City Of Carpinteria, California

Residential Design Guidelines Subarea 5
Concha Loma Neighborhood

November 2014

Purpose

The development review process is a creative and collaborative process designed to protect and preserve the rural charm, natural history and beauty of the City through careful review of proposed development. This is important because the City of Carpinteria's small beach town image is exemplified in the homes that comprise the Concha Loma Neighborhood, the boundaries of which are established in the General Plan. It is the intent of the General Plan and the Local Coastal Land Use Plan policies included in the Community Design Element of the General Plan to uphold this image. These Design Guidelines allow the creative process to continue while providing guidance as to the primary standards by which a project will be evaluated. These Guidelines augment existing standards contained in the Community Design Element of the General Plan/ Local Coastal Land Use Plan, Carpinteria Municipal Code Chapter 14, Zoning Code and Chapter 2.36, Architectural Review Board.

Figure 1: The Concha Loma Neighborhood (Subarea 5)

The exterior appearance of residences, the type and extent of landscaping and the site design of a property affect the desirability of the immediate area and neighboring areas for other land uses. It is in the interest of the City to prevent the introduction of elements which may be incompatible with the highest quality development and which might impair the value of both improved and unimproved property. As set forth the General Plan/Local Coastal Land Use Plan, it is the intent of the City Council to preserve property values and to encourage the most appropriate and beneficial use of land so as to safeguard the general welfare of the community. Therefore, these Design Guidelines are appropriate for the Concha Loma Neighborhood.

Table of Contents

Applicability

These Guidelines are intended for use by applicants, the public, City staff and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) to evaluate the suitability of development reviewed through the City's planning process. For applicants, the Guidelines can be used in design before an application is submitted. The public can use these Guidelines to measure whether a proposed project is appropriate. City staff can use the Guidelines to assist applicants, the public and the ARB in analyzing consistency with development policies. The Architectural Review Board can use the Guidelines as a tool to evaluate the compatibility and context of a structure in addition to its architectural merit.

Contextual compatibility of development is of foremost importance and underlies the purpose of these Design Guidelines. Context is the setting in which a structure exists, including the project site, properties immediately adjacent to a project site and the larger surrounding neighborhood. Building scale and massing, how the building is presented to the street, its setting and the architectural style all contribute to the perception of compatibility.

These Guidelines are to be used in addition to the City's Zoning Code and General Plan/Local Coastal Land Use Plan to gauge whether proposed development is appropriate in a particular location. Development does not necessarily need to comply with every guideline in order to be approved; however, the greater the degree of compliance with the Guidelines, the greater the likelihood of approval.

Figure 2: Boundary of Concha Loma Neighborhood

Boundary

The Concha Loma Neighborhood Subarea is bounded by Carpinteria Creek on the west, Carpinteria Avenue on the north, the Carpinteria Oil and Gas Plant on the east and the railroad tracks, Tar Pits Park and Carpinteria State Beach on the south. This Subarea includes unique and distinctive residential streets. The streets are generally curving and undulate vertically with the natural coastal terrain. In cross section, they range from traditional tree-lined streets to narrow roads with unpaved edges and no sidewalks. This variety makes the neighborhood a desirable place to live and is worth preserving to maintain the semi-rural character of the area. A small number of commercial and multi-family buildings are located on Carpinteria Avenue, along the northern edge of the neighborhood. Any changes to these sites should be made in conformance with the applicable policies of the Community Design Element, and with sensitivity to the abutting residential uses to the south. These Guidelines apply only to single family residential development in Subarea 5.

Carpinteria Creek

The Carpinteria Creek watershed reaches a peak elevation of approximately 4,690 feet. Headwater tributaries drain steep hillsides and canyons of the Santa Ynez Mountains. In the foothills and coastal plain, Carpinteria Creek passes through agricultural and urban areas. The creek passes under bridge crossings at U.S. 101 and Carpinteria Avenue, and continues south between the Concha Loma residential tract to the east and the downtown area to the west. Farther downstream, the creek passes under the Union Pacific Railroad bridge and empties into the ocean at Carpinteria State Beach.

