

COASTAL BLUFFS

Specific Plan

Ordinance No. 170,046
Effective October 6, 1994

Specific Plan Procedures
Amended pursuant to L.A.M.C. Section 11.5.7

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Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan



Subareas



COASTAL BLUFFS SPECIFIC PLAN

An ordinance establishing the Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIFIC PLAN

The City Council hereby establishes the Coastal Bluffs Specific Plan. The provisions of this ordinance shall apply to any lot located in whole or in part within the area shown within the heavy dashed lines on the following map identified as Exhibit I. The residential portion of the Specific Plan is divided into numbered subareas as shown on Maps 1 - 7 of Exhibit II.

Section 2.

PURPOSES

The purposes of this Specific Plan are as follows:

- A. To implement the policies and objectives of the Scenic Highways Plan, the Seismic Safety Plan, the Open Space Plan, the Conservation Element and the Westchester Playa del Rey Community Plan, which are portions of the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles.
- B. To protect, maintain, enhance and where feasible, restore the overall quality of the coastal environment and its natural and cultural resources.
- C. To assure that maximum public access to the coast and public recreation area is provided.
- D. To prepare specific development and environmental regulations tailored to the particular conditions and circumstances of the Playa del Rey Bluffs consistent with the general policies of the adopted Los Angeles General Plan and the Westchester-Playa del Rey Community Plan.
- E. To regulate all development, including use, height, density, bulk and other factors in order to provide for the protection and enhancement of views of scenic features visible from scenic corridors and scenic highways, and to assure that development is compatible and in character with the existing community.
- F. To control erosion by increasing ground water recharge, and reducing water run-off.
- G. To preserve and protect the unique and distinctive landforms within the Specific Plan area by requiring sensitive site design.
- H. To assure that development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas are sited and designed to prevent impacts

which would significantly degrade such areas, and to be compatible with the continuation of such habitat areas.

- I. To reduce potential adverse effects of grading in hillside areas and to prevent or reduce significant erosion, geologic instability or destruction of the surrounding area.
- J. To minimize the impact of commercial and industrial development adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- K. To preserve neighborhood commercially planned areas consistent with the Westchester-Playa del Rey Community Plan.
- L. To reflect current city planning goals, urban design standards.

Section 3.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE

- A. The regulations of the Specific Plan are in addition to those set forth in the planning and zoning provisions of Chapter I of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, as amended, and any other relevant ordinances, and do not convey any rights not otherwise granted under the provisions and procedures contained in that Chapter and other relevant ordinances except as specifically provided herein.
- B. Wherever this Specific Plan contains provisions which require greater setbacks, restricted yards, lower densities, lower heights, restricted uses, greater parking requirements or other greater restrictions or limitations on development than would be allowed pursuant to the provisions contained in Los Angeles Municipal Code, Chapter I, the Specific Plan shall prevail and supersede the applicable provisions of that Code.
- C. The procedures for the granting of project permit adjustments or specific plan exceptions to the requirements of this Specific Plan are set forth in Section 11.5.7 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

Section 4.

DEFINITIONS

Whenever the following terms are used in the Specific Plan, they shall be construed as defined in this Section. Words and phrases not defined herein shall be construed as defined in Section 12.03 of the LAMC if defined therein.

- A. **Director of Planning.** The Director of Planning or his or her authorized designee.
- B. **Downslope Lot.** Any lot where the average elevation of the rear lot line, measured at one foot intervals, is lower than the average elevation of the top of the curb of the frontage street, measured at one foot intervals.

