

Introduction

This neighborhood study was undertaken to respond to the Planning Department's request for input from the community in formulating a Coastal Land Use Plan for Venice. The information contained in these documents focuses on the North Venice B & C Areas and is the result of weekly meetings for the period of approximately three months. The study group was composed of residents, property owners and interested parties listed on the next page. Everyone from the community was encouraged to join, whether through mailings, personal solicitation, or newspaper items.

In complying with the City's request, the group succeeded in addressing the issues of greatest concern. The written materials being submitted to the City Planning Department represent the positions and recommendations of subgroups and individuals from the attached list of participants. These documents represent the views of a number of dedicated, concerned community members who have given freely of their time in trying to express their vision of how growth and change can be directed and accommodated in Venice.

These documents offer the first step in the planning process. They are not the end result. The members of this group feel very strongly that the City staff should continue to keep us involved as the final Land Use Plan is developed. The force and numbers with which members of the Venice community turn out to Planning Department meetings is a good indication of the level of concern our community has for its future.

The input to this neighborhood study is divided into nine main sections

1. Residential:
 - Walk Streets*
 - Drive Streets
2. Commercial
3. Ocean Front Walk*
4. Windward Avenue*
5. Historical Preservation
6. Combined Areawide Development Standards
7. Parking and Traffic
8. Comments
9. Visuals (Presented on Display Table; to be submitted to City Planning Department.)

*The majority of time in our meetings was devoted to discussions of these topics.

10-30-88

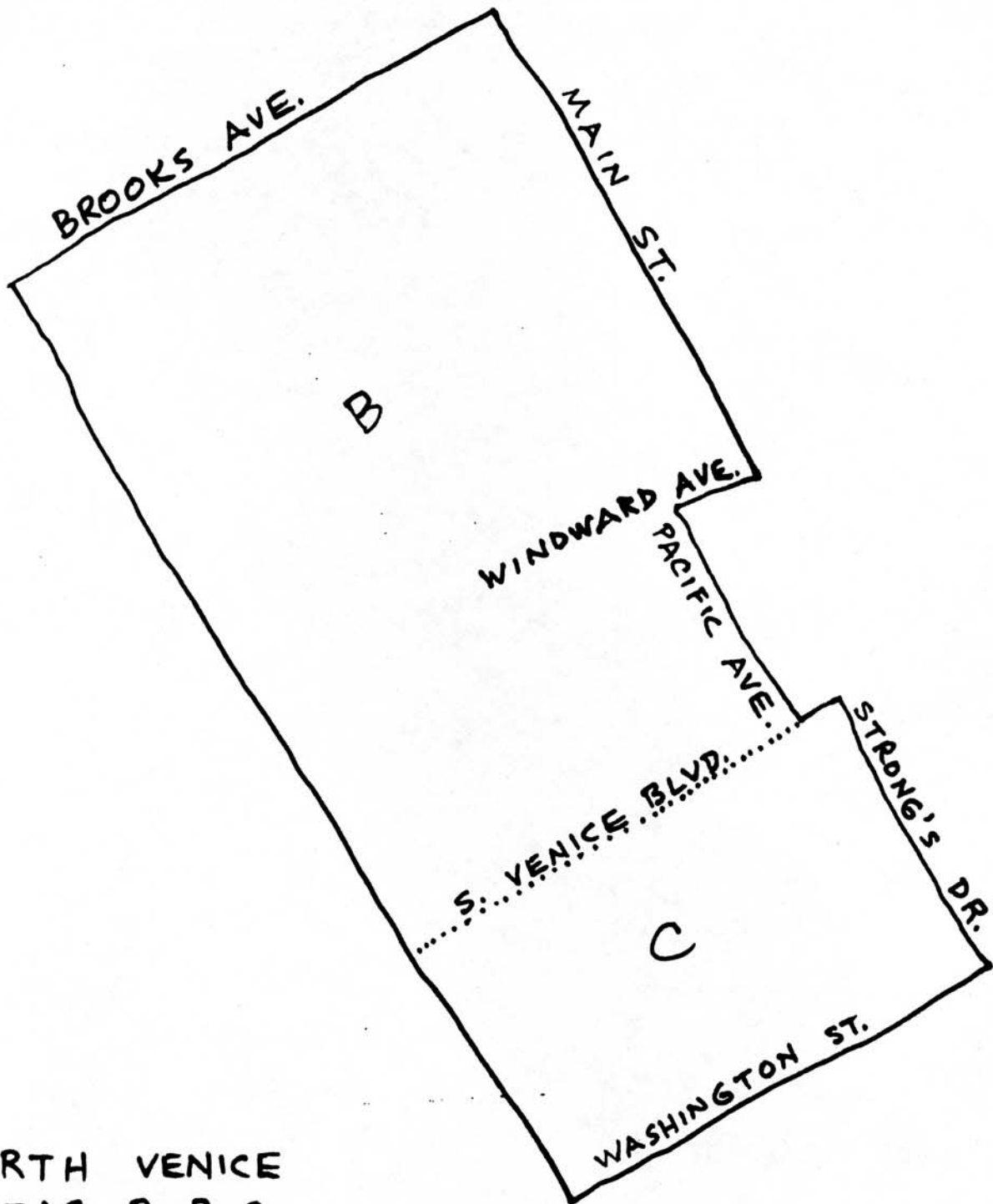
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NORTH VENICE B & C AREAS PLANNING COMMITTEE

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10-30-88
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NORTH VENICE
AREAS B & C

I

RESIDENTIAL

- WALK STREETS

- DRIVE STREETS

10/11/1944

Development Standards and the Local Coastal Program

Walk Streets in Venice's North Beach

The walk streets are predominantly zoned RD1.5. Most of the lots are small (30' by 90'). Historically, most housing on these streets has been bungalows or two story wood frame house. Recent construction has tended towards two and four unit stucco duplexes, which have drastically altered the appearance and texture of many streets. Our primary goal to retain the residential, small scale, variegated character of the walk streets. We would like to encourage preservation of the existing housing stock and discourage demolition of older houses that evoke the feel of Venice's past. We are interested in exploring the possibilities of creating historic or cultural districts to actively preserve these unique streetscapes. For residents the walk streets can provide the benefits of a small scale neighborhood with the extraordinary advantage of proximity to a large city and to the ocean. For beachgoers, a stroll down a these streets is a refreshing oasis after the roar of Ocean Front Walk. It is with these goals in mind that we have listed the following guidelines.

