

May 8, 2007

**Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Hermosa Beach Planning Commission**

**Regular Meeting of
May 15, 2007**

SUBJECT: LOT MERGER HEARING
LOCATION: 636 PROSPECT AVENUE
PURPOSE: TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PROPERTY AT 636 PROSPECT AVENUE,
COMPRISED OF TWO LOTS, SHALL BE MERGED INTO ONE PARCEL

Recommendation

To adopt the attached resolution to merge the subject lots.

Background

The subject property is a 5,910 square feet parcel, comprised of two lots from the original subdivision (lots 4 and 5, Block 139). Each lot is 25-feet wide with varying depths, with lot sizes of 2,898 square feet and 3,012 square feet. The property contains a single family residence which straddles between the lot lines.

Pursuant to Chapter 16.20 of the Municipal Code-Merger of Parcels, as recently revised by the City Council, the City has begun the process to determine whether these two lots that comprise the subject property will be merged. The Planning Commission is responsible for determining if the property shall be merged according to Sections 16.20.010 through 16.20.100 of the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code.

When two or more lots merge, they become a single parcel to be developed, sold, leased, or financed together. Lots may be merged when:

- The same owner holds two or more contiguous parcels of land.
- At least one of the parcels does not conform to minimum lot size requirements.
- The property is zoned R-1.
- The main structure is partially sited on the contiguous lots.

The Planning Commission holds a public hearing to determine whether or not to merge lots based on the above, and on the following criteria related to neighborhood compatibility, as set forth in Section 16.20.030:

- If the substandard lots under consideration for merger are similar or greater in size and width to more than 80% parcels fronting on the same block, inclusive of the subject parcel then the lots shall not be merged unless the integrity of the neighborhood will be harmed

- If the lots under consideration consist of not more than two parcels with a combined square footage of at least 7,000 square feet, then the contiguous parcels shall not be merged unless the integrity of the neighborhood will be harmed.
- Where the subject parcels are located on a block with 5 parcels or less, the 80% analysis above will be applied on a neighborhood rather than a block basis.

Analysis

The property meets the basic criteria to be considered for merger as set forth in Section 16.20.020 and 16.20.030. The lots clearly are less than the minimum lot size (the two lots are less than 4,000 square feet) and they meet the rule that the main structure is sited on both contiguous lots.

As attachment 1 demonstrates, the subject property is one of only three parcels on this block facing Prospect Avenue (since the property across Prospect Avenue is in a different zone) and the substandard lots are greater or similar in size and width to only one of the three lots on the block (33%). Therefore, pursuant to Section 16.20.030, the 80% analysis must go beyond the limits of the block and consider the neighborhood. Neighborhood is specifically defined for the purposes of the lot merger determination as “a grouping of similar uses within the same zoning district bounded by topographical or other physical features, arterials or collector streets or other characteristics that give it a separate and distinct identity.”

Therefore, to determine whether the subject lots are similar or greater in size and width than 80% of parcels in the neighborhood staff has looked beyond just the subject block and evaluated the neighborhood. Given that this district east of Prospect Avenue does not have an easily defined neighborhood boundary, staff made the following findings looking at a range of neighborhood areas:

1. The lots being considered for merger are similar or greater in size and width to only 2 of the 7 parcels (28.5%) fronting on Prospect Avenue between 6th Street and 8th Street - indicating that merging the lots would be consistent with the immediate neighborhood of lots fronting on Prospect Avenue.
2. The lots are similar or greater in size and width to 23 of the 35 parcels between 3rd Street and 10th Street (66%) that front on Prospect Avenue - showing that even on a larger neighborhood area, while its not as compelling, the lots meet the criteria for merger since this number is less than 80%.
3. Looking at a broader neighborhood, bounded by Prospect Avenue on the West and South, 10th Street on the North and the east city boundary, staff found that the lots are similar or greater in size and width than 162 of the 292 parcels (55%).

