

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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

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 Staff: CP-LB
 Staff Report: 2/7/2003
 Hearing Date: March 4-7, 2003
 Commission Action:

**Tu 18d****STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR****APPLICATION NUMBER:** 5-02-353

RECORD PACKET COPY

APPLICANT: Roger Lowenstein**AGENT:** Christopher V. Ward, AIA**PROJECT LOCATION:** 21 Reef Street, Venice, City of Los Angeles.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Demolition of a one-story single family residence, and construction of a four-level, 38.5-foot high, 3,669 square foot single family residence with a four-car garage in the basement.

Lot Area	3,099 square feet
Building Coverage	1,924 square feet
Pavement Coverage	615 square feet
Landscape Coverage	560 square feet
Parking Spaces	4
Zoning	R3-1
Plan Designation	Multi-family Residential/Low Medium II
Ht above final grade	38.5 feet

LOCAL APPROVAL:

1. City of Los Angeles Specific Plan Exception and Specific Plan Project Permit, City Council File No. 02-1781, 9/25/02.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending that the Commission **DENY** the coastal development permit for the proposed project because it does not comply with the public access policies and Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act which require that the scenic and visual qualities of special coastal communities be protected. The proposed 38.5-foot high structure would negatively affect the character of the walk street on which it is proposed and would set a negative precedent for the area. Approval of the development as proposed would also

prejudice the ability of the City to prepare an LCP that conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act because the proposed development exceeds the 28-foot height limit set forth in the certified LUP for buildings along the Venice walk streets. The applicant objects to the staff's recommendation.

SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:

1. Certified Land Use Plan for Venice, City of Los Angeles, 6/14/01.
2. Venice Specific Plan, City of Los Angeles Ordinance No. 172897.
3. Coastal Development Permit Application 5-01-162 (Denied).
4. Coastal Development Permit A5-VEN-01-392/5-01-3491 (King).
5. Coastal Development Permit 5-01-131 (Smith).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the Commission vote **NO** on the following motion and adopt the resolution to **DENY** the coastal development permit application:

MOTION: *"I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit Application No. 5-02-353 as submitted by the applicant."*

Staff recommends a **NO** vote and adoption of the following resolution and findings.

I. RESOLUTION FOR DENIAL

The Commission hereby **denies** a coastal development permit for the proposed development on the grounds that the development will not be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976 and would 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 of the Coastal Act. Approval of the permit application would not comply with CEQA because there are feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

A. Project Description & Area History

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing one-story single family residence and construct a new 38.5-foot high single family residence on a 3,099 square foot lot that

fronts Reef Street in the Marina Peninsula area of Venice (Exhibit #2). The project site is located one block inland of the beach (Exhibit #3). Reef Street is a forty-foot wide City right-of-way designated as a walk street by the certified Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of a variety of older and new single family residences and multi-family residential structures that vary in height up from a single story to a maximum of about forty feet.

The structure to be demolished is a fourteen-foot high single family residence. The proposed new residence is a four-level, 38.5-foot high, 3,669 square foot single family residence (Exhibit #6). A four-car garage, accessed from the rear alley, is proposed in the basement of the proposed house. The front porch of the proposed house would be set back sixteen feet from the Reef Street right-of-way in order to preserve the mature trees that exist in the front yard area of the lot (Exhibit #4). The second story of the proposed house would be set back 22.67 feet from the right-of-way, and the third story would be set back forty feet, creating a stepped back design (Exhibit #5).

The Commission has recognized in both prior permit and appeal decisions that the Marina Peninsula area of Venice, where the proposed project is located, is a unique coastal community [e.g. Coastal Development Permit 5-00-477 (Yoon)]. In 1980, the Commission adopted the Regional Interpretive Guidelines for Los Angeles County which included specific building standards for the various Venice neighborhoods, including the Marina Peninsula neighborhood. These building standards, which apply primarily to density, building height and parking, reflect conditions imposed in a series of permits heard prior to 1980. The Commission has consistently applied these density, height and parking standards to development in the Venice coastal zone in order to protect public access to the beach and to preserve community character. The Regional Interpretive Guidelines for Los Angeles County contain a 35-foot height limit for development in the Marina Peninsula area of Venice. The Interpretive Guidelines also state that the Venice walk streets shall be preserved as walk streets.

On October 29, 1999, the Los Angeles City Council adopted a proposed Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice and submitted it for Commission certification as part of the City's effort to develop a certified Local Coastal Program (LCP) for Venice. On November 14, 2000, the Commission approved the City's proposed LUP for Venice with suggested modifications. On March 28, 2001, the Los Angeles City Council accepted the Commission's suggested modifications and adopted the Venice LUP as the Commission on November 14, 2000 approved it. The Commission officially certified the Venice LUP on June 14, 2001.

The policies and building standards contained in the certified Venice LUP reflect the Commission's prior actions in the area, the Commission's 1980 Interpretive Guidelines, and the existing character of each Venice neighborhood. The Commission-certified LUP for Venice, however, also contains some updated and revised building standards for the various Venice neighborhoods, including the Marina Peninsula neighborhood where the proposed project is situated.

One change proposed by the City and adopted as part of the certified Venice LUP was the lowering of the height limit to 28 feet for all new residential development situated along the Venice walk streets. Formerly, the height limit for development on the walk streets was the same as the general height limit for each Venice neighborhood. In the Marina Peninsula area, the general height limit before the adoption of the certified LUP was 35 feet. The certified LUP height limit for the Marina Peninsula area is currently 35 feet, except for buildings along walk streets which are limited to a maximum height of 28 feet.

After the Venice LUP was certified in 2001, the Commission heard a number of proposals for development along walk streets, including proposals that exceeded the LUP height limit of 28 feet. Most of the proposals were for development that was 28 feet in height or lower. The Commission has been consistent in imposing the 28-foot height limit for new development along the Venice walk streets. No exceptions have been granted to the LUP height limit on walk streets since the Commission certified the City's proposed 28-foot height limit in 2001. In two recent cases along walk streets where the City granted Specific Plan Exceptions to its 28-foot height limit, the Commission overturned the exceptions during the coastal development permit process and required the new development to conform to the 28-foot limit [See Coastal Development Permit 5-01-131 (Smith) & Appeal A5-VEN-01-392 (King)].

Although the standard of review for the proposed development is the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act, the Commission-certified LUP for Venice now provides specific guidance for the Commission's interpretation of the relevant Chapter 3 policies. A coastal development permit is approved only if the proposed development is found to be consistent with the Coastal Act.

B. Community Character – Building Heights Along Walk Streets

As stated above, the project site abuts Reef Street, a forty-foot wide City right-of-way designated as a walk street by the certified Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice (Exhibit #3). The walk streets in North Venice, Marina Peninsula and Milwood neighborhoods of Venice are among the most pleasant pedestrian amenities in Los Angeles and provide excellent vertical access to the beach. The certified Venice LUP identifies the Marina Peninsula walk streets as protected coastal accessways for pedestrians. Vehicular access on walk streets is restricted to emergency vehicles. The Reef Street walk street connects the sandy beach with Pacific Avenue, where curbside public parking is available (Exhibit #3).

The Venice walk streets are typical of a number of southern California beach communities that were originally developed with weekend beach cottages early in the twentieth century. Streetcars served these communities. Walk streets have narrow, pedestrian friendly walkways down the middle of the right-of-way, with landscaped "front yards" that encroach up to the open public walkway in the middle of the right-of-way. This walk street (Reef Street), on the north side, includes the typical landscaped "front yards" that encroach into the street right of way. Along the south side of the right-of-way, however, the residents have converted half of the walk street to a private parking area.

Staff is recommending that the Commission deny the permit application because the height of the proposed single family residence would negatively affect the character and scenic and visual qualities of the community in violation of Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act. The proposed structure exceeds the certified LUP height limit by more than ten feet.

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas....

