

Click here to go to
original staff report

W20b Letter of Support

To: California Coastal Commission

August 17, 2015

Dear Commissioners,

Save our block! APPROVE the project at 1620 Electric Ave.

My name is Nic Neumann. I am the resident of 1654 Electric Ave. I am writing to urge you to **APPROVE** the new single-family house at 1620 Electric Ave. It has come to my attention that some people (most of whom don't even live on the block) have appealed the project, claiming that it is out of character with the street. Nothing is further from the truth. We **NEED** more projects like this on our block for so many good reasons:

1. The design is very attractive, with a very open facade that is **totally in scale** with the many 2 and 3 story homes on the block and in the neighborhood;
2. The house has enormous (almost unheard of) setbacks not only in the front but on the sides;
3. The project will do the street so much good by mediating between the scale of the gigantic eyesore of a building that is right next door and the rest of the street;
4. Most importantly, we desperately need a new house like this to re-establish and to **reinvigorate the residential character** of the block.

As you may know, we are directly across the street from a massive industrial complex. It's bad enough that we have to look at barbed wire fencing, but recently tech startups have flooded into those buildings, doing things like playing basketball in the parking lots until deep into the evening. Business on Abbot Kinney is also booming. As a result, foot and vehicle traffic on our block has increased tremendously. Most of my neighbors on the block have responded to the new activity by **completely fencing or walling themselves off from the sidewalk**. This is terrible for the street! We desperately need a new house (one with a beautiful design and open, inviting front yard) that will make people take notice that we are also a residential street, with people and families living in real houses! Right now, they just walk or speed by without a single thought to the people living behind the tall fencing and out-of-control hedges.

The owner of 1620 Electric Ave., Mr. Smith, should be applauded for taking on an improvement project at an unusual location, for creating an attractive design, and for being willing to further adjust and **reduce the project significantly even though the original proposal was already well within the zoning guidelines in the first place!** What more can you demand of him or of other homeowners like me?!!!!

Please do not block this project. We need **MORE** projects like this, not fewer, and I welcome the addition of Mr. Smith and his family to my block with open arms.

Sincerely,



Nic Neumann (1654 Electric Ave.)

W20b
Letter of Opposition

January 8, 2016

Via EMAIL:

marlene.alvarado@coastal.ca.gov

California Coastal Commission
Coastal Staff & Coastal Commissioners
200 OceanGate, 10th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re. OPPOSITION to CDP application for:
1620 Electric Ave (A-5-VEN-15-0036)
Hearing date: Wednesday January 13, 2016
Agenda Item 20b

Coastal Staff and Honorable Commissioners,

I am writing some comments about the project at 1620 Electric to include in the de Novo hearing next Wednesday before the commissioners.

I appreciate very much the Staff working with the applicant to bring his project closer to compatibility with the immediate neighborhood in mass, scale and character.

1. Even with the reduction in size, there is substantial evidence that this project is materially out of scale with the neighborhood. The new FAR measures out to be .88; compared to the street average of .42, it is still twice as big as the average and that is still a structure not compatible in mass and scale with the block. If the project's mass was brought down further in size, I believe the neighbors concerns about shade and privacy would be relieved.

2. I wonder about his description of "three distinct building volumes". Can a one foot difference between this small middle section and the rear section heights really be called distinct? This house is really made up of two "distinct volume areas" which is not a bad thing when the bulk is removed to the rear.

3. We appreciate pulling the mass towards the rear by limiting the bulk to the rear. That said, he is offering a fully finished basement with media or, it is my understanding this would be considered a full story and so this house should be described as a three-story structure, and not just the rear section. This would increase the FAR to bring it up to a similar FAR of the original structure (1.10).

4. Even with his coming reducing this to a two (though really a three) story house and suggesting it is now compatible with the block, the streetscape tells a different story. 76% of the homes are one story and 24% are two story houses. Comparing it to his

neighbor and reducing the height so it is 2 feet lower ignores the whole picture. The character of immediate neighborhood is what matters when claiming compatibility with the neighborhood character.

5. This revised project is but a 1% smaller than the largest structure, a two unit condo and still 50% larger than the average of the block.

6. 1620 Electric is situated in the Milwood Walk Street Neighborhood, identified by SurveyLA as a potential historic district AND protected as a historic resource in the LUP Policy I. F. 1., page II-28. It is even more critical that it be looked at in this context in evaluating its compatibility to mass, scale and character .

7. Are those renderings really representative and accurate? His project looks awfully tiny for a 3,517 sf house (not including the basement which should be included).

Thank you for including my thoughts with the commissioners' packages. I think reducing the mass and scale by reducing the house size would make this project more in keeping with the neighborhood character.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Sue Kaplan,

Venice Resident

As an individual and not on behalf of the Venice Neighborhood Council or its Committees

Attachment--Streetscape

House No	House Sq Ft	Lot Sq ft/row	Proposed Sq Ft	% House/Lot	Proj. %	One Story	Two Story	Three Story	Peaked Roof	Est. Height	Multi-Unit	
	FAR of proposed project of .88 (1.1 including basement) is over twice the neighborhood average of .42; 1% smaller than largest building with two condos											
	1620 Electric is part of the Milwood Walk Street District - recognized by SurveyLA as a potential historic district											
Revised Project		3517	4013		0.88							
Original Proposed Project		4411.00			1.10							
602 Superba		2676.00	4797		55.78						25	
1522		1599.00	4102		38.98		x				13	2
1520		1001.00	4487		22.31		x				13	2
1518		1100.00	4873		22.57		x				13	2
1514		5410.00	5643		95.87		x				13	3
1510		2438.00	6029		40.44		x					
614 Milwood (corner lot)		850.00	6413		13.25		x				13	corner lot
1618		1148	3916		29.32		x				13	
1620 *		1080	4013		26.91		x				13	
1626/1628		3532.00	3588		0.98			x			30	2 condos
1630		1541	3733		41.28		x				13	2
1632		882	3672		24.02		x				13	
1634		2048	3868		52.95		x				25	2
1640		1512	3912		38.65		x				27	2
1644		3514	3914		89.78		x				22	2
1652		1408	3894		36.16		x				15	1650?
1654		1777	3983		44.61		x				15	2
1660		1228	3941		31.16		x				15	2
1666		2156	3978		54.20		x				27	
1670		1951	3958		49.29		x				27	2
1674		1600	4950		32.32		x				15	2
1682		1160.00	3874		29.94		x				13	
1686		1705.00	4025		42.36		x					
1690		1585.00	3971		39.91		x				13	
1694		1500.00	3837		39.09		x				13	
1698		1824.00	3869		47.14		x				15	
average		1854.81	4365		42.05		76	24		70		13
lot coverage	% average				42							
% + average house					42.05							
% larger than largest SFD					55.27							
Median		2250	3965		51.01							2016
Average of multi house size												
% under median		92										
FAR + 30%					2608.45							

Substantial Evidence - Streetscape

W20b Letter of Support

January 7, 2016

As a resident of Venice, I whole-heartedly support the single-family house project for Mr. Smith and his family at 1620 Electric Ave. The project should be approved and allowed to move forward for all of the following reasons:

The project...

- Offers an attractive, open design
- Obeys all zoning and building codes, including Venice Specific Plan guidelines
- Is in scale with its neighboring buildings
- Will improve character of the street
- Is well below the required height limit
- Has extremely generous setbacks
- Has a small building footprint relative to the rest of the block
- Implements 'Green Building' and 'Green Landscaping' measures
- Will provide a home for a real family committed to the neighborhood.

This project will do much to improve both Electric Ave. and all of Venice.

Sincerely,



Name: SAMEER MARWA

Address: 664 SUNSET AVE, VENICE, CA - 90291

W20b

Letter of Support

January 7, 2016

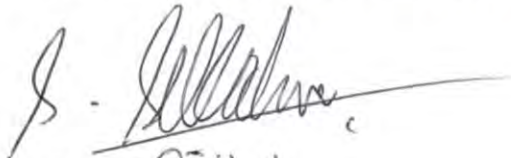
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Sincerely,



Name:

Suminda Sellaheva

Address:

758 Sunset Ave, Venice, CA 90291

W20b

Letter of Support

August 18, 2015

Dear Coastal Commission,

We, as residents of Venice and regular homeowners, whole-heartedly support the revised application for a Coastal Development Permit at **1620 Electric Ave** (Smith Family Residence). We support the project because, after reviewing the revised design, we believe that our community needs **MORE** projects like this in order to maintain its **diverse and dynamic character**.

- The project is a single family house in a multi-dwelling zone;
- It does not increase density;
- It has an attractive design which is very much **in scale** with existing and recent projects in the surrounding neighborhood;
- It does not eliminate any affordable housing;
- It provides more parking for the neighborhood;
- It respects all zoning regulations and is sensitive to its neighbors;
- It has an open, inviting front yard layout which will revitalize the residential image of the street;
- It is a project carried out by family who sincerely and desperately want to move into their purchased property and become an integrated part of the neighborhood--so much so that they commendably **reduced** an already code-compliant building proposal at great cost in order to eliminate further controversy.

Venice is a **dynamic and evolving community** with a long **tradition of design innovation**, which this project continues. It is at least as famous worldwide for innovative contemporary architecture (Frank Gehry, Thom Mayne, etc.) as it is for the presence of traditional building styles. This is why the Land Use Plan explicitly encourages eclecticism in building forms.

