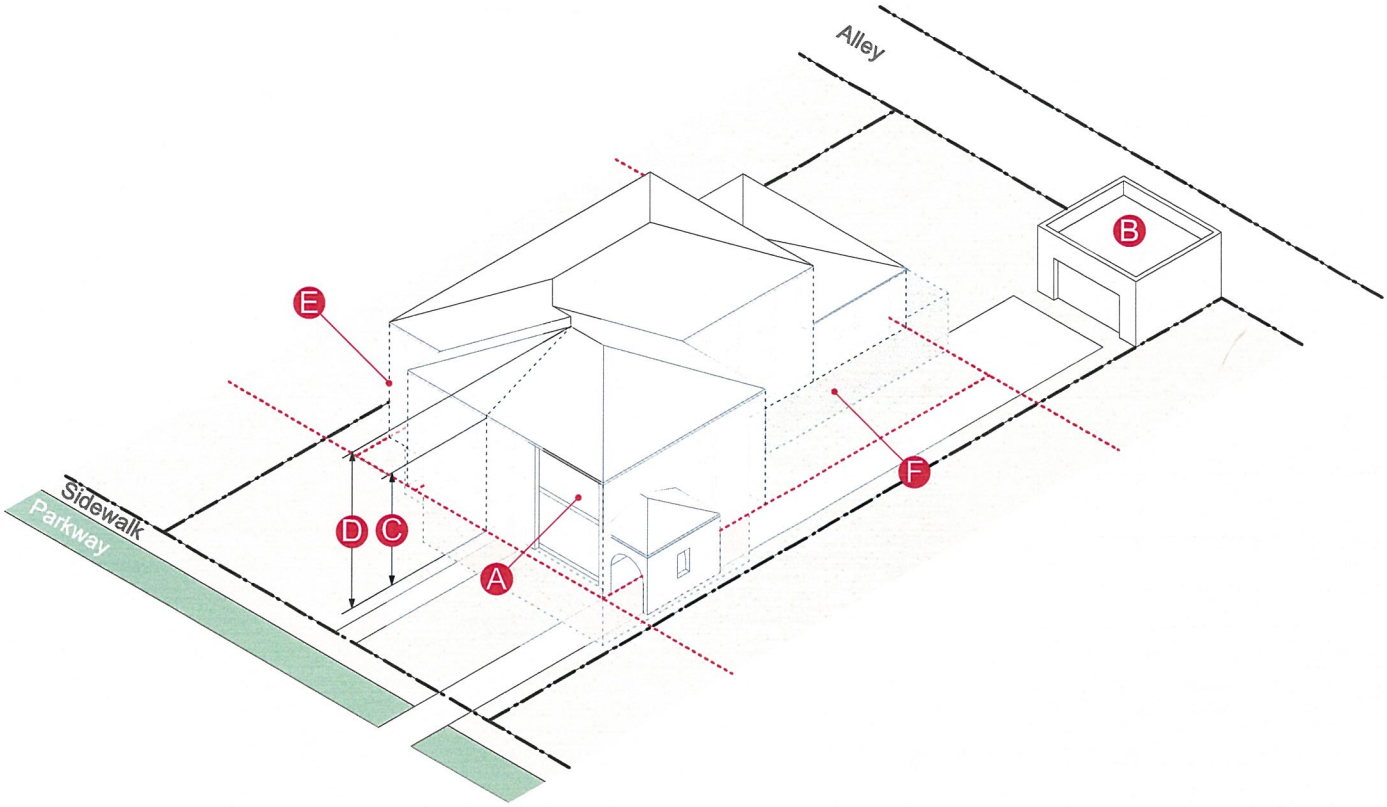
In addition to exempt basement area as defined above, and an allowance of an additional 150 square feet of basement area that may be utilized for any habited use, when a project meets modulation standards, it shall be exempt from the determination of residential floor area.

If the modulation standards are not met, for each square foot of non-exempt basement floor area, 50% of such non-exempt area shall count towards the calculation of the maximum allowed residential floor area.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

B-7 Recommended Parking and Basement Standards Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects



Maximum Built-Out		
	Total floor area (max)	±7,260 SF
A	Second floor area to Principal Building Area %	Max. 55%
B	Above-grade garage area allowance	400 SF

Building Height		
C	Main building plate height	Max. 24'
D	Main building structure height *Only applicable to a building with sloped roof planes and ridge lines.*	Max. 34'

Projections	
E	No projections except porte-cocheres and/or accessory buildings shall extend beyond the Principal Building Area.
F	Basements shall not extend into front yards and/or side yards.