- C. **Grade.** The lowest elevation of the ground, within the area between the building and the property line, or when the property line is more than five feet from the building, between the building and a line five feet from the building. For purposes of measuring height, the lower of the natural or finished grade shall be used. However, for subdivisions of more than 35 dwelling units approved after November 25, 1987, if a grading plan was approved as part of the subdivision approval, then the grade shall be the finished grade established by the approved plan.
- D. **Height.** The vertical distance above Grade measured to the highest point of the roof, structure or the parapet wall, whichever is highest. Retaining walls shall not be used to elevate the Grade for the purposes of measuring the height of a building or structure.
- E. **Project.** Any construction of or addition to a building or structure constructed in whole or in part on a lot within the Specific Plan area.
- F. **Slope.** The difference in ground elevation between the highest point on the lot and the lowest point divided by the horizontal distance between these two points.
- G. **Upslope Lot.** Any lot which has greater than a 7:1 (14.37%) Slope where the average elevation of the rear lot line, measured at one foot intervals, is higher than the average elevation of the top of the curb of the frontage street, measured at one foot intervals.

Section 5.

RESIDENTIAL REGULATIONS

No person shall erect, construct, add to or increase the floor area of any Project pursuant to a building permit issued on or after June 27, 1994, for which a vested right has not accrued, on any lot located in whole or in part within the area identified in Section 1 of this Specific Plan.

Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit, the Department of Building and Safety shall determine that any Project located within a residential zone within the boundaries of this Specific Plan complies with the following regulations:

- A. **Height.**
 - 1. Subarea 1: The maximum Height of a building or structure within Subarea 1 shall be as follows:
 - a. No building or structure shall exceed 36 feet in Height. Notwithstanding the above, on an Upslope Lot, no building or structure shall exceed 45 feet in Height.
 - b. No Project shall exceed 25 feet in Height within 10 feet from the front lot line, as measured from the midpoint between the side property lines, to the highest point of the roof structure or parapet wall. For purposes of this Specific Plan, the front lot line of a through lot is the front lot line fronting the street at the highest elevation of the lot.

- c. The provisions of LAMC Section 12.21.1 B 3 (Height of Building or Structures, Exceptions) which otherwise permit additional height for housing elevators, stairways, and other specified roof structures shall not apply to any one-family dwelling within Subarea 1.
 - 2. Subarea 2: The maximum Height of a Project within Subarea 2 shall be as provided by the LAMC.
 - 3. Subarea 3: The maximum Height of a Project within Subarea 3 shall be as follows:
 - a. Within the area between the front lot line, adjacent to and parallel to the street, and an imaginary line located 38 feet toward the rear lot line therefrom, no Project shall exceed nine feet in Height. Height shall be measured from the midpoint between the side property lines to the highest point of the roof structure or parapet wall. For purposes of this Specific Plan, the front lot line of a through lot is the front lot line fronting the street at the highest elevation of the lot.
 - b. Within any other portion of a Downslope Lot not described in (a) above, Height of any Project or portion thereof shall not exceed the elevation of the midpoint between the side property lines.
 - c. Notwithstanding (a) and (b) above, safety railings enclosing decks may exceed the curb level by three feet, or higher if necessary to comply with applicable building codes, provided they are constructed of open materials which allow at least 75% visibility.
 - d. Under no circumstances shall any Project exceed 45 feet in Height.
 - e. The provisions of LAMC Section 12.21.1 B2 and B3 (Height of Building or Structures, Exceptions) which otherwise permit additional height shall not apply to any one-family dwelling within Subarea 3.
- B. **Front Yards.** Subarea 3: Notwithstanding any other provisions of the LAMC, the front yard shall be a minimum of five feet. For purposes of this Specific Plan, the front yard of a through lot is the yard fronting the street at the highest elevation of the lot.
- C. **Side Yards.**
 - 1. Subarea 1: Side yards shall be as provided in the LAMC. Provided, however, that on reverse corner lots where the width of the lot is 60 feet or greater, there shall be a side yard of not less than 10 feet in width facing the public street.
 - 2. Subarea 2: Side yards shall be as provided in the LAMC.