While some activist members of the community regularly appear before the commission to decry the 'ruining of Venice' by so-called 'greedy' developers and such, we wish to let the commission know that these activists do **NOT** speak for us. The activist few don't speak for the majority of Venice's citizens, real families and homeowners who do not want **onerous and unreasonably vague restrictions** placed upon our properties. They do not speak for those of us who have seen the streets and neighborhoods **improve** and grow more vital (and safe!) precisely because of 'development'. They do not speak for those of us who happily **welcome the growth of contemporary design** in our neighborhoods because it injects an element of the new into an urban fabric that would otherwise quickly become stale under the weight of dated and ultimately *faux* traditional labels like 'Craftsman', 'Spanish' or 'Cape Cod'.

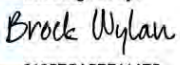
When good, thoughtful, and well-planned houses such the Smith Residence at Electric Ave appear in front of the commission, we want to see the commissioners take a close look at their merits. We want to see the commission empathize with those of us who need and demand **clear and reasonable guidelines** to plan our own homes and therefore our **futures** in Venice. We need the commission to realize that most of us have real jobs and cannot afford to appear monthly before the commission in order to voice our views. When it comes to single-family houses, we feel you owe it to the residents and

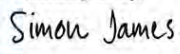
homeowners of Venice to examine each case closely and not simply use your powers to express a pre-formulated policy position favoring the activists. 'Send a message' to City Planning if you must, but let that message be: "We will look at your project closely, and if you design a good house which makes a sincere and genuine effort toward fitting in with the neighborhood, we will not stand in the way of progress for you and your family."

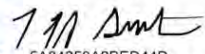
Please exercise sound judgment/common sense and allow the project at 1620 Electric Ave. to go forward.

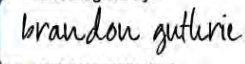
Sincerely,

(Citizen of Venice, with addresses)

DocuSigned by:

8105ECA5EF414E5... 407 Rialto Ave. Venice

DocuSigned by:

1BEE526F7741474... 407 Rialto, Venice

DocuSigned by:

5A84250A2BED44D...
Jeffery A. Guthrie 321 6th Ave. Venice

DocuSigned by:

9D9AF29F028448B...
brandon guthrie 347 6th Ave. Venice

W20b Letter of Support

January 7, 2016

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This project will do much to improve both Electric Ave. and all of Venice.

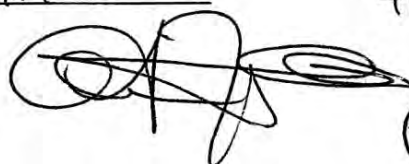
Sincerely,

Name:

1644 Electric Ave.

Address:

Jennifer Vincelli



thank you for
being so
considerate :)

W20b

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Sincerely,

Name:

Andrew Jacobson

Address:

1616 Electric ave

W20b

Letter of Support

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Sincerely,

Name: GIOVANNI LABADESSA

Address: 605 SUPERBA AVE
VENICE, 90291

W20b

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Sincerely,

Name:

RODGER KLEIN 

Address:

1627 CRESCENT PLACE VENICE 90291

W20b

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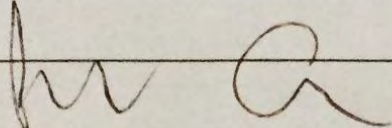
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Sincerely,

Name: 623 California Ave, Venice CA 90291

Address: 

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Sincerely,

Name:

REID CIGOLLE

Address:

534 GRAND BLVD, VENICE 90291

W20b

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Sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

758 Sunset, Venice, CA

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office
200 Oceangate, Suite 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802-4302
(562) 590-5071



W20b

Appeal Filed: 05/28/15
Sub. Issue Found: 07/09/15
Staff: M. Alvarado-LB
Staff Report: 12/18/15
Hearing Date: 01/13/16

STAFF REPORT: APPEAL – DE NOVO

Application Number: A-5-VEN-15-0036

Applicant: J. Edward Smith

Agent: Andy Liu

Appellants: Robin Rudisill, Gabriel Ruspini, Todd Darling, Mark Kleiman, Arnold Springer, Leigh Marling, Gray Marshall, Deborah Marshall

Project Location: 1620 Electric Avenue (Lot 29, Block 2, Venice Annex Tract), Venice, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County (APN 4241-013-029).

Project Description: Demolition of a one-story single-family residence, and the construction of an approximately 3,402 square-foot, three-story single-family residence over basement level with a maximum height of 28.5 feet, an attached 393 square-foot three-car garage, 115 feet of covered decks/balconies, an outdoor open deck, an outdoor 23-foot by 7.2-foot swimming pool, and hardscape and landscape improvements.

Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

At a public hearing on July 09, 2015, the Commission found that the appeal of Local Coastal Development Permit No. ZA 2014-1550, issued by the City of Los Angeles, raised a substantial issue with respect to the proposed project's consistency with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act because of the project's potential impact to the existing community character. The Commission found that the size of the city-approved project was inconsistent with the mass and scale of the

single-family residences in the neighborhood, and was designed to the maximum allowable 30-foot height. Venice residents appealed the project on the grounds that the proposal lacked building articulation to help the structure blend into the neighborhood, and that the structure did not have a pedestrian scale and was not compatible with the existing community character. The Commission is now required to hold a de novo hearing on the merits of the project.

Subsequent to the Commission's substantial issue hearing on the city-approved project, the applicant revised the plans to provide more articulation, reduce the floor area, and reduce the height of the proposed residence. The revised proposed project features a stepped back design with an above-ground approximately 452 square-foot third story limited to the rear of the structure, a reduction of the total floor area by approximately 633 square feet, a reduction in the building height by 1.5 feet (back) to 4 feet (front façade), an increase in the front setback by 2.4 feet and the west side setback by 1 foot-7 inches, and a reduction of the lot coverage by approximately six percent. The applicant also proposes a three-foot high fence and drought tolerant non-invasive landscaping in the front yard to provide a more pedestrian-friendly scale consistent with the community character. See **Exhibits 4 and 5** for a comparison between City-approved project and the currently proposed project. As revised, the development is compatible with the mass and scale of the surrounding area and will avoid cumulative adverse impacts on visual resources and community character.

Therefore, Staff recommends **approval** of Coastal Development Permit Application No. A-5-VEN-15-0036 with conditions. The recommended special conditions required the applicant to undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans, provide drought tolerant non-invasive landscaping and water conservative irrigation, minimize wall/fence height, and implement construction best management practices.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Substantive File Documents

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Project Location and Parcel Map
Exhibit 2 – Aerial View
Exhibit 3 – Revised Plans and Elevations
Exhibit 4 – Project Rendering and Comparisons
Exhibit 5 – Summary of Revisions
Exhibit 6 – Streetscape and Scale Analysis
Exhibit 7 – Pictures of Project Site and Surroundings
Exhibit 8 – 1634 Electric Avenue, Venice: 2nd Unit

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Motion:

*I move that the Commission **approve** Coastal Development Permit Application No. A-5-VEN-15-0036 pursuant to the staff recommendation.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

Resolution:

The Commission hereby approves a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. STANDARD CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following standard conditions:

1. **Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment.** The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. **Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. **Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
5. **Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.** These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

This permit is granted subject to the following special conditions:

1. **Permit Compliance.** The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans, specifically including the site plan, building plans, landscaping plan, and drainage plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a Commission-approved amendment to Coastal Development Permit No. A-5-VEN-15-0036 unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.
2. **Landscaping.**
 - A. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, two (2) full size sets of final landscaping plans, which shall include and be consistent with the following:
 - i. Vegetated landscaped areas shall only consist of native plants or non-native drought tolerant plants, which are non-invasive. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society (<http://www.CNPS.org/>), the California Invasive Plant Council (formerly the California Exotic Pest Plant Council) (<http://www.cal-ipc.org/>), or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a “noxious weed” by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property. All plants shall be low water use plants as identified by California Department of Water Resources (See: <http://www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/docs/wucols00.pdf>).
 - ii. Use of reclaimed water for irrigation is encouraged. If using potable water for irrigation, only drip or microspray irrigation systems may be used. Other water conservation measures shall be considered, such as weather based irrigation controllers.
 - iii. The front wall/fence within the front yard setback area shall be constructed no higher than three-feet above grade as measured from the public sidewalk adjacent to Electric Avenue. The side and rear yard wall/fence, beyond the front yard setback, shall be constructed no higher than six-feet at any point as measured from natural grade.
 - B. The permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the approved plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plans shall occur without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.
3. **Water Quality.** By acceptance of this permit, the permittee agrees that the approved development shall be carried out in compliance with the following BMPs:

- A. No construction materials, debris, or waste shall be placed or stored where it may be subject to water, wind, rain, or dispersion;
- B. Any and all debris resulting from construction activities shall be removed from the project site within 24 hours of completion of the project;
- C. Construction debris and sediment shall be removed from construction areas each day that construction occurs to prevent the accumulation of sediment and other debris which may be discharged into coastal waters;
- D. Erosion control/sedimentation Best Management Practices shall be used to control dust and sedimentation impacts to coastal waters during construction. BMPs shall include, but are not limited to: placement of sand bags around drainage inlets to prevent runoff/sediment transport into coastal waters;
- E. All construction materials, excluding lumber, shall be covered and enclosed on all sides, and as far away from a storm drain inlet and receiving waters as possible;
- F. The permittee shall ensure the proper handling, storage, and application of petroleum products and other construction materials. These shall include a designated fueling and vehicle maintenance area with appropriate berms and protection to prevent any spillage of gasoline or related petroleum products or contact with runoff. It shall be located as far away from the receiving waters and storm drain inlets as possible;
- G. The permittee shall develop and implement spill prevention and control measures;
- H. The permittee shall maintain and wash equipment and machinery in confined areas specifically designed to control runoff. Thinners or solvents shall not be discharged into sanitary or storm sewer systems. Washout from concrete trucks shall be disposed of at a location not subject to runoff and more than 50-feet away from a stormdrain, open ditch or surface water; and
- I. The permittee shall provide adequate disposal facilities for solid waste, including excess concrete, produced during construction.