In conclusion, the Commission has the authority to merge the lots based on the evaluation of the neighborhood as indicated above. However, the Commission is not compelled to merge the lots. Given the high percentage of larger lots in the immediate neighborhood, staff believes merging

these lots meet the intent of the lot merger ordinance, and will protect the neighborhood integrity, and therefore recommends that the lots be merged.

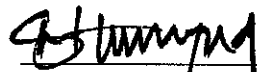


Eva Choi, Planning Assistant

CONCUR:



Ken Robertson, Senior Planner

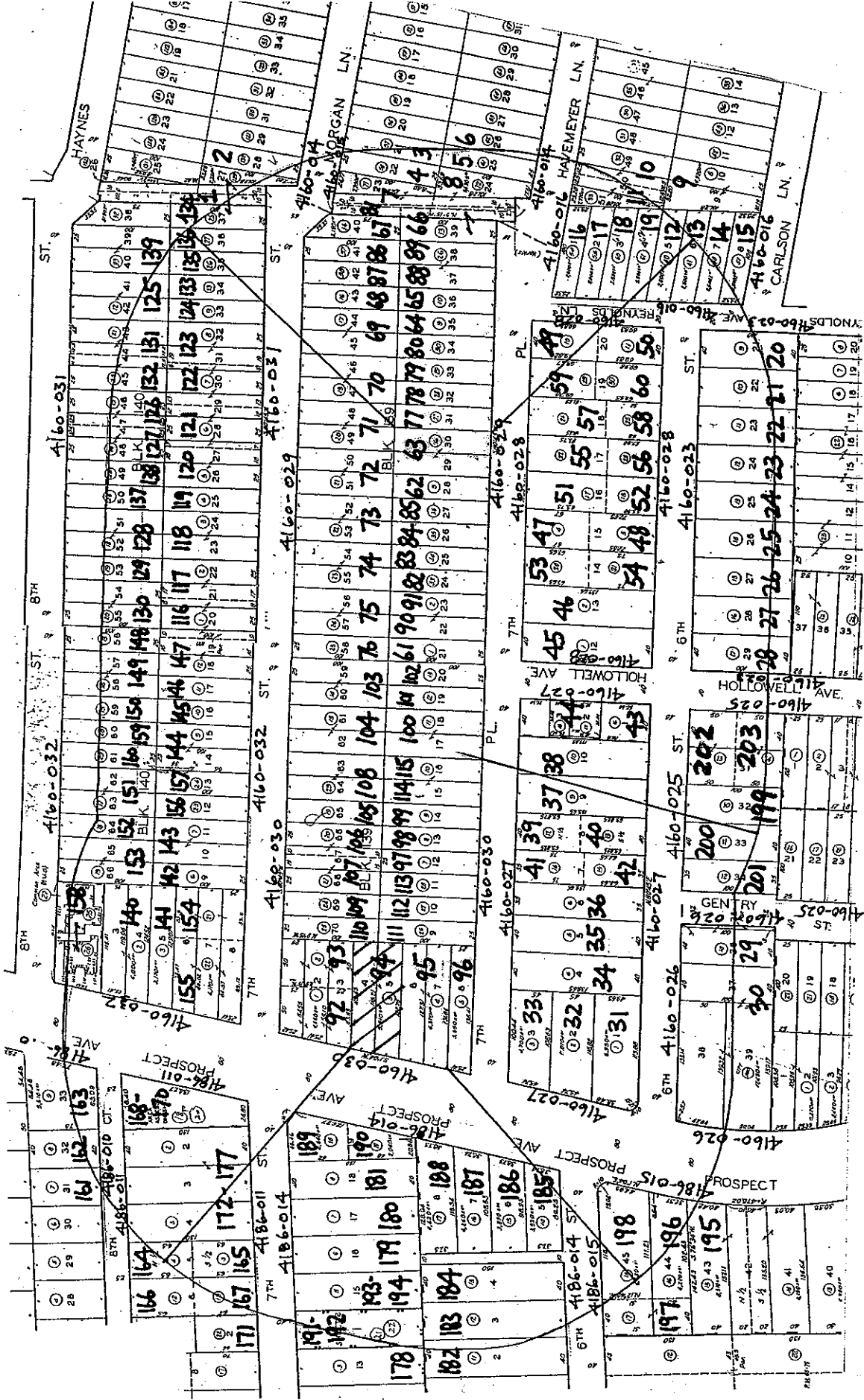


Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments

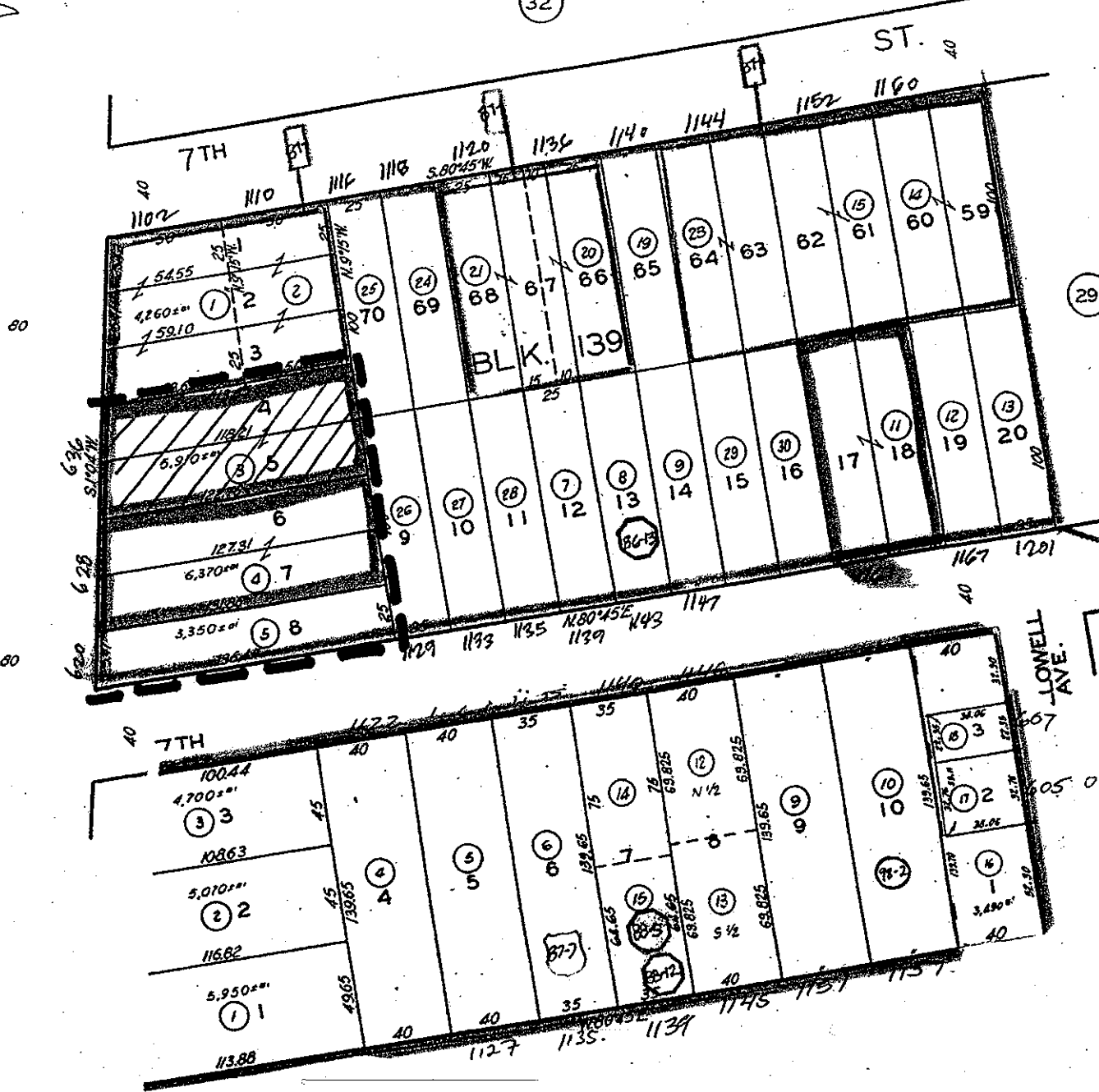
1. Location map
2. Block Map
3. Exhibit showing Prospect Lots
4. Aerial photo
5. Tabulations