Section 30253(5) of the Coastal Act states:

New development shall: (5) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods which, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

In order to protect the unique character of the Venice walk streets, the certified LUP limits the height of development along these walk street to a maximum of 28 feet, which is less than the 35-foot height limit for Marina Peninsula properties not located along a walk street or a sensitive habitat area (Exhibit #2). The proposed 38.5-foot high project would exceed the walk street height limit by more than ten feet (Exhibit #5).

Height limits are needed to: 1) keep the building heights in proportion to the pedestrian walkways which are typically ten or fifteen wide; 2) avoid taller denser buildings that would require wider streets to service them; 3) to ensure better safety in the event of a fire or other emergency – walk streets do not provide the width or turn radiuses for the emergency equipment that taller buildings require; and, 4) to protect the scenic and visual qualities of the unique coastal area.

On June 14, 2001, the Commission certified the Venice LUP which includes the following policies to protect the Venice walk streets and the character of the Marina Peninsula community. The following LUP policies carry out requirements of Coastal Act Sections 30251 and 30253 to protect the scenic and visual qualities of the Marina Peninsula coastal area, a popular visitor destination.

- ***Policy II. C. 7. Walk Streets.*** Designated walk streets shall be preserved and maintained at their present widths for public pedestrian access to the shoreline and other areas of interest and to preserve views along and from the public right-of-way. Vehicular access on walk streets shall be restricted to emergency vehicles. The minimum width of the pedestrian path shall be 10-12 feet in the North Venice and Peninsula areas and 4½ feet in the Milwood

area. The remaining public right-of-way shall be limited to grade level uses including landscaping, patios, gardens and decks.

(Staff note: The following list, which includes Reef Street, is only part of the list of walk streets contained in LUP Policy II.C.7).

The following streets are designated as walk streets (as shown on LUP Exhibit 19):

West of Pacific Avenue and east of Ocean Front Walk:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| a. Twenty-fourth Avenue | j. Galleon Street |
| b. Twenty-sixth Avenue | k. Mast Street |
| c. Twenty-seventh Avenue | l. Outrigger Street |
| d. Twenty-eighth Avenue | m. Privateer Street |
| e. Thirtieth Avenue | n. Reef Street |
| f. Anchorage Avenue | o. Spinnaker Street |
| g. Buccaneer Street | p. Union Jack Street |
| h. Catamaran Street | q. Westwind Street |
| i. Sunset Avenue | r. Yawl Street |
| | s. Via Marina |

• **Policy II. C. 10. Walk Streets -- Residential Development Standards.** *New residential development along walk streets shall enhance both public access and neighborhood character. Building materials, colors, massing and scale of new structures shall complement those of existing structures in the neighborhood. Building facades shall be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to pedestrians. Primary ground floor residential building entrances and frequent windows shall face the walk streets. Front porches, bays, and balconies shall be encouraged. In case of duplexes and low density multiple-family buildings, entries shall be located in the exterior building facade for each residential unit, shall face walk streets, and be well-defined and separate.*

• **Policy II. C. 11. Encroachments into Walk Street Right-of-Way.** *Encroachments into City right-of-way shall be limited to grade level uses including gardens, patios, landscaping, ground level decks and fences. The gardens/patios in the right-of-way, between the fences and the buildings, shall be permitted to provide a transitional zone between the public path ways and private dwellings. To create a defensible space, the planting along the walk streets shall not impede the view of walkways by the residents and the view of the gardens by the pedestrian. Creative use and arrangement of permeable paving materials shall be encouraged. Any fence, wall or hedge erected in the public right-of-way shall not exceed 42 inches in height as measured from the existing grade of the public right-of-way. The use of decorative fence*

patterns such as split rail, picket and rustic is encouraged. New fences shall be located in line with existing fences on the same side of the street.

Policy I.A.7.c contains the density and height limits for the Marina Peninsula area of Venice, as follows:

- **Policy I. A. 7. c. Marina Peninsula**

Use: Two units per lot, duplexes and multi-family structures.

Density: One unit per 1,200 square feet of lot area. Lots smaller than 4,000 square feet are limited to a maximum density of two units per lot.

Yards: Yards shall be required in order to accommodate the need for fire safety, open space, permeable land area for on-site percolation of stormwater, and on-site recreation consistent with the existing scale and character of the neighborhood.

Height: Not to exceed 35 feet. Structures located along walk streets are limited to a maximum height of 28 feet. (See LUP Policy I.A. 1 and LUP Height Exhibits 13-16). [See Exhibit #2 of the staff report.]

Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act and the above-stated policies of the certified Venice LUP require that the Venice walk streets be protected from development that would negatively affect pedestrian access and the unique scenic qualities of the walk streets. The proposed 38.5-foot high structure does not conform to the requirements of the certified LUP or Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act. Policy II.C.7 lists Reef Street as a designated walk street where vehicular access shall be restricted to emergency vehicles and where the height of new residential development shall be limited to 28 feet. The use of the Reef Street as a private parking area violates LUP Policy II.C.7. Such a violation cannot be used as a basis to justify further deviations from the policies of the certified LUP that protect the walk streets.

Policy II.C.10 requires that new residential development along walk streets enhance both public access and neighborhood character. The proposed 38.5-foot high building would not enhance neighborhood character, as it would be taller than many of the other buildings on Reef Street and other neighborhood walk streets. Taller buildings would be out of proportion to the pedestrian walkways and taller buildings require wider streets to service them. The conversion of the walk streets to wider streets for emergency access would adversely affect scenic and visual qualities of the unique coastal area. Therefore, allowing new buildings to exceed the height limit would set a bad precedent. The proposed 38.5-foot high building exceeds the 28-foot height limit called for by LUP Policy I.A.7.c.

The Los Angeles City Council, however, granted the applicant an exception to the City's 28-foot height limit for walk streets [City of Los Angeles Specific Plan Exception and Specific Plan Project Permit, City Council File No. 02-1781, 9/25/02]. In addition to

being part of the certified LUP for Venice, the 28-foot height limit for walk streets in part of the Venice Specific Plan, which the City is preparing to submit to the Commission as part of the proposed LCP for Venice. The City's Specific Plan Exception is based on the finding that the two adjacent residential buildings are 43 and 40 feet high, and that the proposed project's thoughtful architectural design is consistent with other area homes (Page 2, Council PLUM Report File No. 02-1781). The City's findings also state that the 43 and 40-foot high buildings on either side of the project site were built prior to the City's adoption of the 28-foot height limit for the Venice walk streets.

While the proposed project is situated between two very tall buildings, most of the buildings on the other side of Reef Street do not exceed 28 feet in height, and many of the Venice walk streets (including Reef Street) are lined with older residences that are less than 28 feet in height. While some of the existing development on the walk streets does exceed 28 feet in height, all new development is being required to conform to the current height limit. The approval of a third building on the north side of Reef Street nearly forty feet in height, as proposed by the applicant, would create a monolithic wall of buildings that is now broken up by the existing one-story house.

In addition to the height of the two neighboring buildings, the applicant has listed several other reasons why he feels that he should be permitted to exceed the height limit:

1. Reef Street is not a walk street and is being used for parking by vehicles (Exhibit #8).
2. The applicant is proposing only one residential unit when the LUP allows two units per lot.
3. The design of the proposed house is set back more than required from the walk street, thus reducing the mass of the structure from what is allowed by City zoning.
4. The 38.5-foot high portion of the proposed structure is set back almost 23 feet from the Reef Street right-of-way, while the front portion of the proposed house is only 28 feet high (Exhibit #6).
5. The Fire Department has approved the proposed design (Exhibit #8, p.3).