1. Density

Objective: To preserve the neighborhood at its current density.

Commentary: The walk streets with their limited parking facilities, and often difficult access, are fast approaching their density limit. Most lots can not accomodate more than two units. New housing has tended towards the characterless. In order to preserve the historic character of the neighborhood, some incentive should be offered to maintain or add onto the existing houses.

Guideline: One dwelling unit shall be permitted for each 1500 square feet of lot area including one half the alley. A 2250 square foot lot shall be considered acceptable for two dwelling units.

2. Lot consolidation

Objective: To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood.

Commentary: The walk streets comprise a small scale neighborhood. The most successful streets combine one story bungalows with single family residents and duplexes of two stories. On streets where lot consolidations have occurred (even on blocks where there are older apartment houses) the new buildings appear unwieldy and out of place. By preventing lot consolidation, we would actively discourage attempts to buy adjacent buildings with the intent of demolishing them and combining lots.

Guideline: No lot consolidation should be permitted on walk streets. In the case of contiguous lots, the total frontage of any new building can not exceed the frontage that would be permitted on one of the original lots, i.e. if two 30'x90' lots are combined--the frontage of any building could not exceed 24'. No frontage should exceed 36'.

3. Height

Objective: To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To limit height and encourage articulated architectural styles.

Commentary: The existing housing stock is primarily one and two story houses. Parking regulations in recent years have resulted in higher buildings to allow two units on a lot. We want to actively discourage the construction of flat-roofed stucco boxes. We would hope to develop a combination of incentives and restrictions to encourage articulation of buildings and inspire an imaginative and attractive use of space.

Guidelines: Height limit of 20' (perhaps 22') in first third of lot.
Height limit of 28' for rear two-thirds of lot.
Limit can be 6'-8' higher in front and rear for gables
and other architectural appendages.
Towers of not more than 100 square feet will be
permitted up to the height limit.

4. F.A.R. Floor Area Ratio

Objective: To preserve present character and scale and to limit floor-area ratio by encouraging building volume articulation and discouraging large building masses.

Commentary: The existing housing stock is predominantly small houses on lots with garages in back. We feel that a 1.5. F.A.R. allowance not including parking is excessive and encourages the "maxed-out stucco boxes" which have become ubiquitous in recent years.

Guideline: Within the building setbacks, there should be an open yard requirement, which would vary depending on the size of the lot, i.e. 13' x 13' for a 30' x 75' lot, 15' x 15' for a 30' x 90' lot.

5. Front Yard Setback.

Objective: To produce a street edge compatible with the existing fabric. To encourage porches on new construction.

Commentary. The walk streets are unique in that many of the houses extend to the very edge of their property line. Technically, the city owns the bulk of most people's gardens, making the questions of front yard setbacks often an academic one. (This problem would be alleviated if the city in good faith gave these front yards to the property-owners who have maintained them for decades.) Our commitment is to preserve a contiguous line on each walk street. Porches should be encouraged by trade-offs with setbacks.

Guidelines: The front setback of new construction should in no case extend in front of another house. The front-line, including the porch, should be contiguous with other houses on the walk street.

Open porches may intrude in the required front yard setback up to eight feet, if they do not extend beyond the front of the neighboring houses. An open porch is defined by open-wall area of 50% or more. Where open porches are provided, enclosed living space may intrude up to eight feet into the required front yard setback, provided it does not exceed 50% of the length of the building's front facade on the lowest floor. The enclosed area must maintain the 50% open area with the enclosure only in clear glass.

If a porch is provided, upper floors can extend over porch.

6. Rear Yard Setback

Objective: To create fire breaks and allow Fire Department access. To allow access to parking from the alley, including a turning ratio.

Guideline: Rear yard setbacks should be maintained. A 15' rear yard is required. One-half of the width of the alley may be used in computing the depth of the rear yard.

7. Side Yard Setback

Objective To provide adequate fire breaks, light and air. To encourage architectural projections and provide visual interest.

Commentary: In addition to encouraging light and air, we would also like to provide an incentive for architectural protrusions such as chimney, bay windows, and eaves.

Guidelines: The standard setback will be 10% of lot width, with a 4' minimum. The setback can be reduced to 30" (Fire Department minimum clearance) for the 25% of the side wall area consisting of bay windows or other variations. (36" clear minimum for first eight feet)

Protrusions cannot extend more than 2 1/2 feet from building.

Any portions of the side wall that exceed 20', not including gables, must be set back one foot over the allotted side yard setback.

8. Refuse

Objective: To encourage enclosed trash storage in alleys.

Commentary: The older construction in alleys allows little room for trash receptacles. The construction of enclosed areas for trash would help alleviate the problem and would also help in recycling programs which will eventually be developed.

Guideline: Fully enclosed areas for trash containers.

9. Parking and Access.

Objective: To have adequate parking in the area of the walk streets for residents and their guests.

Commentary: The walk streets, with their numerous buildings which do not provide resident parking, their lack of on-street parking, and their proximity to the beach suffer from a severe shortage of parking places. Parking requirements in the BIZ attempt to address these problems. We would suggest that as an interim measure lots which are currently vacant be used for parking without limiting their future potential for development.

Guidelines: Current requirements (2 spaces per dwelling unit) for parking for new construction should be maintained. (Spaces can be tandem).

Property owners should be guaranteed that the future of their property will not be limited if they use it as a parking lot now.

These interim parking lots, as well as other lots on walk streets should be attractively landscaped to camouflage their purpose.

10. Landscaping and Open Space

Objective: To create a pleasant environment for residents and visitors. To improve air quality. To provide visual relief from buildings and streets.

