

Los Feliz

IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION



2016-2017

June 10, 2016

President

Nyla Arslanian

First Vice-President

Marta Alcumbrac

Second Vice-President

Mica Campbell

Coordinating Secretary

Donna Kolb

Recording Secretary

Standolyn Robertson

Treasurer

Donald Seligman*

Vince Bertoni
Director of Planning
Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: CF #14-0656
CPC-2015-3484-CA and ENV-2015-4197-EAF
BMO/BHO First Draft Amendments

Dear Planning Director Bertoni:

The Los Feliz Improvement Association, founded in 1916 and representing 856 households in the Los Feliz district, urges the City to pass the draft of the BHO/BMO amendments as originally proposed by Councilmember Koretz and Councilmember Ryu. These proposed amendments would close loopholes and afford desperately needed protections for our neighborhood and for neighborhoods throughout the city. The public had made it clear that they want greater restrictions on house sizes.

CF#14-0656 called for:

- Ending the 20% bonus Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for energy conservation.
- Establishing a 45% FAR for lots below 7,500 square feet
- Eliminating exemptions

Megamansions, especially those on small lots and substandard streets, are changing the character of our neighborhood, stressing our already fragile infrastructure, and threatening public safety. They are destroying habitat, open space and vital wildlife connectivity.

The Los Feliz Improvement Association stands firmly with Councilmembers Ryu and Koretz and with the Federation of Hillside and Canyon Associations in urging you to support immediate adoption of the original BHO/BMO amendments.

Sincerely,

Nyla Arslanian
President

cc: Councilmember David Ryu

Directors

Dennis Chew

Marian Dodge*

Philip Gasteier

Rafik Ghazarian

Amy Gustincic

Lynne T. Jewell

Alex Kondracke

Chris Laib*

Michael Locke

Rob Menz

Randy Myer

Deanne Paul

David Roberti

Joel Rochlin

Patricia Ruben

Florie Savage

Debbie Simons

Mary Beth Sorensen

Angela Stewart

Mark Stong

Demian Wyma

Gail Zaritsky

*Past President



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Steve Factor <factor.steve@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 5:48 PM

To: paul.koretz@lacity.org, "councilmember.wesson@lacity.org" <councilmember.wesson@lacity.org>, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, niall.huffman@lacity.org, "councilmember.huizar@lacity.org" <councilmember.huizar@lacity.org>, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, "councilmember.english@lacity.org" <councilmember.english@lacity.org>, "councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org" <councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org>, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, stopmansionization@yahoo.com

I have read your proposal and see that twelve months of staff time at the planning department have been wasted by work ignoring instructions given you by the city council. Council Motion CF 14-0656 was created by council members each responding to the needs of their constituency, Los Angeles residents, voters, your employers.

Mansionization was identified by the planning department as a threat to the "scale and character of established neighborhoods". Mitigation measures were recommended by your department in earlier guidance to the city. In spite of its published intent the 2008 Baseline Mansionization Ordinance included loopholes which made things worse. Your current proposal provides speculators even more latitude for abuse.

The graphics in your presentation may look polished on the screen, but I have seen first hand and now must live with the results when a speculator builds the largest structure allowed plus a few "architectural features" to bulk it up. Your current proposal only benefits speculators and those receiving their money while further damaging our neighborhoods.

In Los Angeles our schoolchildren read the instructions before completing their assignments. Throw away your proposal, read your instructions in the council motion and write the amendments you were assigned by your employers. That is your job.

Steve Factor
Beverly Grove resident



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Francie Kelley <Francie@paragonegallery.com>
To: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 6:08 PM

Dear Ms. Dickinson:

As a resident of Upper Nichols Canyon for 36 years, and I am **alarmed and dismayed** at the overdevelopment not only all over the city, but also within quaint neighborhoods and the fragile hillside communities of Los Angeles.

The first draft of amendments to the mansionization ordinances was a good start. The Planning Department received more than 600 responses. By almost 4:1 the people asked for tighter limits on home size. Yet in the latest draft, the amendment goes in the opposite direction. This is shocking!