These reasons cannot be used as a basis to justify further deviations from the policies of the certified LUP that protect the walk streets. Although the City and Commission have designated Reef Street as a walk street, part of the forty-foot wide right-of-way is being driven on and used by unauthorized vehicles. The northern side of the Reef Street right-of-way is landscaped and being used as part of the front yards for the buildings along the north side of the street, consistent with LUP Policy II.C.11 (15 Reef Street, 21 Reef Street, 33 Reef Street & 35 Reef Street). Pedestrian access to the beach is provided down the middle of the right-of-way, as it is on all the walk streets. The southern side of

Reef Street, however, has been paved and is accessible to vehicles (only from Speedway Alley – not from Pacific Avenue). Private “Resident Only Parking – Tow Away Zone” signs are posted along the entire southern side of the Reef Street right-of-way where locals have usurped the public right-of-way for private vehicular uses. The vehicular uses are not permitted and conflict entirely with the certified LUP policies regarding the use of the Venice walk streets. The use of the walk street for private parking is not a reason for granting an exception to the height limit.

The density and design of the proposed project is also not a reason for granting an exception to the height limit. The certified LUP lists both the density and the height limit as two, separate and equally essential requirements. Both limits must be complied with if the unique character of the community is to be protected.

Finally, the approval of the proposed project design by the Fire Department may be sufficient so far as building safety issues are concerned, but proposed 38.5-foot high building would still have a negative effect on the character of the walk street.

Therefore, staff is recommending that the Commission deny the proposed project because it cannot be found to be consistent with Sections 30251 and 30253 of the Coastal Act, and it would prejudice the ability of the City to prepare an LCP which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The applicant’s proposal to construct a 38.5-foot high building cannot be found to be consistent with the policies of the Coastal Act that require the protection of community character and visual quality in the Marina Peninsula neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project is denied.

C. Public Access and Recreation

The Coastal Act and the policies of the certified Venice LUP protect public access along the historic Venice walk streets. The following policy of the certified Venice LUP protects the Venice walk streets for public pedestrian access:

- ***Policy II. C. 7. Walk Streets.*** *Designated walk streets shall be preserved and maintained at their present widths for public pedestrian access to the shoreline and other areas of interest and to preserve views along and from the public right-of-way. Vehicular access on walk streets shall be restricted to emergency vehicles. The minimum width of the pedestrian path shall be 10-12 feet in the North Venice and Peninsula areas and 4½ feet in the Milwood area. The remaining public right-of-way shall be limited to grade level uses including landscaping, patios, gardens and decks.*

Section 30210 of the Coastal Act states:

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public

safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Venice Land Use Plan Policy II.C.10. states in part:

New residential development along walk streets shall enhance both public access and neighborhood character.

Shoreline recreation resources in the Venice area include: Venice Beach, Ballona Lagoon, the Venice Canals, walk streets, and the Marina del Rey north jetty which lies partly in the jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles. Venice Beach is a publicly owned sandy beach, which provides direct access to the entire oceanfront shoreline and is readily accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists. The walk streets in the Marina Peninsula neighborhood provide excellent pedestrian access to the beach. It is a goal of the Coastal Commission and the City to protect these public resources. By allowing residential development along walk streets to ignore the certified LUP policies, i.e. exceed designated height limits, the cumulative effect is an over developed, crowded feel that may discourage public use and enjoyment of these pedestrian accessways. Discouraging public access is inconsistent with the certified LUP and the public access policies of the Coastal Act.

D. 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 which conforms with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act:

- (a) 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). A denial of a Coastal Development Permit on grounds it would 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) shall be accompanied by a specific finding which sets forth the basis for such conclusion.

The City of Los Angeles does not have a certified Local Coastal Program for the Venice area. The Commission officially certified the City of Los Angeles LUP for Venice on June 14, 2001.

The certified Venice LUP contains provisions to protect the character of the Venice walk streets, including a 28-foot height limit for structures along the rights-of-way. The

proposed project does not conform to the policies of the certified Venice LUP. Moreover, as discussed above, the proposed development is inconsistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. By allowing residential development along walk streets to ignore the certified LUP policies, i.e. exceed designated height limits, the cumulative effect is an over developed, crowded feel that changes the community character and may discourage public use and enjoyment of these pedestrian accessways. Such ignorance of the certified LUP at the present time would make it increasingly difficult to adopt and enforce an LCP that includes measures to protect what remains of the Venice walk streets. Therefore, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed development would prejudice the City's ability to prepare a LCP consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and is not consistent with Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act.

E. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

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 applicant's proposed project would have a significant adverse effect on the environment because it is too tall. There currently exists a viable use on the private property: a one-story single family residence. The construction of a 28-foot high single family residence constitutes a feasible alternative to the construction of the proposed 38.5-foot high building. Thus, denial of the proposed project does not deny the applicant all economically beneficial or productive use of his property or unreasonably limit the owner's reasonable investment-backed expectations of the subject property. A 28-foot high building would have less adverse environmental effects on the character of the walk street. In fact, the applicant is left with various design alternatives that comply with the relevant requirements. The proposed structure exceeds the height limit, is not consistent with character of the Venice walk streets, and would significantly impact the character of the community. The denial of this project would reduce the project's visual impact from the Reef Street walk street.

Therefore, there are feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available which will lessen the significant adverse impacts that the development would have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project is not consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.



VENICE, CA



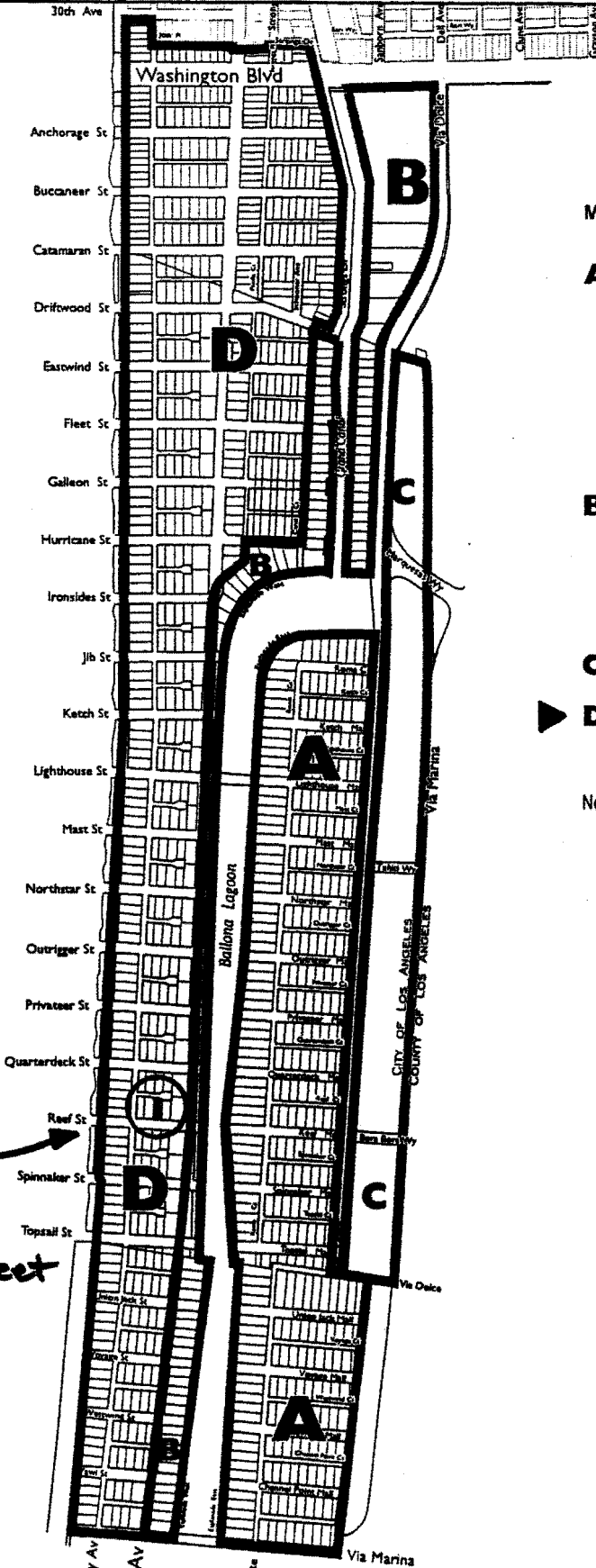
Site:
21 Reef St.