Commentary. The walk streets with their lack of vehicular traffic provide a unique opportunity for landscaping. Vegetation is particularly desirable.

Guidelines: 50% of the front yard must be softscape.

11. Height and Material Restrictions for Fences.

Objective: A street that encourages a neighborhood feeling without unduly limiting privacy of residents.

Commentary: New construction of fencing should not result in fortress-like enclosures. Sightlines should include views of house and garden.

Guidelines: Fences at front yard should not exceed a height of 3 1/2 feet high. Entry arbors are permitted with gates no higher than 3 1/2 feet.

12. Sightlines at intersections.

Objective: Visibility of oncoming traffic at intersections.

Commentary: On certain intersections new construction of walls has seriously impaired the ability of drivers' to see oncoming traffic thus creating a safety hazard.

Guidelines: Corner lots must maintain visibility onto public streets or alleys. Solid walls should not exceed car visibility height at corners.

13. Parking in side or front yards on corner lots.

Objective: No parking on walk streets.

Commentary: This may be an enforcement problem. Several corner lots, accessible to vehicular traffic are now used for parking. This is both a visual eyesore and a hazard for pedestrians.

Guidelines: Parking for walk streets should be accessible only through the rear alleys. No parking in front yard setbacks.

14. View corridors.

Objective: To maintain an unobstructed view of the beach (with the exception of the benches and pagodas) from the walk streets.

Guidelines: No phone banks, newspaper machines, bicycle racks, etc. shall be permitted at the ends of the walk streets.

15. Commercial vehicles

Objective: Limitations on commercial vehicles serving commercial establishments on substandard alleys for residential streets.

Commentary: The narrow residential alleys are often clogged with vehicles making deliveries to business establishments in commercial areas.

Guideline: There should be signage to restrict commercial vehicles on substandard alleys except for Speedway. These vehicles should be directed to the drive through streets.

16. Traffic Control

Objective: Limit traffic congestion, traffic hazards and speeding on Speedway, Pacific Avenue and cross streets.

Commentary: The Speedway is often used for two-way driving, speeding, etc. Very dangerous for cars to turn from alleys onto Pacific. Etc.

Guidelines: More stop signs. Alleys one way west from Pacific to Speedway. Drive-through streets one way east from Ocean Front to Pacific, or two way. Perhaps Speedway should change direction at all major intersections to discourage drive-throughs. Speedbumps should be considered for Royal Court and Speedway.

17. Zoning.

Objective: Protection of residential lots in zones that abut less restrictive zones.

Commentary: It is important to guarantee that all property in a particular zone be afforded the benefits of the restrictions in that zone. If a commercial property, for example, is adjacent to residential property, the setbacks and other requirements that would pertain in the residential zone must be applied on the portion of the adjacent lot that abuts the residential property.

Guideline: If a lot is adjacent to a more restricted zone, the regulations of the more restrictive zone apply on the adjacent property line.

18. Zoning Changes

Objective: Maintain RD1.5 zoning on all walk streets between Speedway and Main.

Commentary: Creeping commercialism is threatening the neighborhood character of the walk streets. The substandard alleys are inadequate for commercial traffic or parking.

Guideline: We support current zoning of the ICO and the Draft Conditional Use Plan. Rezoning should not be allowed.

Rebuttle: To Nancy Kent document on Commercial Uses- This letter is to serve as a tongue & cheek analogy to her document. (See II-3.)

The Walk Streets of Venice have become a burden to the beach area making it impossible for vehicular traffic and creating the overuse of Speedway as the main access route to service the beach area for the 12 million plus visitors to Los Angeles' main beach.

The Walk Street property owners have enjoyed the privilege of encroaching upon city property and making the public thoroughways their front yards. They have built multiple illegal rooms and suites in most of the buildings by splitting one apartment into two, dividing up single family dwellings, adding on without permits, and displacing their garages; and now they complain about no parking. They are attacking anyone with a commercial project and trying to make them to provide parking for the community which they think they are. Any builder or developer who presents a project which falls into the present guidelines, of having adequate parking, providing the necessary amenities of a modern unit is attacked for making the project too big and not fitting into the scale of 1910. The owners of all the old houses should upgrade and provide present requirements.

There is more to the community than the greedy owners of the houses with illegal apartments in Venice, there are also business owners, food service owners, gallery owners, hotels, and entertainers, and the general public who use these services and facilities. Venice Beach is an open space which needs to serve the entire city of Los Angeles. Food service, recreational rentals, area of browsing and shopping, area of open entertainment, adequate parking, and many other services must be considered.

It is now time to investigate the legality of every unit on the walk streets to check their use permits for numbers of dwelling units; to utilize the public right of way and pave over the walk streets making them into drive streets, this will allow public access to the beach, provide enough parking to completely ease the overnight parking problems of the Venice area, and will ease the traffic on Speedway and the few streets that now allow for vehicles.

Horizon Avenue
Westminster Avenue
Brooks Avenue
Low Medium (RD 1.5 zoning, formerly R-4 zoning)

10/25/88
from
Jane Spi
Group B/

7.1 DENSITY

Objective: To preserve the neighborhood at its current density, and to avoid any increase in density.

Commentary: These drive-thru streets are the most densely populated streets in Venice due to the presence of many older large apartment buildings. They are also severely underparked. The current RD 1.5 zoning allowing 2 units on a 30 x 90 lot is desirable.

Guideline: One dwelling unit shall be permitted for each 1500 square feet of lot area including one half the alley. Thirty by ninety lots shall be considered acceptable for two dwelling units. A maximum FAR of 1.2 times lot size shall be permitted. Enclosed Parking spaces are excluded from the FAR calculation.

7.2 HEIGHT

Objective: To preserve the character and variety of scale in the neighborhood.

Commentary: Many of the old apartment buildings on these streets are massive and tall. It is appropriate that new buildings have flexibility to respond to individual site conditions. We recommend a maximum envelope combined with an FAR limitation so that the buildings can be shaped to fit their sites. We want to encourage interesting massing, and two distinct buildings, rather than a single boxy building.

Guideline: Maximum story heights shall be 30 feet for the front 30 feet of the lot. No portion of any building shall exceed 45' in height. Architectural projections including roof access enclosures, towers and penthouses with a total enclosed area less than 200 square feet may reach a height of forty-five feet.

7.3 SETBACKS

7.3.1 Front Yard Setback

Objective: To enhance the pedestrian experience, while facilitating building on substandard size lots. To encourage porches.

Commentary: Porches are a characteristic feature of the historical Venice beach community. They provide a desirable street friendliness and encourage neighborhood interaction. In so doing, they also enhance neighborhood security, which is a major need on these high use drive-thru beach streets west of Pacific.

Guideline: The front yard setback shall be ten feet. Open porches may intrude into the required setback 5 feet. Where open porches are provided, enclosed living space above may intrude up to five feet into the required front yard setback provided it does not exceed 65% of the length of the building's front facade on the lowest floor. Living space at upper floors have a 10 foot setback, 5 foot when porches are provided at the first story.

7.3.2 Rear Yard Setback

Objective: To maximize open space capability in construction on a substandard lot.

Commentary: Many garages and buildings are already built to the alley line on these streets. It is reasonable to allow future buildings the same setback. An alternative would be to allow an average of adjacent property setbacks.

Guideline: A rear yard setback of 7'6" is required from the centerline of the alley.

7.3.3 Side Yard Setback

Objective: To provide adequate light, air and firebreak. To promote articulation of sideyard elevations.

Commentary: We want to develop an incentive for sideyard articulation. Older Venice buildings have bay windows, large roof eaves, and chimneys creating visual interest in their sideyards. Currently, most new buildings have flat side elevations. We would like to encourage the development of form by increasing sideyard requirements to 4 feet, while at the same time allowing a one and one half foot encroachment into that sideyard by architectural projections. This provides a carrot to the builder in allowing a bigger floor area only if articulation of this sort is developed.

Guideline: Sideyard setback shall be 4 feet. Architectural projections including cornices, sills, chimneys, bay windows, and vertical projections may encroach upon this setback for up to 60% of lot length. Roof eaves may project the length of the building. Fire code requirements of 30" setback shall be maintained in all cases.

7.6 UTILITY LINES
Objective: To gradually reduce the blight of utility lines.

Guideline: All new construction and substantial renovation shall be required to put all utility lines underground.

7.7 SCREEN WALLS AND FENCES

Objective: To provide necessary privacy and security for homeowners while maintaining the pedestrian ambiance of Venice.

Commentary : Drive thru streets west of Pacific are heavily impacted by beach visitors. For safety and security reasons, properties on these street should be allowed 6 foot front yard fences. Properties adjacent to major traffic streets need sound walls from excessive traffic noise, and security from cars crashing into their houses. They should be allowed 6 foot fences.

Guideline: 6 foot maximum fence height shall be allowed.

7.9 LOT CONSOLIDATION

Objective: To preserve the scale and character of the neighborhood and to facilitate increased parking capacity.

Commentary: A rich diversity of buildings give Venice it's identity. The one type which is not found in any large numbers in North Beach and the Central old sections of Venice is the large boxy building which spans several lots. That type of building is out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. We do not feel it is suitable for Venice, and suggest a guideline which will prevent its construction.

However, we would like to make possible the continuance of the Venice tradition of courtyard housing. This type of housing has alot of open space, and typically requires the width of three lots.

In addition, we want to maximize the number of parking spaces that can be constructed. On Venice's narrow 30 foot lots, the consolidation of three lots approximately doubles the parking capacity.

Therefore we suggest a guideline which allows three lot consolidation, but does not allow the construction on massive, boxy buildings. It also requires subterreanean parking to be fully landscaped and invisible from the street.

Guideline: Three lots may be consolidated, but the following setbacks and rules shall apply:

- Normal front yard and sideyard setbacks apply to the perimeter of the property.
- Maximum lot coverage allowed is 60% of gross area.
- The property frontage must contain 25% open space to a depth of 30 feet into the property.
- Semi-subterreanean parking may not exceed 30" above average grade.
- Subterreanean parking may not utilize a curb cut off the front street and must be invisible from the front street.
- No open subterreanean parking allowed. Garages must be completely ventilated or screened from the street and sideyards by landscaped berms.
- There shall be no increase in density allowed for lot consolidation.

II

COMMERCIAL

MARKET ST.

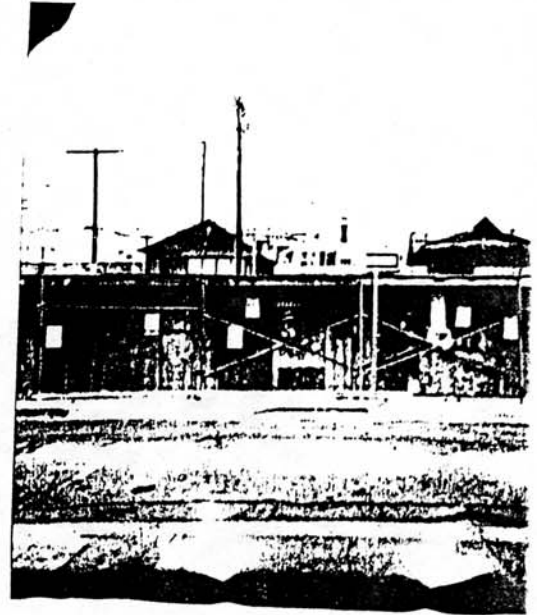
OCEAN FRONT WALK TO
PACIFIC AVENUE

Submitted (J)
by Annette
Robinson,
B/C Group



VIEW ON MARKET TO PACIFIC
Art Galleries
Restaurant
Movie Studio

II-1



CONSTRUCTION - North side
street off of Speedway



APARTMENT HOUSE
Middle of street,
south side



9 MARKET STREET
Ocean Front Walk to Speedway
7 lower commercial units
7 upper low-cost Apartment uni
1 upper high-cost Apartment un.
(Matching low-cost apartment/co

PROPOSAL

1. For each commercial unit, one low-cost apartment unit be reserved or built.
2. One out of four units in apartment housing be reserved for low-cost housing.
3. Market Street from Ocean Front Walk to Pacific Avenue be turned into a walkway. Parking be installed where the Family Clinic is now situated. The Family Clinic be built across the street on Pacific Avenue where storage units and parking now exist. Market Street with a walkway has the possibility of becoming an important art center with weekend art exhibits for resident artists.

WRITTEN SUMMARY OF ISSUES/RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSED AT 9/18/88 "COMMERCIAL AREAS: MAIN STREET AND WASHINGTON STREET" B/C AREA SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

- Concerns phoned in by Marina Peninsula resident Stu Freeman regarding Washington St.: 1) Attractive trash receptacles; 2) Adequate street sweeping; 3) Results of Pier renovation/rebuild/demolition will set tone for this street; 4) Washington Street would be an ideal location for a tram/beach shuttle/whatever mass transit system turnaround point; 5) No duplication of Ocean Front Walk-style open-air or sidewalk vending to be allowed; 6) Keep current "human scale" of buildings; 7) Maintain trees; 8) Community pride; 9) Attractive signage indicating "district designation," i.e., "Venice Pier" area, or whatever.

THE FOLLOWING ARE WRITTEN AGREEMENTS AND/OR PROPOSALS MADE BY THE SEVEN PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE AT THIS 9/18/88 MEETING:

1. Unanimous agreement to eradicate billboards in the Coastal Zone at the earliest time legally possible.
2. Unanimous agreement that commercial signage cannot exceed the maximum height of the building wall at which it is located.
3. Unanimous agreement to encourage commercial signage incorporated into the building facade (examples: murals, awnings) with the goal of eradicating cantilevered signage which obstructs view corridors. (NOTE: Jim Murez to provide a signage photo example for future discussion.)
4. Unanimous agreement that all new and existing commercial uses must provide enclosed trash storage on their own property.
5. Majority agreement that all new and existing residential uses must provide enclosed trash storage on their own property.
6. Majority agreement to encourage (but not require) trash compactors for new construction, both residential and commercial, and for substantial renovations, i.e., those requiring a building permit.
7. Side Set Back on Commercial:
 - Pros:
 - Will encourage rehabs of existing buildings rather than new construction, i.e., will encourage the maintenance of brick buildings, and other older buildings of character
 - Allows for natural light and ventilation
 - Cons:
 - Creates alleyways for crime, trash, and debris
 - Subtracts from commercial frontage, which is prime concern for commercial property
 - Light and air can come in from front and top of commercial buildings without side setbacks.
 - IDEA: Remodelling that does not increase size of building or intensity of its use shall not be subject to any possible new side setback guidelines.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS/CONCEPTS (no concensus reached)

- No commercial lot consolidation and 28' maximum height for commercial (with same guidelines for residential)
- Unlimited subterranean lot consolidation to solve parking shortage
- 30' height limit on commercial with 5' bonus to encourage sloped roofs (though fire code regulations on parapets for commercial may indeed mitigate any visual benefits of the 5' bonus)
- Community concern regarding creeping commercialism.

Submitted by Louis Kent to all B&C Group participants present at the 9/19/99 regular meeting (originally typed under the agenda for the 9/19/88 B&C Group meeting)

Local Implementation Plan Development Guidelines for Commercial Zones
in the "B" and "C" areas of the North Venice Coastal Zone

Submitted October 24, 1988 by Nancy and Louis Kent

Introduction

Venice is recognized as the second most popular tourist attraction in Southern California. North Venice is the primary destination of these tourists and of many Southern California residents as well. We welcome the public to the entire Venice Coastal Zone and warmly invite them to explore our wonderfully diverse neighborhood.

Since the voters of California passed the Coastal Initiative in 1972, new construction and land use changes should reflect the people's mandate to protect the California coast as a natural resource recreational area. The existing level of traffic congestion is high. If it is to change, it should decrease rather than increase.

We are concerned with "creeping commercialism" in Venice: the influence successfully being exerted by commercial interests to intensify commercial uses and expand the amount of commercially zoned land in an area the City wisely downzoned in 1973 due to the substandard street widths, confusing one-way street patterns, and the level of traffic congestion existing in the bygone peaceful era of 1973. Residents and beach visitors who come here for recreational purposes call upon the City of Los Angeles and the State Coastal Commission to uphold the sections of the State Coastal Act that declare that no single area of the coast should be allowed to become overcrowded.

Building heights for new construction should be kept low in order to maintain the feeling of spaciousness one gets in Venice due to the numerous one and two storey buildings here. The attempt to recreate the turn-of-the-century architectural style in the massive new building known as "The Bathhouse" at 909 Ocean Front Walk is not something community members wish to encourage.

The visions and accomplishments of Abbot Kinney are awe-inspiring and the buildings of that and other eras of Venice's interesting history should be preserved as a record of our cultural heritage. That heritage includes the reputation of Abbot Kinney as a man who maintained the position "that no restrictions should be placed on business enterprises." (A History of the Venice Area: A Part of the Venice Community Plan Study, Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 1969, page 17) This City publication states that after Kinney's death in 1920, pressure from residents, the continued breakdown in public services, and the California trend toward progressive reform "were all working to undermine the Kinney influence." (page 19)

To point to the Abbot Kinney era buildings as models for future building standards is a move away from the hard-won progressive reforms whereby citizens have managed to gain a say in what happens to their environment. Our current building standards should be based on the circulation capacity of the streets and the protection provided by the State Coastal Act.

Height

Objective: To encourage low-rise human-scale buildings in the Venice Coastal Zone.

Commentary: The State Coastal Guideline of 30 feet seems reasonable for North Venice. To avoid buildings that are square boxes built out to the maximum permitted, an incentive is provided to include a sloped roof or architectural decorations such as a decorative facade at the front portion of the building.

Guideline: The maximum height shall be 25 feet for the front one-third of the lot. An additional 5 feet shall be permitted for a sloped roof that rises at least 3 feet in every 12 feet, or for any unenclosed decorative architectural feature. A blank wall shall not be considered a decorative feature.