IV. DUAL PERMIT JURISDICTION AREA

Within the areas specified in Section 30601 of the Coastal Act, which is known in the City of Los Angeles permit program as the *Dual Permit Jurisdiction* area, the Coastal Act requires that any development which receives a local coastal development permit also obtain a second (or “dual”) coastal development permit from the Coastal Commission. For projects located inland of the areas identified in Section 30601 (i.e., projects in the *Single Permit Jurisdiction* area), the City of Los Angeles local coastal development permit is the only coastal development permit required.

The proposed project site is within the *Single Permit Jurisdiction* area. On March 25, 2015, the City of Los Angeles approved local Coastal Development Permit No. ZA 2014-1550, but that action was appealed to the Coastal Commission. On July 09, 2015, the Commission found that

the appeal raised a substantial issue with respect to the proposed project's consistency with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. In finding that a substantial issue exists, the locally approved Coastal Development Permit became void. The Commission is now required to hold a de novo hearing on the merits of the project. Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act is the standard of review.

V. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing one-story single-family residence, and construct an approximately 3,402 square-foot single-family residence over a basement level with a maximum height of 28.5 feet, an attached 393 square-foot three-car garage, a 56 square-foot covered deck, a 59 square-foot covered balcony, an outdoor open deck, and an outdoor 23-foot by 7.2-foot swimming pool (**Exhibit 3**). The garage will be accessible from the alley.

Subsequent to the Commission's Substantial Issue hearing, the applicant revised the project to reduce the size of the structure (**Exhibits 4 and 5**). The floor area (including covered decks/balconies) has been reduced by approximately 633 square feet. The current project also provides more height variation; the maximum height of the proposed structure has been reduced by approximately 4 feet at the front façade (from 30 to 25.8 feet) and by approximately 1.5 feet at the rear (30 to 28.5). The first-floor front setback has been increased by about 2.4 feet (14 feet to 16.4 feet), the second-floor front setback by 3 feet (15.8 feet to 18.8 feet), and the west side setback by 1.6 feet. These changes have reduced the proposed lot coverage by approximately six percent; see **Exhibit 5** for a summary of the revisions.

The project site is a 4,013 square foot lot located at 1620 Electric Avenue in Venice, over ½ of a mile inland of the beach (**Exhibits 1 and 2**). The project is located in the R2-1 zoned, Low Medium I and Multi-Family designated developed residential neighborhood of the Milwood subarea within the City of Los Angeles Single Permit Jurisdiction Area. The site is in the center of the 1600 residential block of Electric Avenue, between Palms Boulevard and Superba Avenue. The subject lot fronts Electric Avenue, a one-way 40-foot wide street that connects Venice Boulevard and California Avenue. The rear property line adjoins Electric Court, the 15-foot wide alley behind the project site separating the 1600 residential block of Electric Avenue and the 1600 block of Crescent Place. This residential neighborhood predominantly features single-family and multi-family residences and duplexes that range from one-story wood bungalows to three-story-plus modern, contemporary structures. Industrial and commercial development exists to the south of the site across Electric Avenue on properties zoned M1-1-O and C2-1-O-CA within the North Venice subarea. The existing residence on the subject lot is flanked by a one-story Craftsman bungalow on the east side and a three-story, two-unit condominium (1626/1628 Electric Avenue) on the west side (**Exhibit 4**).

B. PROJECT HISTORY

On May 2, 2014, the applicant submitted to the City of Los Angeles Planning Department a Master Land Use Permit Application for the proposed project. The application was assigned Case No. 2014-1550.

The project description of the Local CDP No. ZA 2014-1550 reads as follows:

“...the demolition of an existing single-family dwelling and detached accessory structures and the construction, use, and maintenance of a new single-family dwelling with attached three-car garage, on property located within the R2-1 Zone, and the Single Permit Jurisdiction and Calvo Exclusion Area of the California Coastal Zone Commission Authority Area of the California Coastal Zone”.

On September 4, 2014, the City of Los Angeles Office of Zoning Administration (ZA) held a public hearing before the ZA Hearing Officer for Local Coastal Development Permit No. ZA 2014-1550.

On March 25, 2015, the Zoning Administrator approved with conditions the Local Coastal Development Permit for the demolition of a single-family dwelling and the construction of a 4,150 square-foot, 30-foot high, three-story single-family dwelling over a basement level with an attached 410 square-foot garage. The City issued the Director of Planning Sign-off (DIR 2014-1215-VSO-MEL) on April 9, 2014 for the proposed project's conformance to the Venice Specific Plan and the CEQA Notice of Exemption (ENV-2014-1551-CE) on July 11, 2014.

On May 28, 2015, Robin Rudisill, et al., submitted an appeal of the City's action. At a public hearing on July 09, 2015, the Commission found that a substantial issue exists with respect to the proposed project's consistency with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The Commission's action voided the local coastal development permit and the Commission is now required to hold a de novo hearing on the merits of the project.

C. DEVELOPMENT

The Venice community – including the beach, the boardwalk, the canals, and the eclectic architectural styles of the neighborhoods – is one of the most popular visitor destinations in California with 16 million people visiting annually.¹ The Venice community is primarily residential, however, and the continued change in the residential character of the Venice Community has been a cause of public concern over the years.

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states in part:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall...be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas...

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states in part:

New development shall...

e) where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods that, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act state that such scenic areas and special communities shall be protected.

¹ Venice Chamber of Commerce website. <<http://venicechamber.net/visitors/about-venice/>>

When the Commission certified the Venice Land Use Plan (LUP) in 2001, it considered the potential impacts that development could have on community character and adopted policies and specific residential building standards to ensure development was designed with pedestrian scale and compatibility with surrounding development. Given the specific conditions surrounding the subject site and the eclectic development pattern of Venice, it is appropriate to use the certified LUP policies as guidance in determining whether or not the project is consistent with sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act.

In this case, the certified Venice Land Use Plan echoes the priority expressed in Coastal Act for preservation of the nature and character of unique residential communities and neighborhoods:

Policy I. E. 1, General, states

Venice's unique social and architectural diversity should be protected as a Special Coastal Community pursuant to Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

Policy I. E. 2. Scale, states.

New development within the Venice Coastal Zone shall respect the scale and character of the community development. Buildings which are of a scale compatible with the community (with respect to bulk, height, buffer and setback) shall be encouraged. All new development and renovations should respect the scale, massing, and landscape of existing residential neighborhoods.

Policy I. E. 3. Architecture, states.

Varied styles of architecture are encouraged with building facades which incorporate varied planes and textures while maintaining the neighborhood scale and massing.

The project originally proposed under local Coastal Development Permit Application No. ZA 2014-1550 was an approximately 4,150 square-foot, 30-foot high, three-story single-family residence over a basement level, which was found to be inconsistent with Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act and with the policies of the certified LUP because of the project's potential impact to the existing community character as a result of its scale and massing.

Subsequent to the appeal of the locally approved project, the applicant withdrew the original proposed 4,150 square-foot residence and has since submitted revised plans (**Exhibit 3**); the 4,150 square-foot dimension includes the covered decks and balconies. The currently proposed project, which is smaller than the originally proposed structure (**Exhibit 4 and 5**), is an approximately 3,517 square-foot (including covered decks/balconies), three-story single-family residence and basement with an attached 393 square-foot three-car garage. The newly proposed design features a reduction in the floor area by approximately 633 square feet, a reduction in building height by approximately 1.5 to 4 feet, an increased front setback by 2.4 feet and the west side setback by 1.6 inches, and a reduced lot coverage by approximately six percent.

The above-ground (non-basement) floor area of the newly proposed residence will be limited to approximately 2,686 square feet. The revised proposal also features a stepped back design

limiting the 452 square-foot third story to the rear of the residence (**Exhibits 3, 4, and 5**); the third story is set back significantly, approximately 66.5 feet from the street and sidewalk. The maximum height of the two-story portion of the proposed structure is approximately 25.8 feet; the maximum height of the stepped back three-story portion is approximately 28.5 feet. The height limit, as set forth in the certified Land Use Plan for Venice, is 25 feet for flat roofed residences and 30 feet for structures with varied rooflines. At the proposed height of 28.5 feet (just the rear portion of the structure), the proposed project (with a varied roofline) conforms to the height limit.

