

MOTION

The Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance was approved by the City of Los Angeles in 2005 to provide fee-simple home ownership opportunities in the City and to promote residential infill development in multifamily and commercial zones. After more than 10 years of implementation, the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance has been used extensively in the City and no more so than in eclectic and historic neighborhoods including Echo Park, Silver Lake and Venice.

Originally proposed as an alternative means to encourage additional for-sale housing opportunities for the burgeoning first-time home-buying market, it has often resulted in the development of high-end, luxury townhomes rather than for-sale housing that is more affordable. These new homes often replace older bungalows and cottages that are themselves more affordable for those with low and moderate incomes, often resulting in projects that are out of scale and lacking in character in comparison to their surroundings.

While the ordinance has created a new urban homeownership alternative to the traditional single-family home, it also brings a new set of spacial complexities that should be addressed by the Planning Department. For instance, projects face challenges brought on by neighborhood context, and the proximity of adjacent structures requiring thoughtful consideration about massing, height, and transitional space from the adjacent properties.

Additionally, particularly where the preservation of neighborhood character is specifically mentioned in both the Small Lot Subdivision Guidelines and the community plans, designing and configuring new homes to be compatible with the existing neighborhood context is of utmost importance.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department to report within 60 days regarding potential updates to the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance and Guidelines.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department to report on adaptive reuse incentives that could apply to existing bungalow courtyards, adaptive reuse and/or preservation incentives that could apply to existing residences on multi-family lots that have room for additional infill, and preservation or other incentives that could also create new homeownership opportunities that incentivize the maintenance of existing structures while adding more units.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department, with the assistance of the City Attorney, to report on concerns that the Small Lot Subdivision Guidelines cannot be enforced and report on how best to codify Guideline requirements, including private on-site trash collection for projects of four or more units and on-site guest parking.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Planning Department to report on creating a unique set of requirements that apply to small lot projects of 20 or more units to ensure that larger subdivisions result in quality urban design and sufficient project open space.

PRESENTED BY: *Mitch O'Farrell*
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