

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development

BY: Esteban Danna, Associate Planner

DATE: January 23, 2013

SUBJECT: Consideration of Code Amendments Regarding Residential Lots with Alley-Access and Alternative-Fuel Vehicle Recharging Systems

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission **DISCUSS** the information presented and **PROVIDE DIRECTION**.

BACKGROUND

As a result of working with the Zoning Code on a daily basis, Staff has discovered items that need review and discussion by the Planning Commission and City Council. Upon discussion and direction, Staff will proceed to develop code language for the necessary adjustments to the Zoning Code as well as the Local Coastal Program. At this time, Staff has identified two aspects in the City's development standards, alley-accessed driveways and alternative-fuel vehicle recharging systems, that warrant review and discussion.

DISCUSSION

Alley-Accessed Driveways

The goal of this discussion is to encourage driveway access from alleys for street-alley lots located in Single-Family Residential (RS) districts in Area District III (beach area). Currently, Title 10 of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code (MBMC) prohibits RS-zoned street-alley lots in Area Districts I and II (inland) from accessing parking from a street (only alley-access is allowed).

The purpose of this amendment is to extend the restriction to RS lots in Area District III. These are mainly located in three separate clusters and mostly towards the eastern portion of said area district. These clusters are separated by multi-family residential districts as well as the downtown commercial district (Attachment B).

The absence of the restriction could create incompatibilities within neighborhoods as well as decrease street public parking supply. Residents living in RS neighborhoods with street-alley lots in Area District III have expressed concerns with this issue in the past when a new construction projects are proposed. Staff prepared code language (Attachment A) for the Commission's review and comment.

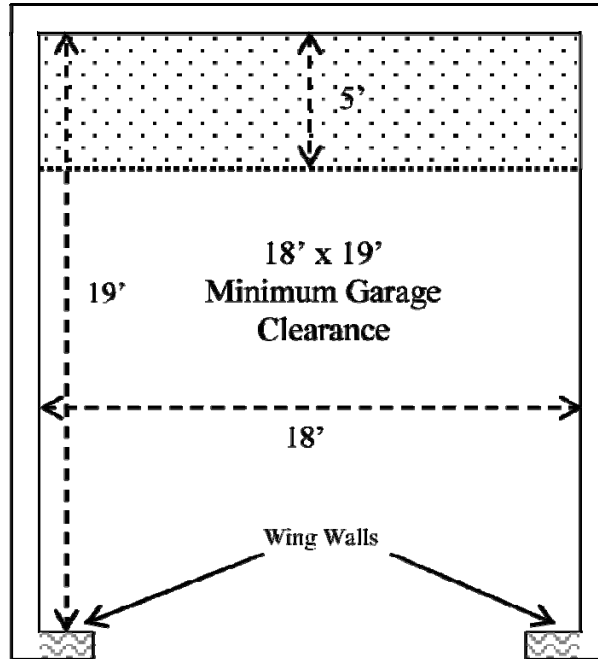
Staff recommends that the Planning Commission also consider including discretion for the Community Development Director's consideration in the form of exceptions, which would also be extended to Area Districts I and II. These exceptions may include the consideration of existing neighborhood conditions and compatibility, impacts on street parking, alternative access for corner lots, and physical characteristics of the lot (slope, topography, lot shape/size, and existing utility locations).

Alternative-Fuel Vehicle Recharging Systems

As part of the 2011 Green Code Amendments approved by the Planning Commission and City Council, alternative-fuel vehicle charging systems were discussed and subsequently partially allowed to encroach into the required garage parking clearance area. The code amendment has proven itself useful and many residents were able to take advantage of the change. Current code requires such systems to have at least seven feet of vertical clearance between the garage floor and the equipment except within the front five feet of the garage (within the area where a car's hood would be located), where recharging units can be as low as four and one half feet above the garage floor. Storage is also allowed within the front five feet of the garage.

Staff has realized, however, that this amendment needs further adjustment since some electric vehicles on the market have recharging outlets at the rear or side of the car. This creates a problem if the recharging device is located at the front wall of the garage.

