

Committee Meeting of  
January 14, 2015

**SUPPLEMENTAL #1**

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Torrance City Council  
Community Planning and  
Design Committee  
City Hall,  
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – SUPPLEMENTAL TO AGENDA ITEM**

Subsequent to the publication of the item, Community Development Department staff has received additional correspondence from members of the community.

Respectfully submitted,

JEFFERY W. GIBSON  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

By   
Gregg D. Lodan, AICP  
Planning Manager

CONCUR:

  
Jeffery W. Gibson  
Community Development Director

NOTED:

  
LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager

Attachment:  
A. Correspondence

1/7/16

To: Councilmembers Heidi Ashcraft, Tim Goodrich and Michael Griffiths,

My name is Jim Pickard. I have lived at 405 Via la Soledad for the past 45 years. The prior 8 years were spent a few blocks away, for a total of 53 years in the Hollywood Riviera section of Torrance.

My current residence was intended to have (and at one time did have) a 180-degree view of Santa Monica Bay, the "Queen's Necklace," Point Mugu, and the Channel Islands. At this time, however, the view has been cut some 60% by trees on the property below me, which were planted many years ago by previous owners.

More recent owners have, in the past, very grudgingly allowed us to trim the trees at our expense. By "us" I mean myself and my neighbors. To me, it seems that our view is being held for ransom. In my younger years I used to top the trees myself, with the owner's reluctant permission.

At some point, for reasons too complex to explain here, the somewhat cooperative attitude changed when a new individual moved into the home. We had always taken great pains to encourage foliage growth down low, to provide complete privacy for the neighbor while topping the trees enough to maintain our view, always at our expense. More recently, we were told by the new individual that we "didn't know how to trim trees and were doing it all wrong." That person paid to have tree-trimmers come in and cut away all the low growth that we had been nurturing, and leave the trees to grow tall, to the point where the views are now completely blocked.

The net result has been loss of the resident's own privacy below, and loss of our view above. The parties below are unconcerned about our plight and will not allow any more trimming. In my opinion, these are "spite trees" born of envy. That's all I can figure—that, perhaps with a dash of ignorance.

In the end, I have a loss of view, loss of enjoyment of my home, and loss of property value. I am trying to leave something of value in my estate for my family, so all of this is disconcerting, to say the least.

I am here stating, therefore, that I urge the council to pass a tree ordinance that would apply to original view properties like mine, while not necessarily including "acquired" view properties that did not have a view to begin with.

Acquired views are a can of worms. The question begged is, "Can an acquired view require a neighbor's trees to be cut? And can that acquired view prevent second-story construction by another neighbor, someone who should have a right to remodel his home as well?" I think not.

All this said, I feel a tree ordinance is patently necessary. Let the chips fall where they may (no pun intended!). The idea that neighbors should "work it out themselves" is naive. There is too much animosity and not enough civility between most people in this situation for them to do this. We need the incentives and guidelines from a city ordinance to solve these kinds of problems. Please provide us with an effective ordinance so we will finally have a way to resolve these differences.

Sincerely,  
James E. Pickard

(310) 375-0264  
jamespartm@aol.com

1/7/16

To: Community Development Department

(Jeffery W. Gibson -

Community Development Director)

FROM: FORREST & JOANN HUNT  
2532 NEARCLIFF ST. TORR. 90505

My wife and I will be out of

town on Jan. 14, 2016, but would like

to thank you for this consideration

regarding "protection of views" in the

Hillside Overlay District from obstruction

by trees and vegetation. This is so very,

very critical and important to, as to speak,

VIEW HOLDERS. We live at 2532 Nearcliff,

Torrance, CA. 90505 and have an over-

increasing number of trees obstructing

our view (even from a house which has

been uninhabited for about 2 to 3 years

at 2525 Nearcliff.) This is extremely

disturbing when neither the owner nor

renters inhabit the house and the trees

are a "view-blocker" for many neighbors.

I hope that this effort on your part will

will help the "tree blockage" problem and

allow VIEW HOLDER to retain views and

property value.

Sincerely, Forrest Hunt,

TORRANCE RESIDENT FOR 17 1/2 years -

(Recreation Dept) and City of Torrance employee for 50 plus years.

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2016 4:22 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: email to be added to information packet for Thursday's Committee meeting on Jan. 14  
**Attachments:** cost neutral.jpeg

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**From:** Judy B [<mailto:judyfrooti@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2016 4:21 PM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda; Poirier, Rebecca; Griffiths, Mike; Gibson, Jeff  
**Subject:** email to be added to information packet for Thursday's Committee meeting on Jan. 14

Dear Linda, Rebecca and all--  
Please include the attached email to the information packet for the committee meeting on Thurs. Jan. 14.

Thank you!

Judy Brunetti  
Riviera Homeowners Association  
(310) 378-5616

Can a view ordinance be cost neutral?

-----Original Message-----

From: Judy Brunetti [mailto:[judy.froct@yarcos.com](mailto:judy.froct@yarcos.com)]

Sent: Saturday, November 07, 2015 6:24 PM

To: David Wahba

Subject: View equity ordinance

Hello David,

I hope you are well and enjoying the fall weather.

We are still going through the process of community hearings, committee workshops and public hearings on a view ordinance for the Torrance Hillside Overlay area. One point of discussion is whether a view ordinance can be cost neutral to the city. I

know you have said several times that the city of RHE ordinance is cost neutral.

Could you explain briefly why that is? Is it the limited involvement of the city plus the charge of a modest fee for the actions the city does take? Or something else?

As always, I appreciate your input on this issue. Thank you, David.

Judy Brunetti

Sent from my iPhone

**David Wahba** <[davidw@ci.rolling-hills-estates.ca.us](mailto:davidw@ci.rolling-hills-estates.ca.us)>

To: Judy Brunetti

Hi Judy,

Yes, it is essentially or certainly intended to be cost neutral. We charge \$500, plus \$300 for mailing at the outset to cover staff's basic time to accept an application and walk people through the initial part of the process. After that, the costs are all born by the parties involved through mediation/arbitration and also the costs of an arborist.

Hope this helps!

David

David Wahba

Director of Planning, Building & Safety, Zoning and Code Administration | City of Rolling Hills Estates | 4045 Palos Verdes Drive North | Rolling Hills Estates | CA | 90274

310.377.1577 ext. 103 | 310.377.4468 (FAX) | [davidw@RollingHillsEstatesCa.gov](mailto:davidw@RollingHillsEstatesCa.gov) | [www.RollingHillsEstatesCa.gov](http://www.RollingHillsEstatesCa.gov)

December 29, 2015

To: City of Torrance  
Community Development Department  
3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503

From: Maria L. Kusion  
P.O. Box 874  
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

REF.: Ordinance for the Protection of Views in the Hillside Overlay District  
from the Obstruction by Trees and Vegetation

I support 100% the passing of the ordinance protecting views from  
obstruction by trees and vegetation.

Planting trees for the purpose of obstructing views has been used  
in the past by individuals to coerce, intimidate and harass neighboring  
property owners in order to allow the remodeling of properties that  
would impact and obstruct neighbor's views.

Respectfully,

*Maria L. Kusion*

Maria L. Kusion  
523 Camino del Encanto  
Hollywood Riviera, CA 90277



## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2016 10:29 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: Please enclose in information packet for committee meeting on Thurs. Jan. 14  
**Attachments:** Laguna 1.jpeg

Include with supplemental. Thanks! lc

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**From:** Judy B [<mailto:judyfrooti@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 10, 2016 11:46 AM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda; Poirier, Rebecca; Griffiths, Mike; Gibson, Jeff  
**Subject:** Please enclose in information packet for committee meeting on Thurs. Jan. 14

Dear Linda and all,

I hope you are well. We are looking forward to the City Council Committee meeting on Thursday, Jan. 14.

Could you please enclose a copy of the attached article from the " LA Times" from Saturday, January 9, 2016 in the supplementary packet for this meeting?

Thank you so much.

Judy Brunetti  
Riviera Homeowners Association  
(310) 378-5616

# View law hasn't made a scene in Laguna Beach

It has drawn 25 claims to restore ocean or other sightlines, fewer than many feared.

