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September 19, 2016

14-0656  
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14-0656

I have been a resident at 10313 La Grange Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025, for nearly 20 years. This residence is located in the Lower Council District 5 area. I am writing to request that the Baseline Mansionization and Baseline Hillside Ordinances (BMO) not be adopted as proposed for the following reason and suggest the changes listed below:

A. BMO EFFECTIVELY PLACES A MORATORIUM ON MANY EXISTING SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES THAT WANT TO REMODEL WITHOUT DEMOLITION:

The BMO effectively places a moratorium on owners of existing single family residences who want to add a second story on the existing structure rather than demolish it and create a new residence from the ground up.

1. My lot is 6,855 square feet.
2. My existing one story house has 2,352 square feet, which is .34 FAR
3. The BMO would only allow a .43 FAR, permitting a maximum floor area would be 2,948.
4. The remaining proposed BMO buildable area would only be 596 square feet ( $2,948 - 2,352 = 596$ ).
5. Without totally sacrificing encroachment into a small rear yard area, which may already be at or near the rear set back limit, the only feasible solution to add additional living area would be to add a second story.
6. No home owner is going to go through the time and expense of adding a second story limited to 596 square feet.

B. THE PURPOSES OF THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT THE EXISTING .43 FLOOR AREA LIMITATIONS FOR REMODELING OF EXISTING ONE STORY HOUSES:

1. The stated goals of the BMO is to draft new zoning options to promote neighborhood conservation by addressing “ the issues of looming, building massing and size, loss of open space, grading, and loss of character” that preserve neighborhood preference, through “user-friendly” floor area ratio (FAR) ranges”
2. Our existing neighborhood on La Grange has sensitively developed many second stories and new houses in the last 20 years that have met the goals of the BMO but would exceed the FAR limits under the proposed ordinance. The following adjoining residences and across the street exceed the .43 proposed limit:
  - a. 10318 La Grange (Lot = 5693, 2 story House = 4118, = .72 FAR)
  - b. 10309 La Grange (Lot = 6247, 2 story House = 3,700+/- = .59 FAR)
  - c. 10319 La Grange (Lot = 5655, 2 story House = 3,500+/- = .61 FAR)
  - d. 10322 La Grange (Lot = 5019, 2 story House = 3,380 = .67 FAR)
3. The issues of looming, building massing and size, loss of character, and open

space have less to do with allowable FAR than with the perception of the view of the front facade from the street. What happens behind the front facade (including some side-wall articulation) has little to do with these goals. The building elements most important in addressing these issues include:

a. Modulation or articulation of the front facade into separate planes of space including some side-wall articulation to create smaller areas of continuous flat planes and shadowing to reduce the appearance of bulk. This may be achieved through the use of balconies (open on at least two sides), roof over-hangs, some side-wall articulation, and other features along the front facade to break up the massing without such severe restrictions of the FAR for second story additions;

b. Maximum height of floor plates and of the sloping roof ridge;

c. Side yard setbacks; and

d. Front yard landscaping

4. The issues of grading and loss of open space are largely related to new construction.

C. A SAFE HARBOR PROPOSAL TO ALLOW VARIATION TO PROPOSED BMO BUILDING STANDARDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND STORIES ON EXISTING HOUSES

Allow a second story be added to existing residences that comply with the following general building standards:

a. The second story must not exceed the current footprint of the existing house for its front and side setbacks, except for the articulation of a portion of the front facade and side-wall;

b. Establish maximum height floor plates and of the roof ridge;

c. Allow the maximum FAR of the existing and new area not to exceed .50 FAR. (NOTE: As set forth above, this proposed FAR is far lower than currently exists in our neighborhood where there are many two story houses that do not create improper massing or bulk or materially and adversely affect the residential character of the neighborhood;

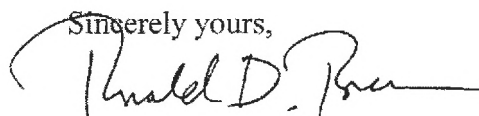
d. Consider requiring a set back of the second story of 10 to 15 feet from the front facade, or allow a variation of this set back by permitting the use of balcony along the front facade to protrude from the existing front facade of up to 8 feet, provided it is open on at least two sides.

e. Such other objective standards as may be appropriate to reasonably achieve a balance of the legitimate public interest in neighborhood preservation with the space needs of families and the legitimate interests of property owners.