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EXHIBIT # 1

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Maximum Building Height

- A** 30' within 60 horizontal feet of the mean high tide line of Ballona Lagoon or inland side of the Esplanade (City right-of-way), whichever is furthest from the water. Beyond 60 horizontal feet, one foot in additional height is permitted for each two additional horizontal feet to a maximum height of 45'. 45-foot limit for structures or portions of structures located further than 60 horizontal feet of the mean high tide line of Ballona Lagoon and the inland side of the Esplanade.
- B** 30' within 60 horizontal feet of the mean high tide line of Ballona Lagoon, Grand Canal or the inland side of the Esplanade (City right-of-way), whichever is furthest from the water. Beyond 60 horizontal feet, one foot in additional height is permitted for each two additional horizontal feet to a maximum height of 38 feet.
- C** 45'
- D** 35', 28' along Walk Streets.

Notes:

*All building heights shall be measured from the elevation of the fronting right-of-way, except on lagoon lots where all building heights shall be measured from the average existing natural grade.

*No portion of any structure (including roof access structures, roof deck railings and architectural features) shall exceed the 30' height limit within 60 horizontal feet of the mean high tide line of Ballona Lagoon, Grand Canal or the inland side of the Esplanade (City right-of-way).

*Notwithstanding other policies of this LUP, chimneys, exhaust ducts, ventilation shafts and other similar devices essential for building function may exceed the specified height limit in a residential zone by five feet.

*See Policy I.A.1 for policy limiting roof access structures.

*See Policy I.B.7 for commercial and mixed-use development standards.

Site
21 Reef
Street

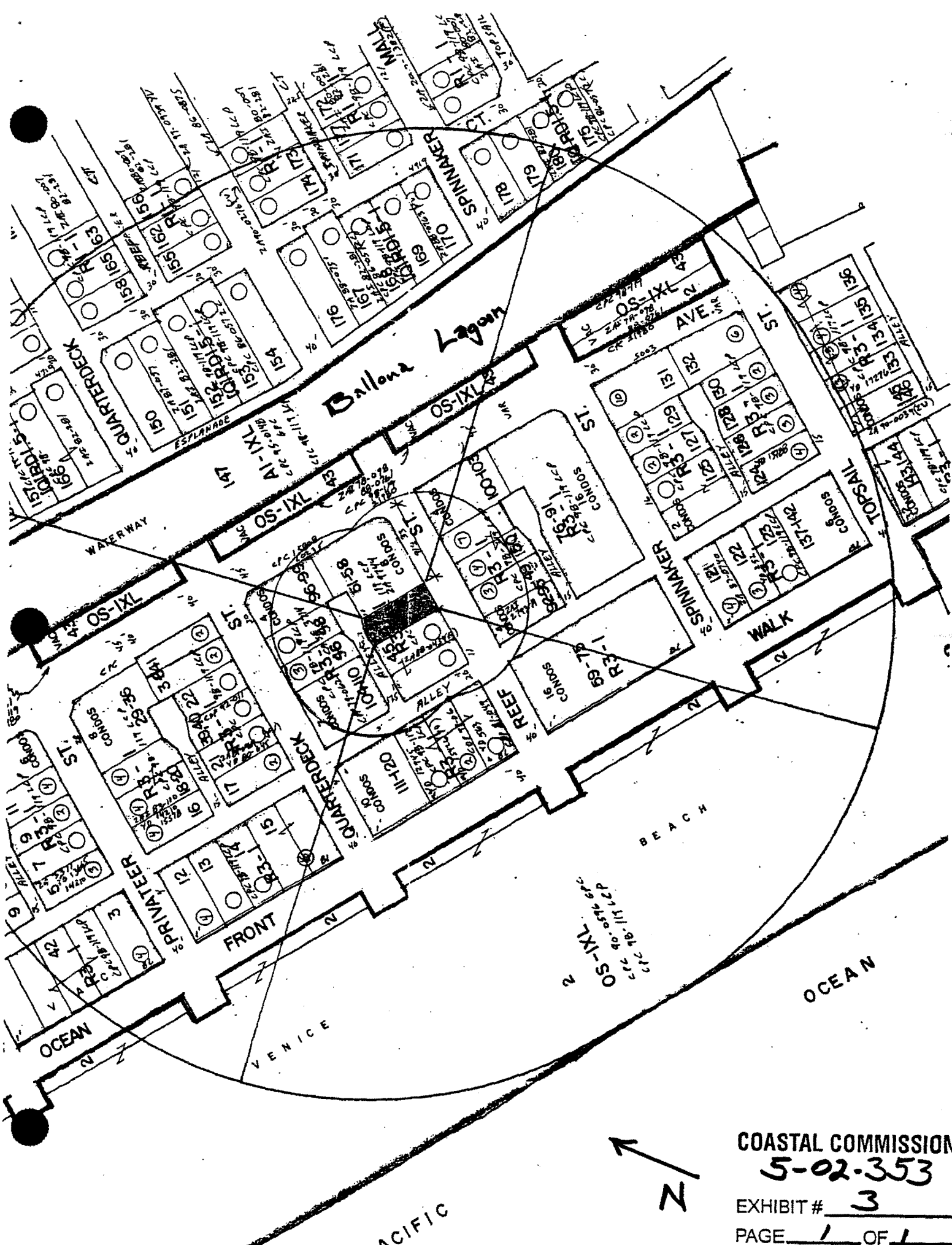
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LUP
Exhibit 13
Height