BY BRYCE ALDERTON

When the Laguna Beach City Council adopted a controversial new view ordinance in 2014, many predicted that the city would be deluged with claims from residents seeking to restore sightlines of the ocean or surrounding hillsides lost to overgrown trees and other vegetation on a neighbor's property.

Statistics obtained recently from the city tell a different story.

Since the revised ordinance took effect in January 2015, the city has received 25 applications from residents seeking to restore their views, far fewer than anticipated. The legislation requires property owners to attempt a solution on their own, or with help from a mediator, before the city-appointed View Restoration Committee considers the matter at a public hearing.

The updated ordinance allows residents to use the date they purchased the home or Nov. 4, 2003 — the date used in the prior law — whichever is earlier, to establish a record of a view, usually through photographic evidence. Offending



**THIS MONTH**, officials are set to consider an ordinance related to city-maintained trees.

vegetation must be within 500 feet of the claimant's property line and at least 6 feet tall to be subject to a claim.

Community Development Director Greg Pfof listened to residents' fears of an onslaught of claims before the new ordinance became law. "I heard, 'Be prepared to have a line out the door,'" Pfof said in an interview. "There has not been a line. People are interested to see how the ordinance will play out. I've heard property owners who have attended [view committee meetings] to see how things play out, so that may delay [filing a claim]."

Under the current ordinance, a property owner alleging a blocked view must try to work out a solution with his or her neighbor har-

boring the trees or vegetation before the city becomes involved. If the parties can't agree, then the property owner pays \$500 for a city-hired mediator to step in.

Of the 25 restoration applications, a mediator resolved five cases while parties in two other cases worked out issues by themselves. Other cases are pending.

If mediation doesn't work, the aggrieved landowner may file a view-restoration claim with a \$630 price tag. Once a resident files a claim, city staff visits the site, interviews the property and vegetation owners and schedules a public hearing where the committee considers the evidence.

Since June, the committee has deliberated four claims.

The hearings have helped some neighbors reach a compromise. During a hearing in July, for example, a resident agreed to remove a 50-foot-tall ash tree that a neighbor said blocked views of the ocean and Catalina Island. At other times, neighbors have failed to agree, such as a recent hearing when a property owner seeking to restore a view rejected a neighbor's proposed planting plan in fear the trees would eventually obstruct sightlines.

There is also disagreement over who should bear the brunt of costs for filing claims and trimming.

Councilman Kelly Boyd said the overall process is an improvement. "Most people aren't going past a mediator, which is good. There was a worry that 50 to 60 people would go crazy. In the past, someone could say, 'Hell with you,' and the view would be blocked. Now people are working it out, which is a great thing."

The City Council this month is scheduled to consider adopting a separate ordinance related to city-maintained trees and vegetation that will outline a process for residents wishing to restore lost views due to trees planted on public property.

bryce.alderton@latimes.com

Alderton writes for Times Community News.

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2016 7:44 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: [OTNA Website: More Information]

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Gibson, Jeff  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2016 7:43 AM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** FW: [OTNA Website: More Information]

Fyi....

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [Debbie.Simpson@acssoftware.com](mailto:Debbie.Simpson@acssoftware.com) [<mailto:Debbie.Simpson@acssoftware.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2016 8:50 PM  
**To:** [dulcevida53@yahoo.com](mailto:dulcevida53@yahoo.com)  
**Cc:** Furey, Pat; Gibson, Jeff  
**Subject:** RE: [OTNA Website: More Information]

Good evening, Frances & Jane! This is Debbie Hays and I am in charge of Community Relations for the Old Torrance Neighborhood Assoc. I am not aware of an upcoming meeting to discuss trees which block the homes on the hillside's view.

I'm cc:ing this email to the Mayor and to the Director of the Community Development Dept. I hope they will be able to provide you the information and/or direction you need to help get this issue resolved.

Debbie Hays :)  
Community Relations, OTNA  
[www.OldTorranceNeighbors.org](http://www.OldTorranceNeighbors.org)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [dulcevida53@yahoo.com](mailto:dulcevida53@yahoo.com) [<mailto:dulcevida53@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2016 7:13 PM  
**To:** Simpson, Debbie A.  
**Subject:** [OTNA Website: More Information]

The following information was just submitted via the 'Contact Us' page on the OTNA Website:

**To:** [debbie.simpson@acssoftware.com](mailto:debbie.simpson@acssoftware.com)  
**From:** Frances C Melwing <[dulcevida53@yahoo.com](mailto:dulcevida53@yahoo.com)>

Message:

I see a meeting will be held to discuss trees that block our view on the hill. Our neighbors have refused for many, many years to remove their huge tree that blocks a large portion of our view. We have offered many times to pay for the removal ourselves but they refuse. They have it cleaned out two times a year or so but it still blocks a good portion of our view. My daughter is disabled for now and I am too ill to attend a meeting. I am 91 and have lived

here for 60+ years. Is there something you can do? At least come see for yourselves the problem!!!! Sincerely Frances & Jane Melwing

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Lynda Myers [lyndalegrandmyers@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2016 8:48 AM  
**To:** Lynda Myers; Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** Re: Backyard view via 5645 Michelle Dr

Ana

Concerning the photos taken from the Myers home at 5645 Michelle Drive:

The photos do not properly depict the view being hindered  
Standing in my backyard is the best way to understand the following:

photo 3838 was taken from our back patio standing outside our breakfast nook door  
on the east side of our property looking towards downtown Los Angeles  
tall trees in Sunny Glen Park on Del Amo Blvd

photo 3839 was taken from the north east corner of our backyard  
looking towards the HOLLYWOOD sign (yes it can be seen from our backyard)  
the brown rust colored leaf tree is in the front yard of the home located at 5633 Konya  
the street Konya runs behind our home at 5645 Michelle Drive

photo 3840 was taken from our backyard on the north side of our backyard  
looking towards El Segundo and the HOLLYWOOD sign  
the very large thick tree on the left of this photo is in the front yard of the home at 5639 Konya and the wispy trees to the  
middle of the photo are in the backyard.

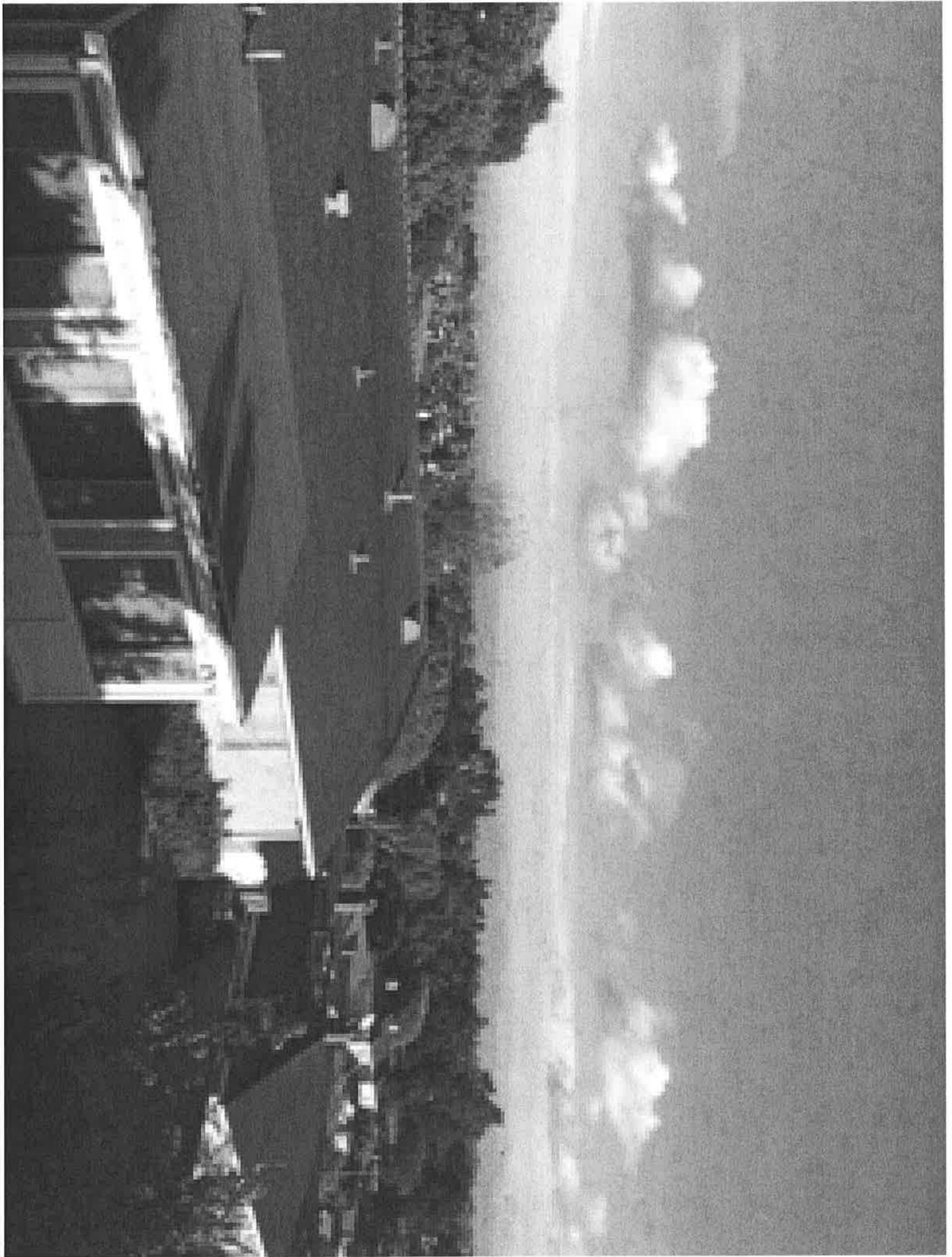
Thank you for your time.  
Your effort is appreciated.  
Regards  
Lynda