The maximum height shall be 30 feet for the rear two-thirds of the lot. The roof and any decorative architectural features shall not exceed the 30-foot height maximum on any portion of the building.

All State-mandated or City affordable housing bonuses shall provide the housing within this height limit. All heights shall be measured from the center of the frontage road to the peak of the roof or the highest decorative feature, whichever is higher.

Front Setback

Objective: To promote vending that is enclosed in a building.

Commentary: A required front setback for commercial property would be of little value to the public.

Guideline: A 0-foot front setback shall be required for commercial buildings.

Rear Setback

Objective: To allow a reasonable space for the delivery of commercial goods and the enclosed storage of waste.

Commentary: Requiring a rear setback in addition to the requirements on commercial property for loading docks and enclosed trash storage is unreasonable.

Guideline: A 0-foot rear setback shall be required for commercial buildings.

Trash Storage

Guideline: On-site enclosed space dedicated in perpetuity for trash storage according to all Municipal Codes and County Health Department Codes shall be required.

Loading Area

Guideline: A loading area in full compliance with all provisions of the Los Angeles Municipal Code shall be required.

Side Setback

Objective: To provide adequate light and air between buildings.

Commentary: The Coastal Guidelines require a 6-foot separation between buildings for every 50 feet of frontage. It is of extremely high value in the Coastal Zone to avoid new construction of massive buildings that consolidate lots; however, side yards at ground level on a commercial street in Venice create spaces where people loiter, urinate, etc.

Guideline: Commercial side setback shall be 0 feet at ground level; however, the side setback shall be 5 feet or 10% of the width of the lot with a 3-foot minimum on each side of the building above 15 feet or the top of the first storey, whichever is lower.

Lot Consolidation

Objective: To promote buildings that provide corridors of light and ventilation for visitors and residents. To encourage the construction of low- and very-low-income housing.

Commentary: Massive buildings that are proposed to cover more than 2 lots are too large for the Coastal Zone, even at a 30-foot height. The only reason lot consolidation above 2 lots should be permitted is to provide a substantial social benefit: low- or very-low-income housing in perpetuity. The rental rates allowed for "moderate-income affordable housing" (for example, \$958 for a 2-bedroom unit) are too high to justify any development bonus. A time limit shorter than perpetuity for low- or very-low-income housing is also unworthy of any development bonus.

Guideline: Building frontage shall not exceed 2 lots or 60 feet of frontage, whichever is less; however, there shall be no limit on lot consolidations or frontage for a building that provides at least 1 unit of low- or very-low-income housing (to be registered as such with the City Community Development Department in perpetuity) for every 30 feet of building frontage. When all the conditions of the housing described above are met, the side setbacks described above in this LIP shall only be required at the 2 sides of the building.

Coastal Public Access

Objective: To promote public access rather than automobile access to the coast.

Commentary: While it is every person's right to have access to Venice Beach, it is not an inalienable right to park one's car at the beach. Dotting the Beach Impact Zone with parking structures destroys the character and charm of the attraction people are coming to. The City should discourage development of public and commercial parking structures near the beach since they work as magnets to bring cars into an overcongested area. The worst beach traffic jams occur where idling cars are blocking lanes of traffic waiting to enter full parking lots. Lot consolidation for parking structures in the Beach Impact Zone is unacceptable. A shuttle system should be established to decrease traffic congestion at the beach. Attention to this matter is long overdue.

Guideline: Commercial or public parking lots shall be limited to at-grade or below-grade lots in the Beach Impact Zone. The top of any subterranean parking shall be no higher than ground level. Semi-subterranean parking with exposed or landscaped grillwork or screening above ground level shall not be permitted. However, projects built to resolve the residential parking shortage with at least 75% of the spaces allocated in perpetuity for monthly or permanent use by residents at a monthly rate equal to one-half the rate charged at the County beach lots may be built east of Speedway in accordance with all the development requirements of this LIP.

Lot consolidation above ground level for such parking structures shall be limited to a maximum of 2 lots or 60 feet of frontage, whichever is greater. Lot consolidation at or below ground level in excess of 2 lots shall only be permitted until a building is constructed on the lots, at which time all the development requirements of this LIP shall apply.

No more beach sand shall be paved over to provide commercial or public parking. No parking structures shall be built on the beach parking lots that currently exist.

An assessment district of visitor-serving commercial uses within the Beach Impact Zone shall be created to enhance coastal public access by providing or contributing to 1) low-cost or free shuttle transportation from lots within or outside the Venice Coastal Zone; 2) signage to direct motorists on major highways to the shuttle parking lots; and 3) bicycle park-and-lock racks throughout the Venice Coastal Zone.

All commercial uses shall provide free employee parking for 100% of their employees, including owner-operators, parking valets, et al. in clearly marked spaces.

Traffic or parking studies done regarding development of visitor-serving uses in the Venice Coastal Zone for submission to any City department shall include separate statistics regarding conditions during peak public access hours (approximately 1 to 6 p.m. Sundays) and shall include information on the date and weather conditions on the day(s) the study was done.

Open-air Vending

Objective: To enhance coastal public access for recreational purposes.

Commentary: FROM A LETTER BY RUTH GALANTER, Councilwoman, Sixth District, August 1, 1988:

The LAPD has indicated that the intensification of uses on both the private and public lands adjacent to the beach, have caused a potentially dangerous situation due to the density of crowds on the boardwalk and the recent appearance of large numbers of gang members from other parts of the city.

FROM A MEMO FROM CALVIN HAMILTON, Director of Planning to the City Planning Commission May 7, 1981 re: CPC29531:

The outdoor sale of merchandise has been historically restricted by the Zoning Code because outdoor sale activities tend to create a blighted effect and also frequently encroach upon the public thoroughfares, streets, railroad rights-of-way, etc., creating safety and litter problems. (page 3)

...it is believed that such potentially large open air sales should be located as far as possible from residential properties due to their tendency to generate traffic and otherwise be disruptive." (page 4)

The traffic generated by the gradual conversion of Ocean Front Walk into a mile-long swap meet crowds out beachgoers. Open-air vending should not be permitted in the Coastal Zone. It has been a major contribution to overcrowding that exists in Venice in conflict with these Sections of the "Public Access" Article of the Coastal Act: 30210, 30212.5, and 30214.

