

# Ad Hoc Meeting on Residential Family (RS) Zoning La Jolla Community Planning Association

## DRAFT MINUTES

Monday, 15 November 2015

La Jolla Recreation Center  
615 Prospect Street  
5:30 – 7:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Angeles Leira, Eric Lindebak, Sharon Wampler (Chair)  
Jim Ragsdale, Diane Kane

Committee Members Absent: Glen Rasmussen

### 1. Review and Approval of Minutes

S. Wampler indicated that the following minutes were open for review and approval:

28 September 2015 – Meeting 5

12 October 2015 – Meeting 6

J. Ragsdale indicated he had not had the opportunity to review the minutes.

Gale Forbes indicated that the abbreviations in the minutes were a problem for some.

Action: Unapproved minutes will be redistributed and Committee Members to send comments or corrections to G. Rasmussen.

### 2. Chair Report

A. Feedback via phone or email – nothing substantial.  
Terrance Underwood – Inquired about the efforts of the Committee.

### 3. Presentations and Discussions

A. D. Kane presented a PowerPoint case study on the La Jolla “Hillside Historic District” that documented many aspects of what defines the character and scale of a neighborhood.

These features included:

Tree-lined, curvilinear, narrow streets

Rural quality with steep hillsides

Natural and designed landscape features

Panoramic views

Eclectic architectural styles designed by Master Architects and Landscape Architects

Technical Evaluation included:

Topography

Climate

Inventory of Parcels including:

Ownership

Lot Size and Home Size

Dates of Home Construction

Architectural Styles

FAR Analysis

Review of historic patterns of arrangement (staggered development) of homes on parcels and their relationship to one another including setbacks and proximity of living quarters and accessory structures.

Discussion following D. Kane Presentation:

Ione Stiegler - Shores (planning process) is a mess. You get what your neighbor has.

No FAR

I. Stiegler is concerned with presentation:

Over generalizes that what happens in Shores is typical in the rest of La Jolla

Cannot say lack of FAR is applicable to the rest of La Jolla

A. Lieras – Major challenges to developments today with the FAR – which is a “new” regulations that came into approx. 40 years ago is that the it does not address staggered setbacks, maintaining greenery.

D. Kane – In addition – maximum height limits have also caused a prescriptive reaction to the design of new structures.

A. Lieras – There is a big difference between what people who are speculating and marketing a property will do vs. folks who are going to actually live at the location (with respect to scale and character). A key factor is how the homeowner views the future marketing of a property.

J. Lacava – to supplement to what Ione indicated – FAR is a problem, but Shores doesn't have a prescriptive FAR and they still have a problem. Another reason people build bigger because if they don't do it now (or at one time), it will be more expensive to add more square footage later.

A. Lieras – Based on what Diane has presented for Coastal Projects, the problem is consistency with scale and character. Standardization has not provided the way to produce projects with scale and character of the neighborhood. Designers are coming in at the end of their design process (for Coastal Reviews) with many exhibits that must be revised to address scale and character.

G. Forbes – Please note, treating property as a piggy bank is pejorative. Nothing wrong with that. Especially if the process results in an old structure being replaced by a newer project for the neighborhood.

B. A. Lieras presented a summary of 6 options for language and baseline requirements that could be adopted as a threshold to allowing permits in the Coastal Zone versus going through the Coastal Development Permit process. The current threshold of retaining 50% of the structure is not working to preserve community scale and character as the City of San Diego has interpreted 50% of the structure to mean only studs and beams. Personally (Lieras) does not believe this meets the original intent and is still a problem.

City of San Diego is considering adoption of language to revise the requirements for projects being exempted from a Coastal Development Permit. This may be a way to avoid some of the problems we've seen to-date. The City of San Diego needs simple and clean language to keep the process from being complicated and allow the permit process to move along as quickly as possible.

Excerpt from draft (2010) ***City of San Diego Categorical Exclusion, Coastal Development – Excluded from Obtaining a Coastal Development Permit***

*The structure height of the single dwelling unit, or the addition or alteration of the single dwelling unit, does not exceed 90% of the maximum structure height permitted by the base zone or overlay zone, whichever is lowest.*

*The gross floor area of the single dwelling unit, or the combined gross floor area of the existing single dwelling unit and the addition or alteration, does not exceed 80 percent of the maximum permitted floor area ratio allowed by the zone and the second story shall not exceed 40 percent of 80 percent of the maximum permitted gross floor area.*

The proposals for consideration put forth by Leiras are as follows (only one of these options would be put forth as an option to replace the City of San Diego's proposed language from the update (indicated in italics above). Please reference the PDF of the handout provided by Lieras for more detailed information regarding each of the subject zones:

Alternatives A. – C. would be for either additions to or complete tear-downs and re-builds, where D. – E. would be considered only for additions only.

**ALTERNATIVE A:** Any development with FAR 80% of Maximum FAR of zone and height of 90% of maximum allowed.

**ALTERNATIVE B:** Any development with FAR 80% of Maximum FAR of zone and height of 80% of maximum allowed.

**ALTERNATIVE C:** Any development with FAR of 70% of Maximum FAR of zone and height of 70% of maximum allowed.

**ALTERNATIVE D:** Any development that ADDS no more than 20% of the Maximum FAR of the zone and height of 80% of the maximum allowed.