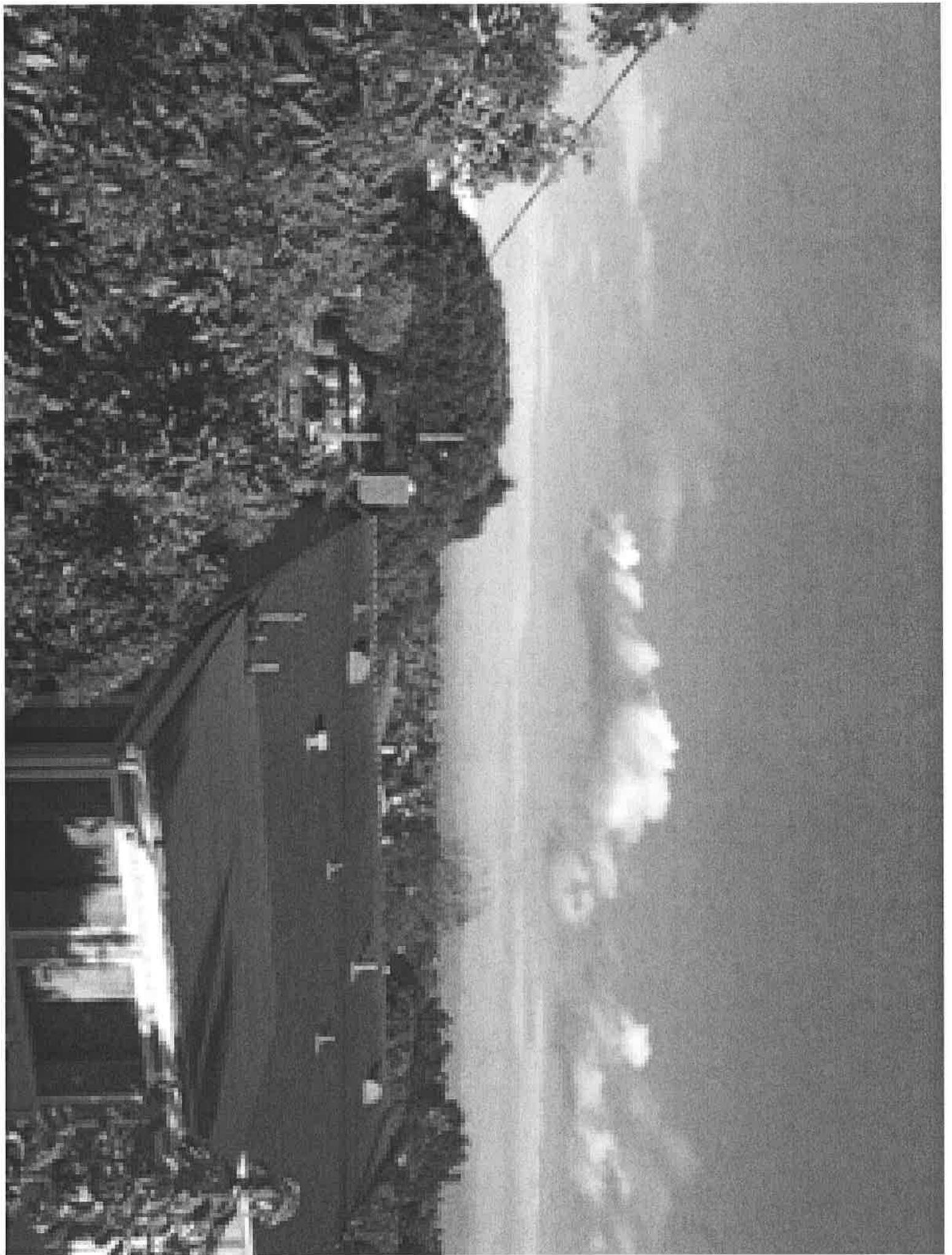
Lynda Myers [lyndalegrandmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:lyndalegrandmyers@yahoo.com) 310-702-9369

On Thursday, January 7, 2016 8:24 AM, Lynda Myers <[lyndalegrandmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:lyndalegrandmyers@yahoo.com)> wrote:

Thank you!







Community Development Department  
303 Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 90503



January 7, 2016

Re: Proposed Ordinance  
Protecting Views from  
Obstruction of trees and  
Vegetation in the Hillside  
Overlay District

I object to the creation of such an ordinance for the following reasons:

1) It will place an undue burden on property owners whose landscaping is considered unacceptable under the ordinance and destroy the character of the Riviera. As an example, on the hillside west of my property there is a stand of Eucalyptus trees which has been there for longer than the subdivision tract. These trees act as a windbreak, their roots keep the hillside from sliding and washing away, they provide nesting for hawks and other birds and the leaves purify the air. Their impact on views is minimal, yet I have heard people objecting to them. Even just trimming them is expensive, non-productive and would eventually kill them.

Throughout the Riviera there are tall palm trees, a prominent and attractive feature, would they have to go?

2) The administrative costs to the city and thus the taxpayers could be considerable. The city could make itself liable for lawsuits if it is deemed the

ordinance is not properly enforced. Why tax all the residents for the benefit of just a few.

For years neighbors have worked out tree and other vegetation problems among themselves. Why should now the city immerse itself in the disputes? As a last resort for disgruntled homeowners, there are the courts. Since views have an impact on the value of a property, that is where such disputes should be resolved.

I suggest leaving things alone. There already exists a view ordinance which I think gives the city and the residents more than enough to deal with.

Sincerely,

Monianne E. Strehler  
4225 Paseo de las Tortugas

currently residing at:

303 Shetland Dr.

Grants Pass, OR 97526

541-471-4966

maridan75@aol.com

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:04 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Ordinance on trees and vegetation

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**From:** CenturyLink Customer [<mailto:maridan75@q.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2016 4:37 PM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Proposed Ordinance on trees and vegetation

To: Community Planning and Design Committee

re: Proposed Ordinance Protecting views in the Hillside Overlay District from obstruction by trees and vegetation

I object to the creation of such an ordinance for the following reasons:

1. It will place an undue burden and expense on property owners whose landscaping is considered unacceptable under the proposed ordinance.
2. The administrative costs of such an ordinance to the city and thus to the taxpayers could be considerable and benefit only a few.
3. The effect of such an ordinance is to increase the value of one property at the expense of another.
4. It will change the character, look and atmosphere of the Riviera.
5. There already exists an ordinance on view obstruction.

