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I. INTRODUCTION

VENICE IS THE SUM OF ITS HISTORY. THAT HISTORY HAS RESULTED IN A UNIQUE CHARACTER MADE UP OF HUMANE SCALE IN A PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT - HOW FEW PLACES THERE ARE IN THIS CITY WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME TOGETHER TO STROLL, SKATE, BICYCLE, PLAY A VARIETY OF SPORTS, LAY IN THE SUN, SWIM, SIT, WATCH IT ALL GO BY; THE CROWDS, THE CHARACTERS - ALL AMONG AN ETHNIC, VISUAL, AND ECONOMIC DIVERSITY THAT IS NOWHERE ELSE FOUND IN THIS CITY. AS RESIDENTS WE WELCOME VISITORS TO ENJOY THIS UNIQUE PLACE AS WE DO.

BUT AS MUCH AS WE DO WELCOME VISITORS WE ARE ALSO A COMMUNITY WITH OUR OWN NEEDS JUST AS ANY OTHER. THE FACT THAT WE ARE ALREADY OVERWHELMED BY THE INTENSITY OF USE TROUBLES US GREATLY AS WE SEE CONTINUED EFFORTS THAT WILL FURTHER COMPOUND THE PROBLEM. VIRTUALLY EVERY PUBLIC FIGURE AND AGENCY HAS COME TO AGREE THAT VENICE IS OVER IMPACTED. IN 1973 THE ZONING WAS DRAMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AS A RESULT AND IF ANYTHING THE PROBLEMS HAVE GROWN WORSE IN THE ENSUING YEARS. ARE WE TO NOW FURTHER ADD TO THE PROBLEM BY INTENSIFYING OUR LAND USE. AT SOME POINT THE QUALITY OF LIFE MUST HAVE PRIORITY OVER FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS.

WE THINK THAT THIS IS A SENSE OF VENICE THAT MANY PEOPLE SHARE, AND IN SHARING THAT FEELING IT IS SOMETHING WE ALL NEED TO CONFRONT.

IN ANY POLITICAL PROCESS WELL MEANING PEOPLE OFTEN FIND THEMSELVES WITH DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE SAME ISSUES. SUCH IS THE CASE THAT TOOK PLACE IN OUR GROUP MEETINGS WHICH HAS RESULTED IN THE NEED TO EXPRESS EACH OF OUR VIEWS SEPARATELY. ON THE ONE HAND THERE WERE THOSE WHO WISHED TO INTENSIFY DEVELOPMENT WHILE THOSE OF US IN THIS GROUP BELIEVE WE MUST LIMIT THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT IF WE ARE TO SAVE OUR COMMUNITY AS WE KNOW IT. WHILE WE MIGHT ALL STRIVE FOR A CONSENSUS OR COMPROMISE THE FACT THAT WE ARE SHOWN THE DIFFERENCES IS VALUABLE FOR EACH OF US IN GAINING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DECISIONS WE FACE.

GIVEN MORE TIME PERHAPS WE MIGHT HAVE FOUND A COMMON GROUND AND ON THE SURFACE THE DIFFERENCES MAY SEEM SMALL, BUT FUNDAMENTALLY EACH IS A SEPARATE VISION OF WHAT SHOULD BE. WE ARE COMFORTABLE WITH THE FACT THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS A FAIR AND REASONED BALANCE OF OBJECTIVES. IT DRAWS HEAVILY FROM THE INTERIM COASTAL ORDINANCE, THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT, THE MUNICIPAL CODE, AND THE STRONGEST DESIRE TO PRESERVE THE EXTRAORDINARY AND UNIQUE QUALITY OF OUR COMMUNITY.

WITHIN OUR GROUP WE WELCOME AND RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO COME AND ENJOY THE PLEASURES OF THIS COMMUNITY. BUT WE DO QUESTION WHETHER THAT RIGHT OF COASTAL ACCESS IS A LICENSE FOR INTENSIVE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT IN OUR OPINION ONLY SERVES TO IMPEDE PUBLIC ACCESS FOR WHAT IS TRULY SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PLACE. WE DO KNOW THAT EACH NEW PROJECT MAKES US SOMETHING LESS THEN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WE ARE AND AFTER ALL HOW MANY T-SHIRTS DO

WE REALLY NEED. WE DON'T HAVE TO ALWAYS MAX OUT THE USE OF EVERY PROPERTY, WE DON'T HAVE TO KEEP PUSHING FOR EVERY SQUARE FOOT AND NOT EVERY BUILDING HAS TO BECOME ANOTHER STORE AND NOTHING ELSE. WE CAN ACHIEVE A FAIR BALANCE BETWEEN COMMERCIAL USES AND ALL THE OTHER OBJECTIVES WE SEEK. THE QUESTION IS HOW WE SET OUR PRIORITIES.

IS IT UNREASONABLE TO HAVE A GROUND FLOOR STORE ON OCEAN FRONT WALK WITH HOUSING ABOVE, PARTICULARLY LOW INCOME HOUSING. OR MUST WE HAVE AN ENDLESS ROW OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

IS IT UNREASONABLE TO ASK FOR PARKING THAT FROM A PRACTICAL STANDPOINT ONLY BARELY MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE INTENDED USE, PARTICULARLY WHEN SO MANY PEOPLE ARE ALREADY WITHOUT PARKING, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE. WE MAY NEVER HAVE ENOUGH PARKING FOR ALL THOSE WHO WISH TO VISIT, BUT CAN'T WE AT LEAST HELP THOSE RESIDENTS WHO MUST SUFFER A DAILY HORROR.

IF WE ARE TO PRESERVE THE PRESENT CHARACTER AND SCALE OF VENICE IS IT UNREASONABLE TO SET LIMITS ON THE SIZE OF BUILDINGS. THE LIMITS WE PROPOSE, WHICH ARE ESSENTIALLY DRAWN FROM THE INTERIM COASTAL ORDINANCE ARE ACTUALLY GREATER THEN THE CURRENT SCALE OF OUR EXISTING BUILDINGS. OR MUST WE SUFFER BUILDINGS THAT GROW TALLER AND LARGER WITH EACH NEW PROJECT, CHANGING FOREVER THE QUALITY OF OUR SPACE.

WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE WITHIN THE EXISTING FABRIC OF THE COMMUNITY A BALANCE OF OUR GOALS THAT INCLUDES RETAINING EXISTING HOUSING AND ENCOURAGING NEW HOUSING, REDUCING, OR AT LEAST NOT ADDING TO THE ALREADY DANGEROUS LEVELS OF OVER IMPACTION, AND SOLVING SOME OF OUR PARKING PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY FOR THE RESIDENTS, BUT ALSO FOR VISITORS.

IN THIS PROCESS WE HAVE BEEN FACED WITH MORE QUESTIONS THEN ANSWERS. THE ISSUES ARE COMPLEX AND INTERRELATED. SOLUTIONS THAT SATISFY ALL DESIRES ARE IMPOSSIBLE. WE OFFER OUR IDEAS TO THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND THE REST OF THOSE GATHERED NOT AS DOGMA BUT AS MARKERS TO ACHIEVING THE COMMUNITY WE SEEK. AND IN RETURN WE ASK, AND EXPECT THAT THE RESPONSE TO ALL OF US IS REFLECTIVE OF OUR GOALS. WE WAIT WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION AND ALSO SOME CONCERN, FOR YOUR TRANSLATION OF OUR OBJECTIVES INTO A PLAN WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SHAPE OUR COMMUNITY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

FOR MANY OF US THIS HAS BEEN AT TIMES A DIFFICULT AND TRYING PROCESS, BUT CERTAINLY EDUCATIONAL AND VALUABLE FOR ALL. IT IS EASY TO THINK OF TODAY AS THE END OF THAT PROCESS BUT WE URGE EVERYONE IN THIS COMMUNITY, WHATEVER THEIR VISION TO NOT THINK OF THIS AS AN END. AS A COMMUNITY IF WE ARE TO HAVE THE PLACE WE WISH THEN WE MUST CONTINUE TO STAND READY TO SCRUTINIZE AND QUESTION. WHATEVER WE DO BUILDING AND CHANGE WILL GO ON. THE FORM IT TAKES WILL DEPEND ON US ALL.

II. ISSUES

A. THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT OF 1976

The California Coastal Act of 1976 is a complex and sweeping document designed to protect, in all it's aspects, the coastal zone on behalf of all people. As Venice is located within the coastal zone all future development within the community must conform with the principles contained in the Coastal Act. In accordance with the Act Venice can be considered a "Sensitive coastal resource area" (sec 30116) since it "possesses significant recreational value" (sec 30116b), it is a "significant visitor destination area" (sec 30116e), it "provides existing coastal housing or recreational opportunities for low-and moderate-income persons" (sec 30116f), and it is an "area where divisions of land could substantially impair or restrict coastal access".

As a "Sensitive coastal resource area" within the coastal zone development must be evaluated based on the "cumulative effect" which is the "incremental effects of an individual project in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects." (sec 30105.5). In this regard any change in zoning that might impact on the density or intensity of use within Venice particularly as to how it might affect public access to the coastal zone must be considered in terms of the cumulative effect as described in the Act. Public access must take into account "The capacity of the site to sustain use and at what level of intensity." (sec 30214a2). New development shall also "protect special communities and neighborhoods which, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses" (section 30253(5)).

While public access is a priority of the Coastal Act in view of the specific sections and the generally acknowledged fact that Venice is a highly impacted area any change in zoning that results in intensifying use will likely conflict with the Act. Additionally there is no existing or currently proposed development within the community that is "coastal dependent" as described in Section 30101 of the Act which might justify such development having any priority over any other purpose or use.

B. LAND VALUE

Central to any discussion of zoning is the issue of land value. The permitted use of a property, it's size, and density of occupancy directly impact on the value. Minimum and maximum requirements for such items as parking, setbacks, and height determine the available rentable area which directly translates into the economic value of a development. The larger the allowable structure and the more intense the use the greater the

property value. Not surprisingly property owners look to maximize the value of their property by achieving the highest possible monetary use.

In the course of our local community planning meetings we have frequently heard from those whose primary interest is in further development that given the current zoning requirements it is not economically feasible to build a project. The question is: Are we to accept this notion and if so should we adjust the zoning to accommodate this supposed economic need of developers?

While we may sympathize with the economic problems associated with developing property we must also realize that if a property is too expensive to develop it is generally because too much was paid based on the permitted use. The cause of such a situation is either poor analysis, or the basing of investment decisions on a particular future expectation that does not occur, neither of which warrants a change in zoning

The fact is that land values have come to reflect the expected use of a property given the application of variances or other changes, rather than the actual permitted use. This seems to be the result of a process in which most developers have come to expect that what ever zoning may exist can in fact be changed in some way to enhance the value of a property through more intense use. The granting of variances and hardships in some cases has become more of a routine than a special situation to deal with legitimate problems. When the expectation of a change in use is not forthcoming there is an obvious problem for those who purchased property at a price based on the expectation of a heightened use.

C. RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Most people who live in or visit Venice arrive at their own sense of what the area is. Many people have come to view the area as a unique and diverse community that is a joy to live in and a wonderful place to visit. Over the years the community has expressed itself repeatedly in various forms that the desire is to retain the special quality that makes Venice what it is. In particular, to maintain the current scale and character, to perpetuate the diversity of people, to prevent over-commercialization, to reduce traffic congestion, and to provide adequate parking. Despite the repeated expressions of the community we see new projects built and proposed that are out of character with what Venice is and what we want it to be. Virtually every currently proposed project in the area is for non-coastal dependent commercial development that can be expected to compound already dangerous levels of traffic, congestion, lack of parking, and over-commercialization.

The outcome of the current process will shape the future of Venice for the next generation. As a community we are concerned that financial interests will take priority over the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. In the final analysis we are hopeful and expectant that the blueprint for the future will be respectful of the needs and wishes of the community. Our desire is for a better Venice not a different Venice.

D. OVER IMPACTION

Millions of people from around the city, the country, and the world are drawn each year to Venice. As a local tourist attraction this community is second only to Disneyland in the number of visitors. The large number of visitors, compounded by a lack of adequate public transportation into the area has resulted in the saturation of the local streets with vehicular traffic. The police department has acknowledged that the pedestrian traffic has also reached a dangerous level of crowd congestion.

The success of Venice as a visitor destination threatens to destroy the very qualities that have made the community so appealing. The desire to capitalize on the commercial implications of large numbers of visitors will only lead to further intensifying the danger through a cumulative affect and ultimately strangle the community. Given the over-impaction of the area, responsible land use planning requires an objective, comprehensive determination of growth limits, taking into account projected impacts from all proposed projects in Venice and in neighboring communities.

E. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The right of public access is based on the fact that the beach located in Venice is a unique asset belonging to all residents and visitors. In general beach front property or property in close proximity to a beach is often considered to have special commercial value. Commercial development interferes with the public use of the beach and only serves to provide economic benefit to a small group of property and business owners. At the same time commercial development draws people for purposes other than the use of the Beach which tends to impede public access by increasing traffic and reducing available parking for beach use. Virtually all commercial activity that currently exists at or near the beach can be found throughout the city, while the beach itself can, obviously, only exist where it is.

While we recognize the right of every property owner to pursue a return on their investment (property), the good of the community, and of the public at large, does require a limit on the intensity of land use in the Beach Impact Zone even if it may result in

reducing a property owners overall economic benefit. This is a risk that all types of investors must face, and it cannot take precedence over the needs of the community.

The decision we need to make is whether we want to provide maximum public access to use the beach or to allow commercial development that draws people for reasons other than using the beach, and in so doing impedes real beach access? Virtually every public official and agency that has examined the area has concluded that it is over impacted. In 1973 this problem was officially acknowledged through a major down zoning. If anything the problems have only worsened as the area has grown in popularity. To allow continued commercial development on a massive scale is to allow the beginning of the end of Venice as a community and as a place for all residents of Los Angeles, and the world, to come and enjoy.

F. LOW COST HOUSING

The diversity of people that make up Venice is as much a part of the character of the community as any other element. People of different age, religion, color, background, and economic condition live together in this unique community. By encouraging the continued development of low income housing through incentives that are consistent with the overall existing scale and character of the community we look to preserve Venice as a place where all people can live and continue to enjoy.

Developments that are solely commercial in nature do not contribute to providing low cost or other housing in addition to further impacting the area. The conversion of existing residential property to commercial use also does not provide low income housing as well as reducing the overall amount of housing available. Allowing the replacement of units displaced by commercial development to other sites only means that no real increase in housing is taking place.

Given this situation we believe that the only reasonable approach to providing low income housing as well as housing in general within the existing scale and character of Venice is through strict limitations on the amount, scale and nature of new commercial development in conjunction with incentives that are within the established building guidelines.

G. PARKING

In the words of the ICD "there currently exists a critical lack of parking in the Coastal Zone in Venice for residents and Coastal related recreation and commercial uses which serve visitors and residents".

The problem of parking is two fold. For residents without a parking space it is a daily nightmare of danger, tickets, and endless turns around the block to find parking. For visitors the problem usually means having to face gridlock traffic and grossly insufficient parking in order to spend just a few hours at the beach.

The shortage of parking is so severe that no one solution can begin to solve the problem.

Neither the resident or visitor lack of parking will go away by forcing developers to add a few extra parking spaces, particularly when each new development usually results in a significant net loss of spaces.

Based on the limited available street parking Resident Parking Permits can only have a minimal benefit, but still, how can we deny the residents of this community a right that so many other communities enjoy, including other coastal communities, to permit parking in their own neighborhood.

The use of in-lieu fees amounts to an \$18,000 tax that will ultimately be paid by consumers in the form of higher rents, and what good is it if new parking does not result.

Only an intense and concerted effort using a broad range of measures can hope to provide a solution to this difficult and complex situation. The solution begins by recognizing that there are two fundamentally separate and distinct problems. The resident parking problem is finite and with commitment it can be solved through a combination of measures, many of which have been presented through various other channels. The problem of Visitor parking, on the other hand, is endless. The more parking we provide, the more people come, resulting in the need for more parking.

Solving both problems begins with accepting, once and for all and not only in word but deed, that this area is over impacted, and unless we limit commercial development and the intensity of land use there will simply not be sufficient parking for anyone. The choice is: do we want people to come here for the stores, the fast food, the tee shirts, or do we want them to come for the beach and a chance to lay on the sand close to the ocean. For every car load of people that comes for shopping, some people were prevented from reaching the beach. If a project does not contribute to reducing the problem then it will only make the problem worse.

H. SCALE

We often think of Venice in terms of its scale. This is the relationship between a person and the surrounding environment that influences how people feel about and relate to their

neighborhood. It is determined by the width of streets, the size of buildings and the spaces between buildings. What we enjoy about Venice, and what is so important to what makes Venice unique is it's humane scale.

The scale of Venice today has been arrived at through the accumulation of it's history and an amalgam of different types, shapes and sizes of building. In the attached survey of a portion of North Venice Beach you can see that the average height of the area is less than 25'. Driving around we believe most people would intuitively agree that this closely approximates the whole of Venice. The fact that we arrived at this condition over the entire history of the area is less important than to realize and accept that this is what the scale is and most residents and visitors find it pleasurable and appealing.

Why then is the community faced with so many proposals for development that goes beyond the scale? Why is there so much effort to increase the height and scale of projects far beyond what currently exists? This, of course is about land value. Are we willing to change a whole community because a few people want to maximize the economic return? How will we justify allowing buildings 50' tall or more? And when the first one goes up then more will follow. It's already happening.

I. DESIGN

The reality of Venice is an amalgamation of many sizes, shapes, and styles of design. Indeed the very diversity of visual appearances is one of the hallmarks of Venice and an important contributor to the overall character of the area. This diversity has been achieved over the entire history of Venice beginning with it's founding, and has endured despite periodic changes in zoning and the vagaries of the economic fortunes of the area. The ability to walk through our humanly scaled community which is largely non-commercial in nature is one of the central attractions that has made Venice so appealing to visitors and residents alike.

In the course of our current discussions we have often heard that the current zoning requirements are too restrictive and that the result will be a repetition of design in the form of essentially plain boxes as developers try to maximize the value of their property. If this is really true then permitting taller buildings or lower setback requirements will only result in wider and taller boxes. Some notions have been put forth such as Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as a means of achieving more varied design. While this may seem conceptually appealing the reality is that given the typical property in our area a particular configuration under FAR or whatever formula is used is likely to develop that will maximize the economic value of a property and we will tend to see that form endlessly duplicated.