3. Subarea 3: For any Project the side yards shall be as follows:

- a. There shall be a side yard on each side of any building, the width of which side yards together is not less than 25% of the width of the lot, or not less than 15 feet, whichever is greater.
- b. If the width of the lot is less than 50 feet, then the width of both side yards may be reduced to a total of 12 feet.
- c. Under no circumstances shall an individual side yard be less than 10% of the width of the lot.

D. **Lot Coverage.** Subareas 1 and 3:

1. A Project extending more than six feet above Grade shall cover no more than 40 percent of the area of a lot.
2. Notwithstanding (1) above, for a lot which is substandard as to width and as to area, a Project shall cover no more than 45 percent of the area of a lot.

Section 6.

COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS

Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit for any Project located within a commercial zone within the boundaries of this Specific Plan, the Department of Building and Safety shall determine that the Project complies with the following regulations:

- A. **Use.** No residential uses except for hotels and motels shall be allowed on the ground floor, street level, or first floor of a building or structure.
- B. **Height.** Notwithstanding LAMC Section 12.21.1 B 2 (Height of Building or Structures, Exceptions) to the contrary, no portion of any building or structure shall exceed 36 feet in Height.
- C. **Equipment.**
 1. Notwithstanding LAMC Section 12.21.1 B 2 (Height of Building or Structures, Exceptions) to the contrary, any roof-mounted structure shall be considered a part of the structure and shall conform to the Height limitations provided in Section 6B.
 2. Mechanical equipment, including plumbing, heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment or conduits, or television satellite dish antennas, shall be screened from view from adjacent streets or architecturally integrated into the design of the building.
- D. **Noise Reduction.** Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit, the Department of Building and Safety shall determine that the Director has certified in writing that the Project conforms with the

following regulations:

1. No rooftop parking shall be permitted.
 2. No outdoor eating areas for dining or drinking shall be permitted within 75 feet of a residentially zoned lot.
 3. No outdoor entertainment shall be permitted.
 4. No outdoor loudspeaker or public address system shall be installed or operated on any open portion of the premises. Further, no paging system shall be installed which is audible outside the building in which it is located.
 5. All windows on an exterior wall within 75 feet of adjacent residentially-zoned lots shall be constructed with double-pane glass.
- E. **Lighting.** Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit, the Department of Building and Safety shall determine that the Director has certified in writing that the Project conforms with the following regulations:
1. All exterior lighting shall be shielded to reduce glare and directed onto the site so as not to be seen directly from the adjacent residential areas.
 2. All floodlighting shall be prohibited.
 3. This provision shall not preclude the installation of low-level lighting for the purposes of safety and security.

Section 7.

ALL PROJECTS

Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit, the Department of Building and Safety shall determine that the Project complies with the following regulations:

- A. **Drainage.** Subareas 1 and 3: Both temporary and permanent drainage from each lot, particularly from roofs, pools and spas, shall flow to an improved and dedicated street by gravity. An appropriate drainage system may include an enclosed pipe in a private drainage easement to a non-contiguous improved street. If adequate drainage by gravity cannot be provided, as determined by the Department of Building and Safety, then another method shall be approved by the Department of Building and Safety. The means of discharging onto the improved street shall be approved by the City Engineer.
- B. **Pools and Spas.** No permit shall be issued for any pool or spa located in whole or part over an area with a Slope equal to or steeper than 7:1 (14.3%). **EXCEPTION:** A pool or spa with a permanent non-chlorine using water purification system shall be permitted. Chlorine shall not be added to any such pool or spa. Any drainage or emptying of such a pool or spa shall be required to be pumped to the street as

required in Section 7A above, rather than allowing the water to run down the hillside.