Traditionally, neighbors have worked out disputes about trees and bushes among themselves. I'm not sure it is the City's place to immerse itself in the fray. It should be kept in mind that Eucalyptus and palm trees have been a feature of the Riviera since its development in the 1920's and 1930's. That should not change. Since views enhance property values, some people will go to great lengths to gain one and demand that everything above the ridge line of a home be cut down. Therefore, I do not think that a sweeping ordinance will work. Every case needs to be decided on its merits, and that is where the city could find itself spending more time and money than reasonable. At the least, the benefiting home owners should bear the expense of the dispute.

Marianne E. Strehler  
4225 Paseo de las Tortugas

currently residing at:  
303 Shetland Dr.  
Grants Pass, OR 97526  
[maridan75@q.com](mailto:maridan75@q.com)  
541-471-4966

## **Fernandez, Ana**

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:01 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Protecting Views in the Hillside Overlay District

**From:** Jim Grogan [<mailto:jlgrog@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2016 9:47 PM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Protecting Views in the Hillside Overlay District

I strongly support the creation of view protection ordinances for the Hillside Overlay District. I have been the victim of a neighbor with a fortress mentality for his property that has resulted in the loss of city, light, sky and mountain views for my other neighbors and me. Despite attempts to discuss a reasonable approach to prune property line trees and his on-lot trees, he has refused to engage with any of his neighbors on the matter.

I will provide you pictures of the obstructed views from my property that will document the effect improper tree maintenance has on local properties.

--

Jim Grogan  
2655 Clarellen St  
Torrance  
310-257-1189 (H/O)  
310-849-0956 (C)

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:00 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda; Gibson, Jeff  
**Subject:** FW: Community Planning & Design Committee Meeting January 14, 2016

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Terry Brennan [<mailto:tb0011@verizon.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2016 5:11 PM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Community Planning & Design Committee Meeting January 14, 2016

Dear Mr. Jeffery W. Gibson,

We have privacy concerns regarding the potential creation of the view ordinance. Though we have no problem with people wanting to enjoy a view from their home, we don't believe it should be at the expense of other people losing their privacy. This can be a problem with homes that are located adjacent to each other, but located on different streets: e.g., the homes on the south side of Via Colusa located below the homes on the north side of Paseo de Granada. It also becomes a problem when a one-story home is located next to a two-story home. Both of these situations apply to us. The trees we have in our back yard allow our family privacy from our neighbors peering into our back yard.

Approximately eighteen years ago, the homeowners at 117 Paseo de Granada were allowed to expand their back yard. The homeowners that lived below them on Via Colusa, whose privacy was adversely affected, were against their expansion. However, their Hillside Exemption application was approved. If it were not for the trees we now have, the homeowners at 117 Paseo de Granada would have a clear view into our bedroom from their backyard.

Our neighbors at 112 Via Colusa own a two-story home, with security cameras surrounding it. One of those cameras had a direct view into our children's bedroom, before we were forced to put trees up to block their view into their room.

These encroachments on our privacy resulting from approved Hillside Exemption applications, two-story homes, and our neighbor's unobstructed views into our back yard, have created the effect of living in a fish bowl. The only thing that prevents that, are the trees we now have.

If the proposed ordinance adversely affects the privacy we now enjoy, we will vehemently oppose it.

Sincerely,

Terrence and Kazumi Brennan  
116 Via Colusa  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Date: January 10, 2016

To: Jeffrey W. Gibson  
Community Development Director  
Community Planning and Design Committee  
City Council Members

From: Mel and Joanne Satterburg  
311 Via San Sebastian  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

melsatterburg@aol.com

RE: Notice of Public Meeting - January 14, 2016

My wife and I purchased our home at the lower end of Via San Sebastian in 1966. We liked this section of the Riviera because of the beautiful trees on the streets. Via San Sebastian had pepper trees that were maintained by the City of Torrance. Only a few healthy and attractive trees remain today. Two of these are on either side of our property. Our pepper tree was downed by a run-away truck. This loss of attractive trees is mostly the result of pressure on city leaders by some area residents who own houses higher up on the hill. As we drive up the hill into our section on Via Anita, we see mostly houses and few attractive trees. This is certainly not a beautiful view. Some homes have very ugly landscapes that are not even kept up. A number of residents leave their **large city trash containers** in places that are clearly visible from below or as one passes by. **Why does the City allow this???** How can the City leaders be proud or satisfied with what they have allowed to happen to this area over the past few years? Residents and visitors view the area in 360 degrees – not only the ocean water and lights of the city. Look at Palos Verdes Estates, La Jolla, Del Mar, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Carmel, Masons Island in Mystic, CT., Guilford, CT., or Madison, CT. These towns are beautiful because they all have beautiful trees. They all have achieved balance.

Please work to restore the **beauty** and **balance** that we once had in this area of Torrance. Do not give in again to those residents who are attempting to get everything they want even at the expense of others.

We will look forward to receiving your responses by e-mail.

January 11, 2016

To: Community Development Department

While my view of the ocean has been completely blocked by my neighbor who purposely planed trees, that is not my concern at this time. My concern is that the "pine" (cypress) tree is top heavy and with the rains, I fear that it will fall over and take out all the power lines near it plus all the other lines. It leans toward them and the street. The address of the neighbor is 712 Calle Miramar and the house is on the corner of Miramar and Selva. I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Linda Gresik

537 Paseo de las Estrellas

Redondo Beach

CA 90277

310 378-0064

310 683-8394 Cell

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 7:58 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Public Meeting On View Protection

**From:** Denny Lawrence [<mailto:dennyol@sbcglobal.net>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 10, 2016 4:41 PM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Public Meeting On View Protection

I would like to offer some information in advance of comment. Our home is on a location that is part way up the hill. We have some city view that is partly blocked by city owned parkway trees as well as general neighborhood trees including one that has several evergreen trees approximately 60 feet high. Further, our back yard is a 1/3 acre upslope. Five properties touch our upper fence and another five or six have a clear view of our home. Most of those properties have small, older homes that were built on the 1950's but their lots offer a wide view of the LA basin. In time their owners will attempt to build mega-homes that will impinge upon the value and privacy of our home as well as our neighbors. We already have one house above us that was doubled in size in recent years. When the planning commission people knocked on my door to assess the impact (not at our request) and we expressed concern at eventually being in a fishbowl, they said that "there is no law against planting trees." Over the 31 years that we have lived here, we have removed and topped trees as requested or just in due consideration of our neighbors. We are in the process of planting more trees on our hill at the present time. We don't plan on blocking anyone's view on purpose but we realize that our property value is at risk if there is further "mansionization" on any home above us. The house directly above

us is owned by a builder that has rented it out for many years. He has said that as soon as his family is raised, he and his wife will return. I am certain that he doesn't plan to move into the existing small home when the city will allow him to build out closer to the property lines on all four sides as his next door neighbor has done. A few of the homes above us take no care of their weed and grass issues and their drainage swales are blocked by debris. Will the City be caring for these matters along with tree height control? We are generally opposed to legislation of this sort and would like to understand why the City of Torrance has chose to make this issue a priority item at this time. We plan on attending the meeting.

Thank you,  
Dennis Lawrence  
2676 Hillside Drive.

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 7:56 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Gibson, Jeff; Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Creation of an ordinance protecting views in Country Hills

**From:** pat cooper [<mailto:whambamm35@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 08, 2016 8:58 AM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Creation of an ordinance protecting views in Country Hills

Dear Jeffrey W. Gibson,

I am responding to a card I received in the mail about protecting views in the Hillside Overlay District from obstruction by trees and vegetation.

I am the property owner of two properties in Country Hills which has views and would qualify for this:

1. 3017 Oakwood Lane, Torrance, Calif. 90505
2. 2945 Briarwood Drive, Torrance, Calif. 90505

Since I am original Owner of these view properties and paid a premium to have the views. I would appreciate any help as far as protecting the views which I have noticed that some Neighbors in Country Hills have planted trees on their embankments which do obstruct the views. Oakwood Lane comes to mind.

Unfortunately Country Hills is now without a Homeowners Association that used to somewhat regulate these matters and would appreciate any help that the City of Torrance could provide.