The revised plans illustrate enlarged door openings and design articulations on the front building façade with eaves, canopies, balconies, and projected window fins (**Exhibit 4**). In addition, the new project makes use of natural wood cladding to provide character and warmth to the design (varied planes and textures). With the increased front yard setback (approximately 16 foot-5 inch, or 16.4-foot), which exceeds the required 15-foot setback by approximately 1.4 feet, the new proposal also provides 631 square feet of open space between the residence and the pedestrian sidewalk.

The applicant has also indicated that drought-tolerant, non-invasive vegetation will be used for new landscaping. Drainage from the roof drains, gutters, and downspouts will be diverted onto an area of permeable pavers for on-site filtration. The newly proposed project also implements water efficient and conservation measures, including the use of drip irrigation and weather-based irrigation controllers, as well as high-efficiency plumbing fixtures and low flow rates required by other local and state regulations (i.e. CalGreen). Because an outdoor pool is being proposed, the applicant has indicated that a pool cover will be used to help minimize evaporation.

The proposed project is consistent with the scale, massing, and landscape of the existing residential neighborhood. The surrounding neighborhood consists of multi-unit residential structures and single-family residences that vary in height between 13 and 30 feet (**Exhibit 6 and 7**). The dwellings on the 1600 residential block of Electric Avenue are predominantly one and two stories, but also consist of a few three-story structures. The one-story structures range from 13 to 15 feet high structures, and the two-story structure range from 22 to 27 feet high. To the south of the proposed project site, there exists one-story and two-story large-scale industrial and commercial development on properties zoned M1-1-O and C2-1-O-CA.

The project site is flanked by a one-story Craftsman bungalow on the east side and a three-story, two-unit condominium (1626/1628 Electric Avenue) on the west side (**Exhibit 4**). In 2003, the City of Los Angeles approved the construction of the three-story, 30-foot high residential structure consisting of two (2) condominiums with a roof access structure that extends to a height of 37 feet on a 3,862 square foot lot at 1626/1628 Electric Avenue, directly next to and east of the proposed project site. This structure was built to nearly the maximum size allowed by the zoning code and the certified LUP, and included narrower front setbacks than the subject application. The newly proposed design subject to CDP No. A-5-VEN-15-0036 does not maximize on the size and scale allowed under the zoning code and the certified LUP, includes setbacks in excess of what is required by code, provides significant articulation (it is not “boxy”), and is several feet (8.5 feet) shorter than the neighboring development.

The other three-story, 28-foot high structure that exists on the same residential block was processed in 2004 as a De Minimis Waiver project by the Executive Director of the Commission

(5-04-020-W) (**Exhibit 8**). De Minimis Waiver No. 5-04-020-W (1634 Electric Avenue) authorizes the demolition of a detached garage, and construction of a 28-foot high, 681 square foot single-family residence (2nd Unit) over a two-car garage. This structure was built as a rear-yard secondary residential unit to an existing one-story, 15-foot high single-family residence. The newly proposed project under CDP No. A-5-VEN-15-0036 features a residence with a stepped-back third story, but it is limited to the rear of the property and, therefore, does not contribute directly to the Electric Avenue Streetscape similarly to the three-story second residential unit at 1634 Electric Avenue.

In 2012, the Executive Director of the Commission issued another waiver of coastal development permit requirements for a three-story single-family project within 200 feet of the proposed project site. De Minimis Waiver No. 5-12-184-W (1627 Crescent Place) approved the demolition of two detached single-story residential structures, and the construction of a three-story, 28-foot high (with a 31-foot high elevator housing), 3,531 square foot single-family residence with a 380 square foot two-car garage. This dwelling is similar, in mass and scale, to the proposed project.

The revised proposal features a first-floor 16.4-foot front yard setback with a three-foot high front yard wall of reclaimed wood. In order to ensure that the development preserves the pedestrian scale which contributes to the unique character of the community as outlined in the certified LUP, **Special Condition 2** requires that the front wall in the 16.4-foot front-yard setback area shall be constructed no higher than three-feet above grade as measured from the public sidewalk adjacent to Electric Avenue. The side and rear yard wall/fence, beyond the front yard setback, shall be constructed no higher than six-feet at any point as measured from natural grade.

The revised proposal is also consistent with the existing landscape of the community because it provides drought tolerant non-invasive landscaping in the 18.8-foot front setback, which will be visible from the sidewalk and will provide contrast from the front façade of the residence.

In order to ensure that the development is carried out as shown on the revised plans, consistent with the size and scale of surrounding structures and with the pedestrian scale which contributes to the unique character of the community as outlined in the certified LUP, **Special Condition 1** requires the applicant to undertake development in accordance with the approved final plans, specifically including the site plan, building plans, landscaping plan, and drainage plan.

Opponents of the project argue that the CEQA Notice of Exemption is invalid because an environmental assessment is required to assess the impact of successive out-of-scale projects in Venice. The Commission has no authority to review and invalidate the City's CEQA determination. In its substantial issue analysis, the Commission found that the appellant's contentions regarding the City's CEQA determination did not raise a substantial issue because the Commission does not have jurisdiction to review those contentions.

For the reasons discussed above, the development is located within an existing developed area and, as conditioned, will be compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding area and will avoid cumulative adverse impacts on visual resources and community character. Therefore, the Commission finds that the development, as conditioned, conforms with Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act.

D. WATER QUALITY

The landscape plan features entirely drought-tolerant, non-invasive plant species. The drainage plan features gutters and downspouts which direct water to permeable areas for on-site infiltration; all hardscaped areas will consist of open/permeable paving. Landscaped areas will be irrigated through drip irrigation with weather-based controllers. The applicant proposes construction best management practices including filters to capture any runoff and sandbag barriers for erosion control during construction. In order to ensure that water quality is preserved and energy use is minimized over the life of the development, **Special Condition 2** implements the installation of non-invasive, drought-tolerant vegetation and water-conservative irrigation systems. In order to preserve water quality during construction, **Special Condition 3** requires the applicant to implement construction best management practices.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, conforms with Sections 30231 and 30253 of the Coastal Act regarding protection of water quality to promote biological productivity, minimization of energy consumption in new development, and to protect human health.

E. PUBLIC ACCESS

As conditioned to provide a pedestrian scale along the portion of the property fronting Electric Avenue, the proposed development will not affect the public's ability to gain access to, and/or to make use of, the coast and nearby recreational facilities. Adequate on-site parking for the proposed single-family residence is provided by the attached three-car garage, which is accessed from the alley. Therefore, as conditioned, the development conforms with Sections 30210 through 30214, Sections 30220 through 30224, and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

F. LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM

Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act provides that the Commission shall issue a coastal development permit only if the project will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction to prepare a Local Coastal Program (LCP) which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act:

Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

The City of Los Angeles does not have a certified Local Coastal Program for the Venice area. The City of Los Angeles Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice was effectively certified on June 14, 2001. The Commission's standard of review for the proposed development is the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The certified Venice LUP is advisory in nature and may provide guidance.

As conditioned, the proposed development is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and with the certified Land Use Plan for the area. Approval of the project, as conditioned, will not

prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare an LCP that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

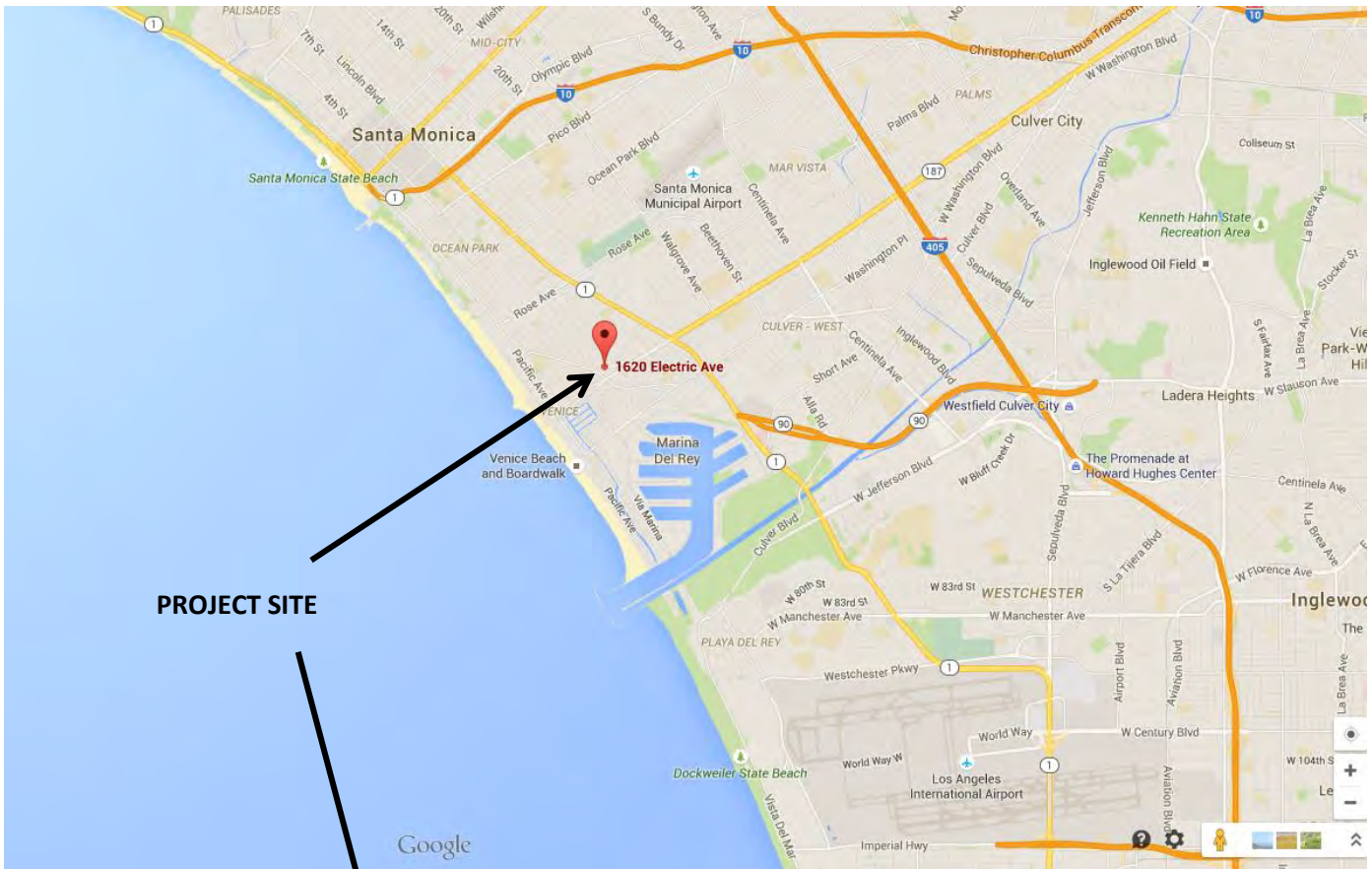
G. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Section 13096 Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations requires Commission approval of a coastal development permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment. The City is the lead agency for CEQA compliance and after preparing an Initial Study, the City issued a CEQA Notice of Exemption (ENV-2014-1551-CE) on July 11, 2014.

