

Council Meeting of  
**January 26, 2010**

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Members of the Council:

**Subject: Community Development – Consider an appeal of a Planning Commission's denial of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence with semi-subterranean garage, in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf Road.**

**PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: Mark Stephenson**

**Expenditure: None**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation of the Planning Commission that the City Council deny the appeal and take the following action on property located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road:

1. Adopt Resolutions denying:
  - A Precise Plan of Development; and
  - A Waiver

Recommendation of the Community Development Director that the City Council uphold the appeal and take the following action on property located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road:

1. Adopt Resolutions approving:
  - A Precise Plan of Development; and
  - A Waiver

**Funding:** Not applicable

**BACKGROUND**

The applicants are requesting approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence with semi-subterranean garage, in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum building height. This request was first heard on December 17, 2008 when the applicant asked for the project to be approved with a roof pitch of 4 in 12 even though the plans and silhouette were based on a 3 in 12 roof slope. The Planning Commission voted to continue the project and allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved. The project was brought back before the Planning Commission on February 18, 2009. The applicant decided not to make any modifications to the project, and moved forward with the proposal as portrayed by the previously submitted plans and silhouette, including a roof pitch of 3 in 12. At such meeting, a motion for denial for PRE08-00025 passed unanimously. On March 5, 2009, the applicant appealed the decision citing that his proposed residence is only

slightly larger than other residences in the area and that the proposed house layout cannot be changed due to issues with the required driveway slope. Subsequent to appealing the decision, the applicant has continued to attempt to work with the Homeowners Association and has proposed several modifications to the project, including a reduction in the building height, and a reduction of the Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

### **Prior Hearings and Publications**

A Planning Commission Public Hearing was scheduled for December 17, 2008. On December 4, 2008, 59 notices were mailed to property owners within a 500 foot radius. The case was continued to February 18, 2009. On February 6, 2009, 58 notices were mailed to property owners within a 500 foot radius. On January 13, 2010, 91 notices of the City Council Public Hearing were mailed to property owners within a 500-foot radius and to the Homeowners Associations in the City of Torrance. A notice of public hearing was posted at the site and a legal advertisement was published in the newspaper on January 15, 2010.

### **Environmental Findings**

New construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301

### **ANALYSIS**

The property is a pie shaped lot that is 10,750 square feet in area, and it is located in the R-1 Zone, in the Hillside Overlay District. The lot is currently vacant but it was previously developed with a two story single-family residence with an attached garage built in 1976. This house was severely damaged by a fire in 2004, and subsequently demolished in 2006. The applicant is proposing the construction of a new two-story single family residence with a semi-subterranean garage. The total area for the project is 5,560 sf. The project was reduced in size from its original design in order to address concerns from the Country Hills Homeowners Association and some neighbors in the area. The following table compares the revised proposal and the original project which was denied by the Planning Commission:

<b>Statistical Information</b>	<b>Original Proposal</b>	<b>Revision</b>
◆ Lot Area	10,750 square feet	10,750 square feet
◆ Lower Level Living Area	2,483 square feet	2,266 square feet
◆ Upper Level Living Area	2,784 square feet	2,500 square feet
◆ Garage	734 square feet	635 square feet
◆ Upper Level (Open to Below)	159 square feet	159 square feet
◆ Total Floor Area (Inc. Garage)	6,160 square feet	5,560 square feet
◆ Floor Area Ratio	0.573	0.517
◆ Building Height	35.60 ft.	32.54 ft

Due to the location of the lot, Staff does not see any potential view or natural air flow impacts to the neighbors in the area. In terms of privacy and natural light, Staff has had conversations with both adjacent neighbors at 25634 Amber Leaf Rd. and 2830

Sunnyglen Rd. The neighbor to the south on Amber Leaf Rd. stated that he had no concerns with the project and was pleased to see the site being developed. However, the neighbor to the north on Sunnyglen Rd. stated that she was concerned with the originally proposed project as she felt that privacy and natural light around her rear yard will be adversely impacted. A condition was added by Staff that the north facing window in bedroom # 2 (second floor) shall be replaced by a high clerestory window with a sill height of at least 6'-0". In addition, Staff recommended that the windows in the adjacent bathroom and laundry room shall feature obscure glazing. The new plan eliminated the window in bedroom # 2 entirely. Staff continues to condition the installation of obscure glazing in the above mentioned windows. Due to large amounts of mature landscaping and tall trees to the southeast of the project, Staff determined that, as proposed, the plan would not further impact the neighboring property on Sunnyglen Rd. in terms of natural lighting. Staff is not aware of any objections to the revised proposal from these neighbors.