(Existing Standard) *(Proposed Standard)*

B-8 Case Study with Recommendations
Lot North of Santa Monica Boulevard (Revised 10/22/2013)

John Kaliski Architects

Attachment 2

March 27, 2014 Staff Report

City of Beverly Hills
Planning Division
455 N. Rexford Drive Beverly Hills, CA 90210
TEL. (310) 485-1141 FAX. (310) 858-5966

Planning Commission Report

Meeting Date: March 27, 2014

Subject: Amendments to the Central Area Single-Family development standards to address concerns related to building scale and mass and parking requirements.

Recommendation: Review Planning Commission Task Force recommendations and provide direction to staff on proceeding with an ordinance.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report presents a set of draft recommendations that are intended to address concerns about the scale and mass of single-family homes and the adequacy of current parking regulations in the Central Area of the City. These recommendations will be discussed in an interactive format, allowing the Planning Commission to ask questions and receive input from architects, engineers, developers, Design Review commissioners, residents and staff, with the goal of determining the recommendations that should be included in a draft ordinance to be prepared by staff for future consideration by the Planning Commission.

The recommendations in this report are the result of a process that began with direction from the City Council to study R-1 scale and mass, the hiring of consultant Dyett & Bhatia with architect John Kaliski, appointment of a Planning Commission Task Force (Commissioners Rosenstein and Corman), Task Force meetings with stakeholders, submittal by the consultant of an "Issues and Options" paper, presentation of a draft recommendations report at an October 24, 2013 Community Workshop (Attachment 1), and finally, Task Force meetings to synthesize public comments with the draft recommendations, resulting in this report.

This report summarizes Beverly Hills' history with bulk and mass restrictions, the consultant's recommendations in the October report, input from the community and Task Force review, setting out a framework to discuss code amendments to reduce perceived scale and mass of new single family development and addressing the adequacy of current parking regulations.

Attachment(s):
1. Recommendations Report, October 2013
2. Permissible Encroachments in Setbacks

Report Author and Contact Information:
Michele McGrath
Principal Planner
(310) 285-1135
mmcgrath@beverlyhills.org

BACKGROUND

The issue of houses that appear too large and bulky for their sites, often called "mansionization," is not new to Beverly Hills or to other cities that are considered particularly desirable places to live with concurrent high land costs. Such cities, like Beverly Hills, have experienced a high rate of teardowns, with replacement by new houses that are built to the maximum building envelope allowed by local codes. Larger homes in turn give rise to concerns about the provision of adequate parking.

Cities trying to achieve more appropriate scale and better design in single family home development have employed one or more of the following tools, sometimes in combination:

- Reduce the maximum amount of floor area allowed on a site;
- Reduce the maximum amount of floor area allowed and then allow additional floor area if certain design criteria are met (City of LA Baseline Mansionization Ordinance);
- Require a certain amount of modulation and/or stepbacks;
- A design review process:
    - Adopt design guidelines based on site planning, structure location, scale/mass and landscaping without addressing architectural style (Marin County);
    - Adopt design guidelines that focus on architectural style (Beverly Hills);
    - Adopt design guidelines that focus on site planning and architectural style (City of Santa Barbara).

<u>Adjacent Cities' Programs</u>

In Los Angeles' Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (adopted in 2008), the City reduced overall maximum allowed floor area and then permitted floor area exceptions if certain criteria are met that are intended to reduce the scale and mass of homes. A number of Los Angeles neighborhoods have been unhappy with the resulting development, feeling it is still out of scale with neighborhoods. Several neighborhoods have initiated a process, built into the Los Angeles ordinance, that allows neighborhoods

to revise the ordinance to better suit their neighborhoods. The Beverly Grove neighborhood, directly east of Beverly Hills, recently went through such a process and enacted more stringent limits on maximum floor area.

West Hollywood uses a combination of floor area requirements, setbacks, height and design compatibility language in the West Hollywood Code to address issues of scale and mass. The City's Design Subcommittee only reviews projects headed for the Planning Commission.

Santa Monica regulates floor area through maximum allowed lot coverage. Building lot coverage and envelope standards, including setbacks at the front façade, must be met unless the applicant goes to the Architectural Review Board. Avoiding a Board is an incentive for applicants in Santa Monica to design to the Code.

