

**CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 18, 2006

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission

From: Sol Blumenfeld, Director,
Ken Robertson, Senior Planner
Community Development Department

Subject: Text Amendment For R-1 Small Lots

Recommendation

To adopt the attached resolution recommending amending the Zoning Ordinance.

The attached resolution reflects the action of the Planning Commission at the June meeting, to recommend that the City Council adopt an ordinance to provide additional exceptions to the R-1 development standards for small lots. The resolution contains the necessary text changes to Chapter 17.08 to implement the recommended exceptions to open space and lot coverage requirements.

RESOLUTION P.C. 06-18

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH, CALIFORNIA, TO RECOMMEND AMENDING THE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OF THE R-1 ZONE, PERTAINING TO THE EXCEPTIONS FOR SMALL LOTS

The Planning Commission of the City of Hermosa Beach does hereby resolve as follows:

Section 1. The Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on May 16, and June 20, 2006, based on initial direction from the City Council, to consider amending the development standards of the R-1 zone, as set forth in Section 17.08.030, as they pertain to the exceptions for small lots.

Section 2. Based on the evidence considered at the public hearing, the Planning Commission makes the following findings:

1. Section 17.08.030 of the Zoning Ordinance currently provides exceptions to the R-1 development standards for small lots with respect to open space requirements.

2. Small lots are defined as lots that are 2100 square feet or less, and the Planning Commission on a case-by-case basis may also include lots within 10% (i.e. up to 2,310 square feet).

3. The small lots are largely concentrated in the Shakespeare Tract (between 30th Street and Longfellow Avenue west of Valley Drive). There are approximately 150 lots zoned R-1 located in the Shakespeare tract with lot dimensions of 30'x 70' feet. Additionally, there are approximately 140 other smaller parcels of less than 2100 square feet, of which about 70 are "half-lots" located throughout the City. Also there are approximately another 150 smaller parcels that fall within the 10% range (i.e. between 2100 and 2310 square feet), which are located in various areas throughout the City. Therefore, a total of approximately 440 properties that may qualify as "small lots" in the City.

4. A small lot exception for open space in the R-1 zone was added to the code in 1988 and amended in 1997 to deal with the hardship of building on small lots. These provisions have the unintended effect of allowing the development of slightly larger homes with unconventional floor plans (i.e. primary living area on upper floors with bedrooms on the first floor) rather than traditional floor plans. Also development pressures on small lots have resulted in an unusual number of Variances being requested even with these exceptions.

5. These recommendations to allow the front yard to count toward required open space and to increase the allowable lot coverage provide some additional footage demanded by most homeowners either remodeling or constructing new homes, without compromising neighborhood compatibility, and should reduce the need for Variances. The changes should also increase the desirability of conventional floor plans on walk streets where the front yard open space directly connects to the open area available in the encroachment area. Also, these changes may provide enough additional footage so owners do not feel compelled to construct full basements. For those lots fronting on vehicular streets these amendments will reduce the current benefit gained by loading garages on the vehicular street, so owners will be encouraged to continue to use the alley for garage access, and preserve on-street parking.

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2 6. The subject text amendment is exempt from the requirements of the California
3 Environment Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the general rule set forth in Section 15061(3) of the
4 CEQA Guidelines, as there is no possibility that this text amendment may have a significant effect on
the environment.

5 Section 3. Based on the foregoing, the Planning Commission hereby recommends that the
6 Hermosa Beach Municipal Code, Title 17-Zoning, Chapter 17.08, Section 17.08.030 sub-sections be
amended as follows:

- 7 1. Eliminate the entire subsection number (1), under Section 17.08.030(L), entitled
8 Exceptions for small lots
9 2. Add a new Section 17.08.040 to read as follows:

10 **“Section 17.08.040 Development Standards for Small Lots.**

11 Lots that are 2100 square feet or less in area shall be subject to the development standards as
12 contained in Section 17.08.030, with the exception of the following standards:

13 A. Open Space. There shall be a minimum of three hundred (300) square feet of usable open
14 space with minimum dimensions of seven feet in length and width, and all of the required usable
15 open space may be provided on balconies or decks provided that at least sixty percent (60%) of
16 usable open space is directly accessible to primary living areas (living rooms, family rooms, and
17 kitchen and living room or family room combinations) and located on the same floor level as the
18 accessible primary living area. The required front yard area may be included in the required amount
19 of open space provided a minimum dimension of seven feet in length and width is provided. When
computing open space in conjunction with required side yard areas, only the area that exceeds the
minimum required yard dimension may be counted toward open space and only if the overall
dimension of the required yard and the excess area together has a dimension of seven feet in length
and width.

20 B. Lot Coverage. All buildings including accessory buildings shall not cover more than seventy
21 (70) percent of the area of the lot

22 C Lots within ten percent (10%) of the lot size identified above (i.e. lots ranging from 2101 -
23 2310 square feet) may also be considered for some or all of the lot coverage and/or open space
24 exceptions for small lots, pursuant to the above, subject to review and approval by the Planning
Commission if found justifiable based on any of the following reasons:

- 25 1. To achieve a consistent and comparable amount of indoor living space with existing
26 dwelling units in the immediate neighborhood;
27 2. To allow design flexibility in the application of the open space standard in conjunction
28 with the remodeling and expansion of existing structures
29 3. To allow an innovative design which otherwise is consistent with the goals and intent
of the open space and development standards for the R-1 zone;

1 4. To address unusual lot configurations or topography, as compared with surrounding
2 lot and development patterns"

3 VOTE: AYES:
4 NOES:
5 ABSTAIN:
6 ABSENT:

7 CERTIFICATION

8 I hereby certify the foregoing Resolution P.C. 06-18 is a true and complete record of the action taken
9 by the Planning Commission of the City of Hermosa Beach, California, at their regular meeting of
10 July 18, 2006.

11 _____
12 Peter Hoffman, Chairman

13 _____
14 Sol Blumenfeld, Secretary

15 July 18, 2006

16 _____
17 Date

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