Carpinteria Creek is one of the few streams in Southern California that has not been channelized and continues to flow year round. It is also home to a recovering steelhead trout population and provides habitat for several other species of special concern. The creek is the western boundary of the neighborhood which separates the more urban Downtown/Old Town Neighborhood subarea and the Concha Loma Neighborhood. The tall canopy of the riparian area also aids in dividing these two neighborhoods.

The Bob Hansen Creeks Preservation Program was adopted by the City Council in 2005 and implements the Local Coastal Program. It guides preservation and restoration of all of Carpinteria's creeks. Development of properties located adjacent to Carpinteria Creek may require increased setbacks and limitations on development to protect sensitive resources.

Figure 3: Carpinteria Creek separates the Downtown/Old Town and Concha Loma Neighborhoods

History

The Concha Loma Neighborhood is partially located on a former Chumash Village that was known as "Mishopshnow." It is believed that Native American occupation began 9,000 years or more ago in Santa Barbara County. The Mishopshnow Village occupied the area of the current Concha Loma neighborhood presumably until Spanish occupation, which began in 1769, and the subsequent establishment of the California Mission system. Spanish explorers referred to this village site as "La Carpinteria" for the canoes or "tomols" on the beach and others that were being constructed here and gave the village the look of a shipyard. The tar seeps were a major attraction for the Chumash, especially for canoe building. This history gives the area archaeological significance.

Figure 4: The historical marker at the northern end of the neighborhood

CC&Rs

CC&Rs are covenants, conditions and restrictions placed on a property by a builder or neighborhood association which regulate development. CC&Rs are typically recorded on the property deed and enforced by the specific homeowners association identified in the CC&Rs. Although the City does not enforce private CC&Rs, it is important to acknowledge their existence when planning development in the neighborhood.

There are three separate subdivisions in this subarea: the Concha Loma Subdivision to the west, Carpinteria Park Estates to the northeast and Carpinteria Park Subdivision to the southeast. The Concha Loma Subdivision map was recorded in 1948, the Carpinteria Park Estates map was recorded in 1957, and the Carpinteria Park Subdivision map was recorded in 1956.

Figure 5: CC&Rs boundaries for Concha Loma

Neighborhood Differences

Within the larger Concha Loma Subarea 5 Neighborhood, there are two distinct neighborhoods that are defined by their unique design and character. These two neighborhoods are the Carpinteria Park Estates/Carpinteria Park neighborhood to the east and the Concha Loma neighborhood to the west.

Figure 6: Carpinteria Park Estates/Carpinteria Park neighborhood

Carpinteria Park/Carpinteria Park Estates Neighborhood

The Carpinteria Park Estates/Carpinteria Park Neighborhood is a standard single-family suburban subdivision that includes sidewalks, parkway strips and street trees. The homes were developed as part of a tract and have very similar frontage patterns. The tract is defined its by ranch and cottage style architecture, with two-car garages. The properties have a variety of garage placements, with some forward-facing, some side-facing, some placed in front of the home and some placed toward the rear of the home. Most construction occurred in the late 1950s. Few properties have fences or hedges to define property boundaries and have open landscaped front yards. Those that do have fences typically have low picket fences. The following guidelines are recommended to maintan the character of the neighbrohood.

Figure 7: Typical frontage pattern of the Carpinteria Park Estates/ Carpinteria Park neighborhood

DG 1: Use of low landscaping elements is encouraged to define property boundaries. Tall hedges that limit visibility of the residence are discouraged.

DG 2: Native landscaping and permeable surfaces are encouraged to replace lawns, paving and other landscaped areas.

DG 3: Low roof heights should be preserved when additions or alterations are proposed. New roof styles and materials should be consistent with those existing in the neighborhood.

DG 4: Front porches and street-facing entrances are encouraged as part of the ranch and cottage styles of architecture prevalent in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Differences

Concha Loma Neighborhood

The Concha Loma Neighborhood is characterized by an eclectic palette of homes in a semi-rural setting. Although the neighborhood architecture is more varied than in Carpinteria Park/Carpinteria Park Estates, many of the homes are ranch or craftsman style. The western side of the neighborhood contains few formal sidewalks. The neighborhood has less formal street frontages, having few sidewalks, curbs and gutters. The neighborhood is developed with varying setback patterns and site layouts, as compared to the eastern side of the larger Concha Loma neighborhood. Public rights-of-way have been developed with private encroachments which appear to limit availability of public parking and pedestrian access.