Beverly Hills

Beverly Hills has addressed these issues over the years by making discreet amendments to the Zoning Code (limiting maximum height and floor area, revising the definition of floor area to capture spaces with two-story dimensions, addressing the permitted location of parking areas, etc.); and, by adopting a Design Review program in 2004 for single family homes in the Central Area. When the City was reviewing responses to mansionization in 2003 and 2004, the City considered reducing the maximum amount of floor area allowed on single family properties as one possible response to the concerns. The City then decided not to reduce floor area but to institute design review.

The City's measures have helped arrest the development of residential designs considered particularly massive and out of scale with their neighborhoods; however, many feel the issues persist. Now, ten years into adoption of the Design Review program, the City Council has directed staff and the Planning Commission to consider, "discrete amendments to the R-1 development standards to address concerns related to building scale and mass and required parking requirements."[1]

The Planning Commission Task Force encouraged the City's consultant for this project to look at ways good design can be incentivized along with reviewing possible changes to development standards. As seen in the Los Angeles model, a key incentive would be allowing additional floor area if certain criteria are met; however, Beverly Hills already allows a substantial amount of floor area on single family residential sites. As a result, Beverly Hills would need to reduce the maximum floor area allowed, allowing it back to applicants, providing their projects meet scale, mass and parking criteria. Since there does not appear to be a City desire to change the floor area standards as Los Angeles has done, the consultant has identified two other ways to incentivize design that may be more palatable in Beverly Hills than reducing above grade floor area:

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[1] City Council Budget Work Plan Item: R-1 Mass and Bulk Standards. Continue to consider discrete amendments to the R1 development standards to address concerns related to building scale and mass and required parking requirements. This work item is not a comprehensive re-evaluation of the R1 standards, but identifies opportunities to make minor changes to improve neighborhood compatibility and enhance the quality of the buildings being constructed, while also addressing concerns related off-street parking requirements. Continued from previous fiscal year (CP, DI, GP)

1. Count basement area in the calculation of maximum allowed floor area for the site (currently, basement area is not included in calculations of maximum allowed floor area). This potentially reduces the amount of basement area that could be constructed but the additional basement area could be permitted if certain scale/mass/parking criteria are met.
2. Further incentivize the design review process. Currently, R-1 projects that meet certain criteria may be reviewed at staff level which is generally faster and less costly than a commission hearing process. The consultant has proposed creating additional opportunities for applicants to receive staff level review if certain criteria are met.

Both of these incentive ideas are discussed later in this report; the concept of incentivizing basement area is discussed under Recommendation 10, and further incentivizing the City's review process is discussed under Recommendation 12.

DISCUSSION

The consultant's recommendations for potential amendments to the City's single-family development standards were provided to the Planning Commission prior to the Commission's October 24, 2013 meeting and were presented to the public during a citywide Workshop that evening. Following are the main concerns that were expressed during the Workshop:

- Concern that prescribed standards will result in "cookie-cutter style;"
- Limiting encroachment of architectural projections in setbacks will reduce or eliminate features such as roof eaves that are desirable in alleviating the appearance of bulk and mass;
- Landscaping is a critical factor;
- Concern about reduction in allowed basement area;
- Interest in strengthening the City's Style Guidelines; consider tying specific modulation/design standards to specific architectural styles;
- Interest in exploring a variety of parking solutions.

An overarching concern expressed by architects and residents was avoiding standards that would result in "cookie cutter" homes. This concern speaks to the City's development largely with custom homes resulting in diverse architectural styles that set Beverly Hills apart from cities with large tract housing developments. Concern was expressed that strict step-back (setting upper floors back from the front façade) or modulation requirements can result in a uniform appearance and may preclude certain architectural styles.

Other than the importance of landscaping, the recommendation that appeared to elicit the most comment was the suggestion to allow the maximum basement area only if certain building envelope modulation criteria for the above-grade structure are met. Many expressed the view that basement area does not impact the appearance of scale and mass and should be encouraged; others asserted that limiting basement area is a reduction from current allowed square footage. Some noted that large basements may intensify the use of the land, resulting in the need for more parking; alternatively, parking can be provided in the subterranean structure.