Staff has prepared code language to address this issue (Attachment A) for Commission review and discussion. Staff proposes allowing the recharging unit and related appurtenances to be attached to or adjacent to the inside wall of the garage immediately adjacent to the garage door (wing wall) provided a minimum 4.5 feet vertical clearance is maintained above the finished floor of the garage please (refer to diagram below). Planning Staff has discussed the proposed changes with the Building and Safety Division to ensure consistency.



Authority of the Planning Commission

Before the City Council may adopt a Zoning Ordinance and Local Coastal Program amendments, pursuant to MBMC 10.96 the Planning Commission must hold a duly noticed public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council after making specific findings as to whether the proposed zoning regulation is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and the purposes of Title 10.

General Plan Goals and Policies

The General Plan of the City of Manhattan Beach poses certain goals and policies which reflect the expectations and wishes of the City with respect to land uses. The items discussed above are consistent with and will advance the following goals of the Manhattan Beach General Plan.

Amendments to street-alley lot requirements are consistent with the following goals and policies of the General Plan:

Goal LU-3: Achieve a strong, positive community aesthetic.

Policy LU-3.1: Continue to encourage quality design in all new construction.

Goal LU-4: Preserve the features of each community neighborhood, and develop solutions tailored to each neighborhood's unique characteristics.

- Policy LU-4.6: When public improvements are made, they should preserve and maintain distinctive neighborhood characteristics.*
- Goal I-3: Ensure that adequate parking and loading facilities are available to support both residential and commercial needs.*
- Policy I-3.4: Review development proposals to ensure potential adverse parking impacts are minimized or avoided.*
- Policy I-3.9: Work to retain on-street parking in the Beach Area, particularly on Highland Avenue.*

Amendments to alternative-fuel vehicle recharging system requirements are consistent with the following goals and policies of the General Plan:

- Policy CR-5.1: Employ principles of a sustainable environment in the development, operation, and maintenance of the community, emphasizing the importance of respecting and conserving the natural resources.*
- Policy CR-5.7: Encourage the use of energy-saving designs and devices in all new construction and reconstruction.*
- Policy CR-5.8: Encourage utilization of “green” approaches to building design and construction, including use of environmentally friendly interior improvements.*
- Policy CR-5.10: Encourage and support the use of alternative fuel vehicles, including support of charging or “fueling” facilities.*
- Policy CR-5.11: Support sustainable building practices.*

Next Steps

With Planning Commission direction, Staff will prepare new code language be presented to the Planning Commission at a public hearing. The Planning Commission recommendation will then be forwarded to City Council. The City Council will also conduct a public hearing and may take action on the Zoning Ordinance text and Local Coastal Program amendments. Amendments to the Local Coastal Program will also require review and certification by the California Coastal Commission.

Public Input

A public notice for the Zoning Ordinance amendment will be published in the Beach Reporter newspaper prior to the public hearing.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission **DISCUSS** the information presented and **PROVIDE DIRECTION**.

Attachments:

- A. Proposed Code Amendment Language
- B. Map of RS Properties in Area District III

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Proposed Code Amendment Language

10.12.030 - Property development regulations: RS, RM, and RH districts.

Q. Parking/Garage Location, Street-Alley Lots. When a street-alley lot in Area Districts I and II or a street-alley RS lot in Area District III adjoins an improved alley, all vehicle access to parking shall be provided from the alley.

Exception: Requirement for RS lots in Area District III may be waived at the discretion of the Community Development Director. In making a determination, the Director shall consider the following:

1. Compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood for driveway access from the street.
2. Reduction in street parking inventory with the driveway access from the street.
3. Opportunity to increase street parking inventory.
4. Alternative access on corner lots.
5. Physical characteristics of the subject property that create practical difficulties include but are not limited to: slope, topography, visibility, lot size and/or shape, and existing utility locations.

Non-Alley Lots: In Area District I and II, the aggregate total of garage door width within the front half of a lot shall be limited to eighteen feet (18') for lots fifty-five feet (55') or less in width. Lots wider than fifty-five feet (55') may have a maximum aggregate garage door width of twenty-seven feet (27') within the front half of a lot if at least one (1) garage door is recessed a minimum of five feet (5') beyond another garage door.