The applicant is requesting a height Waiver to allow the proposed house to be 32.54 ft. tall. Staff notes that most of the building will have height of 26.5' ft which is under the 27'-0" height limit in the R-1 Zone. The only area where the house will feature a height of 32.54' is in the rear half of the garage where a portion of the house sits on top of the semi-subterranean garage. As the proposed home and the semi-subterranean garage are attached, the Torrance Municipal Code requires that the height be measured from the lowest adjacent grade (the northeast corner of the garage) to the highest point of the structure (the main roof ridge of the house). Staff notes that this neighborhood features several houses that are three-stories in height and exceed the 27'-0" height limit in the R-1 Zone. These houses were built in the mid-seventies when neither the Hillside Overlay District nor the current 27'-0" building height restriction were in place. There are seven three-story houses within the 500 feet notification area for this site, and they are common in the tract overall, particularly on up sloping lots such as this one.

The applicant is also proposing the construction of a 7'-0" feet tall retaining wall in the northerly side yard area and adjacent to the semi-subterranean garage. Staff notes that Planning Commission approval is also required for any retaining wall taller than 5'-0" in height. The proposed wall is a continuation of the retaining wall that separates the house from the semi-subterranean garage and it will provide the structural support necessary at this location, similarly to the adjacent house on Sunnyglen. Staff does not foresee any adverse impacts resulting from the construction of this retaining wall.

The square footage of the proposed house is divided between both stories, so that the applicant is able to preserve useable yard area that would not be available if the square footage were added to the first story only. It should also be noted that the square footage calculations count the stairwell and the vaulted ceiling foyer area once on each story as required by Code.

Based on staff observations of the revised silhouette, revised plans, and neighboring properties in the area, there do not appear to be adverse impacts to the view, light, and air of surrounding properties by the proposed project as condition. The proposed residence features a well articulated design that is compatible with the vicinity and will enhance the value of the property while complying with the Floor Area Ratio and Lot Coverage of the Zone and General Plan designation. The project is consistent in scale,

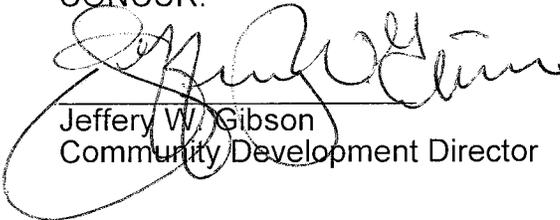
mass and configuration with other houses in the area. For these reasons, Staff recommends approval of this appeal and approval of this project.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

As previously noted, this item was unanimously denied by the Planning Commission on February 18, 2009. At this hearing, representatives from the Country Hills Homeowners Association expressed their concern that the project will not be compatible with other houses in the vicinity in terms of design, size, and mass. They also contended that the applicant did not obtain approval from their Association for the proposed project. A petition signed by 27 neighbors in the area was submitted in opposition to the construction of incompatible houses. In response, the applicant mentioned that it is very difficult to build in this lot because of the natural slope, therefore the need for a height Waiver. He also voiced his belief that his project will not be incompatible as there are other large houses in the vicinity, and that his lot is the largest in the immediate area. The Planning Commission expressed concerns about the proposed size and the resulting Floor Area Ratio of the project, and noted that it would be beneficial for the applicant to work with the neighbors and the Homeowners Association. A motion for denial of the project passed by unanimous vote.