- C. **Soils and Geology Report.** Subareas 1 and 3: If a Project requires the import or export of more than 10 cubic yards of dirt, earth or other fill material, then a soils and geology report shall be submitted. This report shall include a run-off and drainage control plan, a slope protection plan, and an erosion restoration plan. The report shall include proposals for protection, control and restorative work as necessary, and shall be prepared by a soils engineer (as defined in LAMC Section 91.0420) and an engineering geologist certified by the State of California. The slope protection plan and erosion restoration plan shall be prepared in collaboration with a landscape architect. The report shall also address potential earthquake hazards including but not limited to earthquakes along the Charnock and Newport-Inglewood fault lines and how these potential hazards will be mitigated. Prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit, all building plans shall be signed by the preparer of the soils and geology report certifying that all necessary recommendations for grading, slope protection, foundations, erosion restoration, retaining walls and drainage made in the report have been incorporated into the development.

Section 8.

UTILITIES

To the extent physically feasible, all new distribution lines shall be installed underground. The Rules for Electric Service of the Department of Water and Power shall be used to determine the appropriate installation of new distribution lines.

Section 9.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Prior to the issuance of a grading or building permit for a Project, all of the following public improvements shall be completed or suitably guaranteed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer:

- A. Dedication and improvement to standard street dimensions of at least one-half of all adjacent public rights-of-way for the full width of the frontage of the subject lot.
- B. Construction of sewers and drainage facilities.

Section 10.

DIVISION OF LAND

- A. **Open Space Management.** Any subdivision or parcel map approved by the Director shall require the establishment of an entity such as a homeowner's association or benefit assessment district or other entity, the form of which is approved by the Director, to manage any open space or public areas of the tract. Unless other arrangements are made satisfactory to the Director, each owner and future owner shall automatically become a member of the association or other entity and shall automatically be subject to a proportionate share of the cost of

managing the open space.

- B. **Subarea Boundary Adjustments.** Adjustments in the location of boundaries between subareas may be approved by the Advisory Agency as part of the approval of a subdivision within the Specific Plan area when:
1. The unsubdivided parcel or tract contains more than one subarea; and
 2. The adjustment is made to move the subarea boundary to coincide with lot lines of the subdivision.
 3. Adjustments permitted pursuant to this subsection shall be limited to a distance of less than 50 feet.

Section 11.

EXEMPTIONS

The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to:

- A. Projects for which project permits or hardships exemptions were granted pursuant to Ordinance Number(s) 162,444, 163,687, 163,938, 165,508, 166,260 or 167,812 (Westchester Bluffs Interim Control Ordinances) provided:
1. Architectural and structural plans incorporating any and all conditions of the permit or exemption were accepted for plan check by the Department of Building and Safety and a fee paid not more than 365 days after the effective date of this ordinance; and
 2. No subsequent change occurs on the plans which would cause the Project to exceed any provision of the permit or exemption.
- B. Nonconforming Buildings and Structures: A building or structure, nonconforming as to Height or lot coverage, shall not be added to or enlarged if such addition exceeds the original perimeter of the building at the exterior wall. Notwithstanding the above, a building or structure may be added to or enlarged if the addition meets the requirements of Height in this Specific Plan and the Height of the resulting building or structure does not exceed the maximum Height for the subarea in which the building or structure is located; provided, further, that the resulting building or structure complies with the lot coverage requirements of this Specific Plan.
- C. Temporary Structures: Temporary structures of 6 months duration or less as determined by the Director shall be exempt from the requirements of Sections 5 and 6 of this Specific Plan.

Section 12.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court or competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, clauses, or applications of this ordinance and the provisions and clauses of this ordinance are declared to be severable.

Section 13.

URGENCY CLAUSE

The City Council finds and declares that this ordinance is required for the immediate protection of the public peace, health and safety. This ordinance will prevent potentially irreversible development to occur which creates problems of soil erosion, slope instability, destruction of scenic resources and excessive building height and bulk in the Specific Plan area. The ordinance is necessary to protect environmentally sensitive coastal bluffs and wetlands and to prevent irreversible development pending its adoption. Therefore, this ordinance shall become effective upon publication pursuant to Section 281 of the Los Angeles City Charter.