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LOT MERGER GROUP 1
628 & 636 PROSPECT AVENUE
1161 & 1245 7TH PLACE

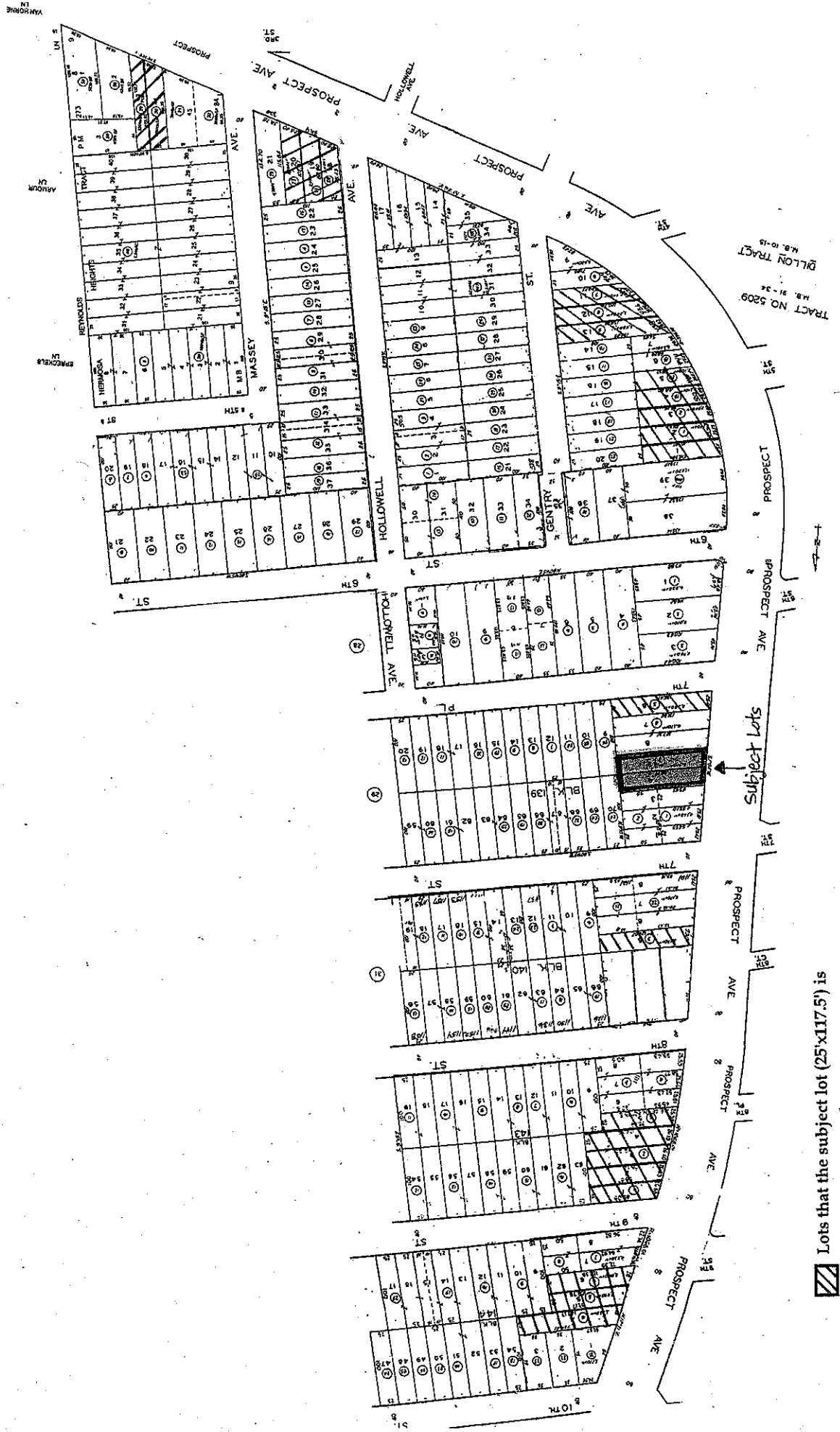
PROSPECT AVE.




