

May 8, 2007

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

**Regular Meeting of
May 15, 2007**

SUBJECT: LOT MERGER HEARING

LOCATION: 1161 7TH PLACE (A.K.A. 1161 AND 1163 7TH PLACE)

PURPOSE: TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PROPERTY AT 1161 7TH PLACE,
COMPRISED OF TWO LOTS, SHALL BE MERGED INTO ONE PARCEL

Recommendation

To direct staff as deemed appropriate.

Background

The subject property is one large 5,000-square foot parcel comprised of two lots from the original subdivision. The property contains a legal nonconforming duplex partially constructed on contiguous lots (Attachment 1). Each lot has a 25-foot wide width and a 100-foot depth, with a total lot square footage of 2,500 square feet.

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 block¹, 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 structures are sited on both contiguous lots.

There are sixteen parcels that front on 7th Place between Prospect Avenue and the Hollowell Avenue intercept. Of these sixteen parcels, ten are similar in size and width. Therefore, the subject lots are greater or similar to only 62.5% of the lots on the block as defined by the lot merger ordinance. Based on this analysis the lots qualify for merger.

The property is located on a block that is unusual in that the north side is characterized by a uniform pattern of 25-foot wide lots with only one 50-foot wide parcel out of eleven. Conversely, the south side lots are 35 and 40 feet wide and are a mix of "half lots" and "through lots" where some of the homes front on 6th Street.

The applicant contends that the criteria for lot merger fail to recognize the predominant lot size and width of the properties located north of 7th Place (Attachment 4). Of the eleven lots north of 7th Place, ten, or 90.91%, are similar in size and width (Attachment 2). Conversely, two of the five lots that are south of and front 7th Place are "half-lots"; the remaining lots are "through lots" with 35' to 40'-foot widths and 139-foot depths. Given that a vast majority of the lots north of 7th Place are similar in size and width, merger of the lots may adversely impact the existing integrity of the north side of the block.

Summary

The Commission has the authority to merge the lots based on the lot merger criteria as indicated above. However, the Commission is not compelled to merge the lots. Given the high percentage of similar lots on the north side of 7th Place, merger of the lots may be inconsistent with the character of the north side of the block.



Richard Denniston
Associate Planner

CONCUR:


Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments:

1. Location Map
2. Block Exhibit
3. Aerials
4. Correspondence and Petition from the Applicant

¹ The term "block" shall mean both sides of a street within the same zoning district uninterrupted by an intersecting or intercepting street (not including an alley)."



1161 7th Place

1161 7th Place

Study of properties *fronting on 7th Place Avenue* with lots that are similar or greater in in size and width fronting on 7th Place.

