



Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee

Case Report

Lot Split and Flag Lot

PLUM Meetings: June 18, 2020

Case Nos: AA-2019-7668-PMLA
ZA-2020-0337-ZAA

Site Location: 23014 Erwin Street, 91367, between Fallbrook Avenue and Woodlake Avenue

Project: The applicant is proposing to subdivide an RA-1 zoned lot into 2 lots and to demolish a portion of the existing single family residence to meet side yard setback requirements creating a flag lot in the rear.

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Submitted By: Henry Rice, WHWCNC PLUM Committee Member

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is located on the south side of Erwin Street between Fallbrook Avenue on the east and Woodlake Avenue on the west in a very low density community of large RA-1 zoned lots locally known as Walnut Acres. See **Figure1, attached**, for map including surrounding properties.

The applicant proposes to subdivide an approximately 35,779 sqft. RA-1 zoned lot into 2 lots creating a flag lot in the rear. In addition, the applicant is seeking a zoning administrator adjustment to allow the west side yard setback to remain 9.9 ft. in lieu of the 10 ft. minimum

code requirement, and the midpoint width of the rear lot to remain 20 ft. in lieu of the 70 ft. minimum code requirement. After removal of part of the existing structure, the east side yard setback will be 11 ft. satisfying the code requirement of 10 ft. minimum.

OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS

A two story residence is currently located on the front portion of the property as shown in **Figure 2, attached**. There are currently no structures on the rear portion of the property. A landscape architect reviewed the trees on the lot, as it exists, and none were determined to be protected species.

A review of the project was conducted along with pertinent LAMC codes, the general character of the neighborhood, and information about past and present development activity in the community was evaluated. The general character of the neighborhood is typically wide and deep lots, and semi-rural setting, which includes large backyards providing much privacy. The residential/agricultural zoning status makes the neighborhood appealing to animal keeping enthusiasts. Walnut Acres remains as a refuge of open space, open air and greenery, and a living link to the historic agrarian past of the San Fernando Valley. For the residents, protection and preservation of its character is a quality of life concern of the utmost importance.

There has been an upsurge of pressure from developers to split lots and insert large homes inconsistent with the applicable General and Specific Plans. If allowed to succeed, the increased density will dilute and ultimately destroy the character of the Walnut Acres community.

The Los Angeles zoning regulations applicable to RA zoned parcels are shown in **Figure 3, attached**.

The lot split proposed by the applicant (**See Figure 4, attached**) results in two lots each conforming to the LAMC minimum area requirement of 17,500 sqft. for RA-1 zoned lots. **However, the rear lot does not conform to the minimum lot width requirement of 70 feet at the midpoint as defined by LAMC Article 2, Section 12.03 stated below.**

“LOT WIDTH – The horizontal distance between the side lot lines measured at right angles to the lot depth at a point midway between the front and rear lot lines.”

Additionally, the Preliminary Parcel Map, dated October 22, 2019, provided by the applicant does not include a provision for fire trucks to turn around at the rear end of the driveway to the proposed rear lot.

A number of negative attributes to lot splitting and flag lots have been identified. Among the most significant are:

1. They are in direct contradiction with the very low density and intended purpose of RA zoned properties and the General Plan
2. They create privacy issues and potential conflicts with adjoining residents
3. They impinge on animal keeping privileges of adjacent property owners

4. They add undesired density and degrade the semi-rural atmosphere of RA zoned communities
5. They promote development that adds extra stress to the infrastructure including streets and utilities designed for RA zoned communities
6. They establish a negative trend for future development of the neighborhood
7. The added driveways contribute to increased traffic density in the area

Walnut Acres residents have in the past, and continue to categorically opposed lot splits and have successfully challenged their introduction into the community. Their efforts have had the following results:

1. There have been no lots splits approved since 2006. Most existing flag lots in the community pre-date the current regulations, and according to City Planning may not be developable because they cannot meet current fire regulations.
2. The former District 3 Councilman opposed lot splits in the community.
3. A South Valley Area Planning Commission determination basically stated that flag lots in the community are undesirable, have a negative impact on the community, and encourage a trend of increased density inconsistent with the applicable General Plan and Specific Plans