636 Prospect Avenue 4160-030-003

-  Property Subject To Merger
-  Block Boundary

1 of 3 Assessor's Parcels ≤ Size of Lot Subject to Merger (33%)



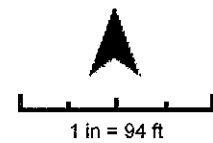
 Lots that the subject lot (25x117.5') is similar or greater than

Prospect Avenue Fronting Lots



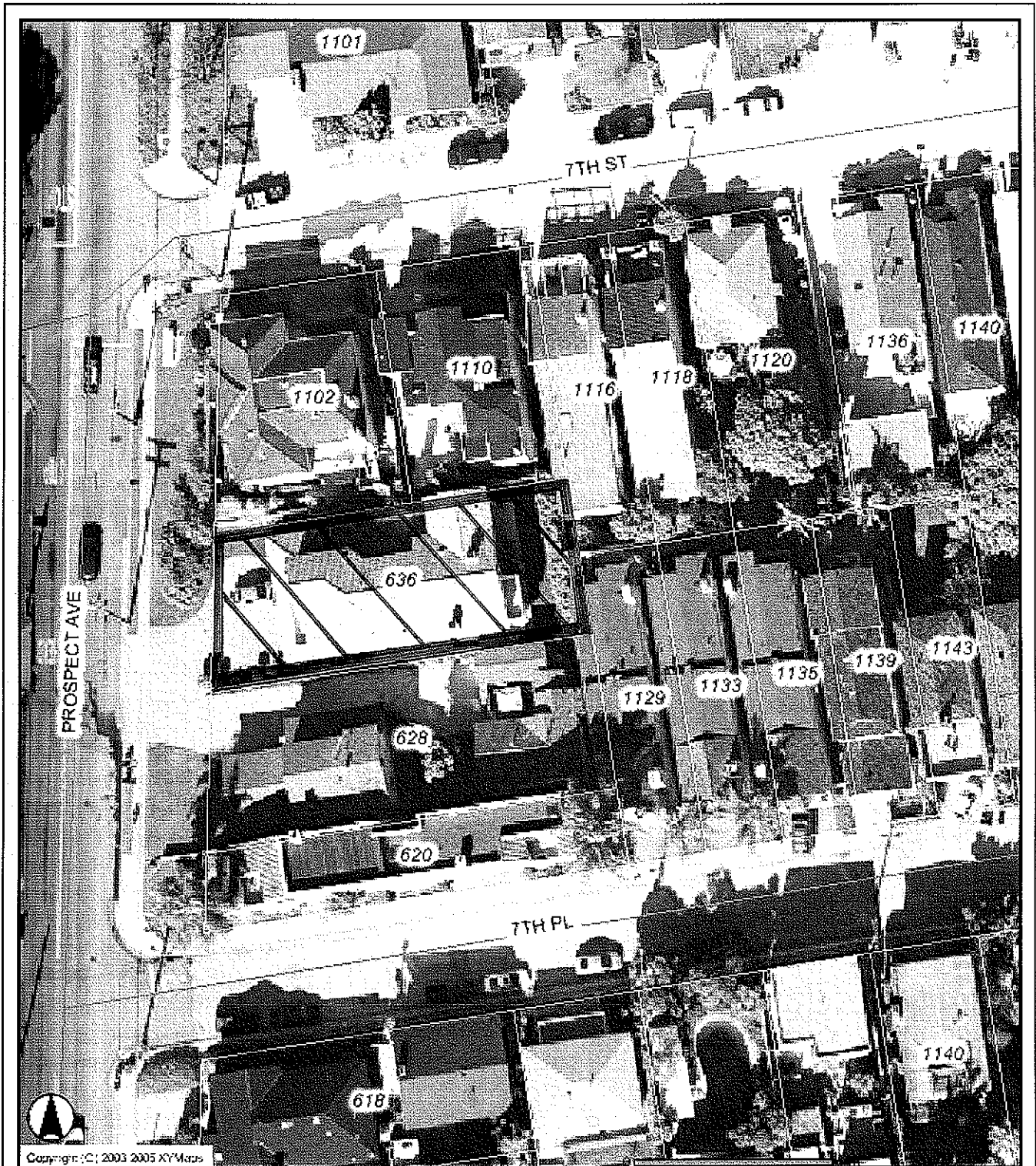
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636 Prospect Avenue



