Residential Design Standards
Proposed Code Amendments

September 17, 2020
In May 2019, City Council initiated Code amendments and directed staff to:

1. Reduce third floor massing, bulk and scale of single-unit dwellings and duplexes *(eliminate unintended consequences from 2010 ZC Update)*; and

2. Incentivize the preservation of beach cottages *(under review by Coastal Commission)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Code Changes</th>
<th>PRE-2010 ZONING CODE</th>
<th>CURRENT ZONING CODE</th>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
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<td>24’ flat roof or rails&lt;br&gt;29’ sloped (midpoint @ 24’)&lt;br&gt;24’ flat roof or rails&lt;br&gt;29’ sloped (min 3:12 pitch)&lt;br&gt;3:12 roof pitch&lt;br&gt;3rd floor step backs&lt;br&gt;Maximum 3rd floor area&lt;br&gt;Unfinished attics excluded&lt;br&gt;Silent on required openings&lt;br&gt;Bulk controls:</td>
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<td>Only applicable to enclosed floor area&lt;br&gt;Covered decks and attics excluded&lt;br&gt;Floor Area Definition:&lt;br&gt;Unfinished attics excluded&lt;br&gt;Silent on required openings&lt;br&gt;Certain Areas Exempt:&lt;br&gt;Balboa Island&lt;br&gt;RM Zones&lt;br&gt;25’ wide R-2 lots</td>
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Problems

- No 3rd Floor Relief
- Bulky 3rd Floor Decks
- Not Always Applicable
- Easy to enclose
What Has Happened

08/19/19
• 1st Community Meeting

09/10/19
• City Council Study Session

Various
• Consultation with community members and designers

03/09/20
• 2nd Community Meeting

05/07/20
• Planning Commission Meeting – continued

Various
• Consultation with HCD, additional legal, community members and designers
Not Intent of Code Amendment

- Comprehensive overhaul of design standards
- Not changing allowed heights
- Not prohibiting covered roof decks
- Not changing allowed floor area potential
Proposed Code Amendments

A. Revisions to 3rd Floor Standards
B. Clarification of Gross Floor Area
C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25’ wide) Zones
CURRENT CODE

• 15’ Front & Rear Stepbacks
• Floor area limited to 15-20%
• Only applies to enclosed floor area

PROPOSED CODE

• Stepbacks apply to both floor area and covered deck area
• Addition of a 50% maximum coverage allowance

*Coverage standard revised for clarity
3rd Floor Side Stepbacks

**CURRENT CODE**
- Only applies to enclosed floor area
- Only applies to lots wider than 30’

**PROPOSED CODE**
- Will apply to enclosed floor area and covered decks
- Will apply to lots 30’ wide or greater

- Majority of lots 30’
- Results in 3 levels of non-articulated walls

- Results in more designs with 3rd floor articulation

**Additional 2’ from side setbacks**
A. Revisions to 3rd Floor Standards

B. Clarification of Gross Floor Area

C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25’ wide) Zones
## Comparison

### Openings Required for Covered Decks

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<th>PRE-2010 CODE</th>
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| Two Sides Open | Silent, but implemented:  
• One side completely open  
• Two sides substantially open | Bulky Designs, Easy to Enclose |

Moves required openings from front and rear of structure to sides where less visible.
Desired Outcome - Reduced bulk; increased transparency

### Openings Required for Covered Decks

**Two sides open, except:**
- Minimal structural supports
- Open guardrails (40%) or glass
- Ground level

- **Open above**
- **Glass Guardrails**
- **Open Guardrails**
- **Required open space moved to front**

*Proposed Change*
Current Code

Attics

Gross Floor Area

- Attics over 6 feet in height do not count as floor area is unfinished.
- Only floor area is subject to 3rd floor step backs
Proposed Change

Attics

Gross Floor Area

Any interior finished portion of a structure that is accessible and that measures more than six feet from finished floor to ceiling.

Unfinished Attic +6’ Height

3rd Floor Area

3rd Floor Deck

Reduced Attic Heights and Bulk
Proposed Code Amendments

A. Revisions to 3rd Floor Standards
B. Clarification of Gross Floor Area
C. Applicability to Balboa Island, RM, and R-2 (25’ wide) Zones
**CURRENT CODE** – Not applicable to:
- Balboa Island (R-BI) Zone
- Multiple Residential (RM) Zone
- Two-Unit Residential (R-2) Zone lots that are 25 feet wide or less
### Additional Applicability

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Applicable Standards</th>
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| **Balboa Island (R-BI)**      | • 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Step Backs (front, sides, rear)  
                              | • 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Area and Covered Deck Area Limits  
                              | • Open Volume Limits |
| **R-2 25’ wide or less**     | • 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Step Backs (front and rear) |
| **Multiple-Unit Residential (RM)** | • 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Step Backs (front, sides, rear)  
                              | • Open Volume already applies  
                              | *no changes in height, no 3<sup>rd</sup> floor area limits, and not applicable to 3+ units |
Development standard can’t:

- **Reduce density** – number of potential units
- **Reduce intensity of development** - height, floor area, setbacks, lot coverage, or anything that lessens the dwelling unit potential of development.

Housing & Community Development (HCD)

- Reviewed and issued letter of determination of **compliance**

Amendment Compliance:

- No changes in achievable height, setbacks, floor area, density
- 3rd floor step-backs are not setbacks (design standard)
- Incentivizes more density in RM zone by exempting 3+ units
- Open Volume encourages modulation, does not impact floor area potential
• **Public hearings**
  • Planning Commission – recommendations to City Council
  • City Council

• **Recommendations for projects under review:**
  • Discretionary applications deemed complete (e.g., CDPs) and projects submitted for plan check prior to effective date of ordinance allowed to be reviewed under existing regulations.
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Questions?