



Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee
Case Report
Lot Split and Flag Lot

PLUM Meetings: October 1, 2020

Case No: AA-2020-3128-PMLA

Site Location: 22838 Erwin Street, 91367, between Fallbrook Avenue and Woodlake Avenue

Project: The applicant is proposing to subdivide an RA-1 zoned lot into 2 lots creating a flag lot on the rear of the property

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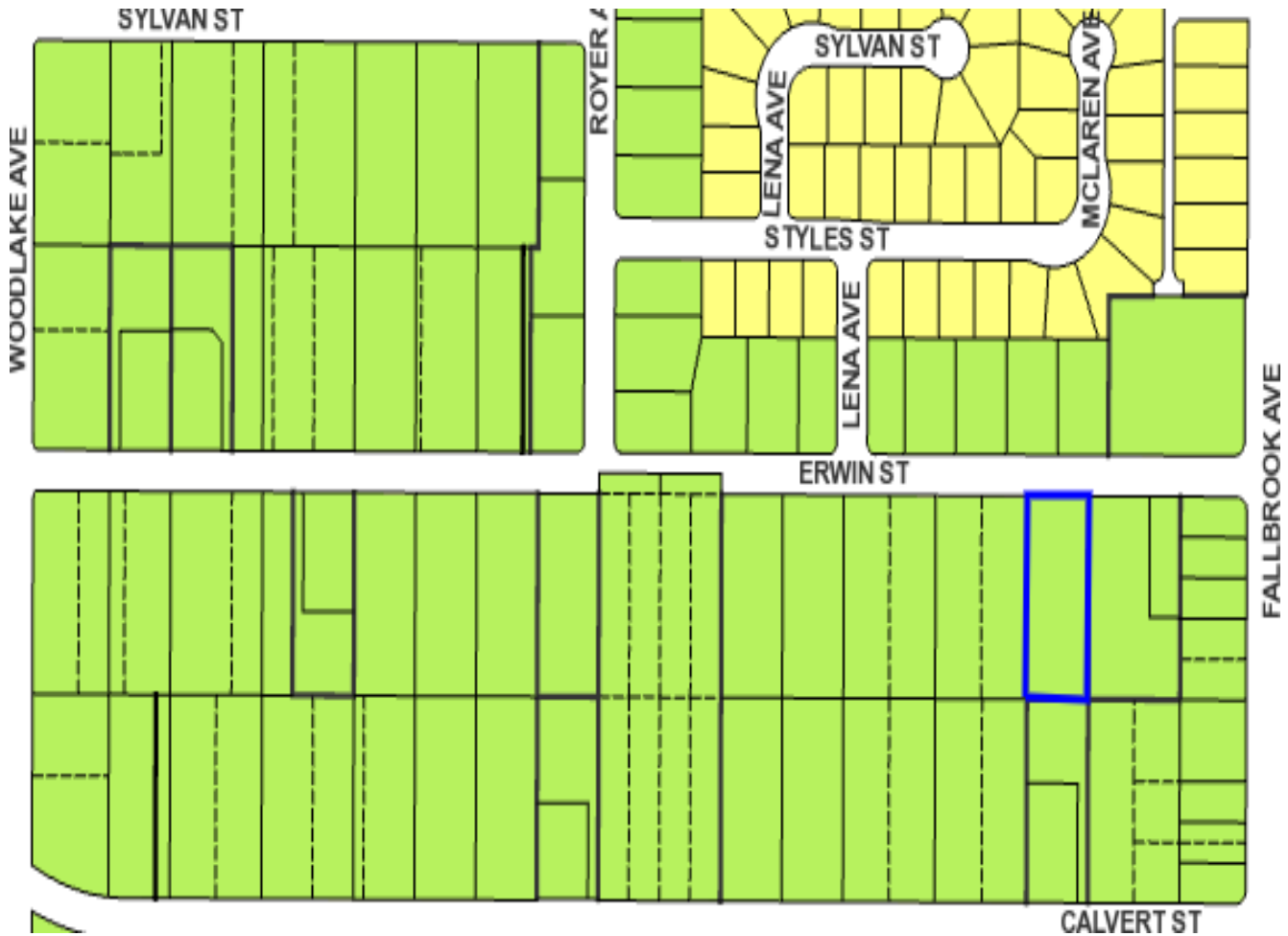
Applicant's
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Submitted By: Henry Rice, WHWCNC PLUM Case Leader

