



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 18, 2017

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Planning Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Adoption Of Resolution For Infill Design Guidelines For The Architectural Board Of Review And Historic Landmarks Commission

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City Of Santa Barbara to Approve the Addition of Infill Guidelines to the General Design Guidelines and Meeting Procedures for the Historic Landmarks Commission and Architectural Board of Review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) and Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) are in need of updated design guidelines relevant for multi-unit, mixed-use, and larger nonresidential projects proposed as infill development or redevelopment, including Average Unit-size Density (AUD) Incentive Program projects. The ABR and HLC drafted the proposed Infill Design Guidelines based on experience in reviewing these types of applications, and they recommend that Council approve them. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft guidelines and was divided on Council's direction to supplement the Infill Design Guidelines with guidelines regarding unit configuration and parking requirements for AUD Incentive Program projects. Staff suggests that these issues are outside the normal purview of design review and are more appropriately addressed by amending the Zoning Ordinance to provide regulatory certainty for project applicants. The Planning Commission does not support the proposal to require Planning Commission comments to the ABR or HLC on AUD Incentive Program projects with five or more dwelling units because the Commission believes that comments alone do not carry enough weight.

DISCUSSION:

Background

The recent influx of larger rental housing projects proposed under the Average Unit-Size Density (AUD) Incentive Program has highlighted the challenge for design review

boards to review higher-density projects that push the envelope on acceptable size of buildings in established, under-developed neighborhoods. Clearer direction to project applicants is needed on acceptable design techniques for higher-density projects that are compatible in size, bulk, and scale with surrounding development, to ensure new buildings fit into their respective neighborhoods.

The City has a limited set of adopted design review guidelines for use by the ABR specifically targeted to commercial and multi-unit residential projects. The HLC has no such guidelines addressing these specific types of projects. The proposed Infill Design Guidelines are intended to address this need. The proposed guidelines would be applicable to projects proposed under the AUD Incentive Program, and other large multi-unit residential, mixed-use, and nonresidential buildings proposed as redevelopment or new development on vacant sites. The proposed guidelines are intended to relate to and inform the Project Compatibility Criteria used by the ABR and HLC and provide more specific direction to design review bodies and applicants to achieve compatibility in an existing neighborhood.

Development of the Infill Design Guidelines

Planning staff has been working since 2014 to develop guidelines for multi-residential and mixed-use projects. Housing Element Implementation Action H16.8 calls for Multi-Family Design Guidelines to address unit size; setbacks; open space; landscaping; building size, bulk, and scale; and site planning. In 2015, the Planning Commission participated in joint subcommittee meetings with the ABR and HLC to develop approaches and options for Council to consider in crafting new multi-residential and mixed-use project design guidelines, including hiring a consultant to assist. With an estimated cost of \$175,000 to complete the project, those initial efforts with the larger scope of work were halted due to the lack of City financial resources.

The most recent effort to create design guidelines began late in 2016 in response to concerns about large AUD Incentive Program projects and a lack of applicable design guidelines. The HLC took the lead in 2016, creating its own subcommittee and initiating discussions of possible new design guidelines in response to large, high-density projects being proposed within El Pueblo Viejo (EPV) Landmark District. Soon after, staff began similar efforts with the ABR, with the goal of eventually reconciling the two work efforts. The proposed guidelines are identical for the HLC and ABR, providing consistency citywide. The organization of the proposed Infill Design Guidelines evolved to a menu approach that lists design techniques and options for various aspects of project design, and common challenges faced in achieving project compatibility. Projects would be reviewed against the most applicable guidelines and would not necessarily be expected to meet every guideline.

Staff sent the draft guidelines to the American Institute of Architects Santa Barbara (AIA) and later met with AIA representatives. Their comments were generally positive in that the guidelines help explain the term “compatible”; however, they had some

concerns about the guidelines being too restrictive, too rigid, and in some cases potentially reducing incentives offered by the AUD Incentive Program.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft guidelines on February 16, 2017 and believed that they are a step in the right direction. The Planning Commission offered suggestions on wording and clarifications, and commented that the guideline language should more strongly emphasize the objective of empowering design review boards to address neighborhood compatibility (Attachment 1 – Planning Commission minutes).

On February 27, 2017, staff presented draft guidelines to the ABR that had been revised to respond to the comments of the Planning Commission, various interested groups, and the public. The ABR accepted the revisions and recommended Council adoption (Attachment 2 – ABR minutes).

On March 17, 2017, staff presented the revised draft guidelines to the HLC, and the HLC recommended Council adoption (Attachment 3 – HLC minutes).

