



CITY OF PACIFIC GROVE
300 Forest Avenue, Pacific Grove, California 93950

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Brodeur, Community and Economic Development Director

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2016

SUBJECT: Big Lot Mergers and resulting Mansionization Code Modifications

CEQA STATUS A Negative Declaration will need to be completed and approved before the Commission can take action.

RECOMMENDATION

Offer staff a conceptual recommendation. Suggested actions are articulated for discussion purposes only. Is staff heading in the right direction?

Along Ocean View Boulevard, create a maximum lot size to minimize lot mergers that seek to build homes that are out of character with the existing housing stock in the neighborhood. Establish a maximum lot size of 13,000 square feet or a maximum of two lots, whichever is less.

Along Ocean View Boulevard, create a second floor massing metric which would require that any proposed home over 3,250 square feet would restrict the second floor to 65-75% of the gross ground floor square footage.

Also, discuss and consider if additional side yard setbacks on the upper floor are necessary in addition to the restricted upper floor square footage to create ocean view corridors for homes behind Ocean View Boulevard.

DISCUSSION

The primary subject of concern is that lot mergers along Ocean View from Sea Palm and Ocean View to Asilomar and Ocean View should be controlled in some manner to avoid the mansionization of Pacific Grove's oceanfront boulevard. Should we consider all of Ocean View Boulevard from the City limits with Monterey or just this portion which has been the most problematic? Currently, the maximum size of a home is specifically restricted according to the size of the lot. The City spent seven years creating the extensive lot size to house size matrix contained in the Zoning Code. Upon review of the matrix, it is clear that as the lot gets bigger, the percentage of allowed home square footage gets smaller and that seems to be working for the most part. Staff feels that the matrix is well-founded and need not be changed.

When the existing lots along Ocean View Boulevard are merged together, the results are a new lot and a home that are out-of-character with the scale of the existing neighborhood. Merging two or more lots together is not a discretionary action approved by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator does not have discretionary review, meaning he/she cannot deny the merger if the lots are of proper size and width. Therefore in order to protect neighborhood compatibility, a more definitive approach would be needed to establish a maximum lot size along this section of Ocean View Boulevard. The maximum

would be established by reviewing the size of every current lot of record and setting the maximum at a size minimally larger than the largest lot.

The lot sizes along the Asilomar to Sea Palm section range from 3,256 to 12,043 square feet. Only 5 lots are over 10,000 square feet out of the 48 lots. A good maximum lot size *could be established at 13,000* square feet which would equate to a maximum home size of 4,355 square feet. The Zoning Administrator could then deny any lot merger that produces a new parcel larger than 13,000 square feet.

As an alternative to creating a maximum lot size along this section of Ocean View Boulevard, the Commission could simply establish a maximum home size in the Asilomar to Sea Palm section. This might prove to be a more wholesome approach because someone could want to combine two lots for more than 13,000 square feet because they want a pool or tennis court instead of additional home size. The maximum house size *could be established at 4,355 square feet*.

Along Ocean View Boulevard, a home over 4,000 square feet is still a pretty large home in comparison to the other homes in this section. Therefore another measure to reduce the bulk and massing of a 4,000 square foot home would be useful. The question is when does a home reach the BIG threshold where a simple second floor massing metric could be applied? The answer is simple if we look at the average home size permitted in this section. The average lot size is a bit bigger than 7,000 square feet, so if we use that as the median lot size the average home size permitted by Code is 3,235 square feet. We could easily state that *any home over 3,250 square feet would need to employ a second story massing metric*.

To avoid serious complexity in articulating allowable second floor mass, staff would suggest that the metric should be as simple as the “second floor cannot exceed between 65 - 75% or the gross ground floor square footage”.

CEQA STATUS

Categorically Exempt CEQA Guidelines Sec 15305 (Class 5-Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Mark Brodeur
Community and Economic Development Director