Book 4160

Block between Prospect Avenue and the Hollowell Avenue Intecept

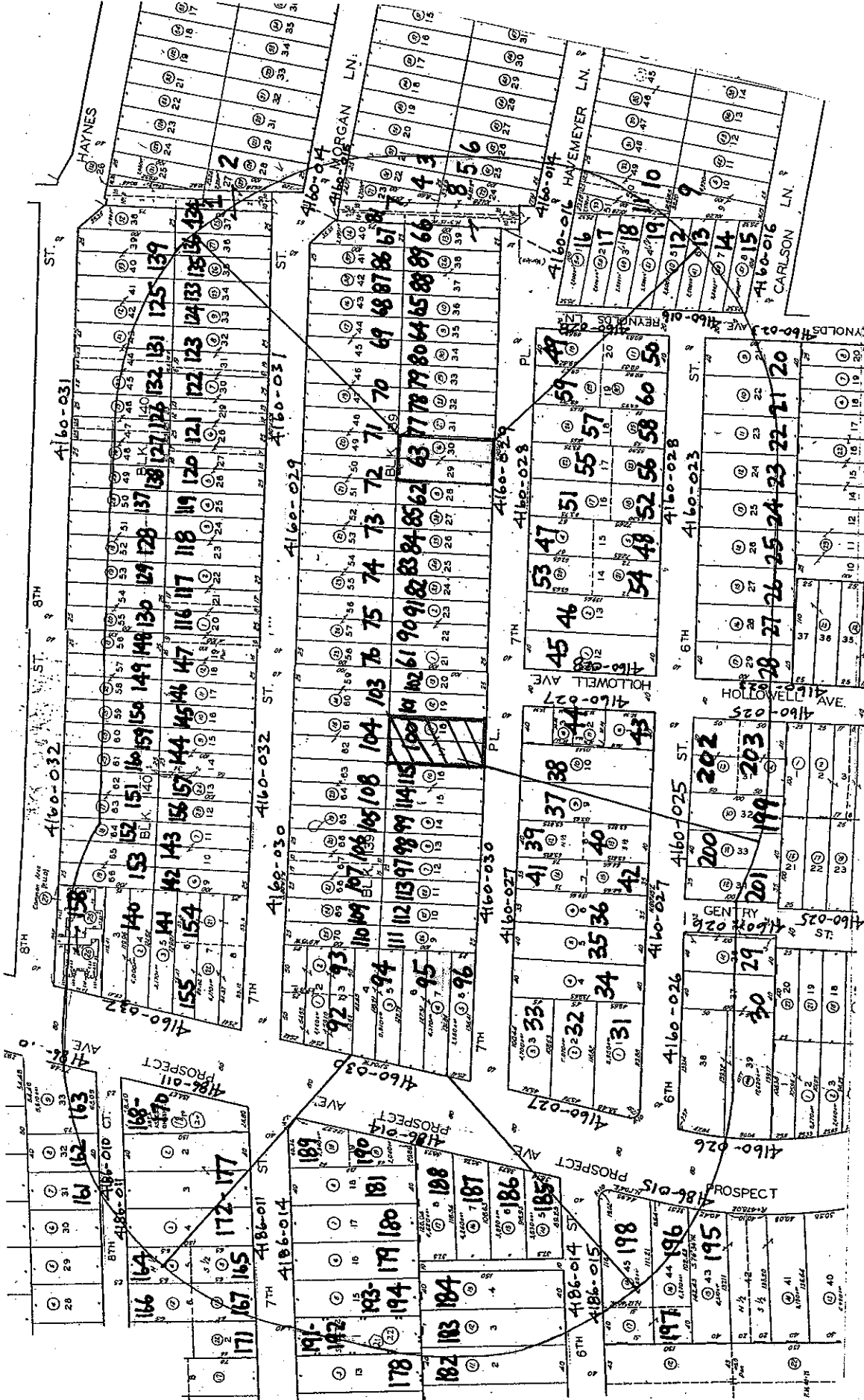
Page Number:	Total Parcels:	# of lots the subject lot (25'x100') is similar or greater than:	# of lots the subject lot is smaller than:
30	16	10	6
Total	16	10	6

10/16=62.5% Lots greater or similar in size and width to subject lot

Block between Prospect Avenue and the Hollowell Avenue Intecept (North Side Only)

Page Number:	Total Parcels:	(25'x100') is similar or	smaller than:
30	11	10	1
Total	11	10	1