We want meaningful reform. Instead, the latest draft preserves **loopholes** that undermined the ordinance in the first place and disregards the majority demands of our citizens. We want the BMO to:

- remove the exemption for attached garage space
- remove the excessive allowances for grading and hauling
- include these so-called semi- "basements" in the total square footage
- simplify the fixes per Council motion instead of reverting to Re:CodeLA which makes it harder to understand and harder to enforce.
- preserve the nature and character of neighborhoods.
- protect our wildlife in the Hills from encroachment of buildings and closing of corridors

TIME IS RUNNING OUT. While the process falls further and further behind, mansionization is **spoiling** neighborhoods all over Los Angeles, including the Hollywood Hills. It feels that developers are calling the shots at City Hall and this is further proof. I hear the developers complain that they have a right to build what they want where they want because that is the American Dream. Really? Imposing their greed for profit on the fragile hillside communities is plain wrong. Allowing the gain and profit for the VERY few, with significant negative impact on the many, is not what the American Dream is.

From an environmental standpoint, the fragile ecosystem just can't take it anymore. Our tiny, mostly sub-standard streets cannot take the massive amounts of construction vehicles. The people cannot take the noise, the urban blight thrust upon us, again for only the benefit of the very few.

The Planning Department needs to **STOP MANSIONIZATION** in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the

Council Motion calls for. It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Sincerely,

Francie H. Kelley

Upper Nichols Canyon

Francie Kelley
7721 Firenze Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046
t: 310.659.0607
c: 323-640-5212



BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Betsy Beale <betsybeale@yahoo.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 6:11

Reply-To: Betsy Beale <betsybeale@yahoo.com>

To: "councilmember.huizar@lacity.org" <councilmember.huizar@lacity.org>, "councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org" <councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org>, "councilmember.english@lacity.org" <councilmember.english@lacity.org>, "councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org" <councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org>, "councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org" <councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org>, "sharon.dickinson@lacity.org" <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Dear Planning and Land Use Committee,

The first draft of amendments to the mansionization ordinances made a good start. The Planning Department collected more than 600 responses -- by almost 4-to-1, people asked for tighter limits on home size. But the latest draft takes a wrong turn.

· We asked for meaningful reform. Instead, the latest draft preserves loopholes that undermined the ordinance in the first place. These include the exemption for attached garage space (even in "the flats") and excessive allowances for grading and hauling, to name just two.

· The Council Motion provided the blueprint for a simple, effective fix. Instead, the latest draft borrows elements from Re:Code LA that make the ordinance harder to understand and harder to enforce. These include "encroachment planes" and "side wall articulation."

While the process falls further and further behind, mansionization is spoiling neighborhoods all over Los Angeles. People who feel that developers are calling the shots at City Hall -- and there are a lot of them -- see this as further proof. The Planning Department needs to stop mansionization in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the Council Motion calls for.

It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Thank you,

Betsy Beale



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Reform on the city's failed Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO)

Diana <dzogran@roadrunner.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 6:12 PM

To: councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, paul.koretz@lacity.org, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, nial.huffman@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, councilmember.krekorian@lacity.org, areen.ibranossian@lacity.org, karo.torossian@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org
Cc: elizabeth.carlin@lacity.org, jordan.beroukhim@lacity.org, faisal.alseri@lacity.org, john.darnell@lacity.org

Dear City Council members and Planning Staff,

The first draft of amendments to the BMO/BHO made a good start. By almost 4 to 1, residents' responses supported the meaningful BMO reform outlined in Councilmember Koretz's original motion.

But the latest draft takes a wrong turn by a) preserving loopholes (exemptions and bonuses) that undermined the ordinance in the first place, and b) borrowing elements from recode LA that make the ordinance more difficult to understand and enforce.