Subarea: Marina Peninsula • Silver Strand •

Ballona Lagoon West • Ballona Lagoon (Grand Canal) East



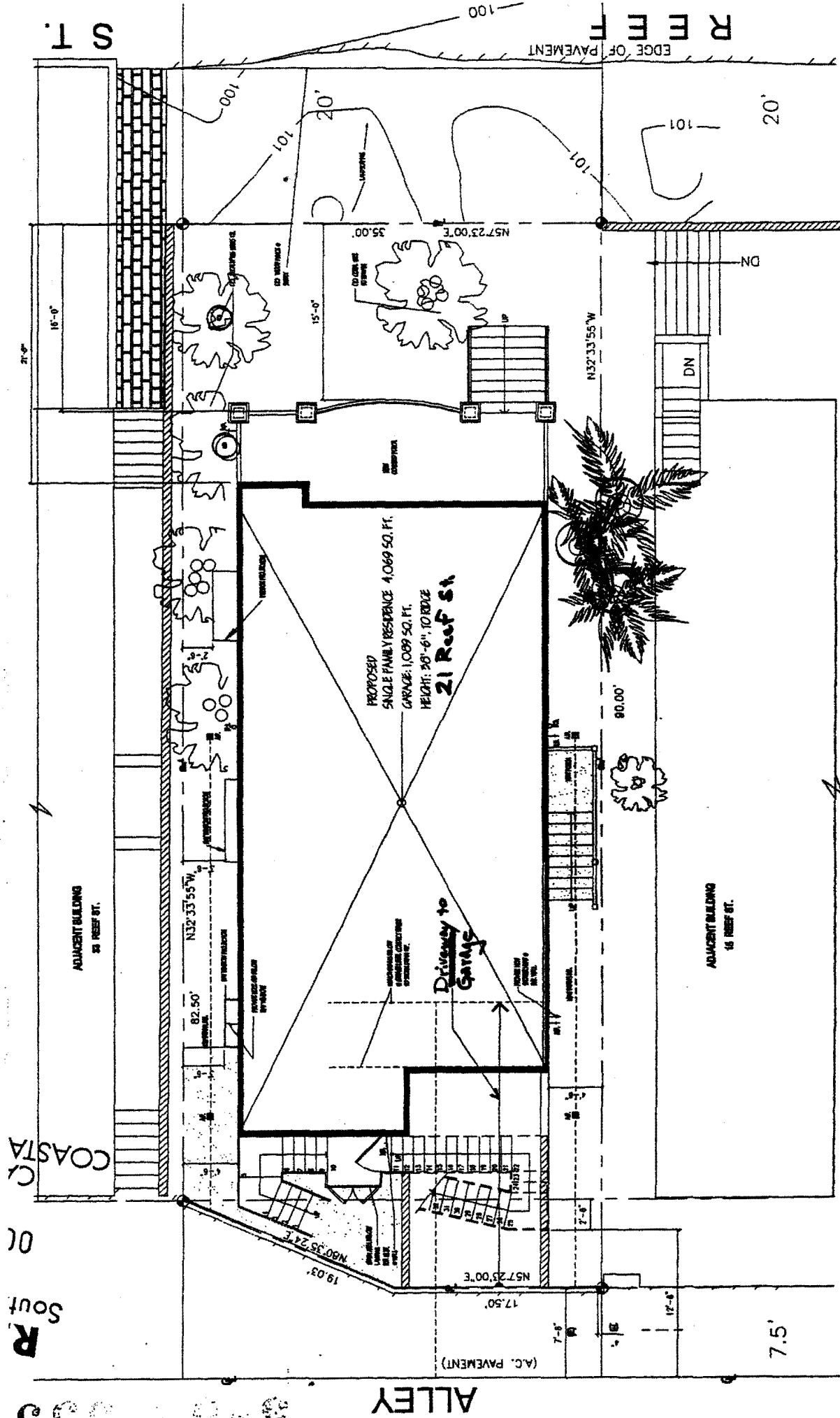


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EXHIBIT # 3

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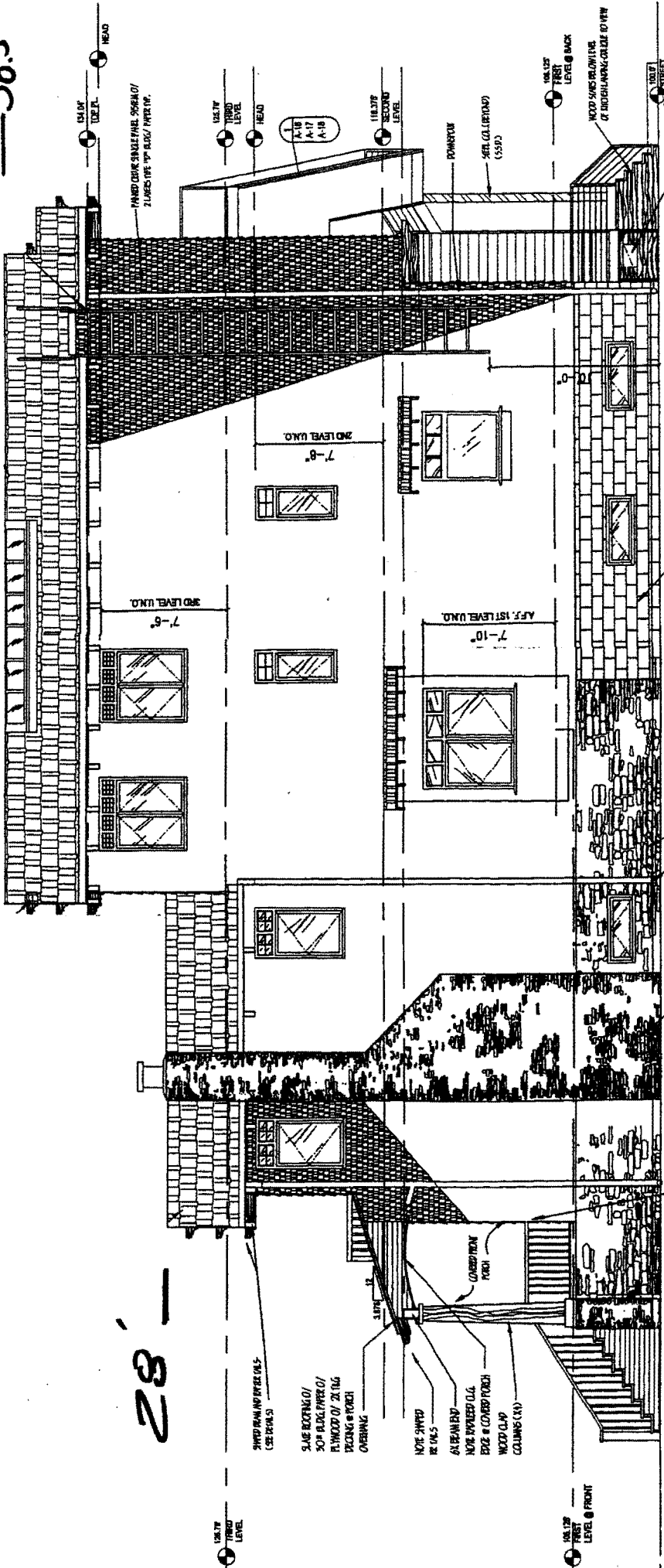
INDICATES FOOTPRINT OF PROPOSED NEW RESIDENCE

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EXHIBIT # 4
 PAGE 1

Proposed Site Plan

38.5'



28'

3RD LEVEL

FIRST LEVEL

Alley

Roof St.

Side Elevation of Proposed House

38

FIRE ACCESS ROOF LADDER
PER LAPD SPECIFICATIONS

FIRE ACCESS ROOF LADDER
PER LAPD SPECIFICATIONS

NOTE SHAPED
RR TAILS

TOP PL.

WOOD CASEMENT
WINDOWS
W/ F.G. PANES ABOVE

28'

125.79
THIRD
LEVEL

HEAD

STONE O/ MORTARBED
O/ WATERPROOF
MEMBRANE O/ FRM'G

DECK W/ RAILING

7'-8"

118.375
SECOND
LEVEL

4X RR TAILS (5512)

114.27
T.O.G.

F.G. WOOD WINDOWS
W/ DIVIDED LIGHT
SINGLE GLAZING

36" HIGH PAINTED
WOOD RAILING

8'-6"