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or additional feasible mitigation measures available that would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative and can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

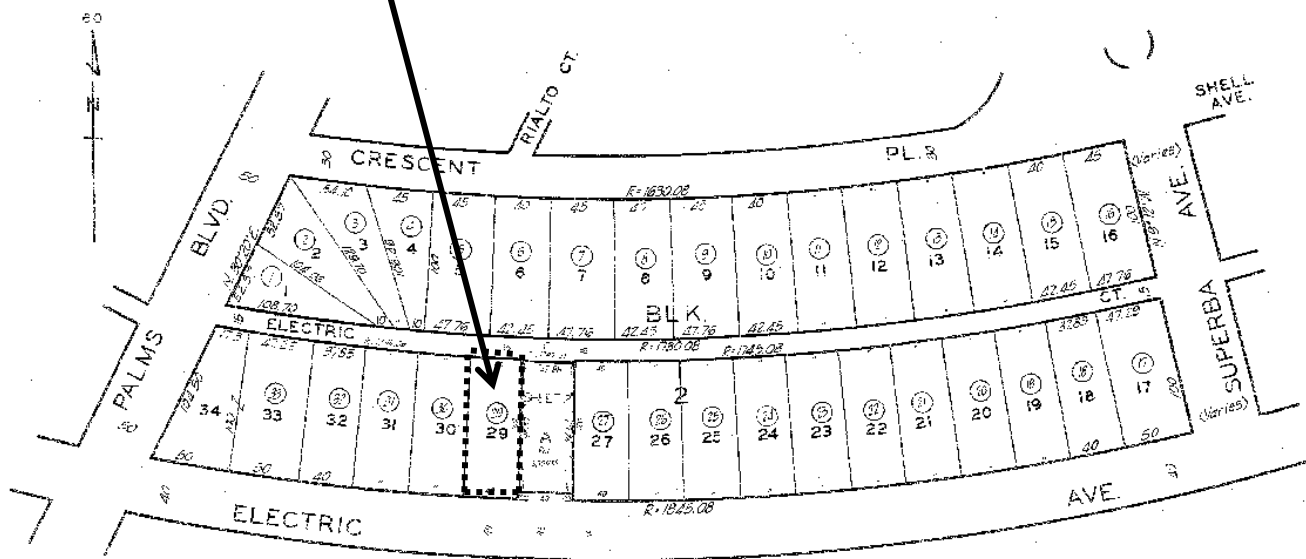
Appendix A – Substantive File Documents

1. City of Los Angeles Certified Land Use Plan for Venice (2001)
2. City File for Local Coastal Development Permit ZA-2014-1550



4241 13
SCALE 1" = 60'