The process is off track and is falling behind: Mansionization is spoiling neighborhoods all over LA but Councilmember Koretz's motion (and the first draft of proposed amendments) provided the blueprint for a simple, effective, and reasonable fix that would allow renovations, expansions and new construction, while protecting our treasured neighborhoods from being ravaged by unchecked, short-term real estate speculation and reckless development.

Please, support *and champion* the intent of Councilmember Koretz's original motion. Ensure that the ordinance does not retain (or create new) harmful loopholes - or get so filled with technobabble that it becomes impossible to understand or enforce.

Your voices carry great weight in this matter. You have a wonderful opportunity to show that you have been listening to stakeholders across the city, and that you care about LA's precious residential neighborhoods. It's time for Los Angeles to put stable, sustainable communities ahead of real estate speculation and political pressure and other interests.

Sincerely,

diana zogran
Studio City
Council District 2



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

ICO Beverly Grove / Fairfax

MARGARET WYNN <mwynn@earthlink.net>
To: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 4:36 PM

Dear Ms. Dickinson-

I wanted to add my voice to those wanting the loopholes tightened on new construction and extreme remodels in my neighborhood. I bought my home twenty years ago because I love the bungalow architecture and vintage Hollywood iconic styles of the homes, and have a huge appreciation for local history. This neighborhood used to be charming, and developers who know nothing about its history and only see the charming houses as old, useless and something to be demolished are quickly knocking down whatever they can get their hands on in the name of making a quick buck, and, as a result, are destroying the charm of the neighborhood with their huge slabs of concrete and glass.

We got some legislation limiting the new construction, but it was sloppily written and left many loopholes that they are using to continue to destroy the character of the area. Once the old homes are gone, there will be no restoring them. The new homes loom over the older lots and block out the sunlight to the point that I have lost most of the trees in my back yard. The people who move into them are not interested in being neighbors or interacting with anyone, they want to stay isolated behind their tall walls, and they move out every two years. My street is almost 25% new construction, and I have only met ONE of my neighbors in the newer homes.

Those loopholes are what ruined the mansionization ordinances the first time. They need to be tightened up so that we can maintain what is left of our neighborhoods' character.

The Council Motion to amend the ordinances directs the Planning Department to do two things: reduce R-1 floor area ratios, and close those loopholes, most importantly by counting attached garages as floor space. Design standards such as "encroachment planes" and "side wall articulation in the latest draft amendments only make the ordinances harder to understand, and virtually impossible to enforce. They will not improve the situation for those of us already invested in our neighborhoods. Please keep the amendments simple and get the job done. We don't need more complications.

Thank you,
Margaret Wynn



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Michael D. Meloan <mdmeloan@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 4:11 PM

To: David Ryu <david.ryu@lacity.org>, Paul Koretz <paul.koretz@lacity.org>, Herb Wesson <councilmember.wesson@lacity.org>, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, niall.huffman@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.english@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, stopmansionization@yahoo.com

City Council and City Planning Department,

With regard to the BMO & BHO Amendments. Please incorporate the following.

1. Tighter limits

Hundreds of people commented on the first draft of amendments. By almost 4-to-1 we asked for tighter limits. We need to get it right this time.

- Get rid of the bonuses and exemptions.
- Tighten the R-1 floor area ratio
- Set reasonable limits on grading and hauling

2. Keep it simple

Bonuses, exemptions, and other loopholes ruined the mansionization ordinance. Our communities and our City Council want to close the loopholes. Pasting "design standards" onto the ordinance just makes it more complicated and slows it down. Let's get back to basics and get the job done.

3. Garages

Attached garages add 400 square feet of bloat. They do away with the driveways that put some air between houses. A 400 square foot garage adds just as much mass as any other 400 square foot room. Garage space attached to the house must be counted.

4. Bonuses and adjustments

The Department of Building and Safety hands out bonuses that add 20 percent more floor space. Zoning Administrators approve "adjustments" that add 10 percent more on top of that. It all happens behind closed doors. Bonuses and adjustments add up to a lot of bulk and zero transparency. This has got to stop.