The Planning Commission Task Force considered the consultant's recommendations, public comments and Planning Commission comments and made suggestions as to which of the consultant's recommendations merit further review by the Planning Commission. The table below summarizes the Task Force's suggestions with regard to each of the consultant's 13 recommendations. Standards that might limit architectural design have not been recommended by the Task Force for further consideration. Recommendations that are suggested for further review are discussed in more detail in this report.

	Consultant Recommendations	Recommended for Consideration	Not Recommended for Consideration
1	Add a definition for "Principal Residential Buildings" and "Architectural Projections" to the Zoning Code	Yes	
2	adjust the definition of height so it is always based on average ground level	Yes	
3	Standards for Modulation of Front Yard Facing Building Planes		Too limiting on architectural design
4	Adjustments in height standards - reduce the maximum roof plate height near property lines		Too limiting on architectural design
5	Limit the size of second floors in relation to the Principal Building Area and the first floor area		Too limiting on architectural design
6	Eliminate encroachment allowances for architectural projections	Yes; in part	
7	Setback standards for porte-cocheres	Yes	
8	Increase side yard setbacks for residences south of Santa Monica Blvd.	Yes	
9	Additional Landscape Standards	Yes	
10	Relating maximum basement floor area to above-grade scale and mass	Yes	
11	Standards to reduce visibility of on-site parking from streets	Yes	
12	Relating compliance with certain development requirements (above) to the ability of property owners to apply for a staff-level review rather than a Commission-level review	Yes	
13	Consider increases to the off-street parking requirements for homes with more than six bedrooms	Yes	

Below is a discussion of the recommendations the Task Force has forwarded to the Planning Commission for additional review and possible inclusion in a draft ordinance.

Recommendation 1. Add Definition of "Principal Residential Building" and "Architectural Projections"

The terms "Principal Residential Building" and "Architectural Projections" are used in the Zoning Code but are not defined. This causes confusion in distinguishing the main house from other structures such as accessory structures, and in identifying projections on structures for regulatory purposes. This proposed change is not expected to have any impact other than increasing clarity in the Code.

Recommendation 2. Adjust Definition of Height

The City has three single-family residential zoning districts: Central Area, Hillside Area and Trousdale Estates. The current study addresses only the Central Area, which is further divided into two areas, north of Santa Monica Boulevard and south of Santa Monica Boulevard. This is mainly because the lots north of Santa Monica Boulevard are generally larger than lots south of Santa Monica Boulevard. The Central Area is distinguished by streets laid out in a grid pattern and generally, but not exclusively, flat topography.

Height in the Central Area is defined as the distance between the highest element of a building or structure and the highest point of ground level at the perimeter of the building or structure. However, if more than fifty percent (50%) of the perimeter of the building or structure is below the highest point of such ground level, then the height shall be measured from the average of such ground level at the perimeter of the building or structure. This exception is intended to address Central Area lots that are sloped. Similarly, height in the Hillside Area is defined by the finished grade at all points along the building or structure perimeter.

This recommendation proposes measuring height on all lots in the Central Area from "the average point of ground level at the perimeter of the building or structure." The Planning Commission may wish to discuss whether changing the definition of height can, even slightly, reduce the perceived height of houses as viewed from the street, allowing new construction to be more compatible with existing homes.

The Planning Commission may also wish to discuss whether "ground level" (used in the Central Area definition) or "finished grade" (used in the Hillside definition) is the better term for the definition. Alternatively, the following language could be used in the definition: "the elevation of the natural or finished surface of the ground, whichever is lower."

A Task Force member noted that the definition of height in the Central Area, as currently written, takes into account certain difficulties associated with developing sloped properties. Changing the definition could penalize owners of sloped properties. Another option might be to require slightly lower plate heights on the lowest 20% of lots that have more than a six foot slope. Staff cautions against creating standards that may become too complicated and unwieldy to administer.

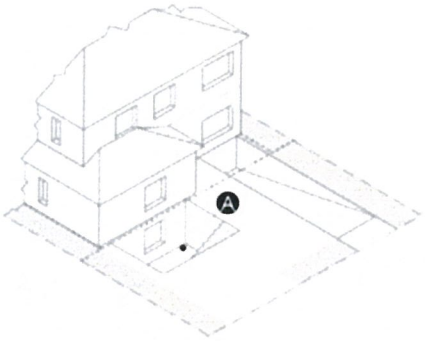
Recommendation 6. Eliminate Encroachment Allowances for Architectural Projections

The consultant pointed out that the City's Zoning Code allows a number of architectural projections and other elements to encroach or project beyond the principal building area. The principal building area is the area in which building is permitted, defined in the Zoning Code as "[t]hat portion of a site area not included within a front yard, side yard, street side yard or rear yard."