Figure 8: Street-oriented frontage withhedge at proprty line

The Concha Loma Neighborhood was subdivided in the late 1940s. Although some of the homes pre-date permit records, many were permitted in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Some of the original older homes have since been demolished or significantly remodeled. Six vacant lots exist in the neighborhood as of the date of these Guidelines.

Figure 9: Public right-of-way that allows for safe pedestrian use

DG 5: As properties are remodeled, efforts should be made to remove landscaping, fences and other structures from the right-of-way to allow for on-street parking and safe pedestrian access. (Figure 9)

DG 6: Entrances should be oriented toward the street through the use of porches, walkways and forward-facing front doors. Hedges and structures in front yards should be low in height and adequately set back to allow visibility of homes from the street. Front yard outdoor living spaces are encouraged.

DG 7: Where unique or varied architectural styles are proposed, design review should ensure compatibility with the neighborhood. Variation in architecture is not discouraged in the Concha Loma Neighborhood, but should be compatible with the established mass and scale.

Mass and Scale

One of the biggest contributors to the general appearance of a structure is its mass and scale. There are at least two factors that influence the perception of mass and scale: the physical relationship of a structure to the size of adjacent structures and the physical distance between structures.

DG 8: The size, scale and form of buildings, and their placement on a parcel, should be sensitive to the scale of the predominantly one story character of the Concha Loma Neighborhood. (Figure 10)

DG 9: Existing one story buildings should be preserved. Where second floors are proposed, they should be set back from the first floor facade and should include extensions of one story roof elements or other suitable architectural elements that reinforce the one story scale of the facade. Architectural components should feature articulated roof and wall planes as appropriate. (Figure 11)

DG 10: Lots over 10,000 square feet in size should use larger side and rear setbacks than the minimum required distances.

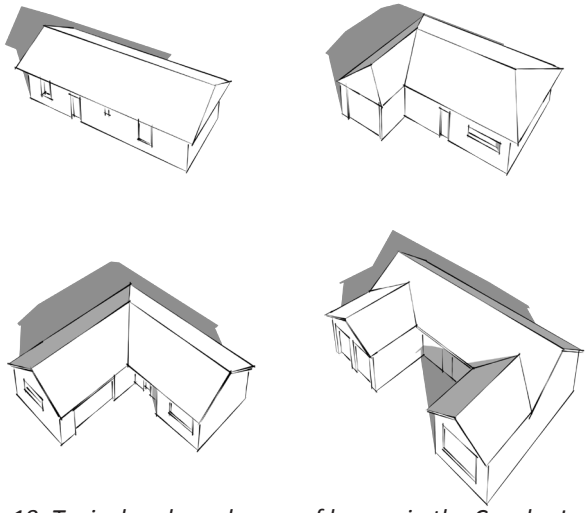

Figure 10: Typical scale and mass of homes in the Concha Loma Neighborhood

Figure 11: Second floor is stepped back from the first floor facade (preferred)

Figure 12: Second floor is not stepped back (not preferred)

Solar Access

Solar access of adjacent properties is often affected by the mass and scale of a structure. New construction or second story additions to existing structures can potentially affect access to sunlight by casting a shadow onto adjacent properties. Depending on the orientation of a parcel (solar access is usually an issue for properties abutting a project site to the north or east), solar access should be an important consideration in designing a home. (Figure 13)

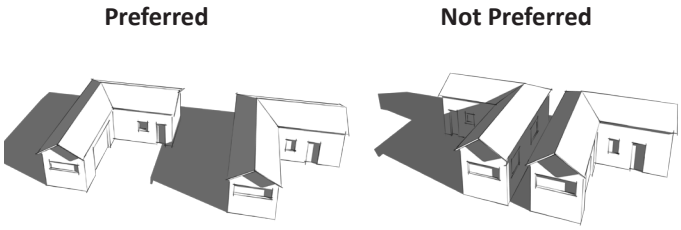

Figure 13: Solar access of adjacent properties

Architectural Elements

Architectural elements such as windows, doors, cornices, dormers and roof forms play a significant role in the appearance of a structure and can also influence how mass and scale are perceived.

DG 11: Windows and doors should be consistent in design with the theme of a house and when appropriate should draw from elements in the existing neighborhood.