The last thing we would wish to do in any area and least of all in such a diversified place as Venice is to attempt to legislate design or encourage or discourage any particular form. We are satisfied that the creativity of our community will continue to find unique and exciting solutions to what is frequently the same problem, and all we ask and require is that they remain within the envelope we have set so their neighbors and the community are not intruded upon. No one would accuse Venice of lacking in variety and yet the general requirements for size we have established, which is basically the ICO, provides for buildings that are 20% larger than the average of all buildings in the area.

J. VISITOR SERVING USES

The idea of visitor serving uses has often been used to justify increasing levels of commercial development particularly along Ocean Front Walk. In reality there is already 24 stores along the walk in just the area between Brooks and Marine. A number of additional stores will be added with the completion of the Plaza Project at Park and quite a few additional stores will be added with the eventual completion of commercially zoned areas. In the end we can expect at least 50 stores. At some point we must ask ourselves if visitor serving uses means supporting use of the beach and the quiet enjoyment of a unique natural resource or the opportunity to sell T-shirts, hats, posters, sunglasses, and hamburgers in a flea market type environment.

K. THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

We emphasize again that as a community we are cognizant of the right of public access to the coastal area. We welcome all visitors to come and hope they enjoy our community with its unique qualities as much as we do. But the right of public access is not a justification for ignoring that a community exists and that it is threatened with destruction through over commercialization and intensified use. Venice, despite such problems as congestion and lack of parking is basically a sound and dynamic neighborhood. Many of the qualities we possess form the basis for modern community planning. To endorse intensified use by permitting uncontrolled commercialization, increased density, and expanded building size is to lay the economic foundation for tearing down large portions of the area. The need of the community is not to be rebuilt or changed but to piece in with responsible use where the few holes in the fabric exist.

L. MYTHS

During our community discussions several issues were raised repeatedly in regards to following the basic guidelines of the Interim Coastal Ordinance. The idea was expressed that unless

size, density, and use limits were expanded it would be economically impossible to build new projects and in particular to create low income housing and additional parking. The further idea was presented that because of the height and setback restrictions new buildings would tend to all follow a box like form as development attempted to maximize building area.

We believe these concepts represent myths that should not form the basis for zoning and building code requirements. In regards to issues of the economics of building and diversity we refer to the earlier discussion on land value and design. In regards to low income housing and parking larger buildings would obviously have more room to accommodate such objectives. However, within the existing Interim Coastal Ordinance requirements, as well as the specific proposals contained within this presentation it is possible to provide additional density to promote specific objectives and still balance other objectives while remaining within the requirements. It should be emphasized that essentially every existing project proposal results in a net reduction in parking and is commercial in nature rather than providing low income housing.

III. GUIDELINES

Preserve the existing human and pedestrian quality, scale, and character of the community.

Improve public access to the community for the specific purpose of utilizing the ocean and beach resources.

Encourage new development that is in keeping with the existing scale of the community and that does not further intensify the over impaction of the area or impede public access to the beach.

Encourage development within the existing scale of the community that provides low income and other housing.

Increase the available parking for residents.

IV. HEIGHT

A. DEFINITION

(ICO Sec 1 Pg 5-6)

The vertical distance from midpoint of the center line of street or alley upon which the lot fronts, to the highest point of the roof, excluding chimneys, solar panels, vents in conjunction with mechanical systems, plant materials, antennae and roof deck railings that do not exceed 36 inches and are of an open design.

B. ICO

(ICO Sec 561 Pg 30)

Maximum height 30 feet

Maximum height for walk streets 28 feet

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The height of the vast majority of buildings within Area A is under 30 feet and less than three stories. The average height of buildings in the area is under 25 feet (See Appendix "A"; a survey of building heights).

D. ISSUES

- Should different streets have different Height limits?
- Should different uses have different Height Limits?
- Should exceptions be allowed to the maximum Height limit?
- Should increases in height limits be allowed as bonuses for low cost housing or additional parking?

E. OBJECTIVES

To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To limit the intensity of new development that may contribute to the over impaction of the area.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON HEIGHT

The ICO provision on Height should be followed. Maximum height to be 30' on all buildings, except on walkway buildings the maximize height should be 28'. Under no circumstances, including for low cost housing density or parking bonuses, should these height limits be allowed to be exceeded. Further recommended that there be clarification of height pertaining to decorative items and that limitations be placed on Solar Panels such that they are not greater than 48" in height above the roof or take up more than 25% of the roof area. Similar restrictions should apply to the use, placement, and size of satellite dishes. The use of roofs for commercial purposes should not be allowed.

G. JUSTIFICATION

One of the most important qualities that contribute to the ambiance of Venice and it's unique pedestrian scale is the overall streetscape. This is largely a matter of a combination of the width of streets, the height of buildings, the space between buildings, and the eclectic diversity of design. The ICO height limit (28' walk streets and 30' on all others) is itself a 20% increase over the existing scale of the area as measured by the average height of buildings (Appendix "A"). Establishing the current ICO requirements as the permanent height limit will help assure that Venice retains it's special pedestrian, neighborhood quality while still permitting reasonable development of properties that is in keeping with the current environment. The ICO height limit of 30' is considered sufficient, given the other density, parking, and setback requirements to permit low cost housing bonuses, or parking bonuses within the 30 height limit.

Various other proposals recommend heights of 35' or more and with certain proposed bonuses for low cost housing that maximum height could reach 44' which represents an 80% increase over the existing scale. Several current and proposed projects exceed even those limits. To permit such heights, which are totally out of character with the vast majority of buildings is to establish a precedent for destroying the scale and ultimately the underlying fabric of the community.

V. RESIDENTIAL SETBACKS

A. FRONT SETBACK

1. DEFINITION

The distance from the front property line to any structure of the building that faces the front property line.

2. ICO

(ICO Sec 563 Pg 30)

Not less than 5 feet .

Additional Municipal Requirements such as R3 requires 15 feet.

3. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Various conditions currently exist with setbacks from 5 feet to 20 feet depending on the property.

4. ISSUES

- Should different streets have different setback limits?
- Should different uses have different setback limits?
- Should exceptions be allowed to the setback limits?
- Should exceptions be allowed to promote a particular architectural form such as porches.
- How should balconies or other encroachments such as window boxes and decoration be calculated?

5. OBJECTIVES

To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To limit the scale of new development that may contribute to further impaction of the area. To keep the front setbacks of new developments consistent with the majority of existing development.