CONCUR:

Respectfully submitted,

  
 Jeffery W. Gibson  
 Community Development Director

Jeffery W. Gibson  
 Community Development Director

NOTED:

  
 LeRoy J. Jackson  
 City Manager

By   
 Gregg D. Lodan, AICP  
 Planning Manager

Attachments:

- A. Resolutions for denial
- B. Resolutions for approval
- C. Location and Zoning Map
- D. Letter of Appeal
- E. Revised Silhouette Certification
- F. Correspondence received after the last Public Hearing
- G. Planning Commission hearing Minutes Excerpts 12/17/08 & 02/18/09
- H. Previous Planning Commission Staff Reports
- I. Proof of Publication and Notification
- J. Plot Plan, Floor Plan and Exterior Elevations (Limited Distribution)
- K. Mayor's Script (Limited Distribution)

**RESOLUTIONS FOR DENIAL**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2010**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, DENYING WITHOUT PREJUDICE AN APPEAL OF A PLANNING COMMISSION DENIAL OF A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN CONJUNCTION WITH A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**PRE08-00025: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission denied without prejudice the application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2009 the applicant filed an appeal for consideration of the Planning Commission denial of the above mentioned project; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 26, 2010 the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing and denied without prejudice an appeal of the Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf,
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed residence, will have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement of the structure on the site; and
- d) That the proposed residence, has been located, planned and designed so as to cause intrusions on the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because the square footage and mass of the proposed residence are greater than those of most neighboring properties; and
- e) That the design and massing of the proposed house does not provide an attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity because the size and architectural design of the structure are not compatible with the neighboring properties; and
- f) That the design will have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity because the architecture and proportions of the proposed house will not be compatible with those of surrounding residences; and
- g) That granting such application would be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed house may potentially impact the privacy of the adjacent neighbors at 2830 Sunnyglen; and
- h) That the proposed residence, would result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity because the proposed additions and resulting residence do not conform to the allowable building height for properties in the R-1 Zone; and
- i) That it is feasible to arrange the proposed house layout for the purposes intended without exceeding the maximum building height allowed by Code ; and
- j) That denial of such an application would not result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant because a new house can be designed on the large lot without having to exceed the maximum height allowed by Code; and
- k) That granting the application would be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because proposed house would not be compatible in either in size or architecture with the neighboring residences; and

- l) Denial of this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will not constitute an unreasonable hardship because the size of the lot allows for the construction of a large house even with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) under .50; and
- m) Granting this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because no other house in the immediate area features such a large square footage,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that PRE08-00025, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby DENIED WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 26th day of January, 2010.

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MAYOR, of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney

By \_\_\_\_\_



**RESOLUTION NO. 2010**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, DENYING WITHOUT PREJUDICE AN APPEAL OF A PLANNING COMMISSION DENIAL OF A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT IN THE R-1 ZONE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission denied without prejudice the application to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2009 the applicant filed an appeal for consideration of the Planning Commission denial of the above mentioned project; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 26, 2010 the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing and denied without prejudice an appeal of the Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed height of the residence will have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement on the site; and
- d) That the proposed height of the residence will not be compatible with current development trends in the area;
- e) That proposed house can be designed and located on the large lot without having to exceed the maximum height allowed by Code;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that WAV08-00011, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby DENIED WITHOUT PREJUDICE.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 26th day of January, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR, of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney

By \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTIONS FOR APPROVAL**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2010**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AN APPEAL OF A PLANNING COMMISSION DENIAL OF A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN CONJUNCTION WITH A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**PRE08-00025: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission denied without prejudice the application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;;

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2009 the applicant filed an appeal for consideration of the Planning Commission denial of the above mentioned project; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 26, 2010 the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing and approved an appeal of the Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf,
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement on the site; and
- d) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, has been located planned and designed so as to cause the least intrusion on the views, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because the proposal does not impair any views of the surrounding properties and has been conditioned to prevent potential light or privacy impairments; and
- e) That the design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity because the exterior materials are of a high quality and the architectural style is in keeping with the architecture of the surrounding residences; and
- f) That the design will not have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity because the exterior will be treated with high-quality finishes equal to those of surrounding residences; and
- g) That granting such application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because a single-family residence is an appropriate use for this property; and
- h) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, would not cause or result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity because the proposed additions and resulting residence conforms to the Low-Density Residential Designation of the Land Use Element of the General Plan of the City of Torrance; and
- i) That it is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the building height, as there is no existing structure and as the applicant would not be able to preserve useable yard area if the total square footage was entirely built on the ground floor; and
- j) That denial of such an application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant because the only option for the applicant to increase the size of the

previous home while preserving rear yard area is to distribute the new addition between the first and second stories. In addition, the proposed residence conforms to all code requirements, with the exception to the height which does not appear to have an adverse impact on the view, light, air and privacy of the surrounding properties; and