106.125
FIRST
LEVEL

103.67
HEAD OF WH
STORAGE LE

100.0
STREET
LEVEL

98.0
GARAGE
LEVEL

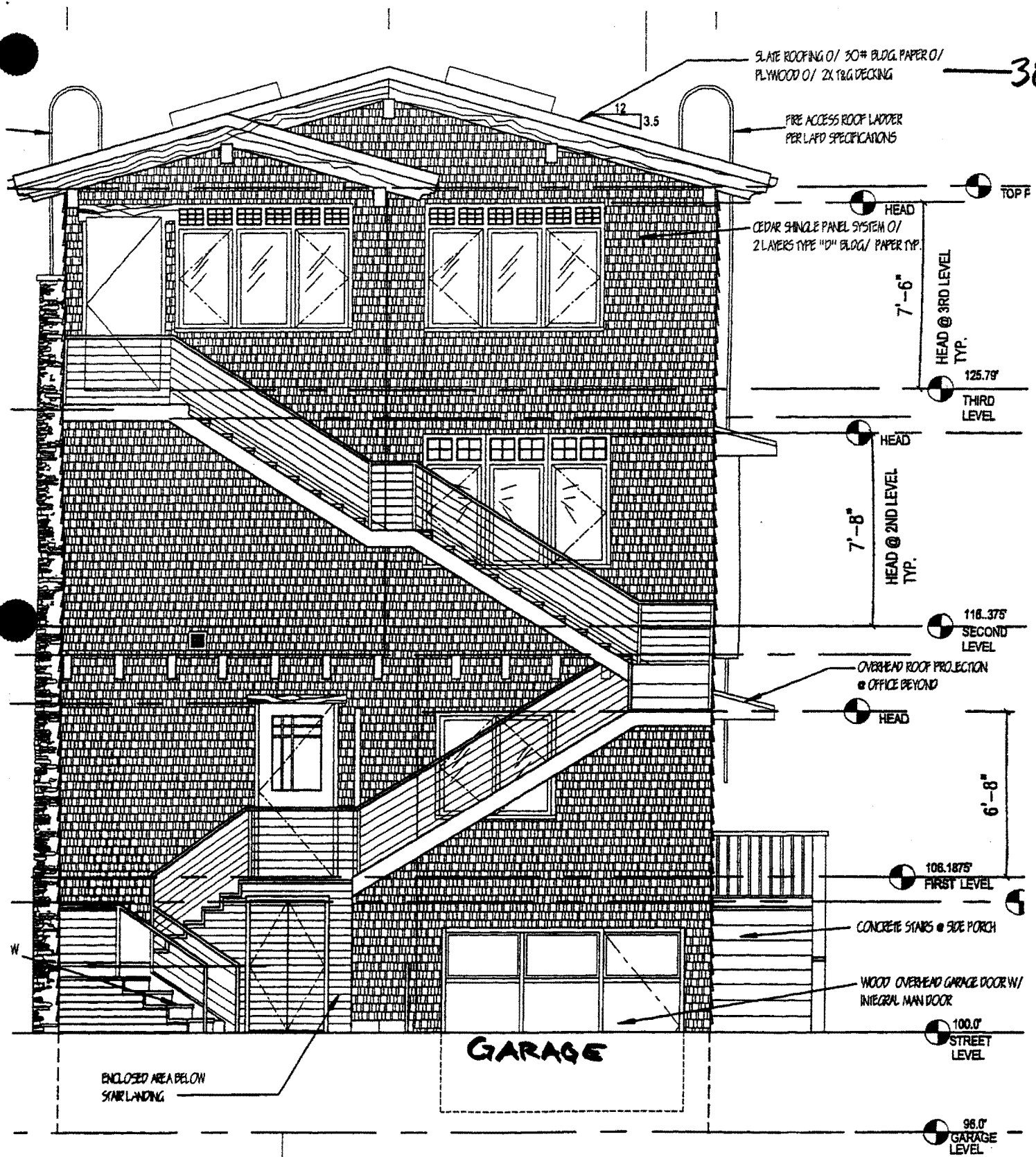
CURVED TO VIEW
SEE PLANS

Front (Reef St.) Elevation

COASTAL COMMISSION
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EXHIBIT # 6

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38.5

Rear (Alley) Elevation

COASTAL COMMISSION
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EXHIBIT # 7

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January 7, 2003

Mr. Charles Posner
California Coastal Commission
200 Ocean Gate Ste 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802

RECEIVED
South Coast Region

JAN 8 2003

RE: Application 5-02-353
21 Reef Street

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Posner and Commissioners,

Thank you for your consideration of our project and considering the following in deciding our case. The owners of this property have directed me to prepare a design which is an appropriate response to the history and tradition of the Venice Community. In addition, the maintenance of character is a driving tenet of the Venice Specific Plan. Other factors such as the height and bulk of adjacent buildings affect this design and our response is to respect the views and rights of others while trying to enhance the property and neighborhood in a way characteristic and consistent with the Venice Community. There are several areas in the Venice Specific Plan which can be addressed in support of approval for this project. These areas include Walk Streets, Density and the Purposes of the Specific Plan. **The design of this project reinforces the character of the Venice historical context.**

Walk Streets

As you know, the Venice Specific Plan designates a number of "Walk Streets". The heights of buildings on these streets is limited by definition in the Specific Plan. The definition of a walk street denotes a path where vehicles are restricted. On Reef Street, vehicles both park and drive, even though it is designated as a "Walk Street". **Reef Street is not a Walk Street.** There are other streets in the Marina Area which are dedicated in the Plan as Walk Streets, but vehicles are not restricted and regularly travel on in order to access parking for homes, apartment buildings and condominiums. Attached are photographs of these streets, which include the subject street Reef St. (Fig. 1), Quarterdeck (Fig. 2), Outrigger (Fig. 3.) and Union Jack (Fig. 4) as well as others in the area. Vehicular paving and parking stalls line all of these streets as well as access to garages and other services. Reef Street is not representative of a typical walk street as represented by other streets in the area, because cars are allowed to both drive on Reef and park there. In the spirit of the neighborhood and in an effort to keep within the character of the old Venice, this project restricts vehicle access to the alley and retains a large portion of the lot facing the street for landscaping.

Density

Another of the tenets of the Specific Plan is the reduction of density in the area. This property at 21 Reef Street could by right be a two unit building but instead the owner has decided to build a single family dwelling in which they will live. The effective density of both the property and the area is remaining unchanged by the addition of this home. **This project reduces density.**

Building Mass

Throughout the Venice and Marina del Rey area over the past two decades, developers have maximized the amount of building mass so that maximum floor areas can be achieved. This project does not maximize floor area at all, (3600 s.f.) as the living area is set back from the front of the property 8' feet more than required and in that area is a porch open on three sides, an element which encourages use of the front yard, and adds a textural quality to the structure, giving dimension to the street and the neighborhood.

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21 Reef Street

1/7/03
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Preservation of Views and Scenic Enhancement

In Section 2, PURPOSES, The Purposes of the Specific Plan, Section F cites that the plan regulate *"use, height, density, setback, buffer zone and other factors in order that is be compatible in character with the existing community and provide for the consideration of aesthetics"*

The single family home proposed for 21 Reef Street is a tiered design, three stories and 38' tall for the rear portion only, lodged between a 40' tall multi unit condominium building to the east (Fig. 5B) and a 43' foot tall block designed dwelling to the west (Fig. 5A). The front of the proposed structure is 28' feet tall and responds in design and height to the home at the west end of the block, which is a shingle style craftsman home. In this regard, the proposed home is not as tall as the structures adjacent to it, but is compatible to them in height and responds in character to the original homes built in the Venice community.

Views and access to the Coastal Area are not affected by the proposed home. The structure to the east, a four story multi-unit condominium building, has views directly to the west of the three story 43' tall dwelling which will sit to the west of the proposed home. The roof decks of the condominiums are still higher than the roof of the proposed home and views to the beach and waterfront are not disturbed by the proposed new structure.

Structures across Reef and the Alley behind the proposed home are two, three and four story apartments and condominiums designed primarily for the maximum leasable, renewable or salable area (Fig. 6). The proposed home is set back from the street to preserve a mature Coral Tree which has been a part of the fabric of the neighborhood for some time. The increased setback in front, enhancing the landscape, causes a 30" encroachment into the required setback in the rear by a small portion of the open stair in the rear. No part of the building mass or structure is in the setback, the house itself is set away from the required setback reducing mass on the alley.

We feel the design of this project respects the history of the area, reduces density and does not restrict access to the Coastal Zone. Height concerns by the Los Angeles Fire Department have been mitigated by providing permanent roof access in accordance with Fire Department recommendations. The Fire Department has approved this project.

Reef Street is a street where cars drive and park on regularly. Adjacent structures are both taller and more massive than the proposed home. Density of the area is not changed or increased. Surrounding structures are more massive and neither views nor access from any surrounding buildings are restricted by this project. The architectural character of the original neighborhood is emulated in the proposed design and the home is set back from the street in order to preserve a yard and an existing mature coral tree. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher V. Ward, AIA

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5-02-353

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Christopher V. Ward, A.I.A.
8060 Melrose Ave., Ste. 230 Los Angeles, CA 90046

Architects
(323) 655-8890 F(323) 655-8875

January 7, 2003

Mr. Charles Posner
California Coastal Commission
200 Ocean Gate Ste 1000
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Application 5-02-353
21 Reef Street

Dear Mr. Posner,

RECEIVED
South Coast Region

JAN 8 2003

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

After our meeting last month regarding the approval of this project, I did some investigation of the Fire Department concerns about the heights of buildings in this neighborhood. I met with Mr. Michael Theule, Fire Inspector II, Los Angeles Fire Department of the Bureau of Fire Prevention. Mr. Theule is the person responsible for approving projects in the Venice area and considering the fire safety of the new projects being built there.