6. RECOMMENDATION ON FRONT SETBACKS

The Municipal Code requirements for RD1.5 zones of 15 feet front yard minimum setback should be followed on all residential units. In addition to the size of front setbacks at least 25% of the front setback area should be landscaped with permeable material in order to soften the relationship with adjoining areas and provide moisture absorption.

7. JUSTIFICATION

The RD zoning requirement of 15' front yard setbacks is consistent with the majority of existing residential development.

B. REAR SETBACK

1. DEFINITION

The distance from the rear property line to any structure of the building that faces the rear property line.

2. ICD

No provision in the ICD
Municipal Requirements require a 15' setback of which up to half can be measured from the center line of alley. Projections are permitted up to 4 feet.

3. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Various conditions currently exist with setbacks from 0 feet to 20 feet depending on the property.

4. ISSUES

- Should different streets have different setback limits?
- Should different uses have different setback limits?
- Should exceptions be allowed to the setback limits?
- Should exceptions be allowed to promote a particular architectural form such as balconies.
- How should balconies or other encroachments such as window boxes and decoration be calculated?
- How should parking structures be calculated?

5. OBJECTIVES

To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To encourage diversity of design. To maintain free access through alleyways. To assure adequate fire department access.

6. RECOMMENDATION ON REAR SETBACKS

Utilize Municipal Requirements which provide for a 15' setback of which up to half can be measured from the center line of alley. Projections are permitted up to 4 feet for balconies, open stairs and decoration. Parking spaces may extend to the property line provided there is a minimum of 22'6" to turn into the parking space.

Additional limitations, however, should be placed on the overall size of any projections to assure they are of reasonable overall scale.

7. JUSTIFICATION

Alleyways are an essential part of local traffic movement for the purpose of fire department access, service access, and parking access. During heavy visitor periods traffic in the alleyways is further intensified. The 15' set back requirement assures that there is adequate room for the free flow of traffic and adequate building separation in the event of fire.

C. SIDE SETBACK

1. DEFINITION

The distance from the side property line to any structure of the building that faces the side property line.

2. ICO

No provision in the ICO.

Municipal Codes requires a minimum of 5 feet. For buildings of 50' width. For buildings 50' the requirement is 10% of the building width but not less the 3 feet as the side setback. At least 6 feet between buildings. Architectural projections are allowed within 30" of the property line.

3. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Various conditions currently exist.

4. ISSUES

- Should the current setback be increased to provide additional light and air?
- What provisions if any should be made for architectural projections or window boxes.
- How should design variation be encouraged?

5. OBJECTIVES

- To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood.
- To encourage diversity of design.
- To maintain adequate light and ventilation for adjoining properties.
- To assure adequate fire separation and access for fire fighting between buildings.

6. RECOMMENDATION ON SIDE SETBACKS

Utilize Municipal Codes which provide for a minimum 3' side setbacks, or 10% of the building width, whichever is greater. For each story above two there is to be one additional foot of side set back. In no event shall buildings be closer then 6 feet to the adjoining building, and in no event should projections of any kind go beyond the 3 feet.

7. JUSTIFICATION

The three foot setback with a minimum of 6 feet between buildings is believed to be the minimum distance necessary to provide adequate light, ventilation, and fire protection. The space between buildings is also an important element in establishing the overall scale of buildings and streets. The encroachment currently allowed of 30" to the property line for architectural elements represents in effect an encroachment on the rights of the adjoining property to a minimum amount of light and ventilation.

VI. LOT CONSOLIDATION

A. DEFINITION

The combining of two or more lots to build a single structure on the combined lots or to otherwise utilize as a single lot.

B. ICD

(ICD Sec 565 Pg 31) Not more than two lots may be consolidated. The REGIONAL INTERPRETIVE GUIDELINES, South Coast Region, Los Angeles County, states: Common wall construction (CWC) projects should be designed to avoid appearance out of character with the neighborhood. CWC should not extend over more than 60 feet of street frontage or two lots. A six foot break provided for each 50 foot of building.

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Most current consolidated properties appear to consist of no more than two lot consolidations. The majority of existing properties are developed as a single lot.

D. ISSUES

- Should lot consolidation be permitted at all?
- What, if any provision should be made for non conforming lots (small lots)?
- Should lot consolidation be considered a bonus requiring additional community benefit?
- Should different types of streets be subject to different lot consolidation rules?

E. OBJECTIVES

To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To encourage diversity in design. To improve the utilization of non-conforming lots. To limit the intensity of development.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON LOT CONSOLIDATION

The IC0 guide lines should be utilized providing for no more than two lot consolidations on drive streets. Any side lot set backs that would have been required without the consolidation are required to be an addition to the side lot set back requirement resulting from the consolidation. Under no circumstances can a building have a width of more than 50 feet. No consolidation on walk streets. As a condition of lot consolidation the maximum height of the project shall be reduced from 30 feet to 24 feet. However, if 25% of the units are permanently designated as low income housing units the maximum height will remain at 30 feet. Underground lot consolidation for parking may extend up to 4 lots if 25% of the parking spaces created are designated for community residents.

G. JUSTIFICATION

The rights and benefits of the side lot setbacks is to the community and adjoining property which is deprived from the community in a consolidation. By adding the side setbacks which otherwise would have been lost in the consolidation to the resulting side setback requirements of the consolidated property the light and ventilation that would otherwise have been lost is retained. In addition the larger mass of building that results from the consolidation requires added space around it to help maintain a scale consistent with the neighborhood. The prohibition against lot consolidation on walk streets is based on the generally smaller scale of these streets. The extended underground consolidation does not infringe on the above ground scale but enables a more efficient parking layout that can provide additional parking for the community. The opportunity of a developer to consolidate properties represents an economic benefit to the developer for which the community is also entitled to a benefit in the form of added parking and/or low income housing.

VII. PARKING

A. DEFINITION

The number of required parking spaces to be provided based on the use of the property.

B. ICO

(ICO Sec 7 Pg 35)

The ICO provides that the parking requirements meet the Los Angeles Municipal Code. In addition it calls for 1 additional parking space for each 640 sq ft of commercial ground floor space or a fee of \$18,000 per space in lieu of for up to 50% of the required parking above that required by the Los Angeles Municipal code. For multiple dwellings of three or more units there must be one additional space for every 1,000 sq ft of ground floor area or a fee of \$18,000 per space in lieu of up to 100% of the required parking above that required by the Los Angeles Municipal Code. ICO includes a Parking Requirement Table for all uses. Generally for residential use it requires 2 parking spaces for each dwelling unit, hotels or motels 1 space per guest room, boarding houses 2 spaces for each 3 guest rooms, offices 1 space per 250 sq ft, shopping 1 space per 200 to 250 sq ft of floor space.