A list of the structures or building elements that may currently encroach in a front setback, also referred to as the front yard, and those that may encroach into a side, street side or rear setback, is Attachment 2 to this report. The Task Force recommended that these encroachment allowances should remain in the code because they can contribute to a more modulated building and good design. An example is roof eaves which can elongate horizontal design lines, reducing the vertical profile of a house.

Lightwells

One setback encroachment that is not on the attached list but was included in the consultant's recommendations is lightwells. A lightwell is defined in the Zoning Code as:



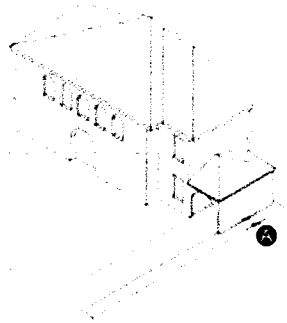
"An excavated area adjacent to a building that extends no more than four feet (4'), as measured horizontally from the building perimeter, that is enclosed on four (4) sides, that is open at the top, and that allows light into a below grade level of a building."

Lightwells are defined in the Zoning code but are not specifically regulated in the Zoning Code; they are regulated in the Building Code. Because the City allows residential basements, and because habitable rooms in basements require emergency egress, lightwells have been permitted by the City in residential setback areas. The consultant suggested prohibiting lightwells in all required setback areas except the rear setback. Such a prohibition would mean that if a basement includes a habitable room, the lightwell would have to be in the principle building area or in the rear. The Task Force further suggested the lightwell be open to the sky. This could encourage an owner to create a cut-out in a side wall, or to set the entire wall back, to accommodate a lightwell in the principal building area. This would provide additional modulation on the side of the building facing a neighboring property or the street and additional area for landscaping.

Recommendation 7. Setback Standards for Porte Cocheres

The consultant proposed considering setback standards for porte cocheres such as landscaped side yard setbacks and a setback from the front of the house. Requiring a small landscaped setback

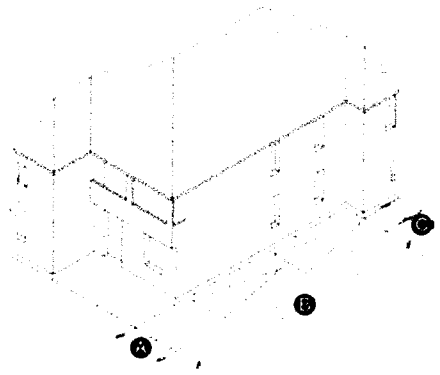
between a porte cochere and side property line could help to create a visual break in buildings along a street. This recommendation is particularly intended to address the situation where two adjacent porte cocheres create the impression of one continuous building wall along the street face(see photo previous page). It is noted that public comment has been received expressing concern that requiring any additional side setbacks will reduce the available locations to provide parking.



With regard to setting a porte cochere back from the main façade of the house, the Design Review Commission often requires this as a condition of approval to break up the building width as viewed from the street.

Recommendation 8. Increase side yard setbacks for residences south of Santa Monica Blvd.

This is a two part recommendation:

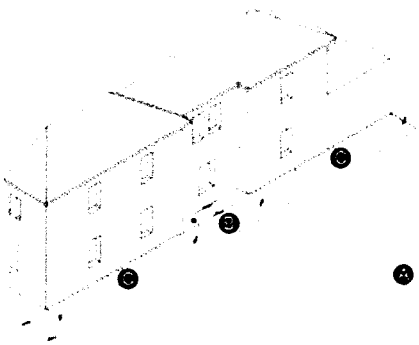


a. Proposes extending the nine-foot wide setback required on one side of the lot on lots south of Santa Monica Boulevard. Currently the Zoning Code requires the side setback for buildings to be five feet (5') on one side. On the other side, the side setback shall be nine feet (9') for the first thirty eight (38') behind the front setback line and five feet (5') for the remainder of the site area. The consultant proposes extending that nine-foot wide setback from 38 feet to 46 feet from the front setback line, an increase of 8 feet, before the setback can be reduced to a five-foot width.

