


ANALYSIS

An ordinance amending Title 22 – Planning and Zoning of the Los Angeles County Code, establishing additional development standards to projects taking place on steep-sloping parcels in the Altadena Community Standards District. These standards are intended to ensure additional oversight on parcels where new development might pose risks to public safety and negatively impact the visual environmental character of the community of Altadena.

ANDREA SHERIDAN ORDIN
County Counsel

By 
ELAINE M. LEMKE
Principal Deputy County Counsel
Property Division

EML:vn

08/02/10 (Requested)

10/26/10 (Revised)

ORDINANCE NO. 2010-0052

An ordinance amending Title 22 - Planning and Zoning of the Los Angeles County Code, establishing additional development standards to projects taking place on steep-sloping parcels in the Altadena Community Standards District.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 22.44.127 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22.44.127 Altadena Community Standards District.

A. Intent and Purpose. The Altadena Community Standards District ("CSD") is established to ~~provide a means of reasonably~~ ensure that new and expanded structures are compatible in size and scale with the characteristics of surrounding residential neighborhoods, protecting the light, air, and privacy of existing single-family residences from ~~the negative impacts on these resources caused by the construction on adjacent properties of uncharacteristically large and overwhelming residences.~~ The District is also established to ~~ensure that new and expanded structures are compatible in size and scale with the characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods.~~ The CSD is also established to minimize the visual and environmental impacts of development in hillside management areas.

B. Description of District. The boundaries of the District are coterminous with the boundaries of the Altadena Community Plan. The map of the District follows this ~~s~~Section.

C. Community-wide Development Standards. ~~Where landscaping is required by this Community Standards District, such landscaping shall be regularly pruned,~~

~~weeded, fertilized, cleared of litter, and replaced when necessary. The use of drought-tolerant plants is recommended.~~

1. Landscaping. Where landscaping is required by this CSD, it shall be maintained through regular pruning, weeding, fertilizing, litter removal, and replacement of plants as necessary.

2. Hillside Management.

a. Applicability. The provisions of this subsection shall apply in hillside management areas, as defined in Section 22.08.080, except for:

i. Applications submitted to the Department of Regional Planning and deemed complete prior to the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection, provided that plans submitted with the application depict all proposed grading and structures.

ii. Changes to applications approved by the Department of Regional Planning prior to the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection, provided that such changes:

(A) Do not cumulatively increase the previously approved floor area or height of any structure by more than 10 percent; and

(B) Do not cumulatively increase the previously approved amount of grading to more than 2,500 total cubic yards of material.

iii. Applications to repair or reconstruct a damaged or destroyed structure that was legally established prior to the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection.

b. Permit Required.

i. A minor conditional use permit, as provided in

Section 22.56.085 shall be required for any development that is not otherwise subject to a conditional use permit pursuant to Section 22.56.215, except for:

(A) Additions to a structure that was legally

established prior to the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection;

(B) New accessory structures; and

(C) Development designed so that all areas with a

natural slope of 25 percent or greater remain in a natural state.

ii. Applications for a minor conditional use permit shall

include the information required by Section 22.56.215.D and shall substantiate the

burden of proof required by Sections 22.56.090, 22.56.215.F.1.a, and 22.56.215.F.1.b.

c. Grading.

i. A conditional use permit, as provided in Part 1 of

Chapter 22.56, shall be required for any grading on a lot or parcel of land that

cumulatively exceeds 2,500 total cubic yards of material, excluding any grading

approved prior to the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection.

ii. In approving a conditional use permit for grading, the

Hearing Officer or Regional Planning Commission shall make the following findings in

addition to those required by Section 22.56.090:

(A) The grading is designed to minimize

disturbance to the natural hillside by clustering building pads and structures near

existing paved streets, on areas with the flattest terrain, or on areas with the least visual impact; and

(B) The overall development minimizes visual and environmental impacts to the surrounding area. In making this finding, the Hearing Officer or Regional Planning Commission shall require projects to comply with the following development standards regarding hillside design, where they apply to the project:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <u>Grading and Topography</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Grading is not conducted uniformly across the entirety of the project and is limited to the pads required of individual structures.</u> • <u>Terracing and retention walls, if unshielded by landscaping and visible from downslope, are designed with varied gradients and curvilinear shapes that mimic or blend into surrounding contours.</u> |
| <u>Views and Screening</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Structures, retention walls, and graded areas are screened by landscaping and vegetation.</u> • <u>Structures are placed to minimize their visibility from surrounding parcels or public viewpoints downslope.</u> |
| <u>Surfaces and Reflectance</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Structures incorporate articulated surface faces instead of flat blank walls.</u> • <u>Structures incorporate colors, materials, and textures with an average Light Reflectance Value of 35 percent or less.</u> |
| <u>Landscaping</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Where new tree planting occurs, new trees blend with surrounding vegetation.</u> |
| <u>Trails</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Existing trail right-of-ways or trail heads within the project, dedicated to the County as of the effective date of the ordinance creating this subsection, are improved if necessary to ensure their ongoing use.</u> |