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

There is a grossly inadequate amount of parking available to service the needs of residents. Visitor parking is inadequate and no comprehensive plan exists to provide adequate parking for current or future anticipated need.

D. ISSUES

- Should permit parking be established for residents?
- Should added beach parking be created to service visitors and/or residents?
- If added beach parking should be created where should it be located?
- Should bonuses be provided to projects that create additional parking dedicated to resident parking at affordable rates?
- Do "In lieu" fees help mitigate the parking problem?

E. OBJECTIVES

To provide adequate parking for all residents. To provide adequate parking for visitors. To encourage the creation of added community parking in new developments. To assure that new developments do not result in increasing the existing shortage of parking which ultimately impedes visitor access to the beach.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON PARKING

In general the ICO guidelines (Section 7, including Parking Requirement Table) should be utilized as the minimum parking standards along with a 50% replacement parking requirement at

affordable rates (ie. 50% of county lot rate). As an adjustment to the ICO guidelines Bed & Breakfast facilities should have the same parking requirements as motels, and all commercial facilities should provide one designated parking space for each employee. No "In Lieu" fees are to be used in place of providing any required parking. In effect all new developments must meet all parking requirements either on site or within a prescribed distance of 500' of the site with permanently dedicated parking. No reduction in parking requirements (number, size, or accessibility) based on the use of valet parking.

G. JUSTIFICATION

The issue of parking is one of the most complex and intractable facing the Venice Community. In effect it really is two problems: grossly inadequate parking for residents; and parking for beach access. On the one hand resident parking is a finite problem that is theoretically solvable while beach access parking is unlimited based on the probable increase in beach visitors with increasing availability of parking.

While the purpose of the current process is to establish new development standards, to create such standards without giving consideration to the issue of parking in a broader way than simply how many parking spaces a new project requires would be grossly ineffectual. In this regard the use of "in lieu" fees, while potentially satisfying a development requirement, does not necessarily contribute to reducing the overall parking problem. The very fact that replacement parking is only 50% of the existing parking available shows that with each new project the parking problem will worsen. Adding that a substantial portion of the replacement parking can be satisfied through "in lieu" fees which may never result in new additional parking results in turning what is already a parking disaster for many residents into a calamity. In this context the only solution is that new developments must meet all parking requirements on site or within a prescribed radius of the site. If a developer is unable to meet the requirements on sight or is unable to locate suitable property to utilize then such inability should be viewed as prima facia evidence that the proposed development is an over impaction on the area and should not occur in the intended form. To transfer responsibility to a government or quasi government agency when private interests are unable to locate adequate parking areas is to abdicate responsibility. While the parking requirements may seem onerous to some, in view of the degree of the parking shortage a government approach based on acquisition of existing vacant property through eminent domain is the only realistic alternative.

PERMIT PARKING FOR RESIDENTS: Since the shortage of resident parking is so great the use of Parking Permits would only have a limited but still meaningful benefit towards reducing the problem (by approximately 10%). Making certain additional streets

D. ISSUES

- Should changes in density, either lower or higher, be considered?
- Should density bonuses be provided for low cost housing?
- Should density bonuses be provided for extra parking?

E. OBJECTIVES

To preserve the present character and scale of the neighborhood. To encourage diversity in design. To encourage low cost housing in perpetuity. To limit intensity of use in the area.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON DENSITY

Utilize ICO guidelines on density. In addition projects which provide at least 25% of the units as low income housing in perpetuity and/or 25% additional parking permanently dedicated to the community shall have a density bonus of 25%, provided that the density bonus may not result in an increase over the maximum height and setback requirements previously established.

G. JUSTIFICATION

The ICO guidelines are considered appropriate as a means of limiting the intensity of use to a level appropriate for the community while still having sufficient flexibility to encourage low cost housing and/or parking within an envelope defined by the parking, maximum height and setback requirements. A typical lot of 30' width and an allowable density of two units can easily accommodate an additional low income unit within the established height and setback requirements.

IX. COMMERCIAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

A. DEFINITION

Property used in part or total for commercial purposes.

B. ICO

(ICO Sec 6 Pg 32)

Establishes that the street wall (the exterior wall of a building that faces the street) of a building be at least 65% of the length of the street frontage and located at the property line or within five feet of the property line. A maximum of 15 foot setback is permitted along the portion of a project which consists

of cafe, plaza, courtyard or arcade. The minimum street wall height is 13 feet.

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Varied.

D. ISSUES

- Should additional commercial development be permitted?
- Should incentives be provided for particular types of development?
- Should a minimum number of stories be required to discourage single story commercial buildings?

E. OBJECTIVES

To mitigate over impaction of the area due to the large number of visitors entering the area for commercial purposes. To minimize the use of property for commercial purposes that might otherwise be used to provide housing and/or community parking. To insure that commercial development is consistent with the largely residential neighborhood.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The ICOD guide lines should be generally utilized. Additionally, limitations should be placed on the development and type of commercial project. All commercial projects should be at least two stories high, with at least one story devoted to residential use. Commercial use is limited to the ground floor level on commercially zoned lots only. Conversion of residentially zoned lots to commercial zoning should not be allowed. Commercial Projects cannot exceed thirty feet in height. All setback requirements that apply to residential use shall also apply to commercial use except. On primarily commercial streets such as Main when the adjoining building is commercial and with no side windows or side setbacks, no side setback is required. In the case of Ocean Front Walk and Main Street the front setback should be in line with existing properties.

G. JUSTIFICATION

Commercial development in the North Beach Areas enables the project to benefit from the concentration of visitors attracted to the area. The local community however, must endure various inconveniences from the influx of visitors for which the commercial projects benefit and in part cause. The community,

therefore should receive benefit from the commercial projects in the form of added low income housing and services that are of benefit to the community.

Commercial development must be strictly limited because it impedes public access to the beach by drawing customers for commercial purposes. Given the largely residential nature of the area along with beach visitors there is no justification for using upper stories of buildings for commercial purposes. To allow single story development would encourage "cheap" construction of roll up type buildings that can be inexpensively destroyed at a latter time and replaced with high density and high impact projects.