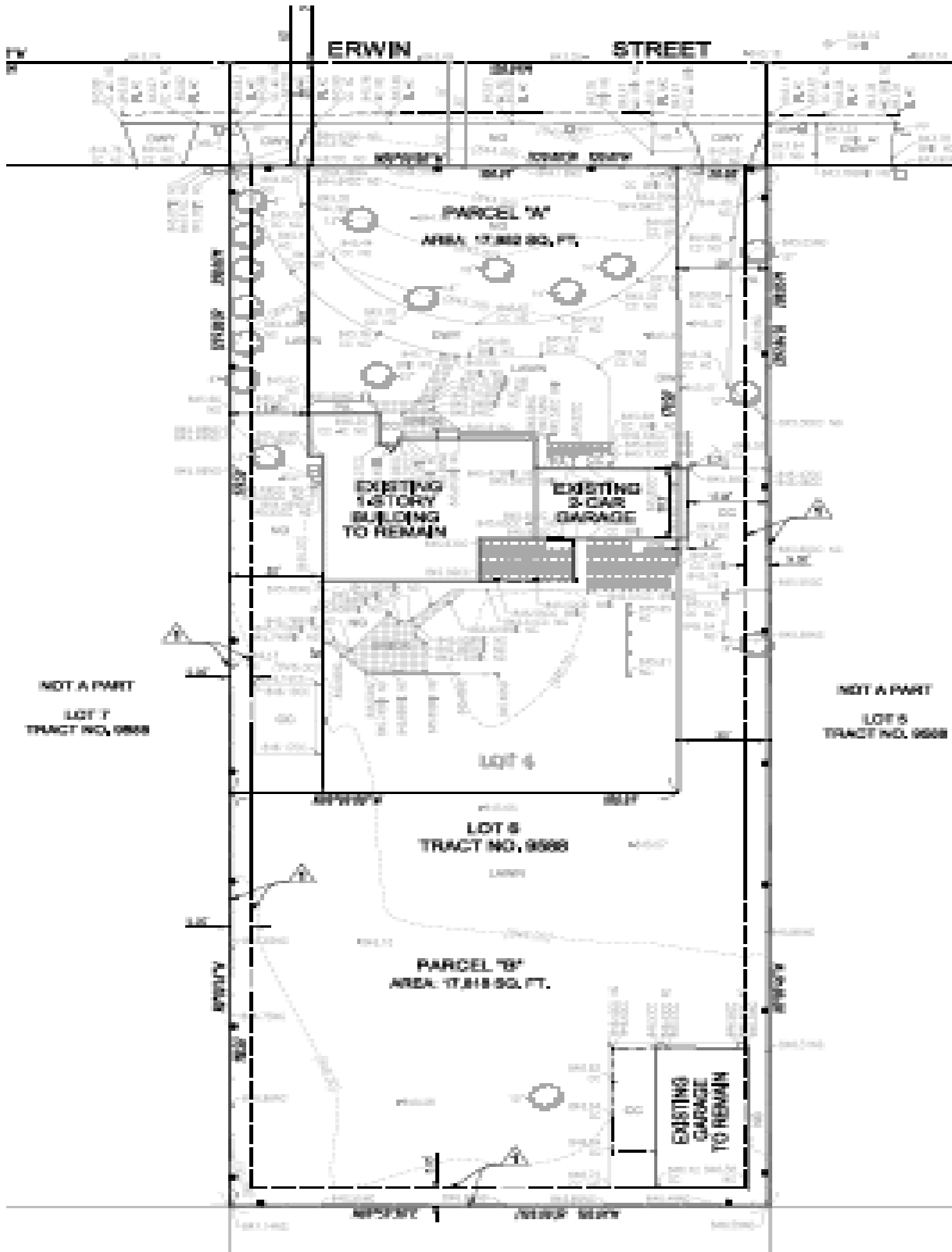
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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 map below including surrounding properties.