5. Property values

We hear claims that strong regulation hurts property values. But we know that's not true. Los Angeles has dozens of Historic Preservation zones where development is closely regulated. Year in and year out, their property values do just fine. The earth is not flat. Regulation does not hurt property values. It's time to move on.

6. Fairness

Some people seem to think it's unfair to change the rules. But we don't smoke in offices anymore. We don't drink and drive. And we should not keep building houses that are out of scale and out of character with their neighborhoods. We should not keep building houses that take away their neighbors' air and light and privacy. When behavior is harmful, we change the rules. Mansionization is harmful and it's got to stop.

7. Property rights

People who want to stop regulation like to talk about their property rights. We all cherish our rights. But those rights have limits. We can't keep horses on small city lots. We can't set off fireworks in our yards. That's because our neighbors have rights, too. Houses that loom over their neighbors spoil their quality of life.

8. One size does not fit all

People who want to stop regulation insist, "One size does not fit all." That's true. That's why the ordinances we're talking about are called baseline ordinances. Specific building requirements for steep hillside lots are different than building requirements for sprawling suburban lots. But whether the lots are big or small, whether they're hillside or flat, out-of-scale houses impose on their neighbors and violate the character of any residential neighborhood. A whole menu of flexible new zone options will let neighborhoods "customize."

But first, we need a baseline that sets sensible limits. We need to close the loopholes -- especially attached garages -- before we take the next step.

It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Best –

Michael D Meloan

415 S. Orange Drive

Los Angeles 90036



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Jed Dempsey <jeddempsey@yahoo.com>
Reply-To: Jed Dempsey <jeddempsey@yahoo.com>
To: "sharon.dickinson@lacity.org" <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 4:09 PM

Dear Ms. Dickinson -

I do not usually get involved in development issues. But the proposed BMO/BHO draft amendments (CF no. 14-0656) have caught my attention and spurred this email. How this issue is addressed will have a direct impact on my neighborhood and my quality of life. I believe it is time for City officials to pay attention to the wishes of the residents they serve.

The first draft of amendments to the mansionization ordinances made a good start. The Planning Department received more than 600 responses. By almost 4:1 the people asked for tighter limits on home size. Instead the latest draft goes in the opposite direction.

We want meaningful reform. Instead, the latest draft preserves loopholes that undermined the ordinance in the first place and disregards the majority demands of our citizens. We want the BMO to

- remove the exemption for attached garage space
- remove the excessive allowances for grading and hauling
- include these so-called semi- "basements" in the total square footage
- simplify the fixes per Council motion instead of reverting to Re:CodeLA which makes it harder to understand and harder to enforce
- preserve the nature and character of neighborhoods
- protect our wildlife in the Hills from encroachment of buildings and closing of corridors

TIME IS RUNNING OUT. While the process falls further and further behind, mansionization is spoiling neighborhoods all over Los Angeles, including the Hollywood Hills. It feels that developers are calling the shots at City Hall and this is further proof.

The Planning Department needs to stop mansionization NOW in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the Council Motion calls for. It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Sincerely,

Jed Dempsey
Upper Nichols Canyon



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Steve Factor <factor.steve@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 6:55 PM

To: vince.bertoni@lacity.org, "councilmember.wesson@lacity.org" <councilmember.wesson@lacity.org>, paul.koretz@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, niall.huffman@lacity.org, "councilmember.huizar@lacity.org" <councilmember.huizar@lacity.org>, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, "councilmember.englander@lacity.org" <councilmember.englander@lacity.org>, "councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org" <councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org>, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, stopmansionization@yahoo.com

BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Gentlemen:

You are elected and appointed representatives of the City of Los Angeles. You have a fiduciary responsibility to act in the interests of the residents of the city. CF 14-0656 was written in response to requests by an overwhelming number of your constituents. A significant number of residents have been harmed by the actions of speculators abusing loopholes, enforcement gaps and the continued delay in making corrections demanded by residents.