In addition to these required design standards, the Hearing Officer or Regional Planning Commission may require that the applicant incorporate additional design standards which would further the intent and purpose of this CSD in minimizing the visual and

environmental impacts of development in hillside management areas. Such standards may include, but are not limited to, requiring that visible topsoils used as grading fill match the color and texture of rocks and soils naturally occurring on site, requiring that project structures use matte or rough surfacing to diminish reflectances, requiring that stands of native vegetation are preserved or expanded, and requiring that mature trees are preserved.

iii. Any application for grading involving the off-site transport of 1,000 or more cubic yards of material, shall include a haul route for review and approval by the Department of Regional Planning.

iv. Any grading occurring during the rainy season, defined as October 15 of any year through April 15 of the subsequent year, shall be subject to mitigation measures deemed necessary by the Department of Public Works to prevent runoff and erosion.

d. Significant Ridgeline Protection. Ridgelines are defined as the line formed by the meeting of the tops of sloping surfaces of land. Significant ridgelines are highly visible ridgelines that dominate the landscape. The locations of the significant ridgelines within the CSD are shown on the map following this Section.

i. The highest point of any structure shall be located at least 50 vertical feet and 50 horizontal feet from a significant ridgeline, excluding chimneys, rooftop antennas, amateur radio antennas, roof-mounted solar panels, and wind energy conversion systems.

ii. Any modification to the standards set forth in subsection 2.d.i. shall require a conditional use permit, pursuant to Part 1 of Chapter 22.56. In approving such conditional use permit, the Hearing Officer or Regional Planning Commission shall make the following findings in addition to those required by Section 22.56.090:

(A) Alternative sites within the project site have been considered and rejected due to the presence of documented hazards or the potential for greater damage to biota, as determined by a biologist; and

(B) The overall development is designed to comply with the development standards provided in subsection C.2.c.ii.b.

...

SECTION 2. Section 22.44.127, Appendix is hereby added to read as follows:

ALTADENA COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT
CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANT RIDGELINES

The designation of the significant ridgelines within the Altadena Community Standards District is based on the following criteria:

- Topographic complexity. Ridges that have a significant difference in elevation from the valley or canyon floor. Generally, these ridges are observable from any location on the valley floor, from a community, or from a public road. Geologic conditions in Altadena make this a common condition.

- Near/far contrast. Ridges that are a part of a scene that includes a prominent landform in the foreground and a major backdrop ridge with an unbroken skyline. This includes a view into a valley rim or a pass. Often, layers of ridges are visible into the distance, such as on or adjacent to Chaney Trail. This contrast can be experienced viewing an entire panorama or a portion of a panorama from an elevated point.
- Cultural landmarks. Ridges from views of well-known locations, structures, or other places which are considered points of interest in Altadena. These landmarks include the Owen Brown cabin and gravesite, Zorthian Ranch, Echo Mountain, Rubio and Millard Canyons, and the Nightingale Estate.
- Existing community boundaries and gateways. Ridges and surrounding terrain that provides the first view of predominantly natural, undeveloped land as a traveler emerges from the urban landscape. These lands introduce visitors to the visual experiences they will encounter in Altadena. Community boundaries and gateways include the Foothill Freeway (Interstate 210) and all of the surrounding ridges that provide a skyline and boundary to the entire San Gabriel Valley and a vast, integrated, visually coherent view space delineating the end of the Los Angeles urban area.

SECTION 3. Section 22.56.085 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22.56.085 Grant or denial or minor conditional use permit by

Director.

A. Any person filing an application for a conditional use permit may request the Director to consider the application in accordance with this Section for the following uses:

-- Altadena Community Standards District, development in a hillside management area as provided in Section 22.44.127.C.2.b.

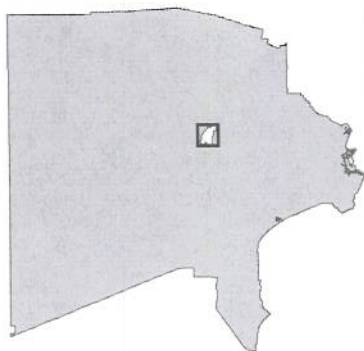
...

[2244127ELCC]

Map of the Altadena Community Standards District and Altadena Ridgelines

Legend

- Altadena CSD Boundary
- Ridgelines
- Altadena Streets
- County_Streets



0 98,000 196,000 294,000 Feet



Los Angeles County
Dept. of Regional Planning
320 W. Temple St
Los Angeles CA, 90012



SECTION 4. This ordinance shall be published in The Daily Commerce a newspaper printed and published in the County of Los Angeles.



Gloria Molina
Chair

ATTEST:

Sachi A. Hamai
Sachi A. Hamai
Executive Officer -
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles

I hereby certify that at its meeting of November 16, 2010 the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors of said County of Los Angeles by the following vote, to wit:

Ayes
Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas
Zev Yaroslavsky
Michael D. Antonovich
Gloria Molina

Noes
Supervisors None

Effective Date: December 16, 2010
Operative Date: _____

Sachi A. Hamai
Sachi A. Hamai
Executive Officer -
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles

I hereby certify that pursuant to Section 26103 of the Government Code, no change of this document has been made.

SACHI A. HAMAI
Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By Antal
Deputy



APPROVED AS TO FORM:
ANDREA SHERIDAN ORDIN
County Counsel

By Leela Kapur
Leela Kapur
Chief Deputy County Counsel