Guideline Organization and Content

The proposed Infill Design Guidelines will be inserted into the existing ABR and HLC General Design Guidelines and Meeting Procedures documents, and include the following major components:

- New goals are added to the existing list of goals that define the major concerns and objectives of the review process (Inside Cover).
- The full text of the Project Compatibility Criteria are added to the “Guidelines Interpretation and Application” section (Introduction).
- A new paragraph describes how projects must not only comply with Zoning Ordinance standards, but must also be consistent with the Project Compatibility Criteria (Part I).
- The term “compatibility” is defined for the context in which it is used (Part I).
- The introduction to the section on the AUD Incentive Program explains the necessity to balance the objectives of that program while maintaining the goal of achieving neighborhood compatibility (Part I).
- New guidelines sections are inserted in Part I, Architectural Design Guidelines, organized by topics of:
 - Building Design, Height, and Massing
 - Site Planning for Open Space and Landscaping
 - Livability and Privacy
 - Historic Resources
- Each guidelines section is preceded by introductory language intended to explain and give context to the guidelines in that section. Each introduction explains that the

group of individual guidelines offers a list of specific design options to achieve consistency with the Project Compatibility Criteria (Part I).

SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR AUD INCENTIVE PROGRAM PROJECTS – RESIDENTIAL UNIT CONFIGURATION AND PARKING:

On December 13, 2016, Council directed staff to draft, for the Planning Commission's consideration, additional guidelines specifically applicable to AUD Incentive Program projects regarding the number of potential occupants of these developments, and potential related impacts to parking in surrounding neighborhoods. Specifically, Council asked the Planning Commission to consider incorporating the following into the proposed Infill Design Guidelines: 1) limit each dwelling unit to a maximum of two bathrooms; 2) require that projects of five or more units be sent to the Planning Commission for comments; and 3) require two parking spaces for dwelling units with three or more bedrooms. These supplemental AUD Incentive Program guidelines were not presented to or discussed with the ABR or HLC (Attachment 4).

There was no consensus (by 3/3/1 vote) among the Planning Commission on the supplemental AUD Incentive Program guidelines. The Planning Commissioners who were not in favor of including the supplemental guidelines as a part of the draft Infill Design Guidelines commented that these issues are best addressed with an ordinance amendment rather than design guidelines, suggested waiting to see the results of the Housing Task Force's work, and expressed concerns about consistency with Housing Element policies. The Planning Commissioners who were in favor of including the supplemental guidelines as a part of the draft Infill Design Guidelines commented that they would be useful as an interim tool for the design review bodies.

Staff agrees that the above issues should be addressed in some form. However, staff has concerns about the implementation of standards regulating the number of bathrooms, interior unit configurations, and the number of required parking spaces as design guidelines. The types of guidelines that "may" require a maximum limit on number of bathrooms or "may" require additional parking spaces are problematic since they do not provide regulatory certainty for applicants when designing projects. An amendment to the AUD Incentive Program ordinance may be a more appropriate method to address these concerns, and the Housing Task Force is considering related amendments. Staff recommends that the above issues be considered together with any other ordinance amendments recommended by the Housing Task Force rather than appended to the proposed Infill Design Guidelines.

Council also requested that the Planning Commission consider a requirement that all AUD Incentive Program projects proposing five or more dwelling units be sent to the Planning Commission for comments. The Planning Commission commented unanimously that it does not wish to review these smaller AUD projects because the Commission believes

that comments alone do not carry enough weight. If AUD Incentive Program projects are referred to the Planning Commission, it prefers to have decision-making authority.

CONCLUSION:

Planning staff has been working since 2014 to develop guidelines for multi-residential and mixed use projects.

The most recent effort to create design guidelines began late in 2016 in response to continuing concerns about large AUD Incentive Program projects and a lack of applicable design guidelines. Planning staff took advantage of the momentum, and the generous time commitment of the HLC and ABR volunteer representatives, to develop the proposed design guidelines without the assistance of a professional consultant. This effort is considered an interim step to give the design review boards some immediate tools to achieve compatible infill development in existing neighborhoods. Additional graphics, renderings, or photos to provide visual guides is still recommended to supplement the proposed Infill Design Guidelines as part of a future work effort.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Planning Commission minutes February 16, 2017
 2. Architectural Board of Review minutes February 27, 2017
 3. Historic Landmarks Commission minutes March 17, 2017
 4. Draft Supplemental Guidelines for AUD Incentive Program Projects – Residential Unit Configuration and Parking

*Hard copies of these documents are available at the City Clerk's Office and are also available from the Planning Division at 630 Garden Street.

PREPARED BY: Jaime Limón, Senior Planner, Design Review Supervisor

SUBMITTED BY: George Buell, Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

IV. DISCUSSION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 1:06 P.M.

REVIEW AND COMMENT ON PROPOSED INFILL DESIGN GUIDELINES TO BE USED BY THE ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW AND THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

The proposed design guidelines are applicable to projects proposed under the Average Unit Size Density Incentive program (AUD), but are also applicable to other large multi-unit residential, mixed use, and commercial buildings proposed as redevelopment, or new development on vacant sites, in areas of the City where compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood is an important consideration. The proposed Infill Design Guidelines will be inserted into the existing ABR and HLC General Design Guidelines & Meeting Procedures documents. The Planning Commission will also consider supplemental design guidelines for AUD projects related to configuration of dwelling units and provision of additional parking spaces for larger units, and possible Planning Commission review and comment on AUD projects proposing five or more dwelling units. Staff is requesting comments to the ABR, HLC, and Council on the proposed design guidelines.

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Contact: Tony Boughman, Assistant Planner

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Tony Boughman, Assistant Planner, gave the Staff presentation. Jaime Limon, Senior Planner, was available to answer any questions.

Chair Higgins opened the public hearing at 1:29 P.M.

The following people provided comment:

1. Lindsey Baker, Co-President, League of Women Voters, submitted written comments in support of the proposed design guidelines.
2. Alex Pujo, stated that proposed Historic Resources guideline number nine on page 7: eaves and ridge lines should be “compatible” rather than “consistent”, therefore not have to be the same. He spoke in support of the AUD program incentive for one parking space per dwelling, and opposed to the supplemental AUD guideline to provide additional parking.
3. Lisa Plowman, Coastal Housing Coalition, submitted written comments and ceded her time to Detlev Peikert.
4. Detlev Peikert submitted written comments and said that the guidelines need more study. He suggested the use of “compatible” rather than “consistent” to adhere to their meanings and provided examples.
5. Christine Newhauser submitted written comments and asked that more parking be required and adequate green space.

Planning Commission Minutes
February 16, 2017

6. Ellen Bildsten, AIA, will provide comments and recommendations to staff. The word “should” is too prescriptive, and suggested “could.”
7. Jan Hochhauser supports the comments made by Mr. Pujo and Mr. Peikert, and advocated for more involvement by the Planning Commission in AUD projects, citing his experience with his project at 800 Santa Barbara Street.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:46 P.M.

Staff asked the Commission to comment on the following four questions:

Question No. 1:

Do the guidelines adequately address the design concerns often expressed by members of the public and neighbors of proposed infill development projects?

Commissioners were evenly divided with three in agreement (Jordan, Lodge, Wiscomb) and three that were not (Campanella, Higgins, Schwartz).

Commissioners in support of the guidelines commented that though there were areas that could use additional clarification, such as use of “compatible” and “consistent” and “livability”, the guidelines at least provided the design review boards with a tool they presently do not have.

Commissioners who did not agree expressed concern with the absence of updated Haley/Milpas Design Guidelines. Some Commissioners thought that the suggested supplemental AUD guidelines regarding bathroom limitations and parking should be addressed with an ordinance amendment.

Question No. 2:

Do the guidelines provide the needed tools to the ABR and HLC to ensure compatible projects while advancing the objectives of the AUD Program?

Commissioners were split with three in agreement (Campanella, Higgins, and Lodge) stating that it was a step in the right direction, but too soon to tell if it would work.

Two Commissioners (Schwartz, Wiscomb) commented that there was not enough ‘teeth’ in the guidelines for the design review boards to address compatibility. Commissioner Jordan could not comment, stating that the language could be stronger and should also include more language in the last two sections (Livability and Privacy, and Historic Resources) to explain why those guidelines sections are important. The guidelines related to Historic Resources should include the physical consequences on loss of sunlight, loss of air, or loss of views that effect historical resource buildings.

Question No. 3

Is the approach of having the ABR and HLC consider bathroom limitations, unit configuration, and the potential to require additional parking a reasonable application of design guidelines?

Commissioners were evenly divided with three in agreement (Jordan, Lodge, and Wiscomb) and three that were not (Campanella, Higgins, Schwartz).

Commissioners in support of the guidelines stated that the guidelines could be overwritten by an ordinance amendment in the future, but until the Housing Task Force completes its work, this provides a tool for the design review boards on an interim basis.

Commissioners who did not agree had varied responses ranging from wanting to see the issues addressed by the supplemental AUD guidelines reviewed at the Task Force level first, while one Commissioner was not convinced that the guidelines are consistent with the General Plan.

Straw Poll: Is the approach of having the ABR and HLC consider bathroom limitations a reasonable application of design guidelines?

Ayes: 3 Noes: 3 (Campanella, Higgins, Schwartz)

Commissioners in support commented that guidelines could be an interim measure while the AUD program is under review.

Question No. 4:

Does the Planning Commission wish to review and provide comments to the ABR and HLC on all AUD projects proposing five or more units?

The Commission was unanimous in commenting “no” on providing comments for a small number of units. Commissioners stated that it was not an effective use of the Planning Commission’s time to provide comments only and, if AUD projects were referred to them, they would prefer to have decision-making authority.

Overall, the Commission was appreciative of the work done by the design review boards. Ms. Brooke took a moment to acknowledge the word of Jaime Limon and Tony Boughman who have worked in a short time and limited budget on these drafts.

DISCUSSION ITEM**1. CITYWIDE****(3:10)**

Assessor's Parcel Number: 099-MSC-0PD
Application Number: MST2017-00059
Owner: City of Santa Barbara
Applicant: Planning Division

(Infill Design Guidelines to be inserted into existing ABR General Design Guidelines & Meeting Procedures.)

Recommendation to the City Council for adoption of proposed guidelines.

Actual time: 3:38 p.m.

Present: Tony Boughman, Assistant Planner, City of Santa Barbara; Jaime Limón, Senior Planner, City of Santa Barbara

Straw vote: How many Board Members are ready to release the document as presented? 5/0 Passed

Discussion was held, the Board made two minor edits and approved the Infill Design Guideline to move forward.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTION ITEM**1. CITYWIDE**

(1:15) Assessor's Parcel Number: 099-MSC-0PD
 Application Number: MST2017-00059
 Owner: City of Santa Barbara
 Applicant: Planning Division

(Infill Design Guidelines to be inserted into existing HLC General Design Guidelines & Meeting Procedures.)

(Recommendation to the City Council for adoption of proposed guidelines.)

Actual time: 1:30 p.m.

Present: Jaime Limón, Senior Planner and Tony Boughman, Assistant Planner, City of Santa Barbara

Public comment opened at 1:45 p.m.

1. Kellam de Forest spoke in support of the guidelines and asked about the definition for the term "adjacent."
2. Greg Reitz stated that Floor-to-Lot Area Ratio (FAR) is not well defined, and he emphasized the importance of private open space on balconies; the guidelines seem to favor open space on the ground floor.
3. Correspondence from Virginia Rehling was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 1:53 p.m.

Motion: Recommend to City Council the adoption of the proposed guidelines, with comment:

1. The Historic Landmarks Commission intends that the guidelines will always be interpreted with reference to the power and duty of the Historic Landmarks Commission under City Charter Section 817.

Action: Mahan/Drury, 7/0/0. (Murray absent.) Motion carried.

Additional comments:

1. The Commission requested a method of notification to the HLC for projects involving adjacent historic resources. The Urban Historian will provide written recommendations for such projects to the Architectural Board of Review, and the HLC will be copied on this memoranda and notified of the outcome.
2. Chair La Voie expressed concern about staff approvals of porches and recommended that these appear as Consent agenda items. Staff responded that this would be addressed in a future review of design guidelines.

Excerpt from Planning Commission staff report of staff's draft Average Unit Size Density Incentive Program (AUD) guidelines for unit configuration and parking presented to the Planning Commission on February 16, 2017 below:

The AUD program incentives allow higher residential densities in some areas of the City and reduced parking requirements. The program is based upon the average unit size, which can allow a variety of unit sizes, regardless of bedroom count.

1. *Units with three or more bedrooms should be configured to encourage shared use of all areas of the unit, rather than dormitory style configurations which may lead towards inadequate parking for the number of occupants, and negative impacts on the livability of the project and neighborhood. To address these concerns, the ABR/HLC may request design adjustments to address the ratio of bedrooms to bathrooms, the total number of bathrooms within the units, and overall configuration of the units to facilitate occupancy by a single household instead of a number of individuals or multiple households.*
2. *Larger units with more bathrooms can facilitate additional occupants and may have negative impacts on the livability of the project and neighborhood. A limitation in the number of bathrooms to two (2) per unit may be considered.*
3. *Depending on the size and configuration of units within the project, a project may benefit if units with three (3) or more bedrooms are provided two (2) or more parking spaces. Tandem or stacked parking configurations can be acceptable under certain conditions, subject to Transportation Planning Division approval.*

Staff requests that the Planning Commission review the draft Infill Design Guidelines and offer comments to the HLC and ABR. Suggested comment areas are:

- 1) Do the guidelines adequately address the design concerns often expressed by members of the public and neighbors of proposed infill development projects?
- 2) Do the guidelines provide the needed tools to the ABR and HLC to ensure compatible projects while advancing the objectives of the AUD Program?
- 3) Is the approach of having the ABR and HLC consider bathroom limitations, unit configuration, and the potential to require additional parking a reasonable application of design guidelines?
- 3a) If so, do the supplemental guidelines regarding unit configuration, bathroom limitations and additional parking adequately address concerns related to residential density and parking impacts to neighborhoods?
- 4) Does the Planning Commission wish to review and provide comments to the ABR or HLC on all AUD projects proposing five or more units?