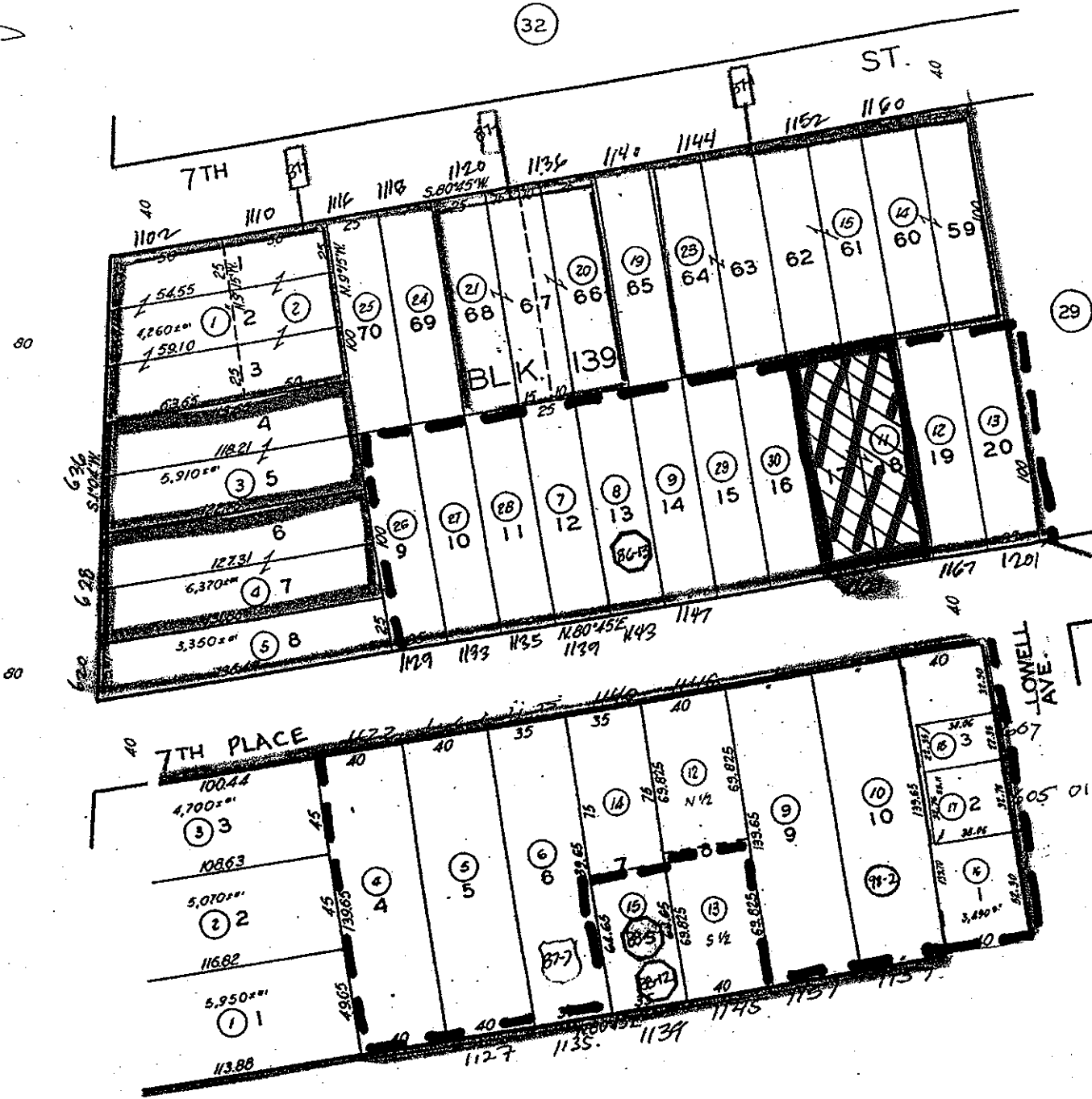
10/11=90.91% Lots greater or similar in size and width to subject lot



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

SCALE 1" = 100'

PROSPECT AVE.



1161 7th Place

4160-030-011



Property Subject To Merger



Block Boundary

10 of 19 Assessor's Parcels ≤ Size of Lot Subject to Merger (53%)



1161 7th Place

May 1, 2007

City of Hermosa Beach
Community Development Department
Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Civic Center
1315 Valley Drive
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

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MAY 07 2007
COMMUNITY DEV. DEPT.

Re: 1161 & 1163 7th Place (APN 4160-030-011)

Dear Mr. Blumenfeld,

I have received notice that my properties located at 1161 & 1163 7th Place will be considered for a lot merger into one parcel. Although my lots meet the criteria for a lot merger, the determination also requires a review of neighborhood consistency. I am requesting consideration from the Planning Commission to make the determination that my lots should be released from the proposed merger based on neighborhood consistency.