Staff proposes, and the Task Force agreed, that the Planning Commission should consider requiring the nine-foot wide setback for the length of the lot on lots south of Santa Monica Boulevard. The nine-foot wide setback traditionally allowed for parking adjacent to the house, along a side lot line. Beverly Hills does not have a requirement to provide a covered garage in the Central Area, a requirement common in other cities, but the City also has a tradition, memorialized in the Zoning Code, of providing required parking in the side and rear of properties rather than in the front. This concept of discouraging parking and parking garages in the front of residences is now a widely accepted urban design concept included in "smart growth" strategies. Even though most of the streets in the Central Area have rear alleys, many homeowners have chosen to park their cars in tandem along the side lot line, rather than parking from the alleys, probably to maximize private backyard area and because of security concerns regarding accessing garages from alleys.

In 1996 the City amended the Code to allow homes in the Central Area south of Santa Monica Boulevard to encroach into this nine-foot setback at a point 38 feet behind the front setback line. Since the required setback on the other side is five feet, allowing a five foot setback on both sides precludes a resident's ability to use the side driveway to access parking in the rear, even if a future owner wished to do so. The smaller five foot wide setback approved in 1996 also brings newer structures closer to

adjacent neighbors in an area where many older properties' backyards begin. Since almost all new single family homes are two stories, this results in a two-story building wall located within five feet of the side property line, potentially impacting neighbors' access to light, air and privacy.



Increasing the side setback at the rear of the house from five feet to nine feet will not prevent any owner from developing to the maximum floor area permitted since there is still sufficient principal building area available to build to the maximum square footage allowed by Code.

b. Proposes in side yards less than 9 feet in width, an additional open to sky side yard open space with a minimum depth inward of four feet from the nearest side yard line, placed a minimum of eight feet from either the front yard or rear yard setback line, with a minimum area of 24 square feet. This is intended to break up the large two story building wall that results along the side property line of new single family development. This new open area could potentially be used as a location for a lightwell (see earlier discussion regarding lightwells).

Recommendation 9. Additional Landscape Standards

This recommendation includes three sections:

a. Planted Landscape Buffer at Side and Rear Yards

The consultant recommends planted landscape buffers along and abutting any adjacent side and/or rear lot lines not occupied by driveways or allowed accessory structures. The buffer is proposed to have a depth of three to four feet. If such a requirement is proposed by the Planning Commission, staff would craft language that takes into consideration the three-foot wide emergency access path that is currently required through each residential site.

b. On-Site Tree Standards

The consultant recommends a minimum 36" box size deciduous or evergreen tree to be planted in the front yard for lots with a front yard width of less than 60 feet and two such trees in a front yard 60 feet wide or greater; palm trees may not be used for the required tree(s). In addition, the consultant recommends one required minimum 24" box size tree in side yards and street side yards for each 80 feet of yard length and one 24" box size tree in the rear yard, provided that the width of the yard is less than or equal to 60 feet in width, and two trees if the rear yards exceeds 60 feet in width.

Beverly Hills has a robust tree canopy and is a recognized tree city. Trees can provide shade, screening, and can soften the appearance of a home as viewed from the street. The City's Design Review Commission often requires large trees to be planted in the front yard as a condition of approval of new or substantially remodeled homes. On the other hand, two large trees in the front or rear yard of a 60-foot wide lot could feel crowded, depending on the type of trees. Trees in side yards, particularly if smaller side yards, can cause issues with neighbors from roots and branches extending across property

lines. A threshold for determining which development projects need to meet this requirement should be established. For example, would this apply to remodel projects. If the Commission wishes to recommend this Code amendment, the Commission may wish to discuss whether particular trees, in addition to palm trees, should be prohibited from fulfilling this requirement.

c. Greening Standard for Street-Facing Fences and Walls

The consultant recommends requiring street facing fences and walls above 18" in height to be set back a minimum of two feet from the property line on lots South of Santa Monica Boulevard and three feet from the property line on lots north of Santa Monica Boulevard to allow space to provide landscaping to soften the appearance of fences and walls and contribute to the garden quality of the City (see the example below). The larger fence/wall setback is proposed north of Santa Monica Boulevard in acknowledgment of the larger lot sizes in that area. The Design Review Commission often discusses front walls and fences and how they can contribute to the sense of bulk and mass of a structure. It is because of this concern that the current Code allows certain architectural projections on a house only if front fences or walls are limited to three feet in height or, if higher, are approved pursuant to Design Review (BHMC 10-3-2408 F). The Commission may wish to explore whether walls and fences should be subject to some kind of design review process. Currently, only walls and fences that are submitted as part of single-family house project that requires Design Review are reviewed as to design. Walls and fences proposed as a stand-alone project and not associated with a new or substantially remodeled house are not subject to Design Review.