The General Plan Framework produced by the planning department shows thoughtful balance to achieve the greatest benefits of development while maintaining our quality of life. The 2008 Baseline Mansionization Ordinance, in spite of its promise, removed that balance. The error was immediately obvious as speculators proved on a regular basis. Does excessive development really cause damage to the character of a neighborhood? We have thousands of examples of just that result, as predicted by the planning department. The planning department however, did nothing. After several extensive surveys, community meetings and analysis the city council instructed the planning department to make the corrections demanded by their constituencies.

The planning department now ignores their framework, ignores calls from residents, ignores a pattern of violations, ignores instructions from the city council and produces a flawed document which will not solve the problem. This inaction serves only the small group of speculators currently abusing our neighborhoods.

Has someone paid you to continue with this charade?

The council motion is simple, enforceable and will correct most of the BMO problems. The city council has selected that solution. Residents have accepted that solution. Stop the delay. It is obvious to everyone. CF 14-0656 was a very clear instruction which you have yet to implement as specified. I suggest this as a first step, Then take your time at home to play with alternatives which will never actually harm our city.



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

Subj: BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656

Michael Fassett <fassettmj@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 10, 2016 at 9:12 PM

To: councilmember.ryu@lacity.org, cd4issues@lacity.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, niall.huffman@lacity.org

Dear All,

I am among many of the homeowners in Laurel Canyon who support tighter limits on home sizes on our small hillside lots and substandard streets with fragile infrastructure.

The latest draft of the BMO/BHO ordinance does not support that.

The loopholes that undermined the first ordinance must be removed: including the exemption for attached garage space and excessive allowances for basements and grading/hauling.

I am facing this situation directly across from my house, where an owner/developer is trying to build a 4000 sq ft house to replace a 2000 sq ft house on a substandard street, with reduced parking and almost no setbacks.

It is so frustrating that instead of counting on the council office (LaBonge, not Ryu) to assist and support building according to the existing ordinance, I had spend \$10000 on a private land use attorney to stop the McMansion. That just doesn't seem right. I was hoping that the revisions of the BMO/BHO ordinance would be a step in the right direction - that currently doesn't appear to be the case.

And what is worse is during the process my neighbor's representative kept saying that he could get any previously expired permits renewed at City Hall, and a variety of other things. Based on how the initial notification (actually lack of notification) was handled, I actually believed him.

People who feel that developers are calling the shots at City Hall – and there are a lot of them – see this as further proof.

The Planning Department needs to stop mansionization in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the Council Motion calls for.

It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Sincerely,

Michael Fassett

2127 Beech Knoll

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

June 10, 2016

To: City Planning Department / neighborhoodconservation@lacity.org

Re: BMO/BHO Draft Amendments (CF 14-0656)

Our organization has submitted earlier comments to the Department in our efforts to support your work to strengthen the BMO/BHO Ordinance and to close loopholes that have diluted its ability to halt oversized development in our residential community and others across the city. We have attended the hearings held by the Department and have heard the comments made by those who, we believe, have been misinformed and frightened by opponents of a strong ordinance.

But our purpose in submitting comments today is to support our Councilmember's original Council motion that instructed the Planning Department to remove the loopholes included in the ordinance that lead to mansionization and that are helping to destroy the character of our neighborhoods – such as the 20 percent bonuses and the exemption for attached garages (which plays a particularly strong role in altering our streetscapes). Further, we wish to highlight **perhaps the most onerous impact of all that mansionization has had in our community – the displacement of and exclusion of families to live in our area seen when speculators swoop in and buy the more affordable properties here.**

Our community is fortunate to be anchored by a very highly rated LAUSD charter school—Westwood Charter Elementary School. For that reason, families sacrifice a great deal to move into our area. They are thrilled to be able to buy what is considered to be a “starter” home here when they can find one. The sad fact, however, is that most families cannot compete with speculators who seek to buy those starter homes and mansionize the properties into luxury homes later available at prices not many/most young families can afford. We are losing our charming older homes that many families covet. The destruction of these homes is being made more attractive to developers because of the loopholes in the BMO. Because oversized homes are permitted and bonuses granted to build ever larger homes on our relatively modest sized lots, there is an increased profit motive that helps these projects to “pencil out.” Thus, the City is fueling rampant speculation that destroys neighborhoods and neighborhood character, destroys neighbors' property values, their privacy and quality of life.