- k) That granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed residence complies with all zoning development standards. The proposed residence will cause no additional hazards, including traffic or fire hazards, there are no anticipated view impacts on neighboring properties as conditioned, there are other two story structures in the surrounding area and finally the proposal will upgrade a currently vacant property; and
- l) Denial of this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will constitute an unreasonable hardship because the proposed addition has provided all required setbacks and the residence, as conditioned, would comply with code required lot coverage and floor area ratio requirements for the R-1 zone.
- m) Granting this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because there does not appear to be adverse impairments to view, light, air or privacy to original views of surrounding properties.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that PRE08-00025, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;
3. That the maximum height of the residence at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of 32.54' as represented by the elevation of 135.83' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' based on a bench mark elevation of 100.72' located near

the northeasterly corner of the property as shown on the official survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review)

4. That the height of the structure shall be certified by a licensed surveyor/engineer prior to requesting a framing or roof-sheathing inspection and shall not exceed 32.54' based on the elevation of 135.83' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' as indicated on the certified silhouette based on the benchmark elevation of 100.72' as shown on the survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review).
5. That an automatic electric roll-up garage door shall be installed for the new garage; (Development Review);
6. That exterior color and material samples shall be submitted to the Community Development Department for approval prior to the issuance of any building permits; (Development Review)
7. That the windows in the upstairs bathroom and adjacent laundry room shall be reduced to the minimum allowed by Code and shall feature obscure glazing hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
8. That the applicant shall provide a plan detailing the location, size, orientation, angle and technical specifications of the proposed solar panels subject to approval by the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
9. That the silhouette shall be removed no later than 45 days after the final public hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
10. That within 30 days of the final public hearing, the applicant shall remove the "Public Notice" sign to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
11. That 4" (minimum) contrasting address numerals are provided (Environmental Division)
12. That all conditions of other City Departments received prior to or during the consideration of this case by the Planning Commission shall be met.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 26th day of January, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR, of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney

By \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION NO. 2010**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AN APPEAL OF A PLANNING COMMISSION DENIAL OF A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT IN THE R-1 ZONE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission denied without prejudice the application to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2009 the applicant filed an appeal for consideration of the Planning Commission denial of the above mentioned project; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 26, 2010 the City Council of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing and approved an appeal of the Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the project is in compliance with the Low-Density General Plan Designation.
- d) Unreasonable difficulty will result from the strict enforcement of this Division as the topography and configuration of the lot limits the development options for the applicant; and
- e) The proposed construction will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or to the property of other persons located in the vicinity as the proposed height of the residence is compatible with neighboring residences in the area;
- f) The proposed construction will not interfere with the orderly development of the City as the height of the residence will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of its proposed placement on the site;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that WAV08-00011, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED.

