

City of Lafayette  
Public Meeting Agenda  
Planning Commission and Design Review Commission  
Special Meeting

Thursday March 30, 2006, 7:30PM  
Lafayette Community Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Manzanita Room

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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS
5. CONSENT CALENDAR (NONE)
6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS (NONE)
7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS
  - A. **DISCUSSION OF HOUSE SIZE**  
**Recommendation:** Discuss and direct staff.  
**Project Planner:** Greg Wolff, Tel (925) 299-3204, [gwoff@lovelafayette.org](mailto:gwoff@lovelafayette.org)  
(Estimated time: 60 min\*)
  - B. **PLANNING DIVISION WORK PLAN FOR 2006**  
**Recommendation:** Recommend approval to the City Council.  
**Project Planner:** Niroop K. Srivatsa, Tel (925) 299-3206, [nsrivatsa@lovelafayette.org](mailto:nsrivatsa@lovelafayette.org)  
(Estimated time: 30 min\*)
8. OTHER BUSINESS (NONE)
9. COMMISSIONERS' ACTIVITY REPORT (NONE)
10. PLANNING MANAGER'S REPORT (NONE)
11. ADJOURNMENT - Adjourn to the regular Planning Commission meeting of April 6, 2006 and the regular Design Review Commission meeting of April 11, 2006.  
The Commissions may continue to a date certain any item it has not commenced prior to 11:00PM.

*I, Kathy Foster, declare under penalty of perjury that this agenda has been posted at least 72 hours in advance at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette.*

/s/

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Kathy Foster, Planning Services Division

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\* Estimated time for consideration is given as a service to the public. Please be advised that an item on the agenda may be considered earlier or later than indicated.

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# City of Lafayette Staff Report

**For:** Design Review Commission & Planning Commission  
**By:** Greg Wolff, Senior Planner  
**Date Written:** March 23, 2006  
**Meeting Date:** March 30, 2006  
**Subject:** Request by the Planning Commission for a joint session to discuss how to handle house size, particularly on hillside & ridgeline lots.

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## **Purpose**

To discuss how to handle house size, particularly on hillside and ridgeline lots.

## **Background**

At its March 2, 2006 meeting the Planning Commission considered a proposed, new, single-family residence in excess of 6,000 sq.ft. on a vacant lot of record in a Class II Ridgeline Setback. As is common with new homes in hillside and ridgeline areas, the issue of size was discussed. The Commission asked staff to schedule a joint session with the Design Review Commission and Planning Commission to discuss home size and to determine how best to handle the issue, if the Commissions determine house size is a problem.

The Commission asked staff to research how other cities handle the issue of house size. In addition to contacting local cities and visiting web sites, staff sent an email inquire to the California League of Cities list serve for Housing, Community and Economic Development. Responses are attached.

## **Discussion Points**

1. Is house size a problem? (Flatland? Hillside? Ridgeline?)
2. If house size is a problem, what is the nature of the problem?
3. What are our current practices? How do we handle house size currently?
4. If house size is a problem, is our current process adequate to handle it?
5. Are the regulations and findings adequate but implementation falling short of the goal?
6. Absent an empirical standard, how do we evaluate size & handle flexibility? How big is too big?
7. How do we want regulate size? (FAR, case by case, program, perception?)

The goal of the joint session is to ensure that staff, the Design Review Commission and the Planning Commission are on the same page with respect to home size and to address the issue in the case where the Commissions determine additional care, scrutiny or regulations are necessary.

## **Recommendation**

Discuss and direct staff.

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Due to the length of the attachments, they have not been scanned into the agenda packet available on the City of Lafayette web site. Please contact Greg Wolff, Senior Planner at [GWolff@ci.lafayette.ca.us](mailto:GWolff@ci.lafayette.ca.us) if you are interested in one or more attachments. Most attachments were provided by the original city in digital format and can be forwarded via email.

## **Attachments**

1. "Mansionization" – responses from HCED List Serve
  - a. Response to City of Gardena HCED Inquiry on Mansionization
  - b. Response to City of Belvedere HCED Inquiry on Mansionization
  - c. Information on Small Lot Design Guidelines
  - d. May 2003 Residential FAR Survey
2. Fremont
  - a. Response to Lafayette HCED Inquiry on House Size
  - b. Hillside Combining District
  - c. Open Space District
  - d. Visual Analyses & Story Pole Procedures
  - e. Submittal Requirements for Projects Above the Toe of the Hill
3. La Canada Flintridge
  - a. Response to Lafayette HCED Inquiry on House Size
  - b. Hillside Development Permit Applicant's Guide
4. Laguna Beach
  - a. Response to Lafayette HCED Inquiry on House Size
  - b. Design Review Process
5. Los Altos Hills
  - a. Site Development Regulations
6. Moraga
  - a. Design Guidelines
  - b. Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO) Guidelines
  - c. Single-Family Residential Floor Area Ratios (FARs)
7. Novato
  - a. Hillside & Ridgeline Protection
8. Orinda
  - a. Hillside & Ridgeline Design Guidelines
9. San Rafael
  - a. Response to Lafayette HCED Inquiry on House Size
  - b. Hillside Development Overlay District Regulations
  - c. Hillside Guidelines
  - d. Hillside Residential Design Guidelines Manual – Compliance Checklist
10. City of Walnut
  - a. Response to Lafayette HCED Inquiry on House Size
  - b. Basis for Approval of Architectural Review