2-1-61



67

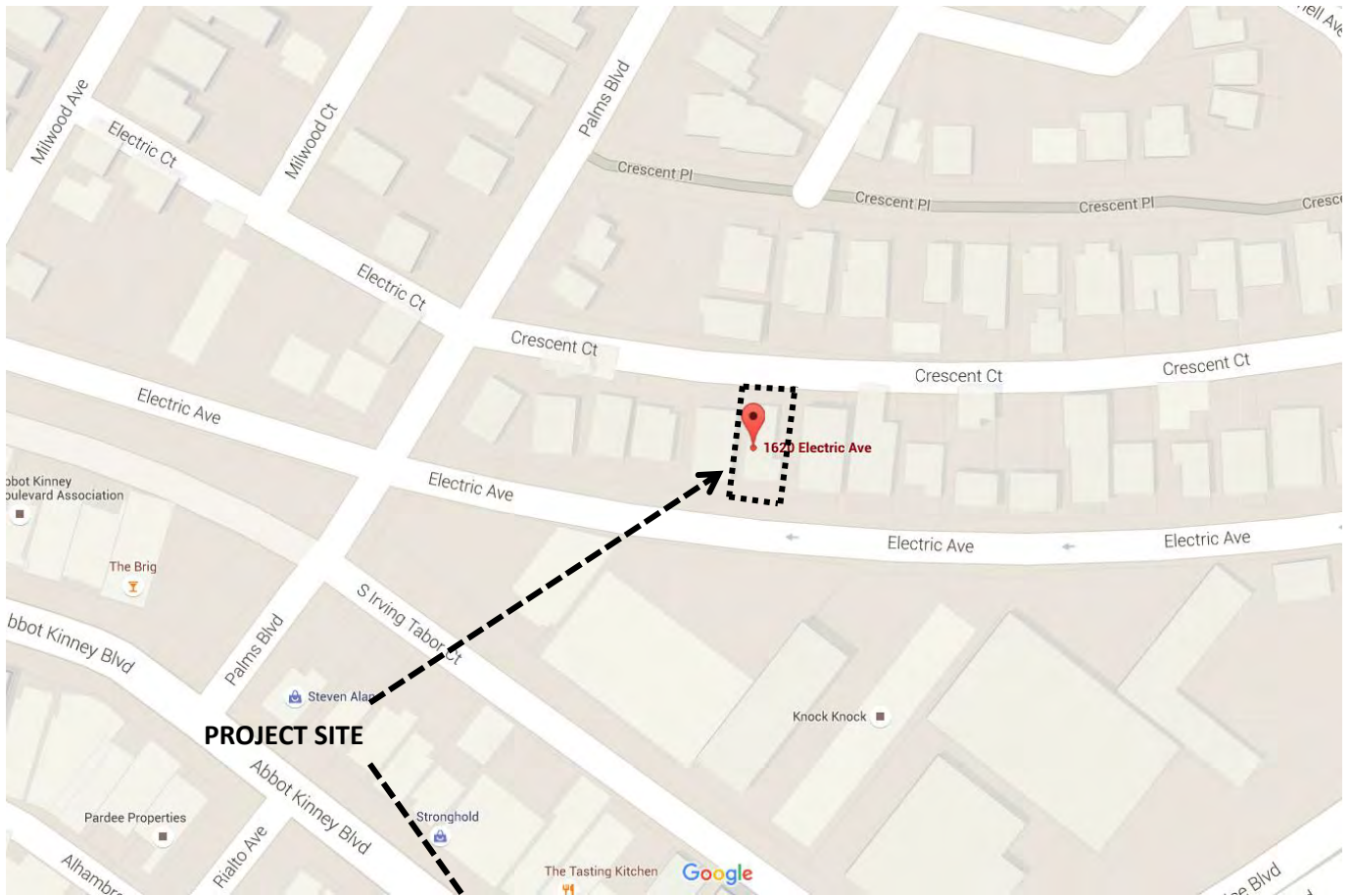
VENICE ANNEX
M. B. 7-200

CONDOMINIUM
PARCEL MAP
PM 332-64-65

FOR PREL. ASSAY, SEE: 573-3

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 1
PAGE 1 OF 1

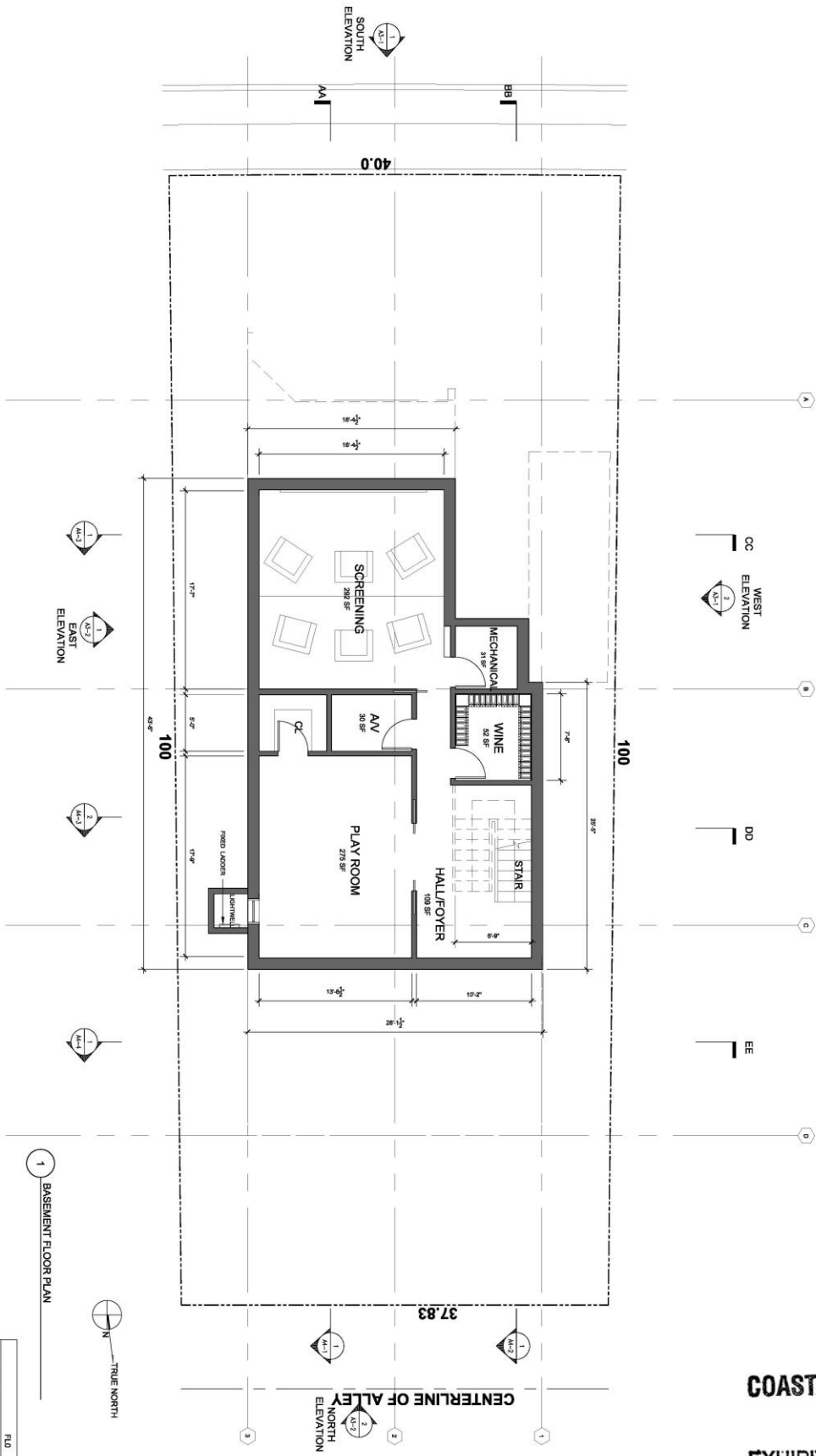


COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 2
PAGE 1 OF 1

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 3
PAGE 1 OF 6



10-19 ARCHITECTURE, LTD.

228 WESTWOOD AVE., STE 287
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

1644 AVENUE 10, #203
WILMINGTON, CA 90794

SMITH RESIDENCE

1620 ELECTRIC AVE
VENICE, CA 90291

JEFF SMITH
1620 ELECTRIC AVE.
VENICE, CA 90291

BASEMENT
PLAN

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

1. planning application 2014-04-18
2. plan check submission 2014-08-20

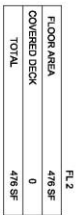


A2-0

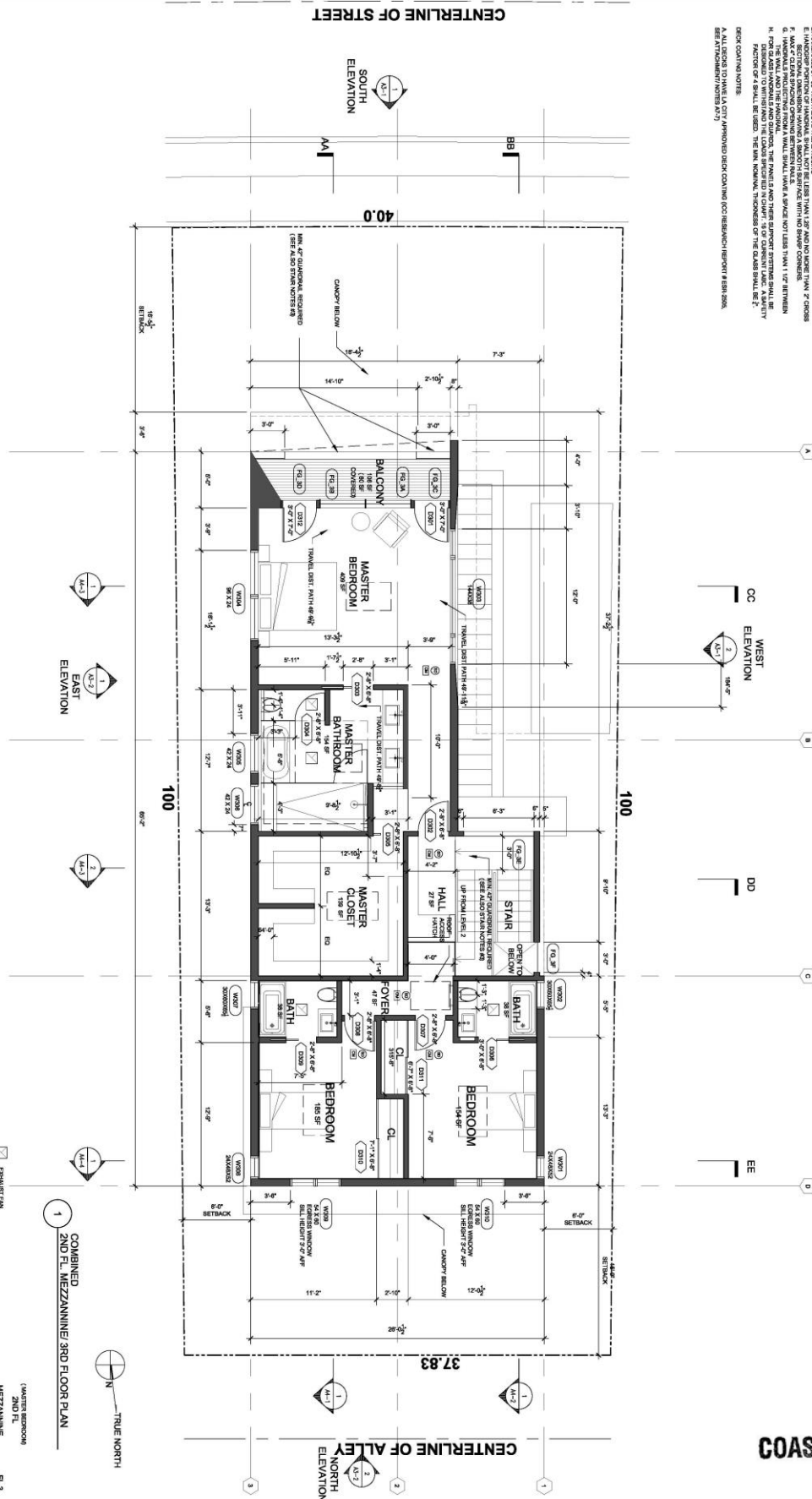
COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 3

PAGE 3 OF 6



A2-2

[illegible]

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 3

PAGE 4 OF 6

10-19 ARCHITECTURE, LTD.