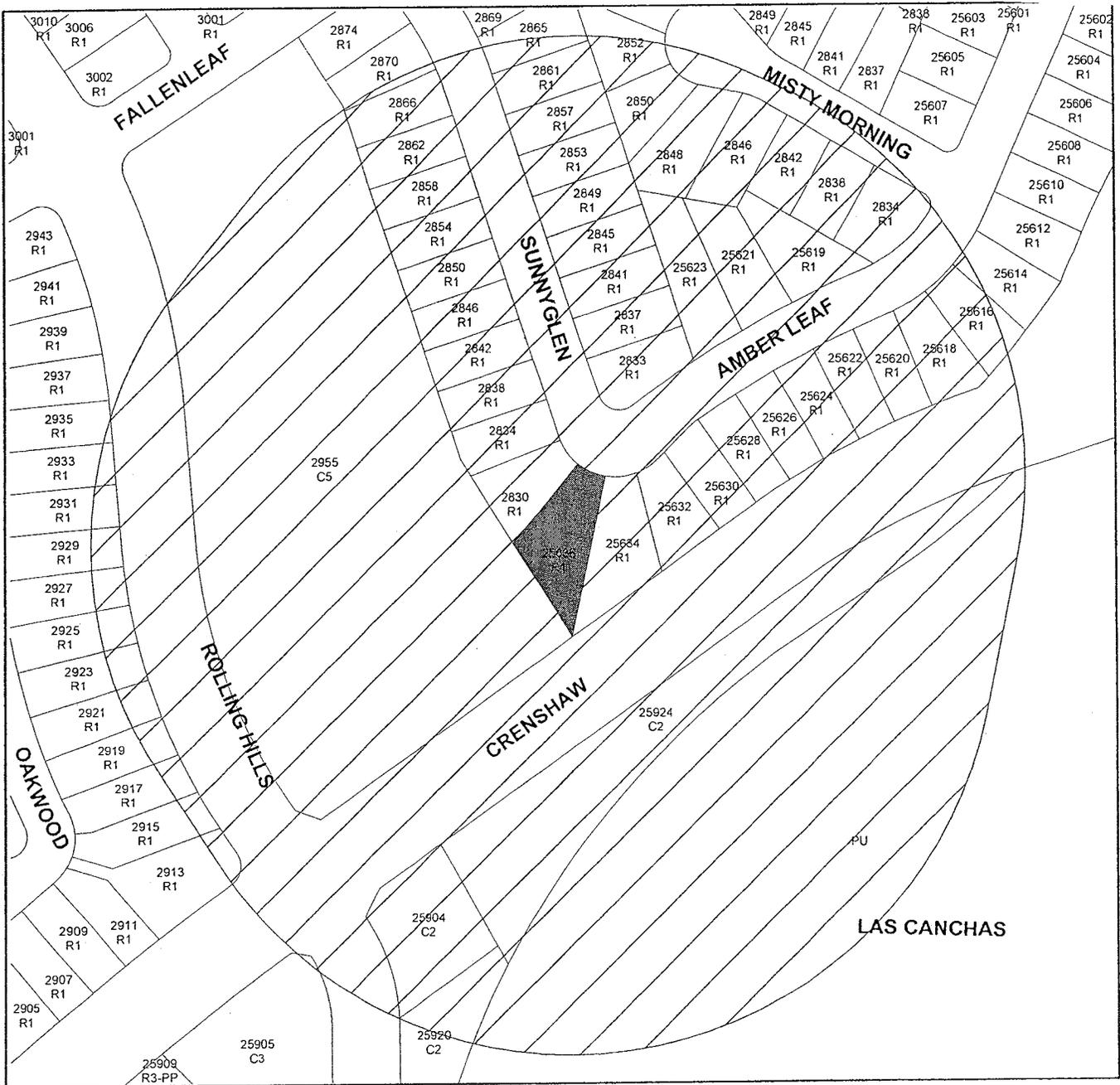
Introduced, approved and adopted this 26th day of January, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR, of the City of Torrance

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
JOHN FELLOWS III, City Attorney  
By \_\_\_\_\_