Location of Site and Surrounding Properties

The applicant proposes to subdivide an approximately 35,770 sqft. RA-1 zoned lot into 2 lots creating a flag lot in the rear. The area of the front lot would be 17,952 square feet, and the area of the rear flag lot would be 17,818 sqft. when the subdivision is completed.



Peliminary Parcel for 22838 Erwin Street

OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS

A 1680 square foot single story residence with an attached two car garage is currently located on the front portion of the property. There currently is a two car garage with attached carport on the rear portion of the property. It is planned to retain both structures as they exist. All trees on the property will be retained. There are no protected species trees on the lot.




Aerial View of Property at 22838 Erwin Street

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 below:

**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 (6)	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		
 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)

LAMC Lot Dimension Limits for RA-1 Parcels

The lot split proposed by the applicant 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 is 20 ft. wide at the midpoint and thus does not conform to the minimum lot width requirement of 70 feet at the midpoint as defined by LAMC Article 2, Section 12.07.C.4, and measured per 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.”

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

DRAFT MOTION

As pertaining to Case AA-2020-3128-PMLA, having held 1 public PLUM teleconference meeting for the application to permit subdivision of the parcel at 22838 Erwin St. Woodland Hills, into two lots, creating a flag lot in the rear, in an RA-1 zone, the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee hereby finds that:

WHEREAS, based on the Preliminary Parcel Map provided by the applicant, dated 04/20/20, the proposed lot split does not involve a parcel landlocked by topography; and,

WHEREAS, the Preliminary Parcel Map, dated 04/20/20, provided by the applicant includes a rear flag lot that is 20 ft. wide at the midpoint and thus does not conform to the lot width requirement of minimum 70 feet at the midpoint for RA-1 zoned parcels as defined by Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Article 2, Sections 12.03 (lot width definition) and 12.07. C. 4 (minimum width requirement); and,

WHEREAS, the proposed lot split and subsequent development can impinge on the animal keeping privileges of adjoining property owners authorized by the RA-1 zoning regulations, and thus deprive owners of the value of the RA-1 zoning for which they paid; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed lot split will result in a nonconforming flag lot increasing

the density, in a very low density residential community as designated by the General Plan, and thus deprive Walnut Acres owners of the value of the RA-1 zoning for which they paid; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed lot split and nonconforming flag lot will potentially create privacy issues and conflicts with adjoining residents, and will potentially depreciate the value of adjoining properties, thus depriving adjacent owners of the value of the RA-1 zoning for which they paid; and,

WHEREAS, flag lots change the character of the Walnut Acres community and have the potential to destroy the character and semi-rural atmosphere of the entire Walnut Acres RA-1 zoned community thus depriving Walnut Acres owners of the value of the RA-1 zoning for which they paid; and,

WHEREAS, the CD3 Council Office and the South Valley Area Planning Commission have opposed lot splits in the neighborhood in the past, and there have been no new lot splits approved in Walnut Acres since 2006; and,

WHEREAS, most existing flag lots in the Walnut Acres community pre-date the current regulations, and according to City Planning may not be developable because they cannot meet current fire regulations, and thus set no precedent for this application.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee, for the findings and conditions stated herein above, finds that the application for subdivision of an RA-1 zoned parcel at 22838 Erwin Street into two lots creating a flag lot, **not receive** the support of the Board of the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council.

AND FURTHERMORE, the Planning, Land Use and Mobility Committee recommends that the Board of the Woodland Hills-Warner Center Neighborhood Council advise the City of Los Angeles Planning Department and Council District 3 Councilmember Bob Blumenfield of its findings, and its subsequent recommendation to **not support** this application as presented on October 14, 2020.

(ADD SPECIFIC CONDITIONS)

Motion: Henry Rice

Second:

Vote: Aye Nay Abstain