10.64.020 - Basic requirements for off-street parking and loading.

F. Location and Ownership.

1. **On-site/Off-site Parking.** Parking required to serve a residential use shall be on the same site as the use served, except that subject to approval of the Community Development Director, parking for group residential and residential care may be located on a different site under the same or different ownership within one hundred fifty feet (150') of the use served, measured from the parking facility to the public entrance of the use served via the shortest pedestrian route. Parking required to serve a nonresidential use may be on the same or a different site under the same or different ownership as the use served, provided that parking shall be within the following distances of the use served, measured from the near corner of the parking facility to the public entrance of the use served via the shortest pedestrian route:

Customer/visitor spaces: 200 ft.	Employee spaces: 400 ft.
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Exception: Parking spaces located within the CD district may serve as required parking for a nonresidential use located within the same district at a maximum distance of one thousand feet (1,000').

2. **Parking in Yards in R Districts.** Required yards and open space shall not be used for parking except as follows:
 - a. **All Area Districts.** Up to twenty feet (20') of the width of the access drive to the garage may be used for non-required unenclosed parking.
 - b. **Area Districts III and IV.** One interior side yard may be used for unenclosed parking.
 - c. **All Area Districts.** Within an enclosed accessory building as permitted by Section 10.52.050
3. **Parking in Yards in C or I Districts.** Required yards may be used for required parking, subject to the landscaping standards of Section 10.60.070 and screening requirements of Section 10.64.160.
4. **Alley Access. Parking/Garage Location, Street-Alley Lots.** When a street-alley lot in Area Districts I and II or a street-alley RS lot in Area District III adjoins an improved alley, all vehicle access to parking shall be provided from the alley.
Exception: Requirement for RS lots in Area District III may be waived at the discretion of the Community Development Director. In making a determination, the Director shall consider the following:
 - a. Compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood for driveway access from the street.
 - b. Reduction in street parking inventory with the driveway access from the street.
 - c. Opportunity to increase street parking inventory.
 - d. Alternative access on corner lots.
 - e. Physical characteristics of the subject property that create practical difficulties include but are not limited to: slope, topography, visibility, lot size and/or shape, and existing utility locations.
5. **Parking in R Districts.** Non-residential parking shall not be located in any R zoned property, except on the east side of Oak Avenue. Residential properties on the east side of Oak Avenue, when developed for commercial parking purposes used in conjunction with business fronting upon and having vehicular access to Sepulveda Boulevard, shall not utilize vehicular access to Oak Avenue between the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. daily.

10.64.100 - Application of dimensional requirements

C. Vertical Clearance. Vertical clearance for parking spaces shall be an unobstructed headroom clearance of not less than seven feet (7') above the finish floor to any ceiling, beam, pipe, vent, mechanical equipment or similar construction, except that automatic garage door opening equipment and the garage door entrance may be 6.67 feet. ~~For storage (not including mechanical equipment) and vehicle recharging purposes for residential uses, non-structural improvements including wall mounted shelves, storage surface racks, cabinets, or electricity based alternative fuel vehicle charging systems may encroach into the vertical clearance, provided a minimum 4.5-foot vertical clearance is maintained above the finished floor of the garage within the front five feet (5') of a parking space.~~

Exceptions:

1. For storage (not including mechanical equipment) for residential uses, non-structural improvements including wall-mounted shelves, storage surface racks or cabinets, may encroach into the vertical clearance within the front five feet (5') of a parking space (opposite to the garage door) provided a minimum 4.5 feet vertical clearance is maintained above the garage finished floor.
2. For vehicle recharging purposes for residential uses, electricity based alternative-fuel vehicle charging systems may encroach into the vertical clearance, as follows:
 - a. Minimum 4.5 feet vertical clearance is maintained above the garage finished floor provided within the front five feet (5') of a parking space (opposite to the garage door), or
 - b. Attached to or immediately adjacent to the wall of the garage adjacent to the garage door (wing wall) provided a minimum 4.5 feet vertical clearance is maintained above the garage finished floor.