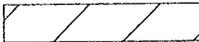


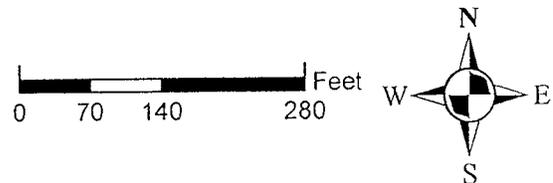
### LOCATION AND ZONING MAP

25636 Amberleaf Road  
 PRE08-00025  
 WAV08-00011



### LEGEND

-  Notification Area
-  25636 Amberleaf Road



# CITY OF TORRANCE

## INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: March 5, 2008

**TO:** Jeffrey Gibson, Community Development

**FROM:** City Clerk's Office

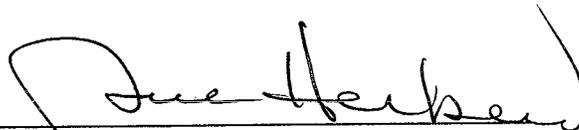
**SUBJECT:** Appeal 2009-02

Attached is Appeal 2009-02 received in this office on March 5, 2009 from Mark F. Stephenson, 2607 Woodbury Drive, Torrance, CA 90503. This appeal is of the Planning Commission's denial on February 17, 2009 regarding PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: MARK F. STEPHENSON located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance, CA 90505 citing proposed residence is only 87 square feet larger than a house 200 meters away. Proposed residence's lot size is 2980 square feet larger than the house that has the largest livable square feet. Proposed residence's layout cannot be changed because it would require another waiver for slope of driveway or my first floor would have a 6-7 feet retaining wall for a residence over 3000 livable square feet.

The appeal fee of \$160.00, paid by check, was accepted by the City Clerk.

**SECTION 11.5.3. PROCEDURE AFTER FILING.**

- a) Upon receipt of the notice of appeal, and the appeal fee, the City Clerk shall notify the concerned City officials, bodies or departments that an appeal has been filed and shall transmit a copy of the appeal documents to such officials, bodies or departments.
- b) The concerned City officials, bodies or departments shall prepare the necessary reports for the City Council, provide public notices, posting, mailing or advertising in the same manner as provided for the original hearing or decision making process, request the appeal be placed on the agenda for hearing before the City Council within thirty (30) days of receipt of the said notice of appeal, and notify the applicant in writing of the time, date and place of the hearing not less than five (5) days before the Council hearing.



Sue Herbers  
City Clerk

cc: City Council



# CITY OF TORRANCE

RECEIVED

## APPEAL FORM

2009 MAR -5 AM 11:20

### AN APPEAL TO:

- City Council
- Planning Commission
- \_\_\_\_\_

### RETURN TO:

Office of the City Clerk  
 3031 Torrance Boulevard  
 Torrance CA 90509-2970  
 310/618-2870

CITY OF TORRANCE  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

RE: PRE 08-00025 WAY 08-00011  
 (Case Number and Name)

Address/Location of Subject Property 25636 AMBER LEAF RD  
 (If applicable)

### Decision of:

- |                                                                                 |                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Hearing Board                           | <input type="checkbox"/> License Review Board           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airport Commission                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Service Commission                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Development Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality & Energy Conservation Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Development Permit     |
|                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                    |

Date of decision: 2/17/2009      Appealing:    APPROVAL       DENIAL

**Reason for Appeal:** *Be as detailed as necessary. Additional information can be presented at the hearing. Attach pages as required with additional information and/or signatures.*

PROPOSED RESIDENCE IS ONLY 87 SF LARGER THAN A HOUSE 200M AWAY  
PROPOSED RESIDENCE'S LOT SIZE IS 2980 SF LARGER THAN THE HOUSE  
THAT HAS THE LARGEST LIVABLE SF. PROPOSED RESIDENCE'S LAYOUT CANNOT  
BE CHANGED BECAUSE IT WOULD REQUIRE ANOTHER WATER FOR SLOPE  
OF DRIVEWAY OR MY FIRST FLOOR WOULD HAVE A 6-7 FT RETAINING WALL FOR  
 Name of Appellant MACK F. STEPHENSON      A RESIDENCE OVER 3000 LIVABLE SF.

Address of Appellant 2607 WOODBURY DRIVE TORRANCE, CA

Telephone Number (310) 953-9328

Signature

Appeal Fee paid \$ <u>160.00</u>	For office use only: Date <u>3/05/09</u>	Received by <u></u>
<b>Notice to:</b> Community Development Department: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building & Safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Council <input type="checkbox"/> City Manager <input type="checkbox"/> City Attorney <input type="checkbox"/> Other Department(s) _____		



City of Torrance, Planning Department

3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 (310) 618-5990 FAX (310) 618-5829

Jeffery W

Attachment E

# Height and Location Certification

The survey must be performed by a licensed land surveyor or civil engineer and should be accompanied by a map which shows the location of the bench mark and the locations where the measurements were taken. The map should also show the location of existing and proposed structures.

