



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING DIVISION

DATE: September 17, 2015
TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Craig Jimenez, Planning Division Manager
SUBJECT: 2015 Neighborhood Study

At their meeting of August 4, 2015, the City Council adopted the Neighborhood Study Policy Direction Statement (attached) to guide the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission and Staff in moving forward in the Neighborhood Study.

A special study session has been scheduled prior to the regular meeting on September 23rd at 5:30 PM. The study session will allow the Commission and Staff to develop and prioritize an outline of work to be studied over the next year.

Theme: Neighborhood Compatibility

Policy Objective: To develop and implement regulations in the Zoning Ordinance addressing concerns of the community regarding the compatibility of new development in existing neighborhoods in a balanced manner.

Topic: Development Standards

Issue: Building/house size

What we heard:

- New houses/additions too large in relationship to lots
- Concerns about mansionization
- Arcadia

How we currently regulate:

- RF – 30% site coverage (all structures)
- RE/RL – Sliding Scale – smaller lots, higher FAR, range from 17% (1 acre lot) - 50% (6,000 SF lot)
- RM – 40% FAR
- RH – 75% FAR
- Accessory structures (and attached garages) calculated separately

Potential regulatory tools:

- Reduce maximum house size for single family zones
- Included attached garages in maximum house size. (incentive)

Additional Study requested:

- Reduce or eliminate minimum dwelling unit sizes (SFR and MFR)
 - Base maximum house size on the average of block.
-

Topic: Development Standards

Issue: Building Height

What we heard:

- Two story houses and additions out of character with some neighborhoods.
- Loss of privacy with neighboring two-story construction

How we currently regulate:

- Two-story homes allowed in all residential zones.
- 27' – 30' Ridge height in single family zones (RF, RE, RL)
- No ridge height limit in RM zones (2 story maximum)
- No height or maximum number of stories in RH.

Potential regulatory tools:

- Limit 2nd story floor area (percentage of ground, percentage of lot)
- Incentive for single story construction
- Increase 2nd story setbacks, add front and rear 2nd story setbacks
- Add maximum ridge height in RM zones.

Additional Study requested:

- Additional restrictions of 2-story structures in RL Zones (equal regulation vs. compatibility)
- Impact of vaulted ceilings

Topic: Development Standards

Issue: Massing/bulk

What we heard:

- Bulk and mass of new houses out of character
- Houses too close to property lines (rear, side)
- Concerns about mansionization

How we currently regulate:

- Front – 25' or average of block (all R zones)
- Rear – 20' all zones
- Side – All R zones have first and second story setbacks based on lot width

Potential regulatory tools:

- Increase rear setbacks in RF, RE, RL
- Add second story setbacks (front and rear)
- Additional setbacks for zoning district interfaces.

Additional Study Requested:

- Impact of additional setback requirements on design
 - Review of attached/front facing garages and side yard setbacks
-

Topic: Density

Issue: Zoning Districts

What we heard:

- Concerns about development in the RM3500 Zone
- More open space needed (on-site)
- Concerns about parking (not enough/people don't park in their garages)
- Need more affordable housing

How we currently regulate:

- PUDs allowable in all MF Zones
- Zoning Ordinance does not distinguish between sale and rental status
- Two car garage required for each dwelling
- Carports allowed only when required parking is met

Potential regulatory tools:

- Additional parking for large houses
- Parking based on bedroom count
- Allow carports
- Review modifications of development standards in the RM3500 Zone/provide incentives for preservation

Additional Study requested:

- Expansion of PD Zones, review process
- Prohibit lot consolidation in the RM3500 Zone

Topic: Compatibility

Issue: Design Guidelines

What we heard:

- Need better design review/authority
- Need less design review/authority (SF)
- New windows (vinyl) should not be allowed on older homes
- New development needs to fit within the neighborhood context

How we currently regulate:

- Single family dwellings design review limited to roof overhang, siding and roofing materials.
- Municipal Code allows full design review on MF development.
- City does not have design guidelines

Potential regulatory tools:

- Increase review authority over single family dwellings. (DRC or staff)
- Separate *design* review from *development* review
- Create separate design review body with design professionals
- Stronger review of garage placement/orientation
- Additional development standards or more review purview related to design (modulation, window placement, porches)

Additional Study requested:

- Design guidelines (but not mandated architectural styles)
 - Garage Placement options/incentives
 - Levels of design review based on size of addition/new houses (incentive)
 - Incentives for good design
 - Unintended consequences of over-regulating future significant designs.
-

Other issues:

- Review notification standards/requirements
- More training for Commissioners

Theme: Historic Preservation

What we heard:

- Preservation of neighborhood character is important
- 50-year window vs. pre-1940's
- City should encourage preservation
- Preservation should be initiated by property owner
- Create incentives for preservation instead of demolition
- Create different levels of designation/recognition
- HPC authority for design review of demo replacement homes.
- Street view and facades are primary...preserve/maintain street view
- Preserve anything built before [date]
- Code Enforcement for maintenance of older structures.
- Designate more districts.
- More education of public, realtors, developers
- Old vs. historic

How we currently regulate:

- Historic Preservation Ordinance provides criteria, process and regulations for designated landmarks and historic districts
- Mills Act Contracts available for all designated landmarks and district contributors
- Demolition ordinance requires review of homes built prior to 1940
- Zoning incentives available to encourage preservation of historic (non-designated) homes

Potential regulatory tools and work program:

- Complete Historic Resources Survey
- Establish different levels of designation
- Establish appropriate period for review (e.g. 50 years, pre-1940)
- Analysis of Mills Act Contract sustainability
- Explore use of City-initiated preservation tools such as historic preservation overlay zones (HPOZ), Planned Development zones, and designation of historic districts.
- Update of Historic Preservation Ordinance, including purview of Historic Preservation Commission
- Old Town Design Guidelines

Considerations:

- Community-wide education component should be at forefront of any actions taken by the City
- Historic Preservation decisions have far reaching implications for property owners
- Decisions should be based on thorough analysis and discussion
- Potential contributing homes need protection while discussion occurs (50 years, 6L and higher).
- Moratorium will need to be extended and/or modified to allow for appropriate discussion including a review of the existing demolition ordinance.