Guideline: Conditional use permits for open-air vending shall not be renewed upon their expiration. No new or renewal permits for open-air vending shall be issued after the effective date of this LIP. All vending shall occur within buildings approved for occupancy by the Department of Building and Safety.

City-owned property shall not be used for open-air vending.

The Grandfathering-in of Existing Commercial Uses

Objective: To preserve the existing balance of residential and commercial uses on Ocean Front Walk. To discourage conversions of viable housing stock for commercial uses in an already over-intensified area.

Commentary: Six blocks of OFW are about to be downzoned from commercial to residential in the AB283 Consistency Program so that they will match the residential land use designation for them in the Venice Community Plan. Three of these blocks are in the "B" area of North Venice: OFW between South Venice Boulevard and 19th Avenue.

One hundred per cent of one of these blocks is occupied by a HUD subsidized building for seniors and handicapped people. This building was constructed with a substantial height bonus because of the HUD use, although this special feature of the building is not required in perpetuity. Parcels on the two other subject blocks contain viable residential buildings.

Having residents on OFW helps to police the neighborhood and keep the area from becoming a no-man's-land after dark. Housing stock should be preserved. North Venice is already oversaturated with commercial uses. Any legally permitted commercial uses on these subject blocks, however, should be grandfathered in as commercial in perpetuity rather than being required to close down.

The phenomenon of open-air vending at 1915 Ocean Front Walk is in conflict with the purpose of issuing such conditional use permits: providing income for the owner until a structure is built on the lot. Since 1915 OFW has a residential structure of outstanding character and charm, if a conditional use permit has ever been issued for this lot, it was either an error or a pernicious bending of the rules.

Guideline: Ocean Front Walk between 19th Avenue and South Venice Boulevard shall be zoned R3-1 and designated in the Venice Community Plan and the Venice Coastal Land Use Plan as "Medium" Residential; however, all existing structures approved for commercial use by all permits required by the Department of Building and Safety and all other City and State governmental agencies shall be grandfathered-in for commercial use in perpetuity.

In addition, land which meets both of the following 2 criteria shall also be grandfathered-in for commercial use in perpetuity:

- (a) no permanent structure is built on the land, and
- (b) a conditional use permit for open-air vending issued by the City is in force on the date of the adoption of the LIP.

All such grandfathered uses will be allowed to rebuild to the limits for commercial development of this LIP upon demolition with the appropriate permit or upon destruction by natural disaster.

All such grandfathered commercial land may be used for residential purposes on any floor of the building if the landowner so chooses.

Food Service Uses

Objective: To insure food service uses conduct business in a manner that does not create an unreasonable impact on the community as a whole.

Commentary: The Culver City Municipal Code requires a conditional use permit for "a fastfood or takeout restaurant." (Ordinance No. 86-020 re: Section 37-42 of the Municipal Code) In Venice this would provide a periodic public hearing to insure that the fastfood vendor did not conduct his business in a manner that would motivate his neighbors to travel to a public hearing to testify that his business was causing an unreasonable impact on the neighborhood.

Culver City also requires a 10-foot by 140-foot on-site queuing lane for drive-through restaurant facilities. This requirement should be smaller for the substandard lot sizes in Venice.

Guideline: New and existing fastfood, takeout food, or drive-through food service uses shall require a conditional use permit with public hearings at the legally prescribed intervals.

A 10-foot by 90-foot queuing lane shall be provided on-site for any drive-through food service use.

Recycling of all recyclable containers shall be required at all food service uses.

Signage

Objective: To encourage advertising a business by murals painted on the walls of that business. To eliminate billboards from the Coastal Zone.

Commentary: Wall murals are an outstanding feature of Venice and should be encouraged by requiring that regular signs be of a small size and that they extend no higher than the height allowed for the building.

Billboards are a blight on the neighborhood.

Guideline: Advertising a business through murals painted on any walls of the building housing the business shall be encouraged.

One sign of a maximum size of 6 feet by 6 feet shall be permitted for each 30 feet of building frontage. The sign shall not extend above 30 feet from the center of the frontage road. Neither the sign nor its supports (if any) shall touch or block the public right-of-way.

Billboards shall be removed from North Venice within 1 year after the effective date of this LIP.

Light and Ventillation

Objective: To encourage interesting treatments on all facades of commercial buildings. To discourage bunker-like buildings with featureless blank walls.

Commentary: In spite of the charm and high land values in the Venice Coastal Zone, we continue to see new construction with 100% featureless side and rear walls. When these walls face a residential neighborhood, they contribute a very cold, sterile addition, often at a height that dwarfs the surrounding buildings. The developers of such buildings send out a 24-hour-a-day message to nearby residents and all who drive past the blank walls "The front of my building will be glamorous for customers, but a solid blank wall is good enough for my neighbors."

If the developer wishes to avoid windows for security reasons, alternative architectural features should be added in place of them. Another alternative would be to locate windows on upper stories of the building. Workers and customers in commercial buildings in the Coastal Zone would benefit from the natural light and ventillation operable windows provide. Any City codes limiting the amount of operable windows for energy-saving purposes should perhaps be re-examined for their appropriateness for the friendly climate in the Coastal Zone.

Landscaping such as a cover of ivy or a landscaped setback would soften the negative impact of blank walls, but the maintenance of landscaping cannot be guaranteed, especially in light of the current water shortage issue facing Los Angeles.

If a commercial building developer only has exactly enough money to buy the land and construct a bunker with 3 or 4 blank walls, the community should not sanction his construction of a stark, hostile building in their midst. Let such a developer relocate his plans to a community that has no development guidelines. Community building standards should not be based on what type of construction will provide the maximum profit for the landowner.