SMITH RESIDENCE

THIRD FLOOR
PLAN

A2-3



EXHIBIT # 3
PAGE 5 OF 6

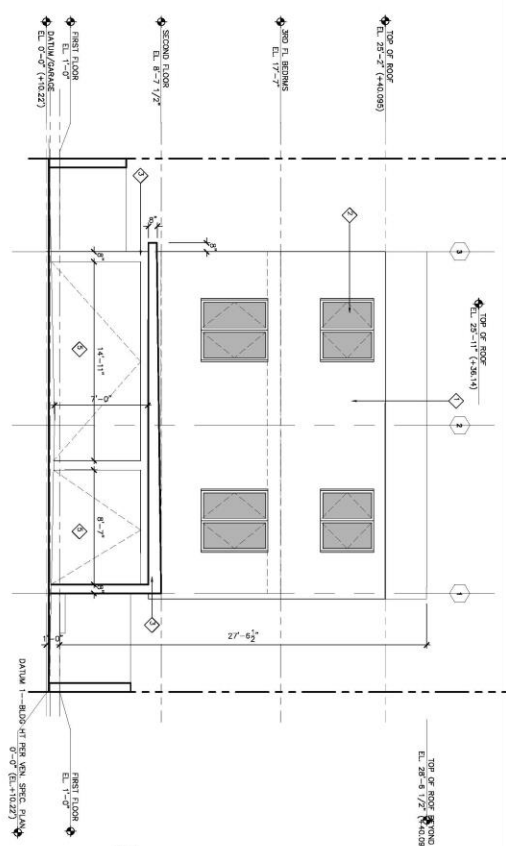
COASTAL COMMISSION

NOTES ON VENTILATION

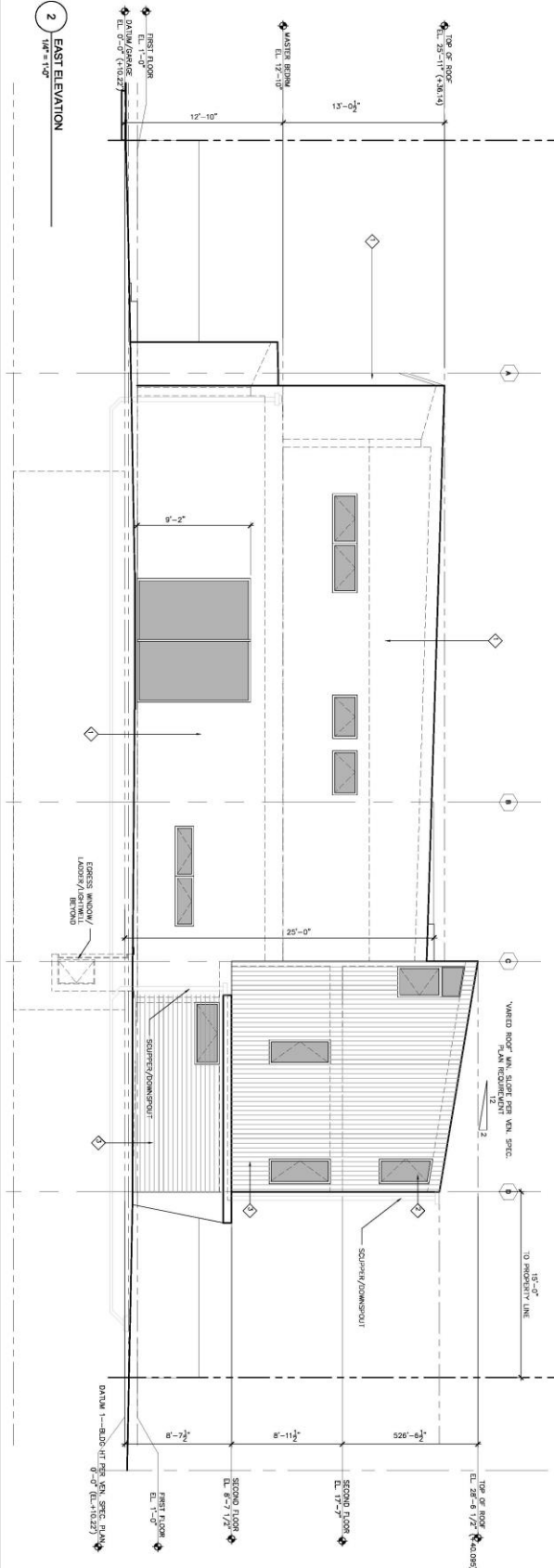
1. PROVIDE AT LEAST VENTILATION OF 1/100 OF THE AREA OF VENTILATED SPACE IN 1500 CUBIC FEET PER HOUR (1/100 C.F.M.) IS REQUIRED. (2018)
2. PROVIDE AT LEAST VENTILATION OF 1/100 OF THE AREA OF VENTILATED SPACE IN 1500 CUBIC FEET PER HOUR (1/100 C.F.M.) IS REQUIRED. (2018)
3. BATHROOM, WALK-IN CLOSET, CLOSET, AND OTHER SMALL ROOMS SHALL BE PROVIDED WITH MECHANICAL VENTILATION CAPABLE OF 20 CFM EXTRACTED DIRECTLY TO THE OUTSIDE (2018)

KEYNOTES

- 1. SMOOTH-CLAY STUCCO
- 2. GLAZING
- 3. WOOD CLADDING
- 4. SLIPED WOOD-COMB BROWN BROWN
- 5. DOOR
- 6. CONCRETE FLOTTING
- 7. GLASS GUARDRAIL



1 NORTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



2 EAST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

10-19 ARCHITECTURE, LTD.

228 WESTWOOD BLVD, STE 207
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

10-19 ARCHITECTURE, LTD.
228 WESTWOOD BLVD, STE 207
LOS ANGELES, CA 90024

SMITH RESIDENCE

1620 ELECTRIC AVE
VENICE, CA 90291

JEFF SMITH
1620 ELECTRIC AVE
VENICE, CA 90291

BUILDING
ELEVATIONS

1/4" = 1'-0"

1. Planning application 2014-04-18
2. Plan check submission 2014-04-30

2014-04-18
2014-04-30



A3-2

FACADE COMPARISON



**OLD
SCHEME**



NEW

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

RENDERING

DATE:

December 15, 2015

MASSING COMPARISON



**OLD
SCHEME**



NEW

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

RENDERING

DATE:

AUGUST 20, 2015

CONTEXT VIEWS



OLD SCHEME



REVISED SCHEME

COASTAL COMMISSION

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

RENDERING

DATE:

December 15, 2015

REVISION SUMMARY

(Old)

(New)

Reduction

FLOOR AREA

BASEMENT (INVISIBLE)	880 SF	831 SF	-49 SF
FIRST FLOOR	1,239 SF	971 SF	-268 SF
2ND FLOOR	699 SF	476 SF	-223 SF
TOP (2ND FL, MEZ + 3RD FL)	1,332 SF	1,239 SF	-93 SF
TOTAL	4,150 SF	3,517 SF	-633 SF (DECREASE)

MAX BLDG HT

@ FRONT FACADE	29'-11"	26'-0"	-3'-11" (DECREASE)
@ BACK	30'-0"	28'-6"	-1'-6" (DECREASE)

FACADE WIDTH

	20'-0"	18'-4"	-1'-8" (DECREASE)
--	--------	--------	--------------------------

LENGTH OF 3-STORY MASSING

	40'-2"	18'-8"	-21'-6" (DECREASE)
--	--------	--------	---------------------------

SETBACK

FRONT (FIRST FLOOR)	14'-0"	16'-5"	2'-5" (INCREASE)
FRONT (2ND FLOOR)	15'-10"	18'-10"	3'-0" (INCREASE)
REAR	15'-0"	15'-0"	-

SIDE (EAST)	6'-0" TO 6'-10"	6'-0" TO 6'-10"	-
SIDE (WEST)	6'-0" TO 12'-10"	6'-0" TO 14'-5"	1'-7" (INCREASE)