DG 12: The use of bay windows, dormers, balconies, covered porches and other decorative elements providing building articulation is encouraged when appropriate to the architecture, particularly when these elements are oriented toward a public street or break up a facade of more than 20 feet.

Figure 14: Architectural elements and colors consistent with the surrounding neighborhood

Materials and Colors

As part of the architectural theme, the use of material and color can have a significant effect on the appearance and character of a building. Building materials and colors should contribute to, not detract from, the visual compatibility of a neighborhood. New materials and colors should continue the theme of the existing residence unless part of an overall design change.

DG 13: Muted or earth color tones should be used to achieve consistency with surrounding residences. (Figure 14)

DG 14: Accent colors that do not match the surrounding area should only be used to unify the structure with other elements such as landscaping. (Figure 15)

DG 15: A cohesive mixture of materials is welcomed.

DG 16: Roofing materials and colors should be compatible with those in the existing neighborhood and with the architectural style of the residence.

Figure 15: Unique accent color unified with landscaping

Frontage Design

In pedestrian oriented neighborhoods, it is critical that the space between the street and the building be designed as an attractive, comfortable and safe place, while still delineating private property. This space between the building and the street is the frontage. Well-designed frontages are key to the success of the relationship between the private and public realms. The following Guidelines address the design and use of frontages within the Concha Loma Neighborhood and how they should interact with the street and the rest of the community.

Figure 16: Main entrance oriented to the street

DG 17: The semi-rural charm of the neighborhood should be preserved.

DG 18: Frontage elements should not interfere with the visibility of the property from the street.

DG 19: Main entrances should be oriented to the street. Porches, landings and walkways should be incorporated into the frontage design. (Figure 16)

DG 20: Garages should not be the focal point of the residence. Garages should be placed at the rear of the lot where feasible. (Figure 17)

Figure 17: Preferred garage placement behind the residence

DG 21: Dwellings on corner lots should be designed with street-oriented facades on both street frontages.

Fences

DG 22: Open fences, including split rail and picket types, are appropriate on frontage lines. Solid fences and walls should be limited to side and rear lot lines.

DG 23: Fences in the front yard should be constructed of decorative materials that emulate the architectural style of the house. Chain-link, wire and similar materials should be avoided.

DG 24: Fences should be set back a minimum of two feet from the back of sidewalk or property line to allow for planting between the right-of-way and the fence. (Figure 18)

Figure 18: Fence is set back to allow for planting

Landscaping

Landscaping can add value as well as establish a sense of place within a neighborhood. Landscaping that reflects the natural environment of Carpinteria is encouraged.

DG 25: Landscaping that is drought tolerant or native to the region is preferred. Invasive plants should be avoided.

DG 26: Attractive landscape frontage designs should be maintained. New development should be carefully planned with landscaping that maintains and enhances the quality of the streetscape.

Figure 19: Drought tolerant landscaping is respectful of the natural character of the city

Hardscape

DG 27: Hardscape materials should complement the building and be distinguishable from materials used in the public realm. Hardscape that incorporates varied materials, textures and designs is encouraged. (Figure 20)

DG 28: Permeable materials are encouraged for all driveways and parking areas and other hardscape areas to reduce runoff.

Figure 20: Hardscape materials complement building

Outdoor Lighting

Sky glow is a problem in the Carpinteria Valley, negatively affecting nighttime sky visibility. Outdoor lighting also affects wildlife and environmentally sensitive habitats and must be carefully reviewed, particularly adjacent to Carpinteria Creek. The guidelines below address night sky friendly lighting.

DG 29: Outdoor lighting should be low intensity and designed to minimize direct view of light sources.

DG 30: Outdoor lighting should include:

-Fully shielded fixtures positioned so that light is not visible above the horizontal plane of the fixture;

-Motion sensors and timers to keep lights off when not in use;

-Energy efficient light types with low watts and lumens;

-Fewest number of fixtures possible at minimum height necessary; and

-Cutoffs for lighting fixtures that minimize glare to prevent spillover onto neighboring properties.

