

**Westwood South of Santa Monica Blvd**  
**Homeowner's Association**  
*Incorporated November 8, 1971*  
**P. O. Box 64213**  
Los Angeles, CA 90064-0213

July 2, 2014

LA City Council  
Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
City Hall, Room 395  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Via email c/o: [Sharon.gin@lacity.org](mailto:Sharon.gin@lacity.org)

**Re: Council File 13-1478 / Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance revisions**

Dear Chairperson Huizar and Committee Members Englander and Cedillo:

We write you in support of the motion brought forward by Councilmembers LaBonge and Krekorian that requests the evaluation and revision of the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance to ensure that future Small Lot Subdivisions constructed are compatible with the neighborhoods in which they are built.

Specifically, it is important that front setbacks be required on all projects. Setbacks create an important sense of scale in the community. Without them the pedestrian experience is greatly diminished and the opportunities for greening and the reclamation of rainwater adjacent to sidewalks are lost. The massing of buildings at the fronts of lots without setbacks destroys the residential nature of most communities. Required front yard setbacks should be a part of any new residential project.

The height of small lot subdivisions must be reflective of the height of surrounding properties. Another important factor in determining neighborhood character has to do with how buildings are oriented. In neighborhoods where homes are oriented toward the street, the small lot subdivision homes should do similarly. Having homes that relate only to the units in their project isolate them from the community and create dead areas on our streets. As the City seeks to encourage more pedestrian and street level activity, it is important that we ensure that our ground floor construction relate to the sidewalk and streets where they are located.

The City's requirement for open space is an important element of any new housing. We are finding, however, that the open space on these projects is often rooftop space. Our experience with rooftop patio areas is that they create noise and privacy problems for neighbors. It has been difficult if not impossible to halt the use of rooftop patios late at night. Furthermore, when placed in certain locations, the noise generated from rooftop uses is amplified many times over as it bounces off adjacent properties. Lighting from rooftop patios has also been a problem, particularly late at night. Privacy concerns are very real – especially on properties that border less intensive zones and/or where neighboring properties are not as tall as the small lot subdivisions.

The rules that have governed the development of apartment buildings have served the City well. As the small lot subdivision option becomes a more popular choice for

those constructing new housing, they should be required to abide by the same rules that have been proven to be important measures in defining our communities and in preserving a reasonable quality of life. In addition to requiring mandatory and increased setbacks with increasing heights, mandatory open space (the majority of which should not be permitted to be rooftop open space), these projects should also provide guest parking, provisions for common trash collection and common area upkeep—requiring maintenance agreements for upkeep of common areas like driveways. Finally, the guidelines adopted to improve the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance must be written such that they can be enforced and that there be clear consequences when compliance is not met.

We thank you for addressing these important issues and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Barbara Broide".

Barbara Broide  
President

cc: Paul Koretz, Shawn Bayliss, CD 5  
Councilmembers LaBonge and Krekorian