Guideline: The area of each building wall shall include at least 15% of doors, operable windows with a ventilation potential of at least 50% of the window area, or decorative architectural features including mosaics, bas-relief, fretwork, or friezes. Uniform grooves on or between the building materials shall not be construed to be decorative architectural features.

Venice Pavilion

Objective: To create a higher visibility police substation on Ocean Front Walk. To remove a blight on the neighborhood.

Commentary: It is valuable to have a police substation on OFW, but its current location is in a City building that is a blight on the neighborhood. The sight one is met with upon entering the public restrooms on the lower level of the Pavilion is not worthy of the second most popular tourist attraction in Southern California. Tourists have been observed going to the doorway, entering the restroom, then suddenly reversing direction. The fact that these restroom facilities are open to the public in light of the bizarre fenced-off space within them is embarrassing.

The addition of a roof to correct the poorly planned Pavilion amphitheater only poured more City money down the drain. This should not be repeated. The existing sunken-from-view picnic area filled with overly-congested tables only invites use by derelicts even on peak beach days.

Guideline: The Venice Pavilion shall be returned to sandy beach land as soon as a new location on OFW is established for the police substation. A few picnic tables will be available on this land.

Windward Circle

Objective: To prioritize public expenditures in a logical manner. To preserve a well-functioning traffic circle for traffic circulation.

Commentary: The statue currently in Windward Circle is a symbol of the spirit of toleration in Venice: Venice adopted it when it was rejected from a public space in Downtown Los Angeles. Certain people think a more glamorous look should be given to Windward Circle. However, it is illogical to add anything to a traffic circle in the middle of the intersection that would distract or block vision for the many residents and visitors who use it.

It is highly offensive to spend any public money on decorating this traffic circle when so many maintenance needs in Venice go unmet. Private funding of "improvements" for Windward Circle would likewise add to a maintenance burden the City has shown it is unable to keep up with.

Guideline: Windward Circle shall be maintained as a traffic circle with its current street widths, diameter, and decorative features until such time as the community strongly agrees at a well-publicized evening or Saturday meeting called regarding this subject that all maintenance in Venice is at an acceptable level.

Historic Preservation

Objective: To prevent the demolition of our cultural heritage.
To encourage re-use.

Commentary: As land becomes more and more valuable in Venice, the tendency is to intensify land use. This natural process unfortunately leads to the demolition of many of our older buildings, and their replacement with buildings of little character or distinction. In order to prevent this, there needs to be both restrictions on the demolitions and incentives offered to the developer to make it attractive to rehabilitate an existing building.

Guideline: The City shall issue demolition permits which must be obtained through a process which includes the signing off of the subject building as being of little or no historic significance by an LIP Review Board. A majority of the Board members shall be owners or renters who reside in North Venice. The Board shall make a ruling within 45 days of receipt of the application for demolition. The demolition of a building found to be of historical significance by the Board shall be delayed for 1 year from the date of the Board's ruling to allow community members an opportunity to preserve the building through purchase, removal to another site, or design advice to the owner.

Hardship Exemptions or Variances

Objective: To encourage all City employees and elected officials to enforce the development standards established in this LIP.

Commentary: The Venice Interim Control Ordinance was written with a hardship exemption section that included no criteria for what constitutes a hardship. This has led to unfortunate results and should not be repeated in the permanent document.

The absence of criteria for a hardship exemption denies due process to those who see the hardship exemption as a special privilege being granted to a landowner for self-imposed hardship. There are no grounds upon which to challenge such an exemption.

Guideline: All 5 criteria for a variance as stated in Section 12.27B1 of the Los Angeles Zoning Code shall be met before any variance or hardship exemption from the guidelines of this LIP is granted. As stated in the Code, "A variance shall not be used to grant a special privilege...nor to grant relief from self-imposed hardship."

This section refers primarily to the area from Westminster Avenue south to Market Street, and from Pacific Avenue east to Main Street street. It also includes Market Street west of Pacific Avenue. This area has two distinct sub-sections- Main Street and Pacific Avenue, which need special consideration.

Neighborhood serving commercial and/or artcraft is the most reasonable zoning for this area.

OBJECTIVE: To protect a blighted residential neighborhood, to enhance its pedestrian character, and to reduce traffic by facilitating neighborhood shopping.

COMMENTARY: This area is adjacent to the densest residential area in all of Venice. In the six block area north of Market Street and west of Pacific Avenue there are approximately 500 units of housing that provide no parking at all. Street parking is available on only two streets, Horizon and Westminster, so there is a tremendous deficit of parking spaces. Population in this are is in the range of 2,000 people. In addition, the largest amount of beach visitor traffic is concentrated here.

This neighborhood has become blighted by three major factors:

1. Lack of parking leads to transient tenants, which has weakened the fabric of the neighborhood
2. Excessive beach crowds have created a severe litter problem in the neighborhood, making it a less desireable neighborhood to live in
3. Drug dealing is heavily concentrated in the neighborhood because of its transient nature, and the large beach crowds

For these reasons, it is important that commercial uses on Main Street be restricted to true neighborhood serving uses that do not generate traffic, and that such uses be allowed on the first floor only, with residential or artcraft use above the first floor.

Artcraft uses only, which do not generate visitor traffic are acceptable on Pacific Avenue. Pacific Avenue has no parking and is not suitable for commercial use.

GUIDELINE:

1. Main Street- Neighborhood commercial uses on the first floor only are acceptable in this area. Such uses shall include sale of goods for personal or household use, but specifically excludes sale of retail clothing and alcoholic beverages. Laundromats, hardware stores, dry cleaning services, stationary and grocery stores are all acceptable uses. No future restaurants shall be allowed with in this area, with current food service establishments to be grandfathered in. In case of doubt as to whether the use is neighborhood serving, the zoning administrator should base the decision on whether the use will generate traffic from outside of the neighborhood. Residential use is allowed on a second story, as is artcraft. Height allowed is 30 feet with an FAR of 1.2.
2. Pacific Avenue- Artcraft use only in acceptable here, with residential use is allowed above. Height allowed is 30 feet, with an FAR of 1.2.