The area of Country Hills has stayed one of the nicest areas of Torrance and helping with this would enhance this fine addition to a lovely area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Jeri Cooper  
3575 Evergreen Drive  
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603



FORMER  
VIEW  
CHANNEL  
ISLANDS

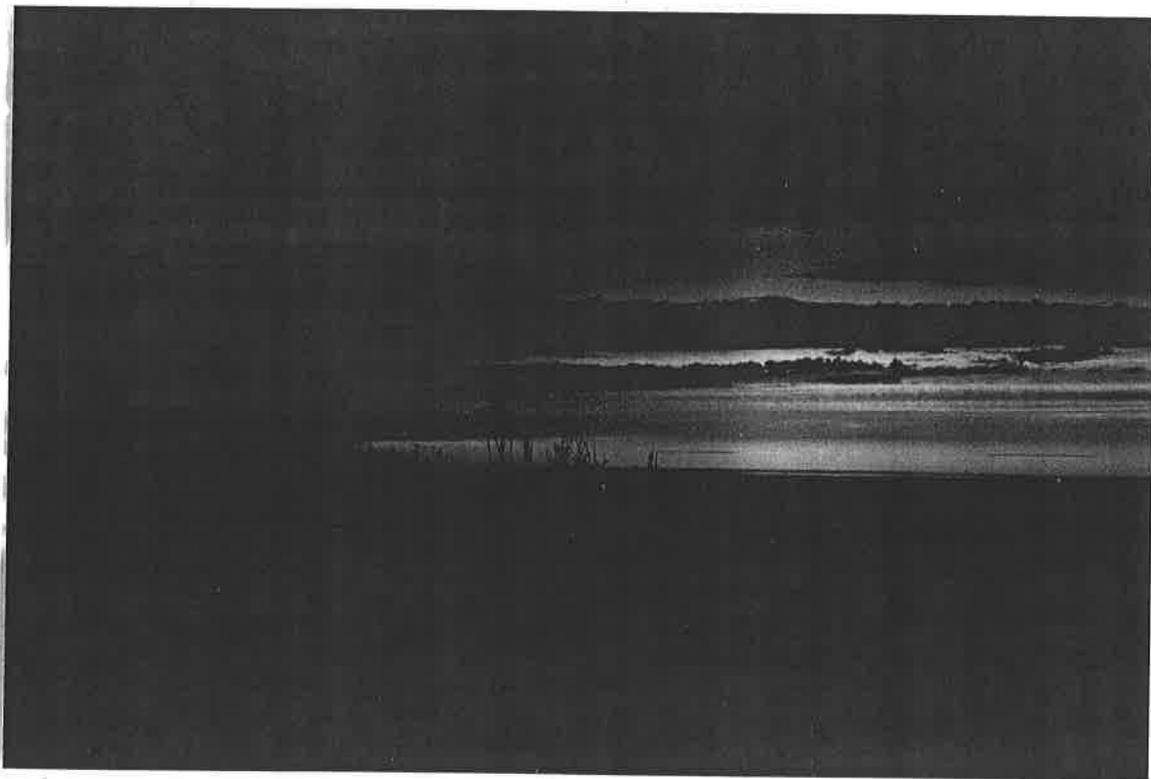


FORMER  
VIEW

EUCALYPTUS  
TREES TAKEN  
DOWN LONG  
AGO BY  
OWNER FOR  
THEIR OWN  
REASONS.  
NOT MINE.



CURRENT  
VIEW  
WEST



FORMER  
VIEW  
WEST  
WITH  
PINES  
TOPPED

CURRENT  
VIEW  
NORTH - WEST



CURRENT  
VIEW  
WEST





CURRENT  
VIEW  
NORTH-WEST



CURRENT  
VIEW  
WEST



CURRENT  
WEST  
VIEW  
FROM  
FAMILY RM.



CURRENT  
SOUTH  
VIEW  
FROM  
FAMILY RM.  
BLOCKED BY  
PINES. MUCH  
TALLER NOW,  
BLOCKS  
NEIGHBORS  
VIEW TOO.



CURRENT  
VIEW  
FROM  
FAMILY RM.

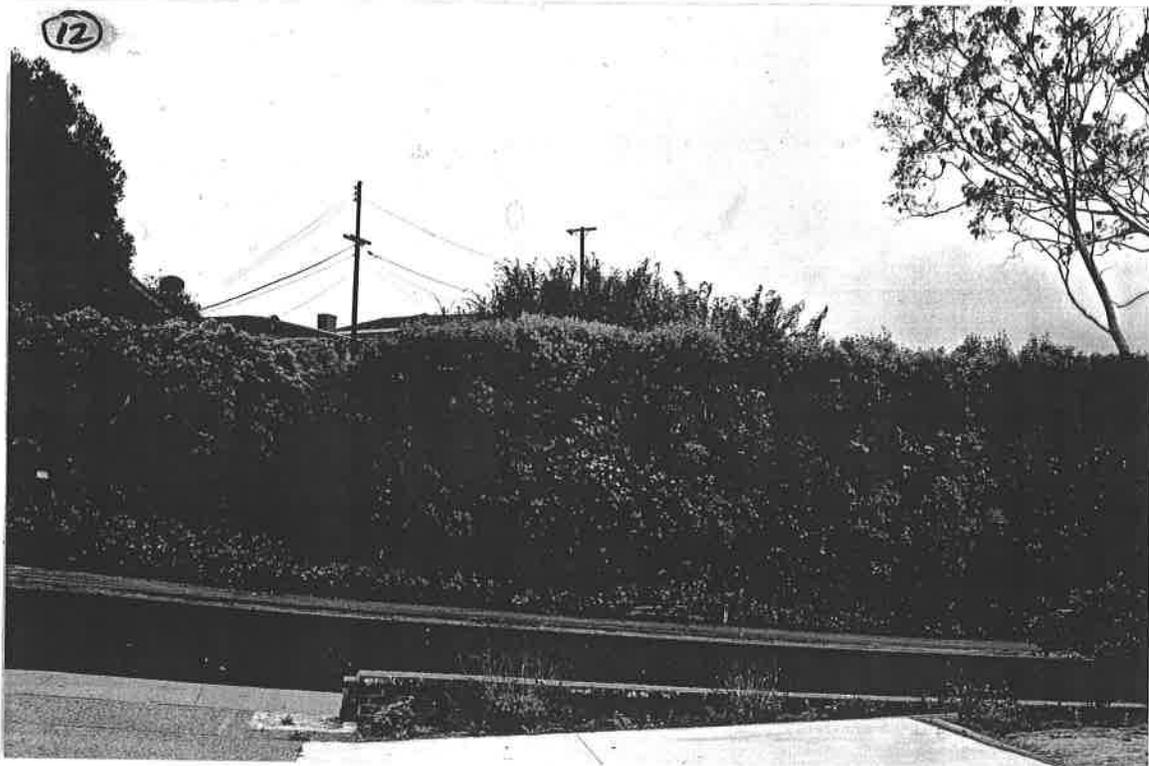


CURRENT  
VIEW  
WEST  
FROM  
RED ROOM  
&  
BACK YARD.

ALL PHOTOS  
MUCH WORSE  
NOW. THESE  
ARE A YEAR  
OR TWO OLD.