The determination for review of neighborhood consistency specifically states that "if the substandard parcels under consideration for merger "are similar or greater in size and width to more than 80% of the separately identified L.A. County Tax Assessor's parcels *fronting* on the same block, *inclusive of the subject parcel* (emphasis added), the merger of the contiguous parcels shall only be required if it is deemed necessary by the Planning Commission, after reviewing the facts of the case, to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood." Block is defined as "both sides of a street within the same zoning district uninterrupted by an intersecting or intercepting street." Neighborhood is defined 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". The following facts are relevant to the determination that merger of my contiguous parcels would not maintain the integrity of the neighborhood:

1. The "block" in which my lots are to be compared, specifically the lots across the street and the small lots that front on Hollowell Avenue are different in many ways from my lots to be merged. The lots across the street do not front on 7th Place, those lots front on 6th street and the rear of those lots back up to 7th Place. The exception is with two half lots. However, those half lots are not similar to the lots across the street because they are only slightly larger in width and size with 69-75 feet in length and approximately 2,600 and 2,700 square feet in area. If you eliminate the lots that do not front on 7th place, the percentage of the lot size in the same block that is similar or greater in size changes to more than 84% (11

Page 2

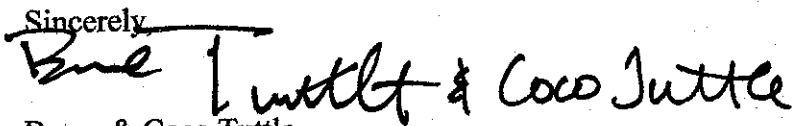
of the 13 parcels that front on 7th Place, located on the same side of the street are the same in lot size and width).

2. The lots across the street that front on 6th Street are through lots (meaning they have a street on either end of the lot.) None of the lots on 7th Place are through lots. They back up to lots, not a street.
3. All of the lots on the same side of 7th Place are 25 x 100 foot lots developed with single family homes. Merging my two lots would create the only 50 x 100 foot lot on the block. This would be out of character with the neighborhood.
4. The merger would allow a much larger residence than what is currently developed on all of the other 25 x 100 lots. The potential house that could be developed on a 5,000 square foot lot would be twice the size of the existing houses on the block. This would be out of character with the other homes in the neighborhood.

In closing, the Planning Commission should release my two lots located at 1161 & 1163 7th Place from the proposed merger because the resulting lot, if merged, would be out of character with the neighborhood. The lots fronting on 6th Street (and back up to 7th Place) should not be compared with my lots because the ordinance indicates that the parcels to be compared should *front* on the same street. The two lots across the street that actually front on 7th Place, (1140 and 1146 7th Place) are half lots and are not similar in width or size to my parcels. My properties at 1161 & 1163 7th Place are developed as a duplex; therefore, merging my lots will not reduce the density in the neighborhood if the lots were released from the merger. Finally, merging my lots would be out of character with the neighborhood because the resulting parcel would be the largest lot on the block that fronts on 7th Place, allowing a much larger house than what is currently developed in the neighborhood.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter and I am available to answer any questions regarding this letter. You may reach me on my cell at (310) 721-2554 or at my home at (310) 372-7658.

Sincerely,


Bruce & Coco Tuttle

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MAY 07 2007

COMMUNITY DEV. DEPT.

We, the undersigned, own property in the vicinity of 1161 & 1163 7th Place. We request that the Planning Commission release the lots known as 1161 & 1163 7th Place from the proposed lot merger to be considered on May 15th, 2007, based on our belief that if the lots were merged, the resulting 5,000 square foot lot would be out of character with the neighborhood.

Print Name	Signature	Address
Patricia A. Copeland	<i>Patricia A. Copeland</i>	1140 7th. pl. ; 90254-4911
Howard Fishman	<i>Howard Fishman</i>	1133 7th PL 90254
AARON FISHMAN	<i>Aaron Fish</i>	1133 7th PLACE
Jon Miller	<i>Jon Miller</i>	1129 7th Place
SCOTT AMBROSE	<i>Scott W. Ambrose</i>	1147 7th PLACE
NANCY MANNING	<i>Nancy Manning</i>	1153 7th Pl.
Miomca Chun	<i>Miomca Chun</i>	1155 7th Pl.
DIXIEANNA F. GIRARD	<i>Dixianne F. Girard</i>	1167-7th Place
Aly Benson	1205 7th place	
Alix V. Benson	<i>Aly V. Benson</i>	1205 7th place
LYNN EDSON	<i>Lynn Edson</i>	1135 7th Pl. #B.

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