Fire Department access is a concern in this area as well the height of buildings. As Mr. Theule explained to me, fire fighters need access to the roof to ventilate an engaged structure. We have provided permanent ladders on the side of the building to allow the fire fighters access to the high roof and this satisfies the Fire Department requirement for access to the roof. Reef street was not considered a walk street on the Fire Department maps and there is vehicular and truck access to Reef St. We are providing a fully fire sprinklered structure, since the property is over 1.9 miles from the Fire Station serving this area. All new structures in this area would be required to provide fire sprinklers.

By providing the required access to the roof and a fully sprinklered structure, this project is more compliant than any of the surrounding buildings which are over the current allowable height. We have addressed the concerns of the Fire Department and received their blessing for the construction of this residence.

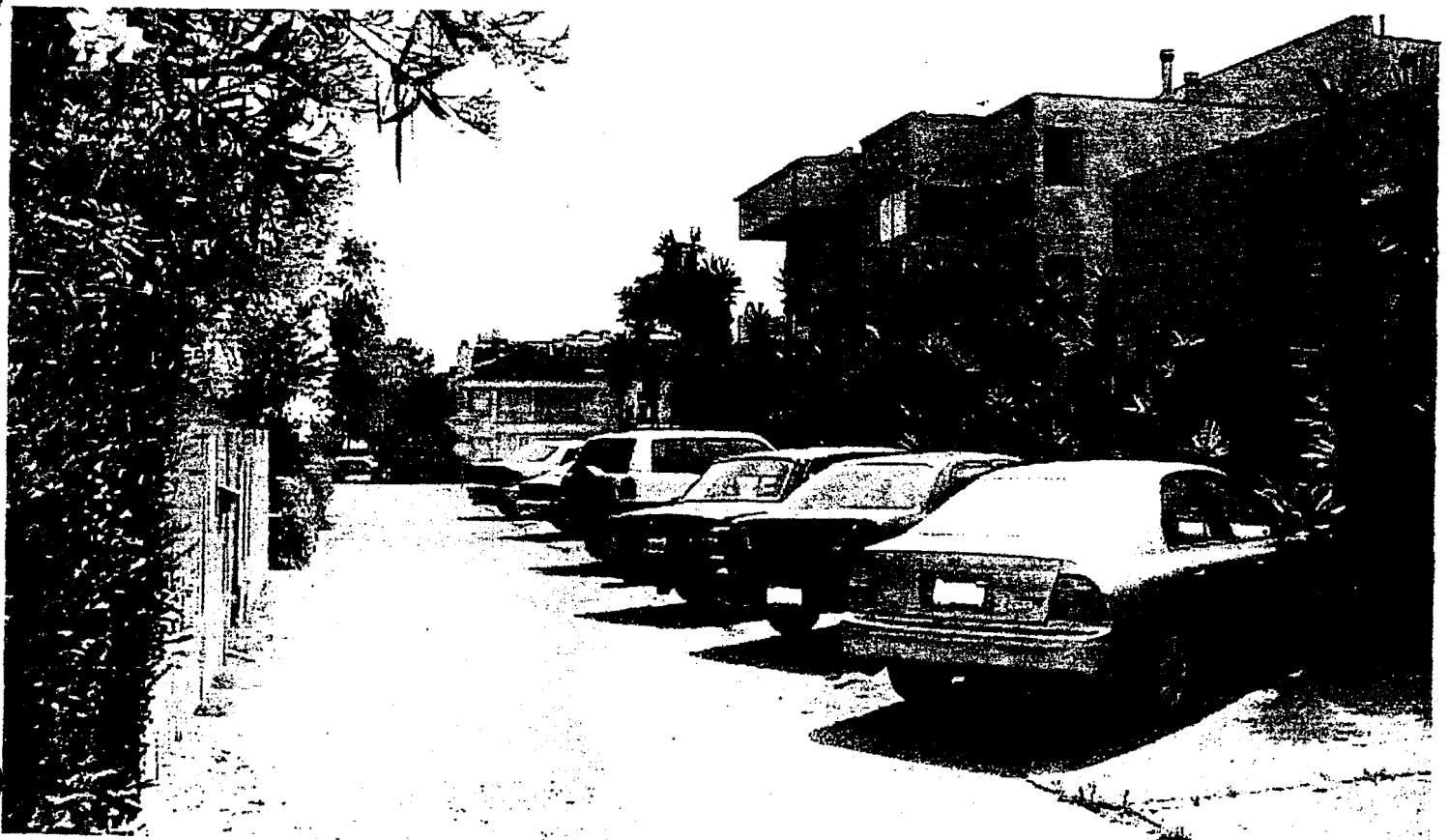
Please find enclosed a copy of the Fire Department approved drawings for this project. The Fire Department approval stamp appears on Sheet A-1 and is noted their official map. Do not hesitate to call if you have any questions and thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Christopher V. Ward AIA

COASTAL COMMISSION
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REEF STREET

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E161



QUARTERDECK

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ENC 7



OUTRIGGER

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FIG. 3



UNION JACK

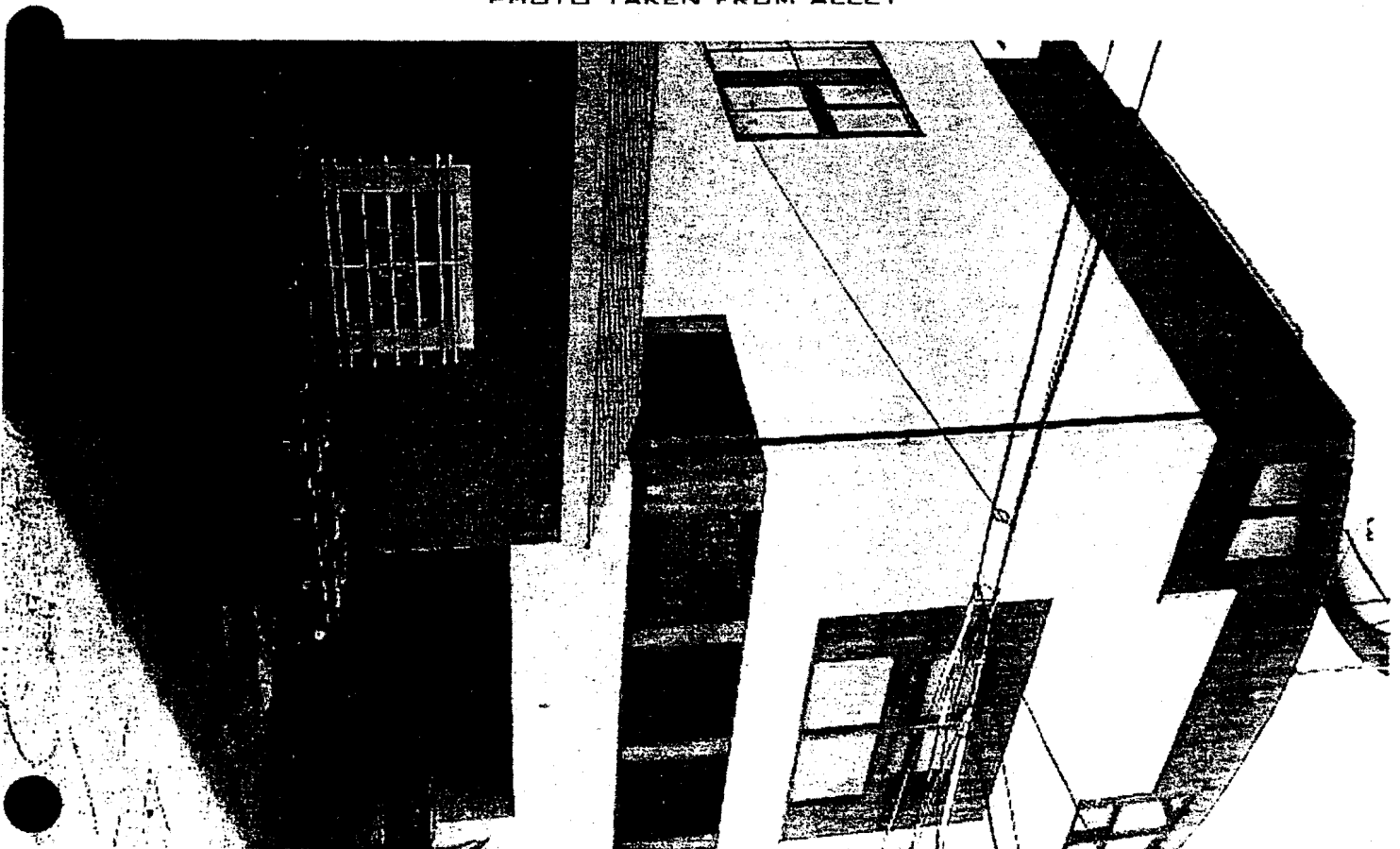
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FIG 4