## SILHOUETTE CERTIFICATION

I have surveyed the silhouette located at 254310 AMBERLEAF  
(address)

on 9-23-09, based on plans submitted to the City of Torrance  
(date)

by STEPHENSON / MCE on \_\_\_\_\_ . The survey was taken  
(applicant/architect) (date)

from a bench mark located at NORTHWEST CORNER "L & T RCE 30826"  
(address)

(attach map) which established a base elevation of 100.72'

The ridge line/highest point of the roof was determined to have an elevation of 135.83'

The plans indicate that the elevation should be 135.83'

*I certify that I have measured the location of pertinent features located on the subject property. Based on the plans submitted to the Planning Department, I have verified that the silhouette/construction accurately represents the proposed structure in terms of height, building envelope, location on the site, and all setbacks.*

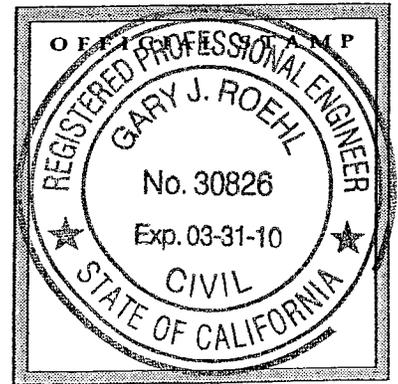
GARY J. ROEHL  
NAME (please print)

[Signature]  
SIGNATURE

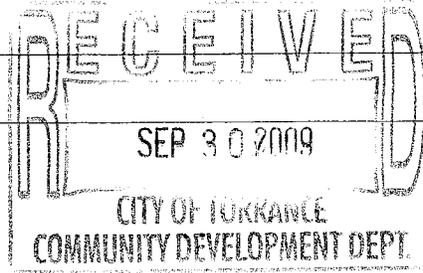
RCE 30826  
LS/RCE#

(310) 542-9433  
PHONE

9-25-09  
DATE

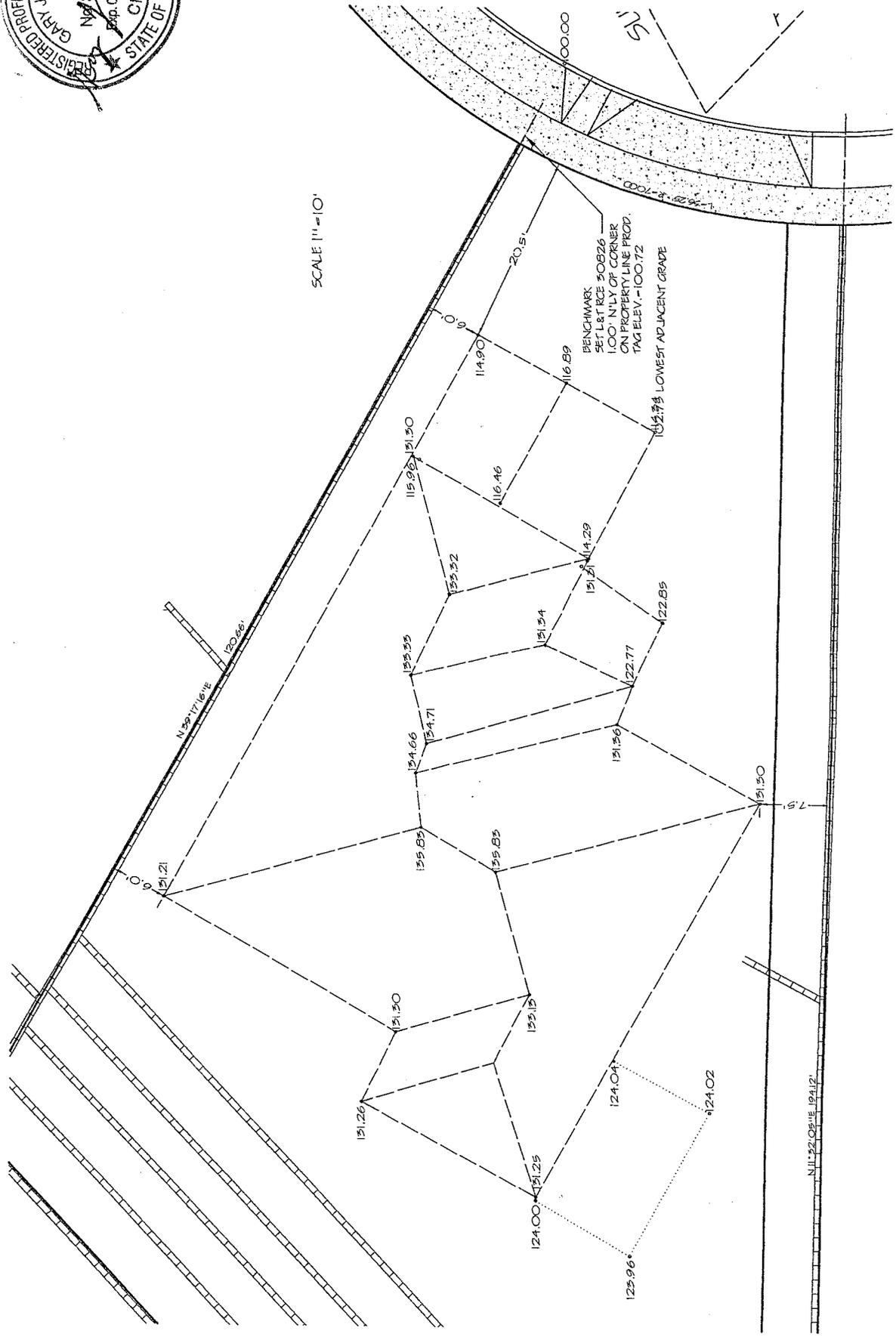
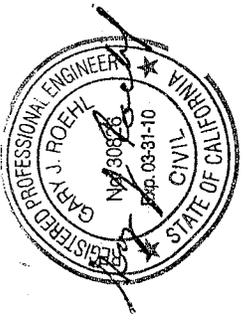