**ALTERNATIVE E:** Any development that ADDS no more than 30% of the Maximum FAR of the zone and height of 80% of the maximum allowed.

**ALTERNATIVE F:** Any development that ADDS no more than 50% of Maximum FAR allowed provided the total sq. footage does not exceed FAR by maximum allowed by zone. Height allowed is 80% of maximum allowed.

Leiras believes that Alternative C. is moderate enough to not be so huge and believes it would be the best, but it does not do one thing – address SCALE and CHARACTER. These options only deal with numbers.

E. Lindebak provides quick volumetric studies based on then above alternatives for scale and bulk references. Although this was not presented at the meeting due to software issues with the presentation, the information is provided herein.

Stiegler – Recalled that she noted one thing that was promised at the beginning of this group's meetings was that this Committee was not going to be anti-second story. This was stated at the beginning. Alternative C (70%/70%) does not allow for a second floor.

Leiras – if you want higher than 70% go for a Coastal Zone Permit. We need to establish a baseline to establish a moderate scale – not a new zone.

Stiegler – Baseline is a goal post and going to 70% (21' height) will result in modern boxes and not the character we want. The question you need to study is what are the unintended consequences? Look at Mission Beach – you the same box repeated hundreds of times over. (She) would hate to see a cookie cutter solution being built everywhere in La Jolla. (She) wants a code to promote pitched roofs.

Cane – Everything you have now is flexible and people are bulking out.

Stiegler – Perhaps allowing accessory structure under a certain height with a flat roof would be okay.

Lieras – If you do an addition, it sets the stage for the architecture of the addition to be in keeping more with the existing house which may be better for the neighborhood.

Stiegler – Can D, E and F be only on 2<sup>nd</sup> floors or can they be both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor additions?

Lieras – no, intent is they could be 1 or 2 story additions.

Stiegler – Cannot do a 3 floor home in 27'

Tim Golba – Concerned that the language discussed does not address character. He cited the City of Coronado's residential zoning code and have no Coastal Development Code. They start out with a very low base FAR (.5) and have a points system. When you earn points, you can up your FAR to .6 or .65 max. There are approximately 30.40 different items which you can earn points including: landscape, massing, and architectural details/character. These items are all processed through staff and the onus is on the homeowner to prove the points have been earned.

Wampler – The Committee looked at Coronado as one of our case studies. We dealing with the City of San Diego. Would the City be able to or would they be open to a plan such as Coronado's?

Kane – we should review their matrix.

Dave Ish – would this be applied as an overlay zone for a particular area?

Golba – Neighborhood character is defined as the block and is block specific. Tim is willing to assist the Committee in drafting a proposal.

Lieras – Would this overlay apply to other areas or zones in the City.

Golba – No, this would be a special category for La Jolla.

Lacava – wants to be clear that the City doesn't do what smaller Cities are doing. We can get an overlay zone that bridges with plans. The Categorical Exemption is on the table now.

Lieras – the State identifies that our neighborhood character is part of planning policies and should be considered when implementing policy. These policies go beyond natural and enter urban.

Wampler – Had discussed with Bob Vacchi in September that replacing the 50% rule with the 80%/90% Categorical Exclusion (CE) language, or a revision thereof, could be an option and understood that the City was open to this. However, the October 1 #10 update of the Land Development Code (LDC) contains both the 50% rule and draft CE language. This is a problem.

Lacava – Updates are done on a yearly basis and are a bookkeeping exercise, however this item sounds like policy not clean-up. When inquiring about this he was told that the City employee was "told to put it in". The number 10 update will most likely go before the Planning Commission in January and then on to the City Council in February or March; after which, it would go to the Coastal Commission and could be here for a year and it would be 2017 before it would be adopted.

Stieger – would support (Coronado process for La Jolla) if we could get an increase for enclosed 2-car garages and negative points for enclosed porches.

Kane – would like to time to review the Coronado policy.

Lieres – we need a tailored ordinance for La Jolla. An overlay that deals with bonuses may help arrive at a good threshold.

Lacava – the Exemption language can get done faster, then follow up with an overlay zone.

Wampler – Back in 1997 and 2010 when CE language was held up at the CA Coastal Commission (CCC), the city development services office (DSD) office didn't have capability at that time to supply requested GIS mapping.

Lacava – the latest version of the number 10 update still includes the 50% language. Should consider asking the City to withdraw Categorical Exclusion from the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment?

Kane – Motion to remove Categorical Exemption and similar policies from the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment so it can have full review of LJCPA of La Jolla and other reviewing bodies.

Lieres – Seconds the motion.

Discussion:

Ragsdale – it's taken so long if it's pulled how long will it take to come back? May be too late if we wait much longer.

Lacava – recommends waiting and trying to clarify with the city why both exemptions are in there (50% rule and CE).

Motion is tabled.

NEXT MEETING 14 DECEMBER 2015