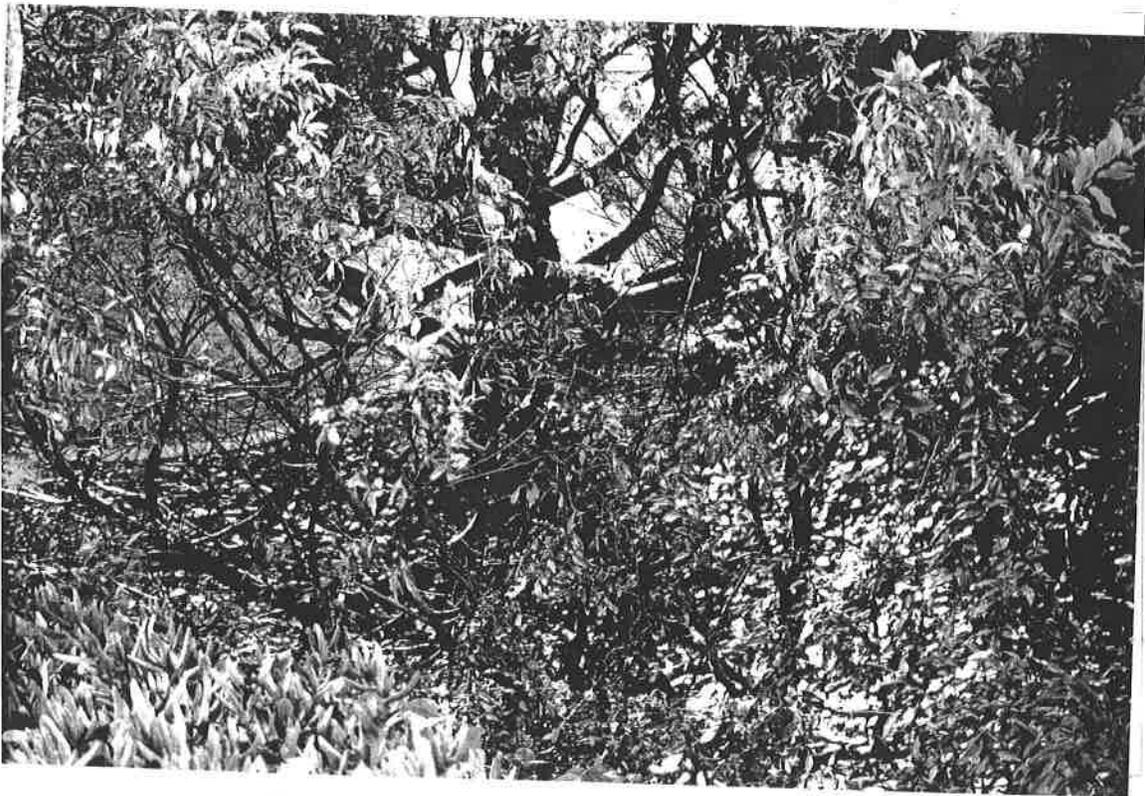
TREES  
WHEN  
TRIMMED  
EUCALYPTUS  
LONG GONE.



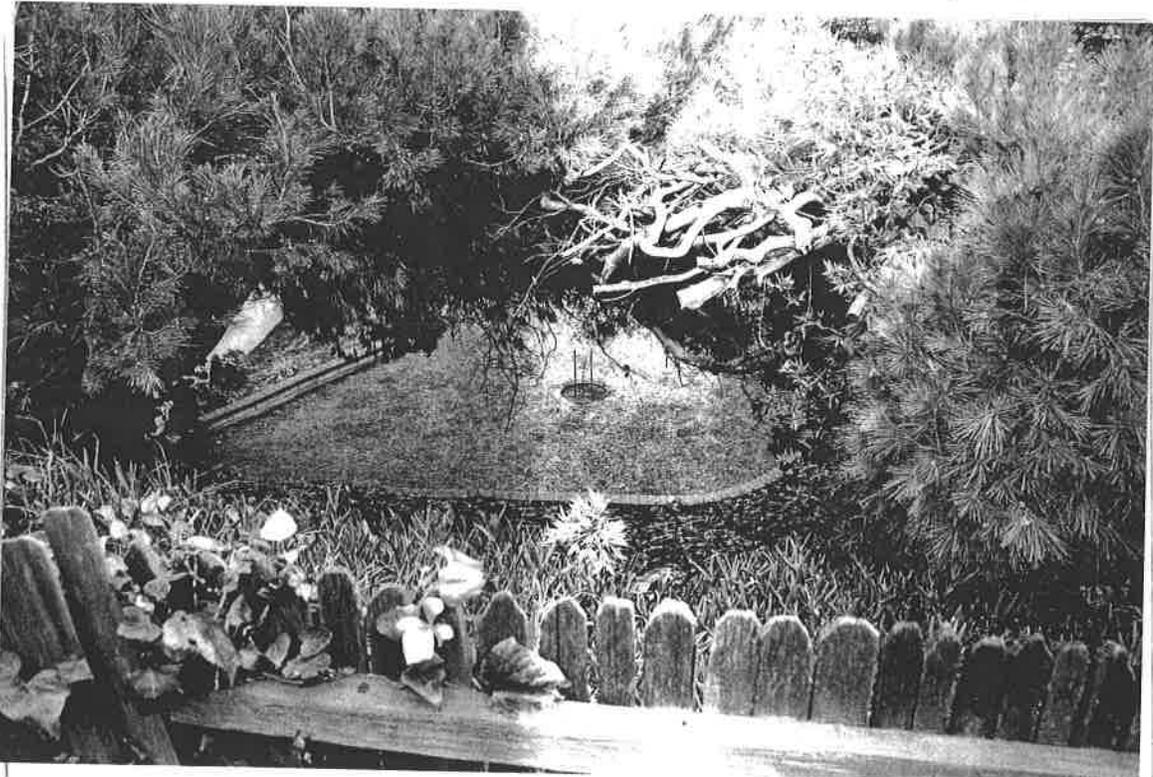
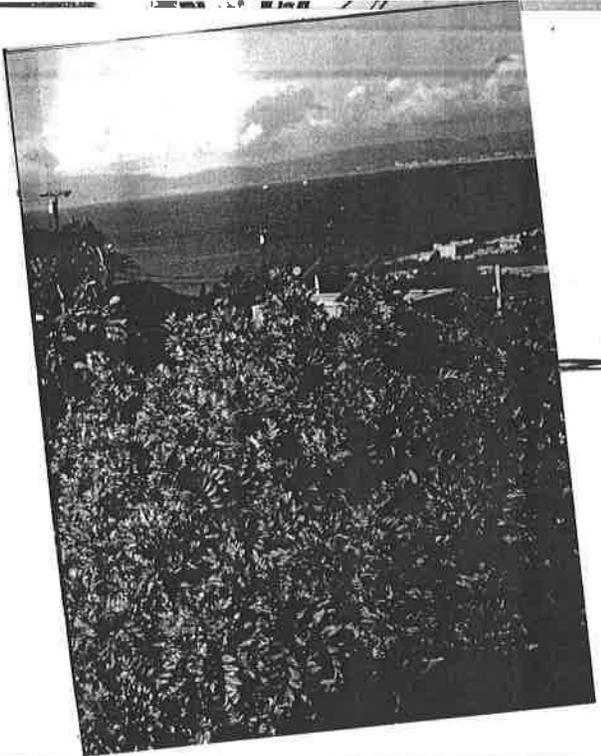
TREES  
WHEN  
TRIMMED  
SOUTH  
EUCALYPTUS  
HEDGE  
WHEN TRIMMED  
YEARS AGO.  
AT OUR EX-  
DENSE



