



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

Date: February 16, 2017

To: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission

From: Amy J. Bodek, Director of Development Services
Linda F. Tatum, Planning Bureau Manager

Subject: **Continuation: Maximum Home Size (R-1-L Zoning District)**

On February 2, 2017, the Planning Commission continued agenda item no. 1, a Zoning Code Amendment request to amend select R-1-L zone development standards in Table 31-2A, Residential Development Standards, of the Zoning Regulations (Title 21), and to add large home design standards for select single-family homes, citywide. Prior to voting for the continuance, the Planning Commission directed staff to collect feedback from the community and prepare a recommendation on the concept of an R-1-L zone single-family home size threshold that would trigger additional design standards and/or discretionary review.

Maximum Home Size (R-1-L Zoning District)

During the week of February 6, 2017, staff held two small group meetings with Los Cerritos residents to discuss the idea of an R-1-L home size threshold. One group of residents was opposed to the idea of a home size threshold, as well as any additional development restrictions for single-family homes, including the R-1-L amendments recommended by staff. The group argued that the existing standards have served the community well, and that further restrictions would negatively impact property values and limit the range of potential home styles. The group recommended that there be no single-family home size threshold, and no additional review process, such as a publicly-noticed hearing, for single-family development projects.

The second group, comprised of members of the Committee for the Preservation of the Los Cerritos Neighborhood (Preservation Committee), recommended that all homes in the R-1-L zone over 7,500 square feet be subject to a publicly-noticed hearing at the Zoning Administrator level, and that any approval include requirements for additional setbacks (10 feet on the ground floor, 15 feet on the second floor) and additional on-site parking (a third enclosed parking stall), as well as a requirement that the development not interfere with any existing solar installations, to mitigate potential impacts to neighborhood character.

Staff's recommendation is to not set a maximum home size threshold in the R-1-L zone or require a public hearing process for a code-compliant, single-family development, regardless of development size. No zoning district in the City currently has a maximum home size standard, and no zoning district in the City has a mandatory public hearing process for a code-compliant, single-family development. Staff is of the opinion that home sizes should be proportional to lot size, as consistently regulated throughout the City via lot coverage and floor area ratio standards, and that additional time and cost constraints should not be placed on homeowners who propose improvements that are consistent with all applicable development standards.

Large Home Design Standards (Citywide)

It was recommended by the Preservation Committee that design standards proposed by staff for large single-family homes citywide apply not only to homes greater than 5,000 square feet in size, but also to any home that is developed to within ten percent (10%) of the property zone's maximum floor area ratio (staff had proposed to the Planning Commission at the February 2, 2017 hearing that both criteria had to be met for the additional design standards to be triggered).

After further consideration, staff supports the group's recommendation, concluding that development impacts are not exclusively related to the raw size of a development (in square feet); a development built at or near its maximum floor area ratio standard can potentially pose impacts as well. Staff's revised large home design standards proposal, which would be added to Section 21.31.255 of the Zoning Regulations, is detailed below. Standards were crafted with potential public realm and adjacent property impacts in mind, and careful attention was paid to not restrict or inadvertently prohibit certain single-family dwelling architectural styles. Existing ordinance text is in black ink; text proposed to be added is in red ink.

21.31.255 - Design, treatment and finish.

The following design standards shall apply to all single-family detached and attached dwelling units unless, through site plan review, the Site Plan Review Committee or the Planning Commission finds variation from these standards to be appropriate.

- A. **Unit Size.** All single-family dwellings shall be at least sixteen feet (16') wide.
- B. **Roof Material.** No single-family dwelling shall have metallic or metallic-looking roofing materials.
- C. **Siding.** No single-family dwelling shall have metallic or metallic-looking siding.
- D. **Style.** Buildings in the R-1-T and R-3-T districts shall maintain a design style consistent with the style of the adjoining neighborhood.
- E. **Side-By-Side Residential Units.** Two-on-a-lot projects where the units are arranged side-by-side (see Section 21.15.2488) shall not be permitted in the R-2-N zone unless approved by the Planning Commission through site plan review.

- F. Large Single-Family Dwellings.** New single-family dwellings and single-family dwelling rebuild projects in districts zoned for single-family development (including Planned Development Districts) that exceed 5,000 square feet in total size or are within ten percent (10%) of the property zoning district's maximum floor area ratio shall comply with the following requirements:
1. Four-sided architecture is required. Building details and design treatments shall be consistent on all building elevations. Bay windows, chimneys, and other projections shall be incorporated in building design for visual and architectural interest.
 2. All dwellings shall provide an inset/offset on walls 25 feet or greater in length. Wall insets/offsets shall be at least two feet deep and have a span of at least 10 feet and extend from grade to eave.
 3. Primary facades shall be street facing and entrances shall be obvious and visible. The height of porches or covered entryway features shall not exceed 15 feet.
 4. Second story windows facing an interior side property line shall not be located directly in line with the second story bedroom windows of a neighboring structure.

Staff recommends the Planning Commission recommend the City Council accept Categorical Exemption CE 16-340 and approve a Zoning Code Amendment related to front yard setbacks, side yard setbacks, lot mergers, and floor area ratio maximums in the R-1-L Zoning District, as detailed in the February 2, 2017 staff report; and approve the addition of large home design standards for applicable single-family developments, citywide. Additionally, staff recommends the Planning Commission recommend the City Council forward a Resolution to the California Coastal Commission to amend the Local Coastal Plan consistent with the proposed citywide large home design standard language.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call Mark Hungerford, Planner, at (562) 570-6439.