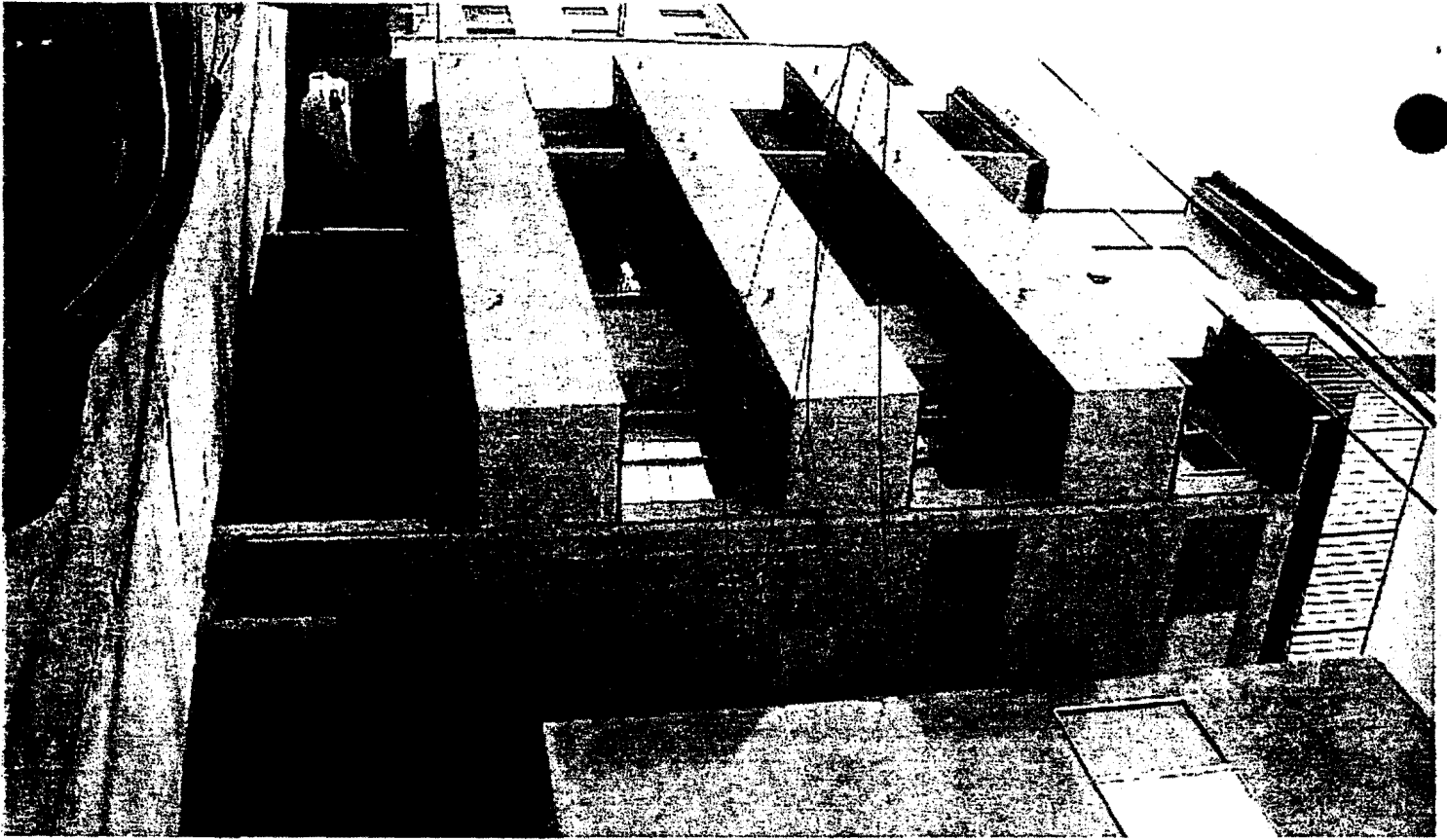
CONDOMINIUM ADJACENT TO EAST
PHOTO TAKEN FROM ALLEY

B



DWELLING ADJACENT TO WEST
PHOTO TAKEN FROM ALLEY

A



48' BUILDING ACROSS ALLEY



35' BUILDING ACROSS ALLEY



CINDY MISCIKOWSKI

City of Los Angeles
Councilwoman, Eleventh District
Assistant President Pro Tempore

Committees
Chair, Public Safety
Vice-Chair, Rules, Election &
Intergovernmental Relations
Member, Budget and Finance
Member, Personnel

RECEIVED
SOUTH COAST REGION

JAN 17 2003 January 10, 2003

CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION

Ms. Pam Emerson
Regulation and Planning Supervisor
California Coastal Commission
200 Ocean Gate, 10th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Ms. Emerson:

I am writing to you regarding a project located at 21 Reef Street in Venice. As you are aware, this case was recently heard by the Los Angeles City Council and approved unanimously.

The request before the City Council was for a Specific Plan Exception to permit a project height of 38' 6" in lieu of the allowable 28 feet with a varied roofline and a modification for a rear-yard setback of 12' 6" in lieu of the required 15 feet. Since the adoption of the Venice Specific Plan the Council has felt very strongly about upholding its requirements, however, this proposed home is a perfect example of why the plan allows for exceptions.

This home will only reach a height of 38 feet for the rear 20% of the property demonstrating that there was an effort by the owner and the architect to comply with the spirit of the Specific Plan on a street where almost every other property does not. You will note this property is surrounded by homes that are over 40 feet, reaching as high as even 43 feet. In addition, the design of this home is such that it softens any impact of the increased height. While surrounded by stucco apartment buildings, this project is proposed to be designed in the Craftsman style reminiscent of the properties that used to front along the Venice walk streets.

I am aware that the Commission is also concerned about the fire access to this property. It is important to point out that while Reef Street is designated as a walk street in the Venice Specific Plan, the street is actually paved and cars are able to drive onto and park along it. The request for the encroachment into the rear yard addresses this fire access by adding a second route for residents to evacuate or fire personnel to enter the building in case of an emergency.

Westchester Office
7166 W. Manchester Boulevard
Westchester, CA 90045
(310) 568-8772
(310) 410-3946 Fax

City Hall
200 N. Spring Street, Room 415
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 485-3811
(213) 473-6926 Fax

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As you know, I have been a strong supporter of coastal protection ordinances and see the benefit in making certain that development near our coastline is in keeping with its surroundings as well as its history. This proposal meets those qualifications and more because of careful design of the architect. I appreciate your consideration of this project and encourage your support of its approval.

Sincerely,

Cindy Miskowski

COASTAL COMMISSION

5-02-353

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