X. PERMITS

A. DEFINITION

The granting by the appropriate regulatory agencies to a property owner of the right to build a project.

B. ICO

(ICO Sec 9 Pg 43)

An application must be simultaneously filed with all appropriate agencies. The determination of the Zoning Administrator may be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals and the City Council by any aggrieved person, council member of the district, or the applicant. An application for a Project permit does not require a public hearing if the Zoning Administrator finds that the project : (1) will not have a significant effect on adjoining properties or on the immediate neighborhood; (2) is not likely to evoke public controversy; (3) the Zoning Administration has received written evidence from all adjoining property owners that these owners have no objection to the proposed permit.

In granting a permit or an appeal the Zoning Administrator, or Zoning Appeals, or City council must find: (1) The project is compatible in scale and character with the existing neighborhood and not materially detrimental to adjoining properties or immediate neighborhood; (2) The project is consistent with the General and Specific Plans; (3) The project is consistent with the California Coastal Act; (4) The project complies with the requirements of the applicable sub area of Section 5 (of the ICO).

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Unknown.

D. ISSUES

-For all projects that fall within the requirements of all applicable zoning regulations is the permit process sufficiently expeditious?

-Should the Zoning Administrator have the right to decide whether public hearings should be held regarding a project?

-Should a fund be established, similar to the Venice Coastal Parking Impact Trust Fund, funded by additional permit fees, to finance local community review of permit applications and appeals?

-To what extent must there be public notice and review of all permit applications?

E. OBJECTIVES

To assure prompt review and approval of permits for projects that fall within all applicable regulations. To assure that the community has an opportunity to review all permit applications which may impact on the local community. To provide adequate financial means for the community to evaluate the impact of a project on the community.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON PERMITS

The ICO recommended permit process should be utilized but the community must have the opportunity to review all projects without exception. Projects that meet all applicable requirements should be allowed to proceed in an expeditious manner. In the case of projects that file for a variance or a hardship Municipal Code, Article 2, Section 12.27A-B should apply. In no event should the variance or hardship process be used to circumvent the intent or requirements of the Code. Funds should be available through a permit application fee to support the review of permit applications by the local community.

G. JUSTIFICATION

Due to the nature of the community every project can potentially have an impact on the entire community. Therefore every project should be subject to public review. Projects that meet all requirements should enjoy the benefit of expeditious approval. The expense of permit applications and appeals are essentially tax deductible, meaning the public is supporting both the application for permit and any appeals. Since the community is largely dependent on volunteer, non-professional effort in its review or objection to granting a permit, the community is at a financial disadvantage in presenting its objections. A fund based on increased permit fees would help support community review of permits in a professional manner.

In the past the routine use of Variances and Hardship appeals has resulted in numerous projects that exceeded Code requirements. Strict application of precisely defined grounds for variances and hardships will assure that the code requirements are not routinely circumvented.

XI. DIVERSITY

A. DEFINITION

Variation in design, form, shape, size, style, and detail.

B. ICO

The ICO does not specifically address DIVERSITY, however, the section on permits (ICO Sec 9C5a Pg47) states that projects be "compatible in scale and character with the existing neighborhood and that the project...not be materially detrimental to adjoining properties or the immediate neighborhood".

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The area is currently made up of a very wide diversity of style, materials, size, shape, details, and color that have the effect of creating an extremely varied visual environment of a mostly pedestrian scale.

D. ISSUES

-How to insure that future projects are consistent with the current area?

-How to insure that future projects are of visual variety?

E. OBJECTIVES

Maintain the current scale and variety of the area. Insure that future projects do not tend to be of identical form. To retain existing buildings that contribute to the current diversity and interest of the area.

F. RECOMMENDATION ON DIVERSITY

In order to encourage design diversity a formula based on Floor Area Ratios (FAR) or Cubic Volume Ratios (CVR) should be utilized provided that the outer envelope of a building does not exceed at any point the maximum prescribed height and setback requirements.

Within the maximum envelope so defined a project may utilize up to 85% of the buildable floor area or cubic volume.

G. JUSTIFICATION

While the community has the strongest desire for architectural diversity and "attractive" designs the very nature of Venice is to encourage freedom of expression. Any attempt to dictate or encourage a particular style through the zoning process is contrary to the concept of free expression. In this regard, limiting the total buildable area or volume within a maximum envelope allows for free expression within the limits of the envelope without intruding on the light, air and space of the surrounding community through excessive height or protrusions.

XII. PRESERVATION OF EXISTING PROPERTY

A. DEFINITION

The retention, and where appropriate, the restoration of existing properties that are of historical significance, or which contribute to the overall quality and character of the community and the streetscape.

B. ICO

(ICO pg 1 paragh 3 part 1)

A basic goals of the ICO based on the 1976 Coastal Act in promulgation of Proposition 20 is to "protect, maintain and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Coastal Zone environment".

C. CURRENT CONDITIONS

While the only actual historic designation in Venice is the Canals the overall character and streetscape of Venice is the result of the combination of many other buildings. In many instances the street scape itself as comprised by the total assemblage of buildings is particularly important and unique.

D. OBJECTIVES

To encourage the preservation of existing buildings and streetscapes that contribute to the overall character of the area.

E. RECOMMENDATION ON PRESERVATION

The recommendations contained within the overall proposal are believed to have significant implications towards the preservation of existing building. In their totality those recommendations are expected to encourage the continued use of existing properties in the current form.

An extremely important concept in connection with density and the overall intensity of land use is to realize that any significant increase in such allowable use will tend to encourage the replacement of existing structures. This is the result of a more intense use being able to economically justify the destruction of the older building

F. JUSTIFICATION

To preserve the existing buildings is an essential part of preserving the overall character and scale of the community. Many of the older buildings, which frequently do not have parking, provide a generally higher density which results in more affordable housing and diversity of population. Retaining these buildings maintains the character while avoiding the need to undertake large scale projects as a form of replacement.