Date Printed: 5/9/2007

7



636 Prospect Avenue

Lot Merger Group 1



628 Prospect Avenue and 636 Prospect Avenue

Study of properties *fronting on Prospect Avenue** with lots that are similar or greater in in size and width.

Book 4160

Page Number:	Total Parcels*:	# of lots the subject lot (25'x117.5') is similar or greater than*:	# of lots the subject lot is smaller than:
22	6	2	4
24	4	3	1
25	City owned properties		
26	9	8	1
27	3	0	3
30	3	1	2
32	1	1	0

Book 4161

29	4	3	1
31	5	5	0

Total	35	23	12
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$23/35 = 65.7\%$ The subject lot is similar or greater in size and width to 66% of lots fronting on Prospect Avenue.

* Similar lots include lots also 25' wide that are close in area (i.e. may not actually contain less area)

628 Prospect Avenue and 636 Prospect Avenue

Study of neighborhood with lots that are similar or greater in size and width.

Book 4160

Page Number:	Total Parcels:	# of lots the subject lot (25'x117.5') is similar or greater than*:	# of lots the subject lot is smaller than:
22	10	3	7
23	14	3	11
24	18	13	5
25	22	15	7
26	17	13	4
27	13	4	9
28	16	14	2
29	30	22	8
30	24	14	10
31	25	10	15
32	22	11	11

Book 4161

29	38	19	19
31	43	21	22
Total	292	162	130

**162/292 = 54.5% The subject lot is similar or greater in size and width to 55% of lots
in the neighborhood.**

* Similar lots include lots also 25' wide that are close in area (i.e. may not actually contain less area)

RESOLUTION NO. 07-

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH, MERGING TWO CONTIGUOUS LOTS ON PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 636 PROSPECT AVENUE, LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS LOTS 4 AND 5, BLOCK 139, REDONDO VILLA TRACT

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

Section 1. A public hearing was conducted, pursuant to Chapter 16.20 of the Subdivision Ordinance, to consider whether or not to merge the two lots that comprise the subject property.

Section 2. The Planning Commission conducted a hearing on the matter on May 15, 2007, at which testimony and evidence, both written and oral, were presented to and considered by the Planning Commission.

Section 3. Based on the evidence received at the public hearing, the Planning Commission makes the following findings:

1. Chapter 16.20 of the Subdivision Ordinance prescribes the procedures and requirements for the merger of contiguous lots;
2. The adjacent lots 4 and 5, Block 139 of the Redondo Villa Tract are meet the requirements for merger as set forth in Section 16.20.030 of the Subdivision Ordinance.

Section 4. Based on the foregoing, the Planning Commission and hereby merges lot 4 with lot 5, Block 139 of the Redondo Villa Tract and directs staff to file for record with the county recorder's office a Notice of Lot Merger.

VOTE: AYES:
 NOES:
 ABSTAIN:
 ABSENT:

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the foregoing Resolution P.C. No. 07- is a true and complete record of the action taken by the Planning Commission of the City of Hermosa Beach, California at their regular meeting of May 15, 2007.

Kent Allen, Chairman

Ken Robertson, Secretary

May 15, 2007

Date