The City states that they are concerned about the loss of affordable housing. While affordable is a somewhat relative term depending upon one's income (and expenses), we see outrageous differences in the cost of housing due to this speculative activity. The City should not be aiding and abetting this speculation that undermines the stability of the community. As we all know, the real estate market experiences periods of rapid increase often followed by periods of instability where market prices fall leaving many in precarious circumstances with their mortgages, etc. The speculation in real estate contributes to this

“boom and bust” cycling. Having a strong and enforceable ordinance to reign in the demolition of our existing housing stock and de-stabilization of communities and to promote responsible remodeling and development respectful of community standards is critically important.

The second iteration of the BMO/HMO amendments fails to give communities the protection they seek. By reinstating loopholes and introducing new ones, it ensures that mansionization will continue. Moreover, our experience on this and other land use issues has shown that the Department of Building and Safety is either incapable of, overwhelmed or unwilling to enforce existing ordinances and code violations. Even today, there are numerous properties in our area where contractors have failed to post demolition and building permits at McMansion sites. (There are two within a block of my own home.) A complicated mansionization ordinance, especially one riddled with loopholes, will be far beyond the Department of Building and Safety's ability to implement. We are concerned that it will be easily gamed and manipulated by contractors, who will go beyond the City's/ ordinance's intention. Our HOA board meetings too often are visited by neighbors who seek help (that we cannot give them due to the loopholes in the BMO) in response to monstrous homes being built adjacent to their homes. They have been told by builders that any concerns will most certainly be handled during construction. They never are. The neighbors naively believe that they are being approached by respectful builders. I am sorry to report to you that that is most often NOT the case. Neighbors are left defenseless in the face of profit-seeking builders interested only in maximizing (mansionizing) their returns. The City cannot afford to continue to lose the more affordable homes attractive to young families. Such a situation will only serve to widen the inequity that plagues Los Angeles which is in danger of becoming of city of the very poor and very rich with an ever shrinking middle (and even upper middle class).

While it is, no doubt, true that larger families require larger homes, it is the role of planning and zoning to establish limits on the size of homes relative to the size of a property. A family wishing to have many children must plan for the many needs and expenses of raising a large family. Just because a family seeks to have many children does not require that they live in a certain neighborhood “by right” and to build a home as large as they may desire. The many negative impacts of such a land use policy would be disastrous for neighbors and for the City. The City earlier compromised the BMO with loopholes to accommodate for too many exceptions. Hopefully, planners and policymakers have come to understand that the tail should not be wagging the dog.

We agree with neighboring homeowner associations that the city's Baseline Mansionization Ordinance and Baseline Hillside Ordinance failed because they incorporated so many loopholes in the form of bonuses and exemptions. Attached garages and uncovered or “lattice roof” patios, breezeways, and balconies should be counted as floor space. As mentioned earlier, the attached garages not only add bulk to homes, but they significantly alter our streetscape with widened driveways, the loss of street trees and street parking. When neighbors drive into their attached garages, they often go unseen on our streets for days. When driveways are used, people are visible and become part of the community.

The “proportional stories” bonus should also be deleted as written. While a proportional bonus may be warranted, it should be considered as a discretionary action by the Department with a public hearing and an appealable written determination by a neighbor or a local HOA representing the community. Automatic bonuses that promote mansionization

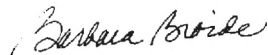
should be stricken, including this one that can add 600 square feet to the size of a house. The case for or against increasing the size of a house must be spelled out in detail as a discretionary action with proper findings, no longer granted in secret by the Department of Building and Safety as a ministerial decision. Furthermore, any discretionary bonus should be based on the net livable footprint of the first floor, not uninhabited areas, such as garages and storage facilities.