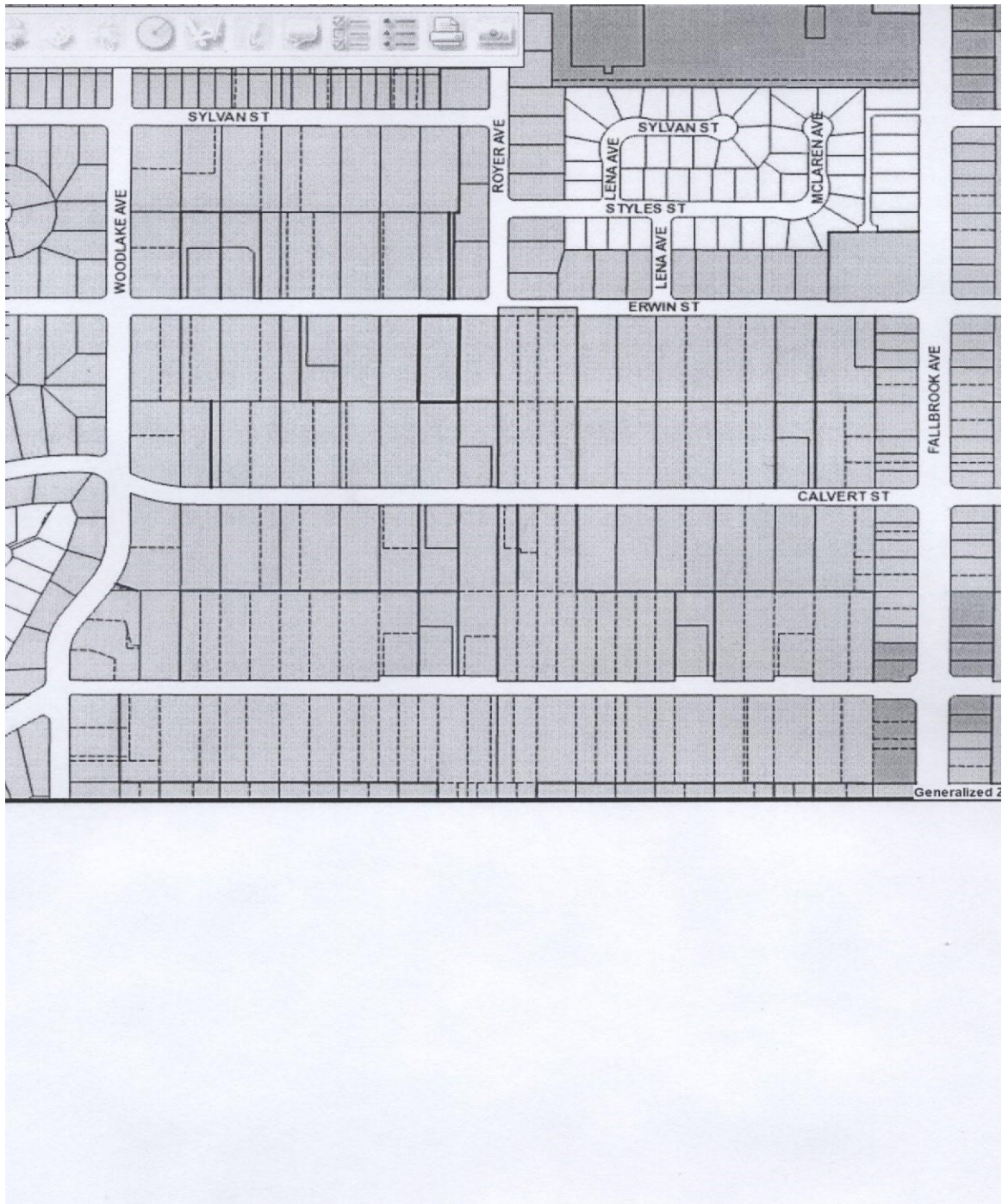


Figure 1
Map of Properties Surrounding 23014 Erwin Street

23014 Erwin St. Woodland Hills 91367



Figure 2
Front and Back Yards of 23014 Erwin Street

GENERALIZED SUMMARY OF ZONING REGULATIONS CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Zone	Use	Maximum Height			Required yards			Minimum Area		Min. Lot Width	Parking Req'd.
		Stories	Feet	Front	Side	Rear	Per Lot	Per Dwelling Unit			
Agricultural											
A1	Agricultural One-Family Dwellings, Parks, Playgrounds, Community Centers, Golf Courses, Truck Gardening, Extensive Agricultural Uses, Home Occupations	Unlimited (8)	45 or (6),(8)	20% lot depth; 25 ft. max. or (6)	10% lot width; 25 ft. max. or (6)	25% lot depth; 25 ft. max.	5 acres	2.5 acres	300 ft.	2 spaces per dwelling unit (6)	
A2	Agricultural A1 uses						2 acres	1 acre	150 ft.		
RA	Suburban Limited Agricultural Uses, One-Family Dwellings, Home Occupations,		45 or (6),(7),(8)	20% lot depth; 25 ft. max., but not less than prevailing (6)	10 ft. or 10% lot width < 70 ft. + 1 ft. for 3 stories or more (6),(7)		17,500 sq. ft. (1)	17,500 sq. ft. (1)	70 ft. (1)	2 covered spaces per dwelling unit (6)	