Figure 21: Opaque glass should be used so that light bulbs cannot be seen

Figure 22: Light fixture that is not shielded creates safety issues (Image Source: International Dark Sky Association)

Figure 23: Lighting that is shielded reduces glare (Image Source: International Dark Sky Association)

Privacy

Privacy is often one of the greatest areas of concern when a new residence or second story addition is proposed. Designing a residence that respects neighbor privacy will lessen objections to the proposal. Particular attention should be paid to elements such as window and exterior door placement, second floor decks and the overall height of a structure. It may not be possible to mitigate all privacy concerns, but consideration of these elements in the project design should reduce potential impacts significantly.

DG 31: Where privacy is a concern,window placement, size, height and the use of glazing with limited transparency are encouraged to minimize impacts.

DG 32: Second story windows should be placed to avoid looking directly into the major indoor/outdoor living areas (e.g., primary yard areas, family/living areas) of adjacent residences. (Figure 24)

DG 33: Second story or rooftop decks or balconies located on the side or rear of a dwelling are strongly discouraged unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it will not create an impact on the privacy of a neighboring parcel. Mitigating factors might include the placement and design of adjacent structures, significant setbacks from adjacent properties or orientation of the deck or balcony toward the front of the property. (Figure 25)

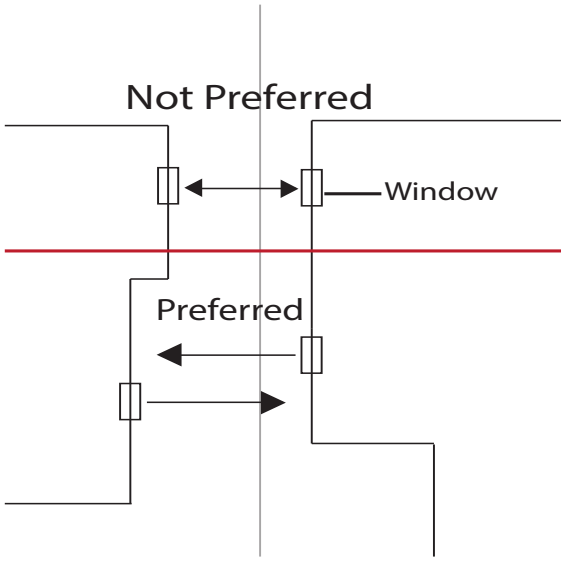

Figure 24: Windows should be offset from neighboring windows

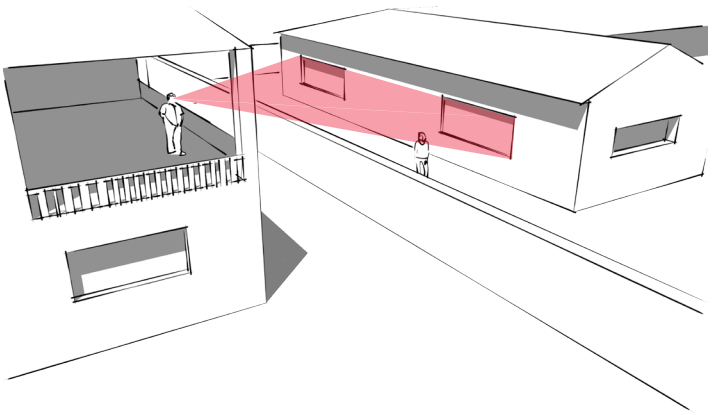

Figure 25:Two-story building presents a privacy issue for those properties that surround it

Utilities and Services

Public utilities and services are an important element to consider in planning new development. Amenities such as trash enclosures, utility lines, backflow preventers, mailboxes, antennas and solar panels should be appropriately located and screened.

Utility Structures

DG 34: Utility hardware, such as meters, backflow preventers, service lines and similar devices should be located underground.

Mailboxes

DG 35: Individual mailboxes should be integrated with the architecture of the associated building.

Trash Enclosures

DG 36: Solid waste containers should be placed out of view from the street and screened using landscaping or other architectural or aesthetic features that are cohesive with adjacent properties. Screening using cages, grates or boxes is discouraged. (Figure 26)

Figure 26: Trash enclosure for solid waste containers

Antennas

DG 37: Antennas should not be visible from the street.

Solar Panels

DG 38: Solar panels should be low profile and be placed on rooftops.

DG 39: Placement of solar panels should be uniform and parallel with the plane of the pitched roof.

DG 40: Support structures and frames should be neutral in color and compatible with the roof surface color.