



BRENTWOOD Community Council

149 S. Barrington Ave., Box 194, Los Angeles, CA 90049

www.brentwoodcommunitycouncil.org

January 8, 2016

Councilman Mike Bonin
200 N. Spring Street, Room 475
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: Council File #14-0656; CPC 20115-3484 CA; Baseline Mansionization Ordinance/Hillside Baseline Ordinance BMO/BHO)

Dear Mike:

The Brentwood Community Council supports revisions to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) with important exceptions.

1. The garage square footage exemption should remain.

We believe elimination of this exemption will simply encourage builders to reduce garage square footage to the required minimum of approximately 300 square feet in order to provide more interior living space. The size reduction will result in garages not suitable for two car parking and thus push cars on to the street. We also believe the exemption for detached garages with the hope that they will become popular again is a fantasy as there is little current evidence people will navigate a long driveway to park in a rear situated garage.

2. The bonus for articulated front should remain.

We believe the intention of the articulated bonus in the original BMO was to discourage "box-like" architecture. The elimination of the bonus would reduce the incentive to build homes with more character. We believe a compromise can be reached by reducing the bonus for an

articulated front to 10%.

3. Limit subterranean parking garages.

While this is not part of the current BMO, we believe the construction of subterranean parking garages diminishes the single-family character of residential streets. We also believe these garages are rarely used for parking, as ingress and egress are not easy to navigate. We suggest allowing subterranean parking garages only when the driveway has a minimum front setback of twenty feet (approximately one large car length).

4. Limit Basement Size.

There is no current limit on basement sizes. Basements increase construction time, increase energy usage, and increase potential for alternate uses. We suggest limiting basement size to the square footage and perimeter of the base floor.

5. Retain Covered Porch Exemption.

Covered Porches add character to a home and discourage the box-like design prevalent prior to the BMO. We believe the 250 square foot exemption should remain.

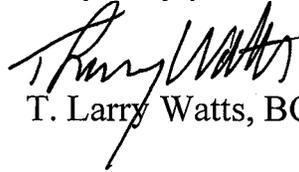
6. Alternative.

Rather than eliminate the bonuses mentioned above, another acceptable alternative might be to retain the bonuses, but reduce the maximum bonus from 20% to 15%. This seems reasonable since the overall FAR has already been reduced on lots under 9,000 square feet. By reducing the FAR as proposed in the draft amendment, and reducing the bonus size, our suggestions still result in a 10% reduction in home sizes on smaller lots.

We support the BMO, but compounding restrictions in the new draft amendment will result in a too dramatic decrease in buildable square footage. Our revisions are an effort to strike an appropriate balance in the goals of the BMO and the differing opinions of homeowners.

Thank you very much for considering our views.

Very truly yours,



T. Larry Watts, BCC Chair

cc: Hon. Eric Garcetti, Mayor, City of Los Angeles
All members of LA City Council
Michael LoGrande, Director of Planning, Department of City Planning
Mike Feuer, City Attorney
Tom Rothman, Senior City Planner, Department of City Planning
Raymond Chan, General Manager, Department of Building & Safety
Lincoln Lee, Chief, Code Enforcement Bureau, Department of Building & Safety
Larry Galstian, Chief, Inspection Bureau, Department of Building & Safety
David Lara, Assistant Chief, Inspection Bureau, Department of Building & Safety
Tricia Keane
Sharon Dickinson, Legislative Assistant, City Council PLUM Committee-
with request for filing in CF 14-1635-S2