I have attached pictures of my house and the neighboring houses for your review.

Thank you for considering these remarks.

Sincerely yours,



Ronald D. Rosen



My House - 13313 La Grange Ave

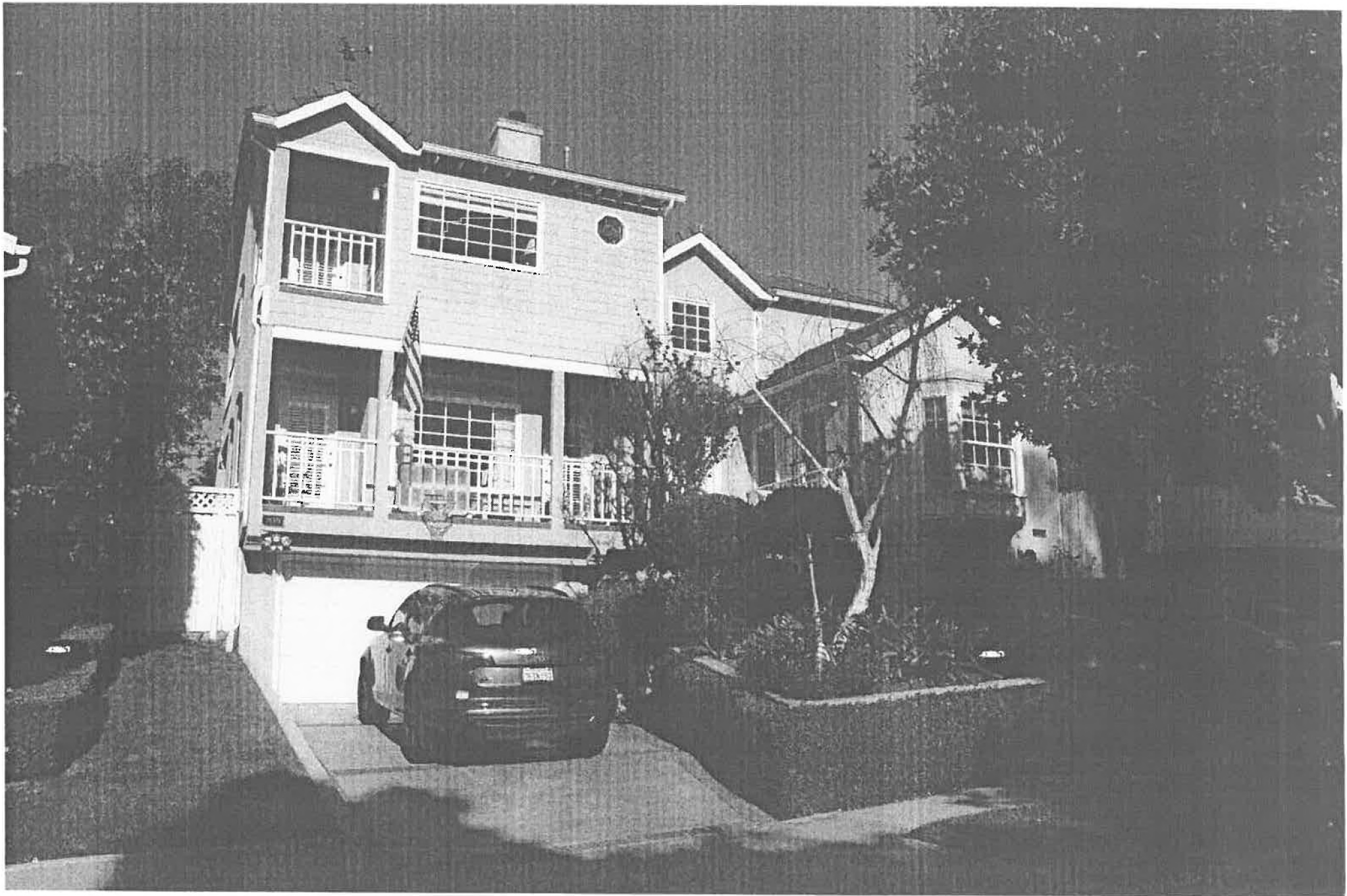