ELM  
WHEN  
TRIMMED  
LONG  
AGO



PRIVACY  
BEFORE  
RECENT  
TRIMMING  
BY OWNERS  
BELOW

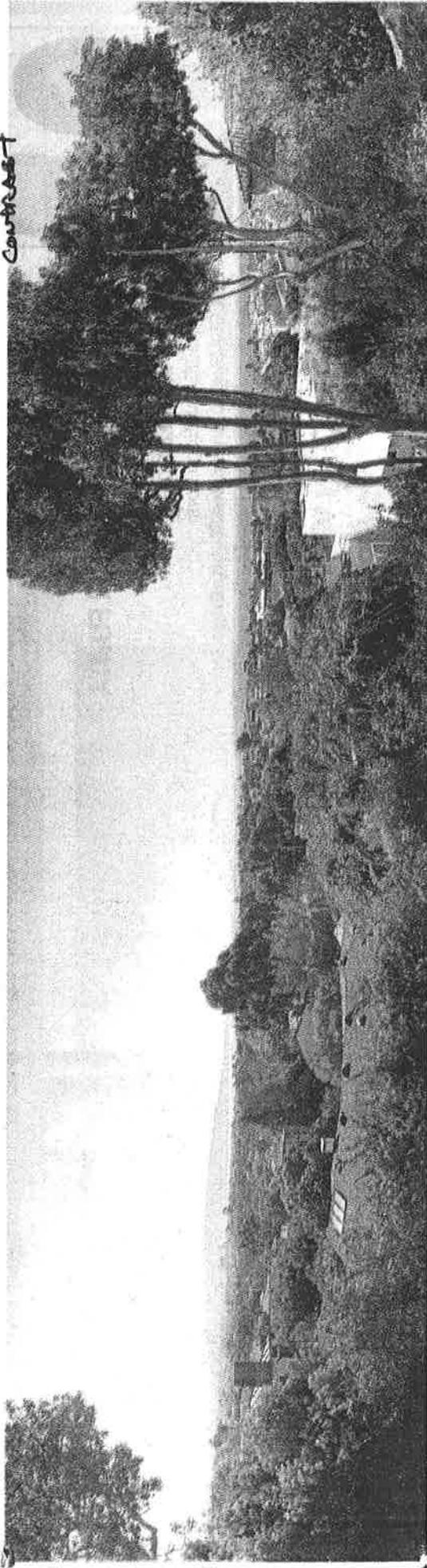


405 VIA LA SOLEDAD

105'  
VIA LA  
SOLEDAD

MY  
OLD  
VIEW

# Once in a generation, trophy property opportunity <sup>HERMOSA AREA</sup> <sup>EXAMPLE BY</sup> <sup>CONTRAST</sup>



## 2820 Amby Place, Hermosa Beach

- \* Surrounded by massive estate properties, this home is located at the end of an exclusive cul-de-sac with mature old-growth trees providing irreplaceable privacy.
- \* This property is one of the last great Estate lots in Hermosa's Hill Section Knoll, North of Gould and adjacent to Manhattan Beach's Hill Section.
- \* The lot totals 18,460sf and offers unblock-able panoramic 220 degree Ocean views with 178 linear feet of Southwestern Exposure.
- \* There are 70 linear feet of West facing lot frontage that allows the second floor of a new home to look due West at unblockable ocean views towards Malibu.
- \* The second floor of the new home will connect the two view corridors to create an unheard of approx. 248' linear feet of unblockable ocean views.
- \* The most valuable and private of ocean-view lots look through the wide part of the lot to the water and this is true of 2820 Amby Place.
- \* Move into this 75 year-old charming home, or one can build over 20,000sf + of home if one so chooses.

**Yours for \$9,900,000**

## Fernandez, Ana

---

**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 10:36 AM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Hillside Overlay Dist

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Craig Partridge [<mailto:cptrout@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:39 AM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Hillside Overlay Dist

I purchased my house in April, 2000 with a very nice city view out my backyard. Unfortunately my city view is through two of my neighbors yards. My neighbor to the east already had several Cypress trees in place when I moved in. When we moved in we had 3 children who would go in the backyard (the previous owners were an elderly couple). My neighbor decided to top his Cypress trees. Topping them made them spread out and it took some of my view. I had a good rapport with that neighbor so I can't say why he did it and I never asked him. My neighbor to the north was a elderly man who passed away a couple years after I bought my house. The new owner asked me about putting up a 6' fence between our properties, which I objected to. I would lose 50% of my view, but he applied for a permit with the city anyways. The city came out and took pictures and my comments and refused there permit. Next thing I see is them putting in 10 Cypress trees. A Cypress tree fence. I asked them not to block my entire city view and they originally agree but they did it anyways. 50% of my view gone. I am in support for an ordinance that does not allow a property owner to obstruct a view with trees or vegetation.

I also think a change needs to be made so when a person buys a home in the Overlay Dist they know before they buy there are ordinances already in place that restrict blocking of views. When I bought my house I was not made aware that I was even in the Overlay District much less there were already existing restrictions.

Sincerely  
Craig Partridge  
25930 Matfield Drive  
Torrance, CA 90505

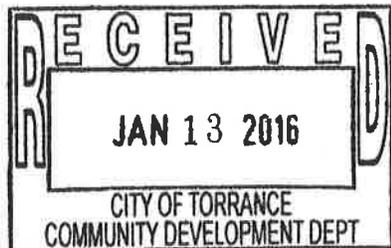
Sent from CP's iPad

PLANNING COMMITTEE:

REGARDING THE MEETING ON JAN 16  
ON TREES & SCRUBS —  
PLEASE LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE,  
FOR 2 GOOD REASONS.

1) YOU GUYS SHOULD NOT BE IN  
THE BUSINESS OF REGULATING  
PEOPLES TREES & SCRUBS  
EXCEPT WHERE THEY BLOCK  
THE STREET OR SIDE WALK.

2) TREES & SCRUBS ARE STILL A  
BETTER VIEW THAN DISTANT  
LIGHTS & CONCRETE.  
AFTER I VE SEEN IT 3 TIMES  
THATS ENOUGH, WHAT GOOD  
REALLY IS DISTANT LIGHTS & BLDGS?  
I PREFER NATURE!



*John Zimmerman*

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 4:14 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Country Hills part of Hillside Overlay District

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**From:** [Whatsurpoint@aol.com](mailto:Whatsurpoint@aol.com) [<mailto:Whatsurpoint@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 2:54 PM  
**To:** CDD Info; [karigm@aol.com](mailto:karigm@aol.com)  
**Subject:** Country Hills part of Hillside Overlay District

Good Afternoon:

We have lived in Country Hills as original buyers. Over the year we have seen our view disappear due to City parkway trees and neighbor trees.

Are we part of the Hillside Overlay District and if not how can we become part of it?

The views this time of year are exhilarating you the trees don't Block the view.

Thank you for your help.

Dale Mircheff

See you tonight.

## **Fernandez, Ana**

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**From:** CDD Info  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 4:14 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Cc:** Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** FW: Comments - View Protection Ordinance for Hillside Overlay District

**Importance:** High

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**From:** Trott, Jordan [ACCUS] [<mailto:JTrott4@its.jnj.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 3:38 PM  
**To:** CDD Info  
**Subject:** Comments - View Protection Ordinance for Hillside Overlay District  
**Importance:** High

**TO: Community Development Department – Torrance, CA**

I am writing because I will not be able to attend the public meeting taking place on Thursday evening January 14<sup>th</sup>, and cannot participate in the discussion around the potential creation of an ordinance to protect views in the Hillside Overlay District from obstruction by trees and vegetation.

I am strongly in favor of creating an ordinance to protect our views from trees and other vegetation! When I purchased my home at 233 Via Anita in January 2013, it was in large part due to the incredible views that the property offered. Many people in the neighborhood have spent a considerable amount of money to renovate their properties to take advantage of these views, and to increase the value of their homes. Allowing homeowners to plant and grow trees and/or vegetation on their property without restriction will create tremendous risk to neighboring homeowners. This is not just a financial risk, but also a risk to the affected homeowner's enjoyment of the property they have invested so much into. This investment includes significant physical, emotional, and financial resources.

I personally had a situation in the last 12 months where a neighbor below my property had planted two palm trees in their backyard, which I hadn't even noticed from 2013 through 2015. All of the sudden this past summer, I noticed these two palm trees had grown considerably and were now obstructing about 40% of my ocean view. Without an ordinance in place, I have no recourse to prevent this from happening. We currently have a very strong building code ordinance and restrictions in the Hillside Overlay District that protect our views. If we have a view protection ordinance for building, why don't we have a similar view protection ordinance for growing trees? They need to be one in of the same, and truly protect our property views as is the intent of our current Hillside building ordinance.

As I'm sure you are aware, it is now quite expensive to purchase a home in the Hillside Overlay area, and a large part of that is due to both the location and the Ocean/City views that come along with the properties. I support protecting these views, and I strongly urge you to move forward with a view protection ordinance for both trees and vegetation.

Please call or email me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

**Jordan Trott**

Homeowner: 233 Via Anita, Redondo Beach, CA 90277

[Jtrott41@gmail.com](mailto:Jtrott41@gmail.com)

310-386-8360

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Gibson, Jeff  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 11:30 AM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda; Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** Fwd: View Ordinance in the Hillside Overlay

For tonight.....