BLDG FOOTPRINT

	1,663 SF	1,432 SF	-231 SF (DECREASE)
--	----------	----------	---------------------------

LOT COVERAGE

	43%	37%	-6% (DECREASE)
--	-----	-----	-----------------------

**REDUCE
MASS / SCALE**

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 1 OF 3

ARCHITECT

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT

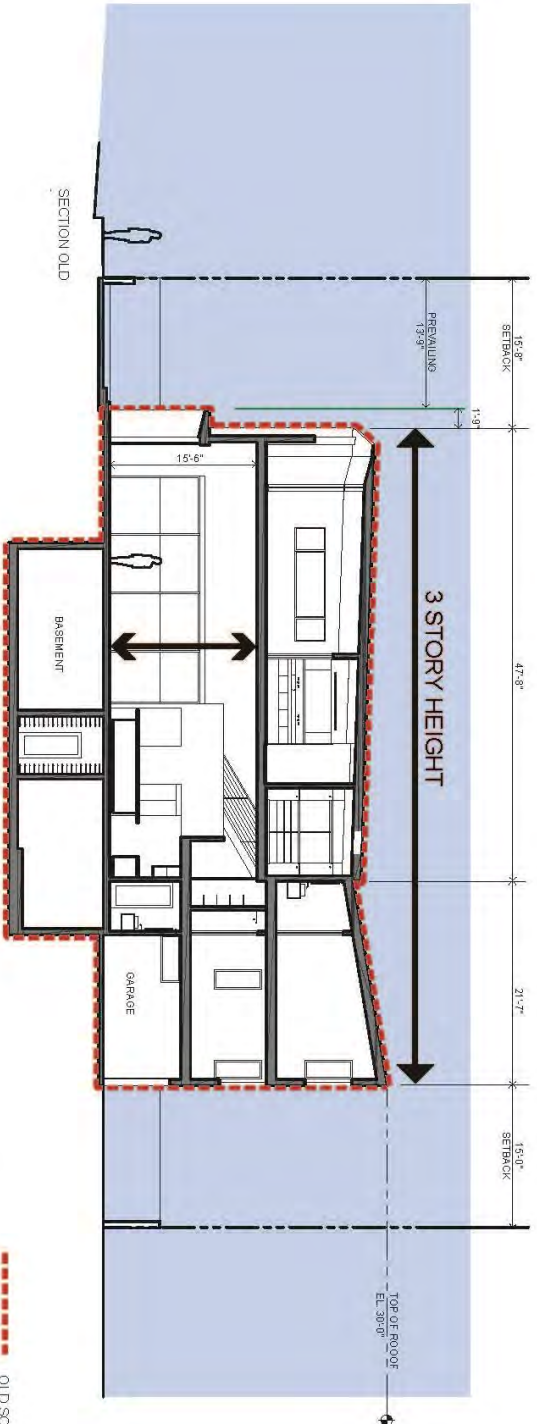
REVISION SUMMARY

DATE

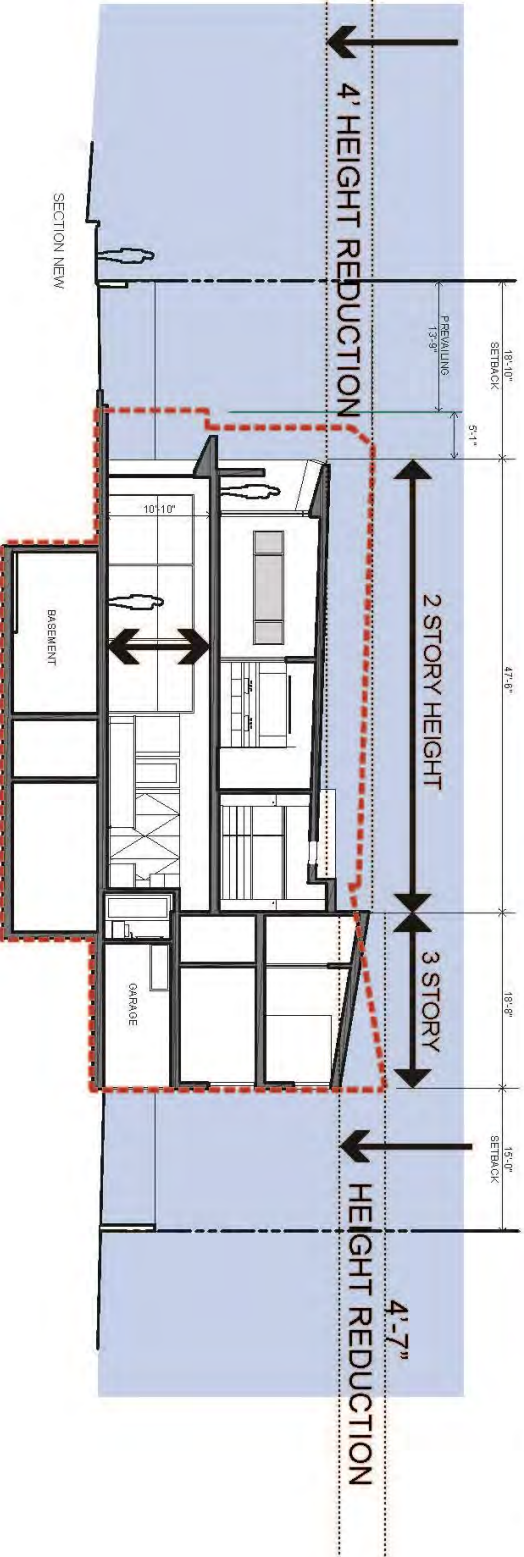
December 11, 2015

REDUCED MASSING

OLD



NEW



COASTAL COMMISSION

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

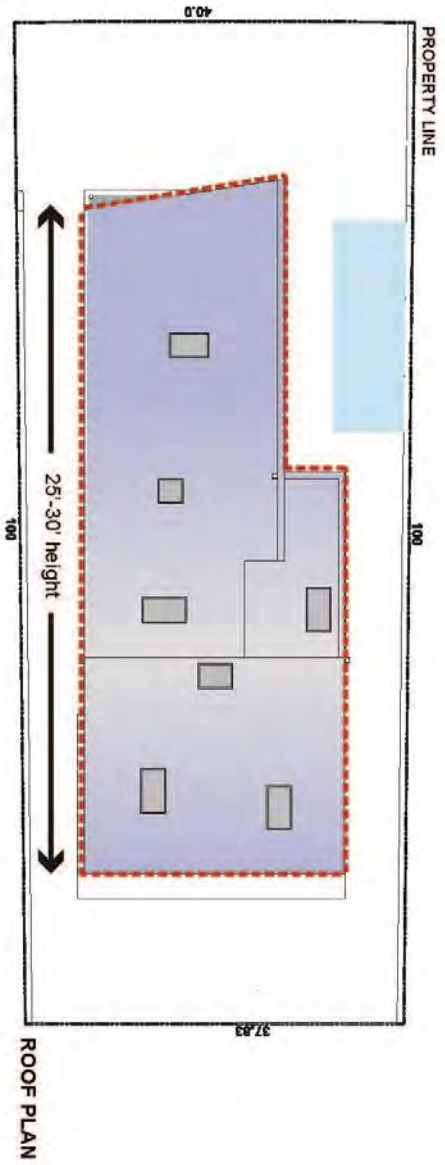
SECTION

DATE:

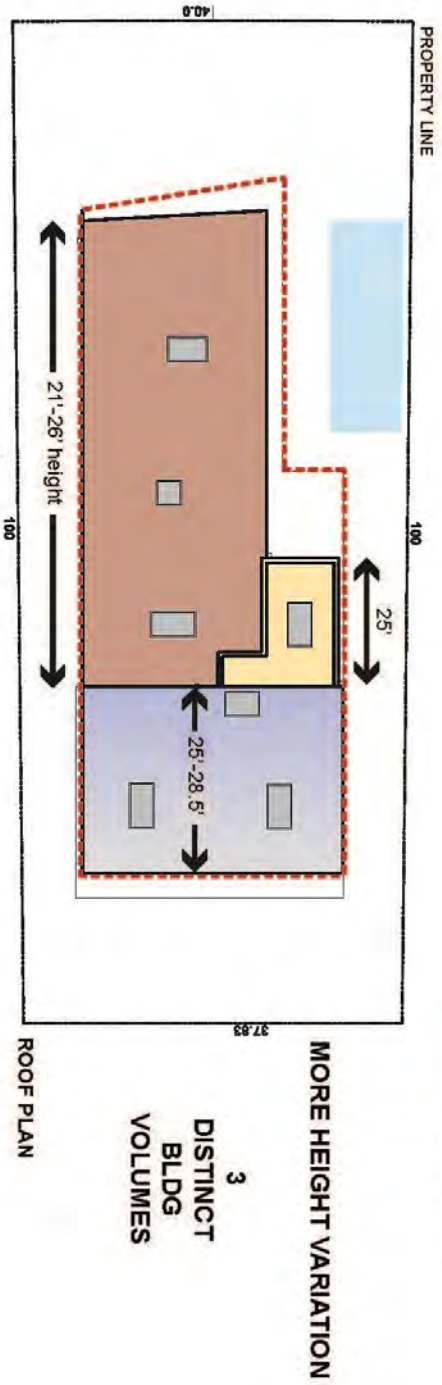
AUGUST 20, 2015

ARTICULATED MASSING

OLD



NEW



COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 5
PAGE 3 OF 3

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

ROOF PLAN

DATE:

AUGUST 20, 2015

IN-SCALE w/ CONTEXT



VIEW OF NEW MASSING FROM WEST



VIEW OF NEW MASSING FROM EAST

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 6
PAGE 1 OF 2

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

SITE MODEL

DATE:

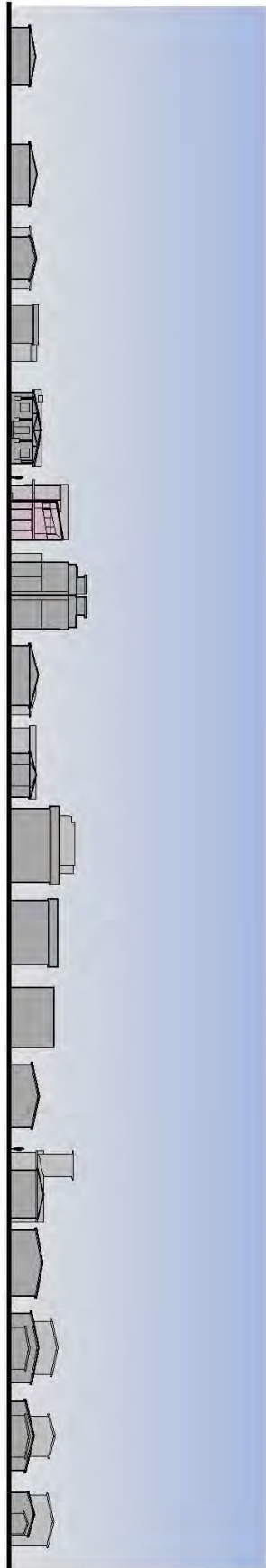
AUGUST 20, 2015

STREETSCAPE / BLDG SCALE



SITE

FRONTAL VIEW--SITE MODEL



SITE

STREET ELEVATION

ARCHITECT:

10-19 Architecture, Ltd.

PROJECT:

1620 ELECTRIC AVE.

CONTENT:

SITE MODEL

DATE:

AUGUST 20, 2015



STREET VIEW 1--LOOKING TOWARD SITE FROM ELECTRIC AVE.



STREET VIEW 2--LOOKING ACROSS ELECTRIC AVE FROM SITE



ALLEY VIEW 3--LOOKING TOWARD SITE FROM ELECTRIC COURT (ALLEY)

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 7
PAGE 1 OF 1



Alley View of 2nd Unit of 1634 Electric Avenue as seen from Electric Court (Alley)

COASTAL COMMISSION

EXHIBIT # 8
PAGE 1 OF 1