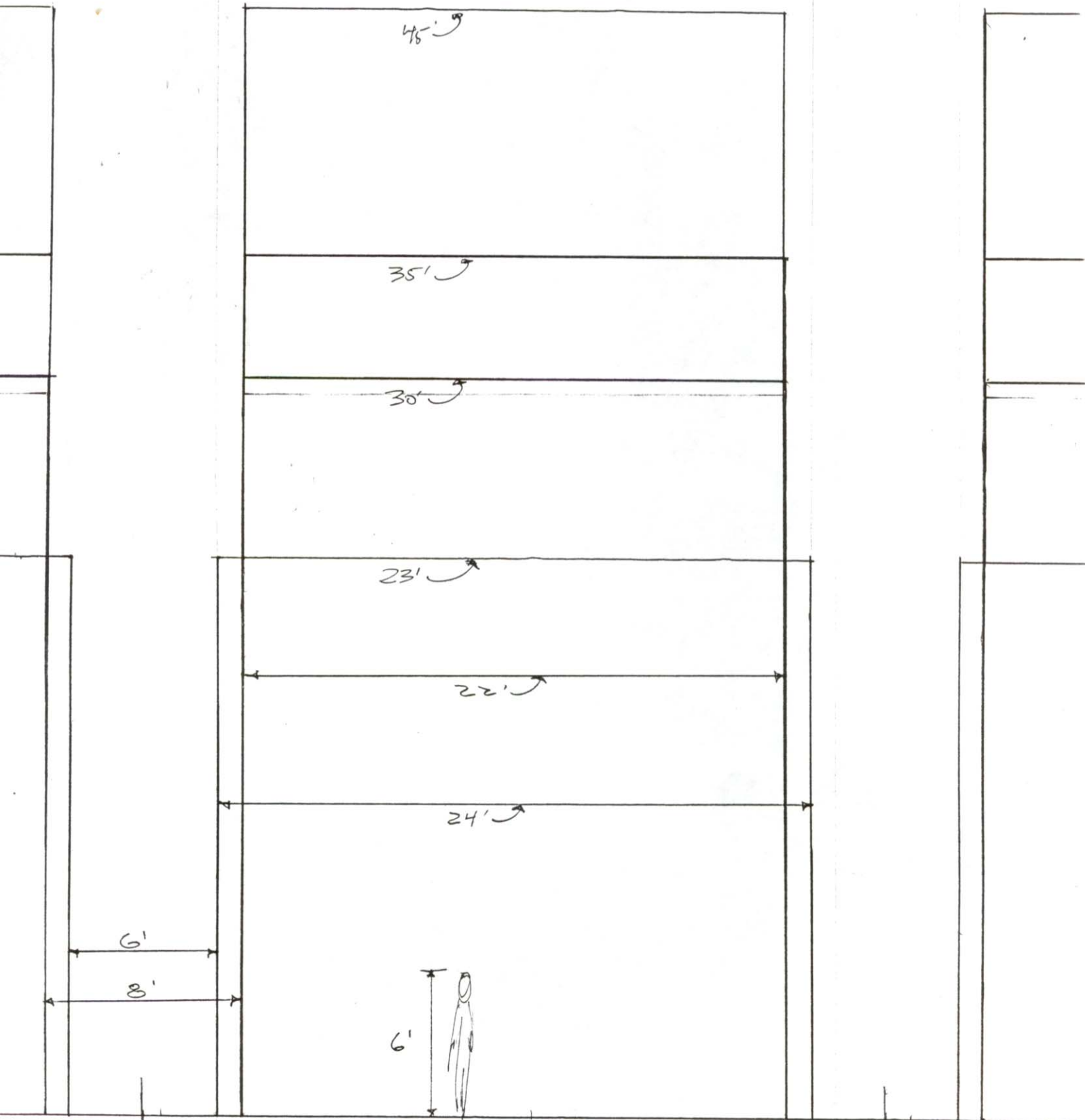
XIII. THE RTD SITE

The RTD site located between Main Street and Pacific Street is potentially one of the most significant properties within the community. The location and large contiguous size makes the site extremely attractive for development. While there is no assurance that the site may ever become available for other than it's existing use, in the event that it does it should be utilized exclusively for the purpose of providing low income housing in perpetuity, particularly for seniors, and resident community parking.

XIV. ATTACHMENTS

A. AREA SURVEY

B. SCALE



PROPERTY LINE

OCEAN FRONT TO SPEEDWAY

MARINE TO BROOKS

SUMMARY DATA

# OF PROPERTIES	41
AVERAGE # OF STORIES	1.83
AVERAGE HEIGHT	21.10
TOTAL PARKING	363
TOTAL AREA	309,910

<u>PROPERTIES</u>		<u>%</u>
0	8	19.5%
1 STORY	7	17.1%
2 STORY	15	36.6%
3 STORY	8	19.5%
4 STORY	2	4.9%
5 STORY	0	.0%
6 STORY	1	2.4%
TOTAL	41	100.0%

<u>LAND USE</u>		<u>%</u>
(R) RESIDENTIAL	17	41%
(C) COMMERCIAL	8	20%
(P) PARKING	3	7%
(T) COMMUNITY	1	2%
(V) VACANT	3	7%
(O) OFFICE	1	2%
(P/V) PARKING/VENDING	2	5%
(C/P) COMMERCIAL/VENDING	1	2%
(R/C) RESIDENT/COMMERCIAL	5	12%

VENDING SPACES

44

STORES

24

	<u>ROOF TYPE</u>		<u>%</u>
(F)	FLAT	23	56%
(P)	PITCHED	10	24%
(NA)	VACANT	8	20%

SPEEDWAY TO PACIFIC
MARINE TO BROOKS

SUMMARY DATA

# OF PROPERTIES	208	TOTAL AREA	857,190
AVERAGE # STORIES	1.8		
AVERAGE HEIGHT	22.3		
TOTAL PARKING	984.0		

<u>PROPERTIES</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>ROOF TYPE</u>		<u>%</u>
1 STORY	52.0	25.00%	PITCHED	149	71.63%
1.5 STORY	5.0	2.40%	FLAT	47	22.60%
2 STORY	98.0	47.12%	NA	12	5.77%
2.5 STORY	10.0	4.81%		208	100%
3 STORY	19.0	9.13%	<u>LAND USE</u>		
3.5 STORY	7.0	3.37%	RESIDENTIAL	195	93.75%
4 STORY	3.0	1.44%	COMMERCIAL	1	.48%
4.5 STORY	1.0	.48%	PARKING	10	4.81%
5 STORY	1.0	.48%	VACANT	2	.96%
VACANT	12.0	5.77%		208	208
TOTAL	208.0	100.00%			

"PRESERVING THE FUTURE"

NORTH VENICE BEACH AREA "A" DESIGN STUDY GROUP
DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND THE LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM