

From: [Bill Lippert](#)
To: [RDG Update](#)
Subject: Residential Guidelines comments
Date: Sunday, January 22, 2023 6:17:11 PM

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I have lived on Maria Avenue in the Beryl Heights neighborhood for nearly 40 years, and have three comments regarding the proposed guidelines:

1. Most of our lots are 40 ft wide. Because of this, curb cuts need to be no more than 16 ft wide, as when you add 7 ft to this for the curb slope, each lot will lose up to 23 ft of parking curb. This still leaves 17 ft of street curb in which to park a car per lot, allowing for a smaller car to park. I believe the wording now is something like "no street parking spot shall be lost due to curb cuts", or something like that. As it used to be, new construction would have an 18 ft driveway and curb cut, and we would lose a parking spot whenever a new home was built. Street parking needs to be preserved!
2. This has to do with second story setbacks. As I remember, many years ago, the second story setback requirement in R1 zones came about due to the feeling that one was driving through a "tunnel" with large full second story homes being built on the narrow streets of the Avenues. This "tunnel" effect really isn't a concern in wider streets like those in Beryl Heights, yet the restrictions were added to ALL R1 lots due to this problem that exists only on the "Avenues." There are several homes on our street that are full 2nd story from the front, and there is no "tunnel" effect. As long as the homes meet the 25 ft setback requirement, then there should be no need to require a second story setback, except on the narrow streets of the Avenues. (and any other R1 area that has narrow streets)
3. I believe that you are proposing that front garages on homes have separate doors, as this is more attractive. I agree that they are more attractive. However, they are much harder to navigate. We have a house on our block, and the owner has said that it is much harder for them to put their cars in the garage, and they wished that the house had only one double garage door. This could also be a problem for handicapped people, who might need to park their car in the middle of the garage so as to make it possible to get a wheelchair out or even to navigate a handicapped walker.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Bill Lippert

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Bill Lippert](#)
To: [RDG Update](#)
Subject: Residential Guideline comment
Date: Monday, January 23, 2023 12:59:24 PM

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I have one additional comment that I forgot to add to my previous email.

Beryl Heights has many homes with ocean views. Although we do not have a view protection ordinance, it would be appreciated if the RI Residential Guidelines for Beryl Heights stated that trees should be planted that will grow no taller than 30 ft., thus preserving views. The trees can have wide canopies to make up for the height that is lost.

Thank you,
Bill Lippert

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Colin](#)
To: [RDG Update](#)
Subject: Design Guideline Comments
Date: Friday, February 17, 2023 2:10:06 PM

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Good Afternoon: I'd like to make the following comments and recommendations with respect to the City's design guidelines as they apply to the R1-A district.

1. With respect to balconies extending into the 25 feet front yard setback, from the second floor of the tall & skinny structures, if the builder or owner of the home on these 25' X 100' lots has already encroached into the front yard setback by extending the second floor 20 feet from the front property line, no balcony on that second floor should be allowed to further encroach another five feet towards the front property line.
2. Any balcony on the second floor of a tall & skinny house should not encroach into a 6 feet side yard setback. This increases the current side yard setback from 5 feet to 6 feet. These homes are too close to each other already.
3. The overall size and dimension of a structure in the R1-A district shall be required to be compatible with the existing homes in the area of the new construction, with 750 feet from the site of the new or remodeled structure.

Stevan Colin



City of Redondo Beach
415 Diamond Street
Redondo Beach, CA 90277 .
20 March, 2023 revision

Tom Wooge
[REDACTED]
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Re: Redondo Beach Objective Residential Standards
Character Area Design Guide Update for TRW Tract

Dear City Planning Commission,

About the turn of the millennium, the City of Redondo Beach spent over \$80,000 on consultants to gather public input at workshops to develop residential design guidelines, producing a code that was word-for-word, diagram-for-diagram, identical to the City of West Hollywood's -which has since abandoned it to allow improved design quality. The generic standards were slathered over Redondo's neighborhoods regardless of appropriate needs and should never have been applied to the TRW Tract.

The vacant TRW-adjacent Tract was subdivided during World War II for factory worker housing adjacent to major aviation companies. In the shadow of massive 100-ft high manufacturing buildings, the houses are small, minimum "*cracker boxes*", approx. 800sf up to 1,000sf for 3-bedrooms, and devoid of "style". The lots on former grazing land are relatively large, typically 55-ft wide x 110-ft deep for over 6,000sf. With ever-rising land prices and housing scarcity, the value of these parcels approaches \$2 million today; though original houses remain as obsolete "*scrappers*" with assessed value of the improvements as only \$30 thousand. The premise that the old is somehow superior to the new and should govern style may apply in more "charming" neighborhoods of South Redondo Beach but would tragically limit quality of the TRW Tract's future.

The notion that new contemporary additions and homes should mimic the limited scale and banal features of the remaining factory houses is unfortunate; yet this is just what the proposed change from design guidelines to "Objective Residential Standards" state as their goal to require. Meanwhile, more onerous "character guidelines" are proposed:



TRW Tract street with TRW/Northrop Grumman manufacturing buildings beyond

Specific TRW-Tract Design Guidelines

1. Roof Design

"Roofs should be sloped" is a quaint old fashioned foreign visible shape for shedding excessive snow loads, not in keeping with Southern California's functional requirements to act as a horizontal sun-visor. Simply stated: "if one places one's hand above one's eyes to improve a view, then the house should do similar in a horizontal gesture of functionality".

The width of eave boards, if any, should be per structural requirements to support or clad the overhang, not to match an arbitrarily imposed bureaucratic criterion.

Roof material should be weather-tight, durable, energy conserving, and allow high quality & high performing materials such as architectural metal or flat reflective membrane material. To arbitrarily require shingles-for-all is dysfunctional for low slopes and contrary to good design.

2. Siding Materials

To require any siding is like something out of a black-and-white western movie set,

not conducive to an honest expression of contemporary building materials and methods. Public comment has pointed out the ridiculous transient fashions of board-and-batten revival. Any arbitrary design requirement in this aspect of a house encourages perpetual mediocrity. Notable architectural examples in the TRW Tract today are panelized exterior expression or linear corrugated material which would be discouraged under the proposed restrictions.

The notion that additions should be encouraged to match existing siding material, even if practical in the future, could discourage any architectural design improvement or practical step-by-step upgrade of a property. A repetition of self-perpetuating mediocrity forever; - but easy for an unthinking clerk to enforce.

3. Windows

The best -if only- quality design feature of the original tract houses was large unbroken horizontal glass lites in exterior fenestration. New plate-glass technology was a major feature, with 2-front bedroom models featuring an expansive picture window in a living room bay. The proposed city design character guidelines that all windows now be multi-paned is a tragic throwback to high-maintenance medieval times, contradicting sensible technology-forward quality of life ideals of this safe aerospace worker tract.

4. Architectural Features

The guideline to "include one of the following features on facades facing a street such as decorative window shutters" is a tragic misunderstanding and contradiction of "Architectural" Features. A well-designed building's visible features are an expression of its intrinsic structure and system of enclosure, like a musical instrument its exterior and interior are unified without extraneous superfluous expressions. A desecration by applied non-functional ornament is abominable and should never be suggested by government.

"Simplicity and repose are qualities that measure the true value of any work ... imposed detail has ruined more fine things from the standpoint of...fine living than any one human shortcoming; it is hopelessly vulgar." - Frank Lloyd Wright

5. Second Floor

A major backfire; the proposed continuation of the requirement for an extra large front setback of a second story is extremely harmful to the quiet enjoyment of privacy. Unlike some "charming" South Redondo Beach neighborhoods, the spacious TRW neighborhood street profile is 90-ft wide between facing houses of only up to 30-ft tall, -difficult to even see both sides in one view and certainly not a scale or privacy issue. But when a second story is arbitrarily shifted halfway back from the front -it then protrudes in the back, where the second-story side wall and windows loom over adjacent backyards instead of the neighboring house; a deadly impact on personal backyard privacy. The notion that this is "compatible with the style in this character area" ignores common sense and the damage accumulated

under the city-wide criterion in years past.

Earthquake safety standards encourage continuity of second story exterior walls down to the foundations. Inconsistent setbacks make tortured structures which, though expensively engineered to current building codes, have only a fraction of the safety of rational design.

Street and front yard character would be greatly enhanced by added street trees, which could locally obscure the huge Northrop Grumman manufacturing building backdrop, yet despite paying a property tax item of over \$40 annually per parcel for "street tree maintenance", there are still almost none in North Redondo.

6. Compatible Styles

The prescription to be "Traditional, Modern Ranch, or Storybook" is absurd in the twenty-first century and will only get worse. See comment item #4 above.

The reference to the TRW Tract's Mid-Century Design Aesthetic is incorrect, - confusing cheap with deep. Mid-century modern homes are characterized by very wide, open spaces, floor-to-ceiling glass, exposed structure and emphasis on bringing the outdoors in, -all good statements. By contrast, the small stucco box TRW Tract starters were of minimal cost construction with very little intrinsic aesthetic expression, what are referred to as "dumb" boxes -in that they do not speak.

"Traditional" style is defined by historical 17th~18th century ideals, emphasizing social standing as vertical expression with steps up to defined living and dining rooms on the first floor with a non-functional front porch, bedrooms on the second with at least one front-facing gable pointing upward, on a protruding basement below. Stone or brick outweigh stucco. These foreign ideals are the antithesis of the TRW Tract simple laid-back worker's boxes, "married to the ground".

"Modern Ranch" as a style entails relief by expansive articulation of opulent features on a scale unachievable on the frontages as subdivided.

"Storybook Style" applied to the TRW Tract is an oxymoron, self-contradictory on many levels: fictitious, artificial, insubstantial, delusive, figmental, imagined, insincere, misleading, mock, notional, pretend, sham, suppositious, -not unlike the notion of a government promoted style.

"Style is a byproduct of the process....To adopt a 'style' as a motive is to put the cart before the horse...." - Frank Lloyd Wright, *In the Cause of Architecture II* (1914)

7. Incompatible Styles

Forbidding some styles, including Contemporary/Modern as incompatible forever condemns the neighborhood to repetition of the old lowest common denominators

and no encouragement of improvement with time. Any scrap of architectural honesty and integrity of the zeitgeist or "genuine spirit of the time" is lost to "schlock".

8. Renovations or Remodels

The suggestion that an existing "style" be maintained forever is pure immurement. Without change, there can be no life or improvement.

"In authoritarian regimes, ideas are seen as threats, not as opportunities. Controlling what already exists is the backward focused goal of tyranny; Creating what will exist next is seen as a subject that should not be discussed."
- Gregg Easterbrook (2018) *It's Better Than It Looks*

In summary, every item and aspect of the proposal to change design guidelines to wrong-headed zero-tolerance requirements and impose character area guidelines is the exact opposite of good planning review. As a forward-looking community of free individuals, the TRW Tract should become a safe haven from all imposed "Objective Residential Standards". The City should develop a capacity for capable professional design review to assist and guide property owners, such as the Palos Verdes Art Jury.

"There should be as many kinds (styles) of houses as there are kinds (styles) of people and as many differentiations as there are different individuals. A man who has individuality (and what man lacks it?) has a right to its expression in his own environment." - Frank Lloyd Wright, *In the Cause of Architecture I* (1908)

Sincerely,

Tom Wooge