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Jackson, LeRoy" <[LJACKSON@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:LJACKSON@TorranceCA.gov)>  
**Date:** January 14, 2016 at 11:28:44 AM PST  
**To:** "Gibson, Jeff" <[JGIBSON@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:JGIBSON@TorranceCA.gov)>, "Beste, Robert" <[RBeste@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:RBeste@TorranceCA.gov)>, "Jones, John" <[JJONES@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:JJONES@TorranceCA.gov)>, "Chaparyan, Aram" <[ACHaparyan@TorranceCA.gov](mailto:ACHaparyan@TorranceCA.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: View Ordinance in the Hillside Overlay

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**From:** Ashcraft, Heidi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 13, 2016 8:44 PM  
**To:** Jackson, LeRoy  
**Subject:** Fwd: View Ordinance in the Hillside Overlay

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Large, Burke S SPL" <[Burke.S.Large@usace.army.mil](mailto:Burke.S.Large@usace.army.mil)>  
**Date:** January 13, 2016 at 1:28:39 PM PST  
**To:** "[HAscraft@TorranceCA.Gov](mailto:HAscraft@TorranceCA.Gov)" <[HAscraft@TorranceCA.Gov](mailto:HAscraft@TorranceCA.Gov)>  
**Subject:** View Ordinance in the Hillside Overlay

Good Afternoon Councilwomen Ashcraft:

I own a small home at 230 Via Anita in the Hillside Overlay. I currently live in Old Torrance and intend to move into the home on Via Anita in June of this year.

Currently there are three City trees blocking parts of my view. I also have a neighbors tree affecting my view.

I strongly support a view ordinance protecting homeowners views from both City Trees and neighbors trees.

I would greatly appreciate your support in adopting a view ordinance similar to view ordinance in Palos Verdes Estates.

Burke S. Large  
1807 Andreo Avenue  
Torrance, CA 90501

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 2:44 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: Trees

**From:** Suzanne1014 [<mailto:suzanne1014@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 1:52 PM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda  
**Cc:** [Jim.F.Monty@gmail.com](mailto:Jim.F.Monty@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Re: Trees

Dear Linda and Jim,

Meant to do this some time ago. My position on trees is to keep them; keep them healthy; fkeep planting new trees, though the latter is more of a challenge. ! Awareness of Global Warming emphasizes the need for tree canopies in cities, preserving and restoring rainforests; even carbon trading includes planting & protecting trees. In the Riviera and all over L.A. Country, trees, etc. are dying, not just due to the drought but also due to insect infestations, a result of climate change. Older trees do a better job at 'air conditioning' holding soil in place, and reducing pollutants that go into ground water, and the sewage system. It is more difficult for newly planted and/or younger trees to survive and be sustained. Other reasons include:

1. Trees purify the air by absorbing carbon and other pollutants. Nothing on earth does that better! So trees help reduce greenhouse gases, thereby reducing global warming!
2. As the planet warms, trees help cool, protect homes from strong winds, hold soil in place, reduce energy consumption, and can increase property value. (If people are concerned about their views, trees can be laced allowing views and a healthier, greener environment.)
3. Trees provide habitat for birds and other wildlife which help maintain a balance with nature.
4. The 'Tree Czar' in Sacramento (whose name escapes me) is very supportive of keeping and planting more trees! So this is a state policy!

When I first moved to Hollywood Riviera, I can remember the amazing decrease in temperature and the rush of fresh air cleansing my lungs as I drove up Via Monte De Oro with its canopy of flowering Eucalyptus trees. It never failed to surprise and invigorate! Over the past several years, many of those trees have been removed or drastically cut back. Fog and smog that never used to reach the Riviera are now nearly as common as the Marine layer along the coast. That and the need for some residents to decimate trees that are both on their property and not even on their property have begun to turn the beautiful green Hollywood Riviera into a hillside of roofs, chimneys, and water towers..., a concrete, Shake, and Spanish tile jungle...to see what?

Heartbreaking and no regard for the planet or future generations.

I will be at the meeting tonight. I pray that the city 'fathers & mothers' will make a decision for the present, and future, of our planet, and generations to come.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Herschenhorn

## **Fernandez, Ana**

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 1:10 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: Community Planning and Design Committee Mtg - January 14, 2016 - Vegetation Ordinance

**From:** Kelly McCord Moore [<mailto:kelly@mccordcpa.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 1:08 PM  
**To:** Barthe-Jones, Eleanor; Cessna, Linda  
**Subject:** Community Planning and Design Committee Mtg - January 14, 2016 - Vegetation Ordinance

Dear Linda,

We were not able to attend the public outreach meetings of residents in the Hillside Overlay and regrettably, are not able to attend the meeting this evening. We would like to go on record as being in support of an ordinance. Specifically, what trees are appropriate in terms of height and size.

Thank you.

Kelly and Howard Moore  
358 Camino de las Colinas

**Kelly McCord Moore**  
**McCord & Llewellyn, CPA**  
Suite G Foothill Executive Plaza  
1150 Foothill Boulevard  
La Canada, CA 91011  
Phone (818) 952-1040  
Fax (818) 279-0808  
Email: [kelly@mccordcpa.com](mailto:kelly@mccordcpa.com)

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Thank you.

## Fernandez, Ana

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**From:** Cessna, Linda  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 3:34 PM  
**To:** Fernandez, Ana  
**Subject:** FW: tree and view ordinance

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Poirier, Rebecca  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 2:53 PM  
**To:** Cessna, Linda; Lodan, Gregg; Sunshine, Brian  
**Subject:** FW: tree and view ordinance

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Lynn Carol Miller [<mailto:lmiller@usc.edu>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 2:51 PM  
**To:** Ashcraft, Heidi; Barnett, Gene; Goodrich, Tim; Griffiths, Mike; Rizzo, Geoffrey; Weideman, Kurt; Poirier, Rebecca; Cortez, Dana  
**Cc:** Lynn Miller; Stephen Read  
**Subject:** tree and view ordinance

Dear Council Members:

We will be unable to attend tonight's meeting so wanted to share our thoughts. My husband, Stephen Read, and I (Lynn Miller Read) are Torrance residents at 428 Via El Chico in the overlay area. We have been very good at removing trees that were sick or where our neighbors (up the hill from us) have pointed out are problematic (i.e., potentially could crack and obstruct upper drainage areas), and of course in the process enhance their views. We have paid for these things ourselves. So, I think it's fair to say we have been good and responsive neighbors to our up-hill neighbors' concerns.

But, in terms of the view ordinance we are very concerned that if it passed, we would lose our right to reinstate our privacy.

1. After we moved into our house (which we purchased over 15 years ago) because we sought PRIVACY, our neighbor at the time behind us (apparently this had been approved before we purchased) built up the ground considerably so that the back of their property (with swimming pool which incidently overflowed into the hillside and caused serious damage to our neighbor's property) so that they acquired a view that greatly reduced our privacy in our back yard and spa area. That uphill neighbor sold the property a few years ago. We don't appreciate our "uphill" neighbors being able to look down into our property. Indeed, a year or so ago, I observed the husband and wife trying to look over the fence between their property and their neighbors (so they are a bit snoop and this is disconcerting...I don't think they get how annoying it is to have neighbors who do this).

2. We lost many trees at the rear of our property (on the uphill) after the construction occurred and after the new owners moved in (the construction itself may have killed them. But, we're unsure). We then took out the dying trees and planted some narrow trees our gardener suggested would enhance our privacy but not threaten the culvert. This would allow us to keep our nosey neighbors from looking down into our property. After removing trees recently (at the request of the uphill neighbor since it could have long term affected the drainage area) we are planning to plant some more of these recently added trees across our

entire back line this week. We are trying to reduce our neighbor's view of our backyard, but not trying to reduce our neighbors' view of the ocean and so forth (although this may impede some view from some areas on their property). Nevertheless, our concern is with our PRIVACY, which is why we purchased our home in the first place where we did. We will keep our trees trimmed as much as possible so that we achieve our privacy and landscaping objectives but not more than that (so we protect our neighbors views as much as possible). And, perhaps that is the way to think about the privacy/view tradeoff.

3. If a view ordinance goes in people, like us, might be far less likely to be so accommodating to our neighbors if removing trees (due to poor health of the tree or potentially being problematic to drainage areas and so forth, because they had gotten very large and needlessly were obstructing view) would mean we couldn't replace them (and thereby still secure our privacy). This could be an unintended consequence of such an ordinance in that neighbors might be less neighborly – doing just what is required by law but no more. I agree with another resident who said that taller allowed fences might be another solution to the privacy-view trade off.

We note that a recommendation that trees be no higher than the roofline is problematic for those of us on the downside of a slope...since the tops of our roofs are often much lower than the property, including the dirt and backyard way up the hill, way above the roof!

4. We do think that there should be a survey of all residents since it is likely that most would be opposed to a view ordinance.

Thank you for allowing us to share our thoughts.

best,

Lynn and Stephen Read