**Figure 3
LAMC Lot Dimension Limits for RA-1 Parcels**

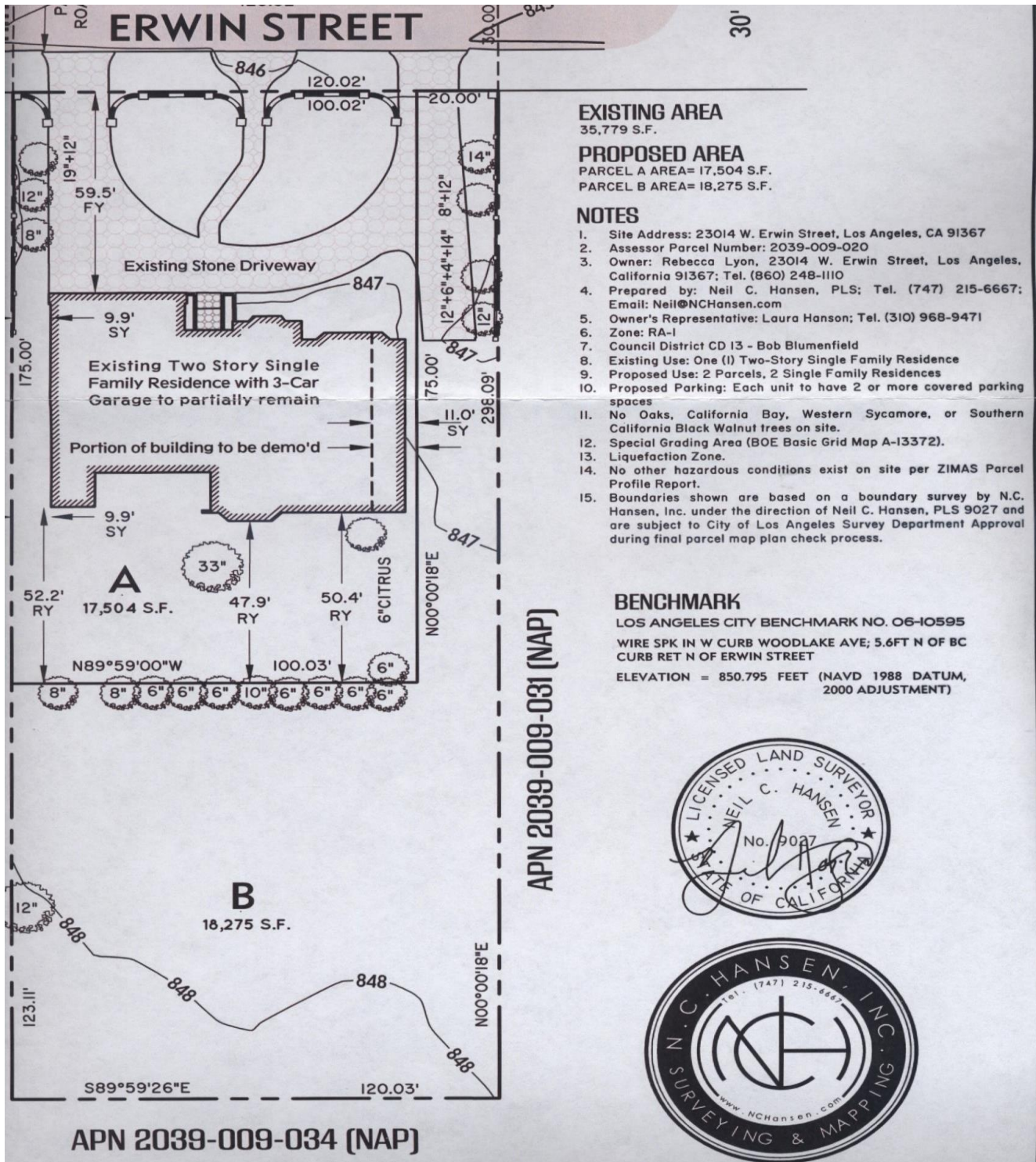


Figure 4
Preliminary Parcel Map for 23014 Erwin Street