10318 La Grande Ave.





10309 La Grange Ave.

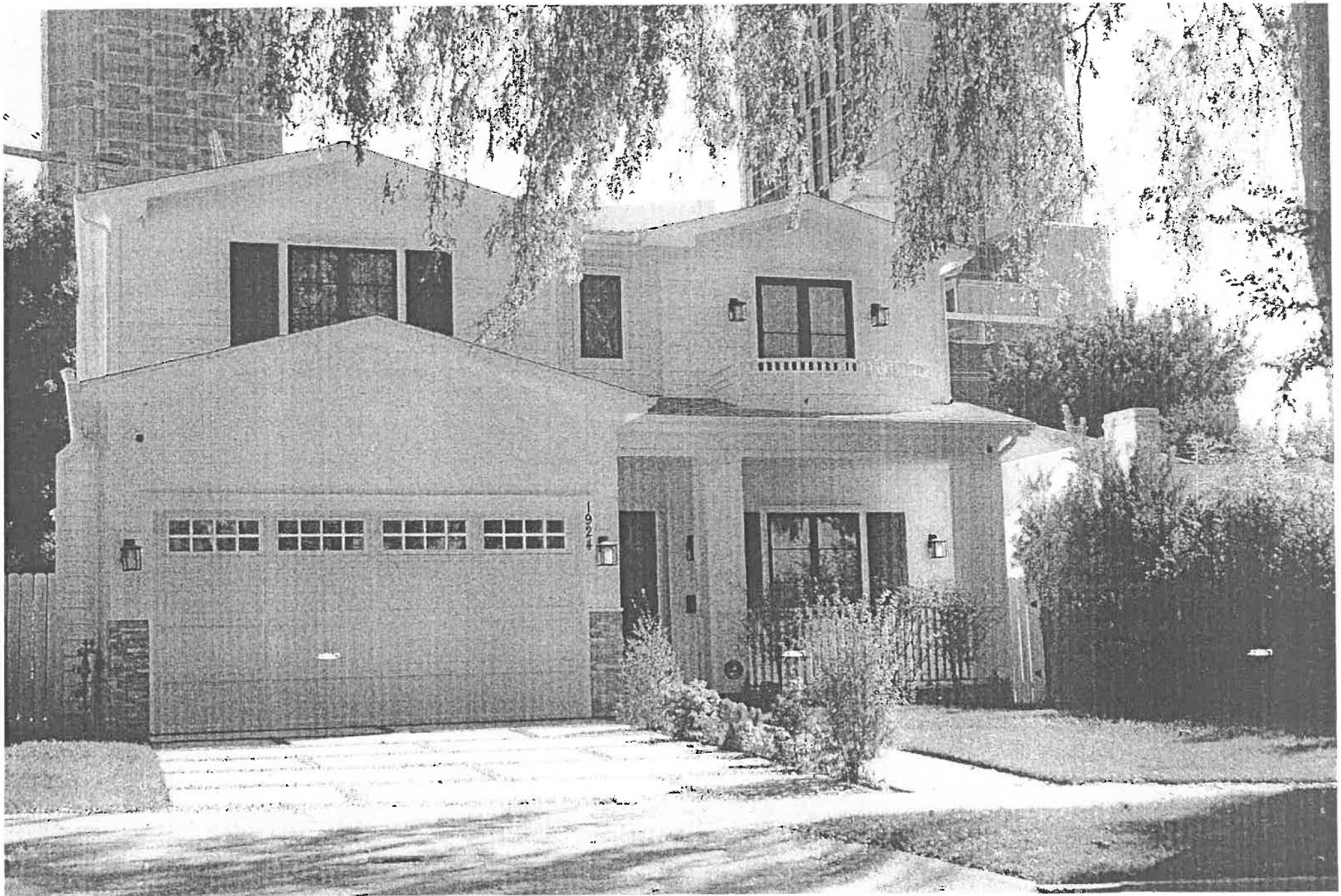


10319 La Grange Ave.



10322 La Grange Ave.





1924 FOX HILLS RD.

LOT SIZE: 6509

HOUSE SIZE: 3,911

Lot: .60