Recommendation 10. Relating maximum basement floor area to above-grade scale and mass

The consultant has proposed counting some basement area in the calculation of maximum allowed floor area. This would help capture area that, while not generally visible from the street, contributes to the intensification of use of a site, including contributing to the number of cars needed by those occupying the site. Capturing part of the basement in the floor area calculations would allow the City to incentivize design of better scale by allowing applicants to achieve larger basements if certain design criteria are met, such as setbacks, modulation, etc. The consultant has proposed exempting basement space used for parking and ramps, mechanical equipment or rooms, and shafts and stairwells to floors above. The balance of basement space could also be exempt if criteria are met and the consultant has set out incentive plans for north and south of Santa Monica Boulevard (Attachment 1).

Despite the strong concern about out-of-character homes in Beverly Hills and adjacent cities, Beverly Hills stakeholders have expressed concern about reducing the by-right amount of basement area permitted by Code, even if the maximum basement area allowed today could be achieved if criteria such as additional second floor setbacks or modulation are met. At the public workshop in October, some residents expressed the view that basement floor area should be encouraged because it is not visible from the street.

Recommendation 11. Standards to reduce visibility of on-site parking from streets

The consultant proposed considering limiting the placement of driveway ramps and stairs providing access to basement parking in front yards and street side yards. The consultant noted that such front yard ramps are not in keeping with the City's traditional residential built-form patterns in the Central Area. This recommendation potentially creates a conflict between the City Council's desire to ensure sites have adequate parking and the desire to screen parking from the public right of way so as not to detract from neighborhood character and the garden quality of the City. Limiting ramps in front yards could make it more difficult to place required and/or needed parking underground which means required parking would be placed above ground in side yards and rear yards. Many residents and guests will also continue to park in front yards.

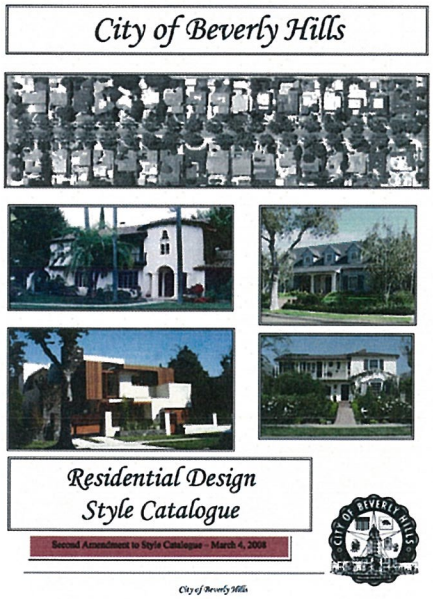
Currently, the Zoning Code prohibits any portion of a driveway to a garage to be below the natural grade within the front yard (front setback area), unless such driveway would not slope below the elevation of the adjacent public right of way and a Minor Accommodation is granted. The Commission may wish to discuss whether limitations on ramping, if appropriate, should apply to certain lot sizes that can better accommodate the ramping without detracting from the streetscape.

The Consultant further recommended the following code change in the areas south of Santa Monica Boulevard: if the vehicular entrance to a garage is located less than 46 feet behind the front setback line (currently the code reads, "38 feet"), the garage entrance shall be perpendicular to the front lot line. It is very rare that applicants use this Code section as it is currently written and likely that almost no applicant would use the Code section as proposed at 46 feet. Applicants considering placing a garage entrance that far back on a property would typically build a detached garage in the rear, taking advantage of the alley to the rear of most (but not all) homes in the Central Area. Staff believes this particular amendment would have little effect on development so staff would not recommend moving forward with this change.

It is noted that the proposed additional landscape standards under Recommendation 9 may also help to shield parking from the public right of way.