We are both grateful and relieved to be included in the lower CD 5 area Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) now providing short-term protection to our community and approximately 22 additional neighborhoods heavily impacted by mansionization. We understand that other communities not in ICO areas are now at a great disadvantage because speculators who would have been plying their trade in ICO-covered areas are now descending upon them in numbers. We know of others who want the protection of an ICO now and do not want to wait for re:code or other remedies down the road.

There is a degree of confusion regarding the recent Neighborhood Conservation/ re:code / R1 “envelope” Planning Department meetings held. People are unclear and confused about their options. They do not know what the ultimate BMO adopted by the Council will be so they do not know how to compare the options that might be available to them. We request that the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance and BHO should be finalized first (before the ICO’s expire) and then later the issues being discussed as part of re:code process such as “side wall articulation” and “encroachment planes” can be evaluated in reference to already established clear standards/limits.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Barbara Broide
President

Cc: paul.koretz@lacity.org
cpc@lacity.org, james.k.williams@lacity.org
PLUM Committee: councilmember.harris.dawson@lacity.org,
councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org,
councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org,
councilmember.huizar@lacity.org



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

From David Kaufman - Please Read (Regarding Amendments)

David Kaufman <davidkaufman23@gmail.com>

Sat, Jun 11, 2016 at 11:19 AM

To: paul.koretz@lacity.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, vince.bertoni@lacity.org, tom.rothmann@lacity.org, ken.bernstein@lacity.org, craig.weber@lacity.org, nicholas.maricich@lacity.org, phyllis.nathanson@lacity.org, niall.huffman@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.fuentes@lacity.org, sharon.dickinson@lacity.org, stopmansionization@yahoo.com, stopmcmansions@gmail.com

Cc: Shelley Wagers <shelley@wagersmail.net>, Peter Nichols <peter@melroseaction.com>, tom@carasoin.com, Dick <dickplatkin@gmail.com>, carltonct@aol.com, pam@pitchpress.com, traconside@yahoo.com, plotkindi@aol.com

Dear City Council Members, Planning Department & PLUM Committee:

Regarding the BMO/BHO Amendments, CF no. 14-0656:

It's too late for my home. I'm in the Melrose area, and unfortunately I am in an R-2 zone. My single-family home is now dwarfed by a massive McMansion that stares into my backyard, has robbed my children of privacy while playing, blocks sunlight to half our yard, even blocks our view of the nighttime sky!!!! The McMansion owner even added a "waterfall" that pours from their second story — so you can now add NOISE pollution that has destroyed our enjoyment of our home. We cannot open our passenger car doors any longer, as they built all the way up to the property line. These are SMALL lots and they have even blocked our ability to open our car doors in our driveway. We must now get out/into our passenger side after pulling halfway into the street. Here is a photo of what we deal with now — what has ruined our home of 21 years. It literally has made us physically sick that our home has been ruined. And our elected officials simply let it happen.



The first draft of amendments to the mansionization ordinances made a good start. The Planning Department collected more than 600 responses -- by almost 4-to-1, people asked for tighter limits on home size.

But the latest draft takes a wrong turn.

- We asked for meaningful reform. Instead, the latest draft preserves loopholes that **undermined the ordinance in the first place**. These include the exemption for attached garage space (even in "the flats") and excessive allowances for grading and hauling, to name just two.

- The Council Motion provided the blueprint for a simple, effective fix. Instead, the latest draft borrows elements from Re:Code LA that **make the ordinance harder to understand and harder to enforce**. These include "encroachment planes" and "side wall articulation."

While the process falls further and further behind, [mansionization is spoiling neighborhoods all over Los Angeles](#).

People who feel that developers are calling the shots at City Hall -- and there are a lot of them -- see this as further proof.

The Planning Department needs to stop mansionization in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the Council Motion calls for.

It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate

speculation.