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RS Properties
in Area District III

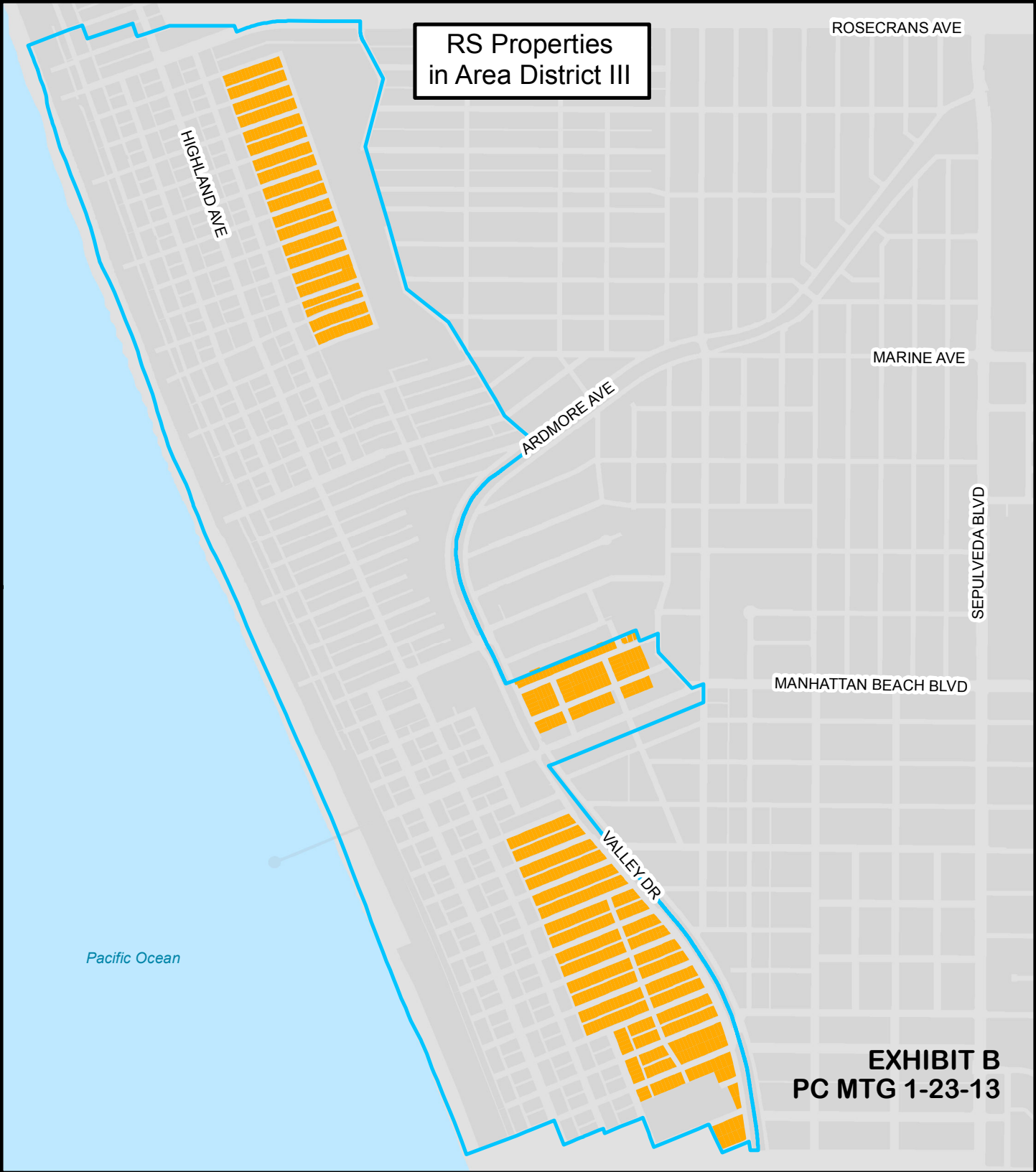




EXHIBIT B
PC MTG 1-23-13

Legend

-  Area District III
-  RS Properties



**City of Manhattan Beach
Community Development**