Recommendation 12. Strengthening the Relationship of Zoning Code Modulation Standards to the Residential Design Style Catalogue

The consultant proposes to encourage better design by creating additional incentives for applicants through the City's Design Review Process. Currently, only remodels of single-family residences in the Central R-1 Zone "that do not materially change the appearance of the structure as viewed from the street" are not subject to Design Review. All other single-family development projects are subject to Design Review. The Design Review process has two tracks: a project can be approved at the staff level (Track 1 "Character Based" review) or a project can require a public hearing before the Design Review Commission (Track 2). The public hearing process takes longer and is usually more costly for applicants. Currently, staff-level review is permitted if the home is designed by a licensed architect and is designed in a pure architectural style. This does not have to be a traditional style; this may be a contemporary style, including a style not currently depicted in the City's Style Catalogue, so long as the applicant can demonstrate through authoritative sources that the style is a pure architectural style.



The consultant proposes adding scale and mass requirements to the criteria to qualify for Track 1, staff-level review. This could be done in a number of ways including requiring conformance with specific modulation and setback criteria as proposed by the consultant in his recommendations, or adding information to the Style Catalogue, clarifying acceptable proportions for various styles described in the catalogue. The consultant and community members, including Design Review Commissioners, have recommended strengthening the Style Catalogue[2], further defining requirements for particular styles. Staff feels that attempting to define each and every architectural style would be difficult; however, staff does feel there is merit in reviewing the City's Style Catalogue with the goal of adding information about scale, mass and neighborhood context.

Staff notes that the Planning Commission can recommend discreet code changes that relate to Design Review; however, the scope of the current Bulk and Mass Study project does not include revising the City's Style Catalogue. If the Planning Commission wishes to make such a recommendation this could be forwarded to the City Council so it could be considered as part of a second phase to this project.

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[2] Available on the City's website at http://www.beverlyhills.org/cbhfiles/storage/files/filebank/3435--Residential%20Design%20Catalog%20May%202008.pdf

In addition to expanding the requirements that Design Review applicants must fulfill to meet the threshold for Track 1 review as recommended by the consultant, the Planning Commission could consider other requirements such as a floor area trigger. Some cities allow an expedited design review or permitting process if a proposed project is not built to the maximum floor area allowed. For example, the City of Austin allows an expedited process if a site is at 85 percent or less of total maximum allowed floor area. If the Planning Commission considers this type of option, staff would propose that any future additions of floor area to a project that qualified for a staff-level review based on floor area, should require a Track 2, Commission-level review.

In reviewing comments from the October 24 Workshop, the Task Force, at a meeting on November 14, 2013, suggested it may be helpful to review the City's Design Review Ordinance with the intent of strengthening the Design Review Commission's authority to require additional modulation, including substantial setbacks. Similar to thresholds for staff–level Design Review, the Planning Commission can recommend a review of the Design Review Ordinance to the City Council.

If the Planning Commission wishes to consider incentivizing both basement floor area and the Design Review process, the City's consultant suggested the following matrix to create incentives for applicants to propose projects that are well designed and more compatible with the community:

Incentives Matrix (Hypothetical)

Process	Review Type	Basement
Meet enhanced modulation standards & Style Catalogue Track 1 Requirements	Ministerial Review	Basement Area does not count toward total floor area
Meet minimum modulation standards & Style Catalogue Track 1 Requirements	Ministerial Review	50% of basement area counts toward floor area
Meet enhanced modulation standards	DRC Review	Basement Area does not count toward total floor area
Meet minimum modulation standards	DRC Review	50% of basement area counts toward floor area

13. Other Recommendations: Increase the Parking Requirements for Single-Family Residences in the Central Area

The City's current Code requires a maximum of four onsite parking spaces for six or more bedrooms.[3] The consultant's recommendation is to consider increases to the off-street parking requirements for homes with more than six bedrooms. Most applicants provide their required parking in the side of the house or in the rear setback. Requiring additional parking for more bedrooms could eliminate some green space in the side or rear or make it difficult to comply with the landscape requirements proposed by the consultant (see Recommendation 9). Additionally, more applicants have been inquiring about

[3] An approved Second Unit would require one additional parking space.

automated parking and turntables. This could make below-grade parking more desirable but, as noted in the October Workshop comments, and discussed in Recommendation 11, there is concern about the ramping required to get cars below grade. The Commission may also wish to discuss the appropriateness of requiring covered parking which is not currently required in the Central Area and is required by most cities.

Other items for Consideration

Other issues that have arisen as a result of this study include:

- Regulation of accessory structures, particularly those visible from the street;
- Determine minimum front setbacks for new developments based on the prevailing street setback; and,
- Hedge heights.

Next Steps

Staff requests direction from the Commission on preparing a draft ordinance to revise the Zoning Code to address issues of single-family scale, mass, and parking.

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