Sincerely,

David Kaufman
Melrose Village



Sharon Dickinson <sharon.dickinson@lacity.org>

BMO/BHO Amendments CF no. 14-0656

Laura Rae-Yates <lradiates@aol.com>
To: Vince.bertoni@lacity.org

Sat, Jun 11, 2016 at 2:10 PM

To all Concerned:

The first draft of amendments to the mansionization ordinances made a good start. The Planning Department received more than 600 responses. By almost 4:1 the people asked for tighter limits on home size. Instead the latest draft goes in the opposite direction.

We want meaningful reform. Instead, the latest draft preserves loopholes that undermined the ordinance in the first place and disregards the majority demands of our citizens.

We want the BMO to

- * remove the exemption for attached garage space

- *remove the excessive allowances for grading and hauling

- *include these so-called semi- "basements" in the total square footage

- *simplify the fixes per Council motion instead of reverting to Re:CodeLA which makes it harder to understand and harder to enforce

- *preserve our wildlife in the Hills from encroachment of buildings and closing of wildlife corridors

TIME IS RUNNING OUT. While the process falls further and further behind, mansionization is spoiling neighborhoods all over Los Angeles, including the Hollywood Hills. It feels that developers are calling the shots at City Hall and this is further proof.

The Planning Department needs to stop mansionization in the simplest, most effective, and timeliest way. That's what residents and homeowners want and what the Council Motion calls for. It's time for Los Angeles to put stable communities and neighborhood character ahead of real estate speculation.

Sincerely,

Laura Rae-Yates
Morton Yates

Upper Nichols Canyon

Tony Braswell, President
Ginny Hatfield, Vice President
Steven Stokes, Treasurer
Dale Liebowitz-Neglia, Secretary
Dorothy Apple
Daryl Baskin
Glenn Block
Richard Davies
Alice Hart
Suzanne Lewis
Lisa Miller
Richard Poole
Paulette Stokes
Jeff Walker
Marc Woerschling
Alex Rostad, Student Representative



**NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
VALLEY VILLAGE**

P.O. Box 4703
Valley Village, CA 91617

TELEPHONE: (818) 759-8204

www.myvalleyvillage.com

June 10, 2016

Hon. Paul Krekorian
L.A. City Council, District 2
L.A. City Hall
200 No. Spring Street, Rm. 435
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Council File 14-0656

Dear Councilman Krekorian:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Neighborhood Council Valley Village, our Planning and Land Use Committee, and our stakeholders, we would like to share some comments relative to the latest proposal concerning the Baseline Mansionization ordinance, Council File 14-0656.

Valley Village is currently one of the dozen or so ICOs that have been created and our community has been included in the RFA District for Studio City since March of 2015. The issue of mansionization almost tore our community apart in 2006-2008 as stakeholders were outraged by the construction of homes twice the size of residences built in the pre-war and post-war eras. The BMO ordinance that passed in 2008 provided some relief, but it was evident early on that this was only a first step in addressing the issue as there were too many loopholes that allowed the continuation of out-of-scale development.

NCVV is in support of the intent of the original proposal introduced by Councilmembers Koretz and Ryu. However, the latest version of this proposed ordinance gives us concern. The ordinance addresses some of what the Councilmembers called for in their motion to review and revise the BMO but certain aspects of these solutions may perpetuate old problems and create new issues as well.

For example, establishing the Encroachment Plane in lieu of the Proportional Stories and Set Backs may appear to be simpler, but is too vague to either guide builders in creating desirable designs with improved massing, or to assure neighbors of newly built or remodeled single family homes that the issues of mansionization will be adequately addressed, or enforced.

The .50:1 FAR for lots smaller than 7,500 sq. ft. is still too large and needs more specific requirements ensuring that the size of very large homes is mitigated by improved massing and proportional design.

We hope you will keep these comments in mind as this legislation makes its way through the legislative process and the final version emerges. Our community will continue to monitor the progress and communicate our comments to our elected officials.

Sincerely,

Dale Liebowitz-Neglia

Dale Liebowitz-Neglia, Chair
Planning & Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Herb Wesson
Vince Bertoni, L.A. Planning Dept.
L.A. Planning & Land Use Committee