Notes: \_\_\_\_\_



07-428

\* LATEST



**Graham, Oscar**

---

**From:** Graham, Oscar  
**Sent:** Friday, June 12, 2009 5:08 PM  
**To:** 'CHHOA'  
**Cc:** Lodan, Gregg; 'Mark Stephenson'; 'Orlye Stephenson'  
**Subject:** 25636 Amberleaf Rd

Re: 25636 Amberleaf Rd. / Mr. Stephenson

Mr. David Henseler  
Country Hills Association,

We would like to set up a meeting with your association and Mr. Stephenson to go over the status of this proposal and try to work out potential alternatives for this case.  
Please let us know if you would be agreeable to this meeting request.

Regards,

**Oscar Graham**  
Planning Assistant - Development Review Division | Community Development Department  
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.5990 voice | 310.618.5829 fax |

 Please consider the environment before printing this email

**Graham, Oscar**

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 30, 2009 12:19 AM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar  
**Cc:** Lodan, Gregg; 'CHHOA'  
**Subject:** FW: 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Community Development Staff

We are almost at the 30 day mark (June 5<sup>th</sup> 2009) since the CHHOA received our application and we have not had any interaction with the CHHOA element except an e-mail notification that was sent forward to you.

The e-mail note below was a summary of the meeting minutes my wife and I had with the Tsuneishi's on Sat May 16 2009. As stipulated we have identified what changes we incorporated into our revised set of plans that we were presenting to the HOA for review and approval. Based upon our actions the Tsuneishi's have stipulated we have satisfactorily mitigated their concerns with our revised plans currently incorporating the identified changes presented below.

Mark Stephenson  
 2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)  
 (424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
 (310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)

size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mailto:mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2009 3:47 PM  
**To:** 'CTSUNEISHI@aol.com'  
**Subject:** RE: 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint

Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneishi,

After checking my sent e-mail folder – you were correct that I did not reply to the Sat 1:00PM meeting request. I apologize for the miscommunication. I arrived late Friday night from my trip and was not thinking when I read your e-mail from Friday morning.

Per Precise Plan PRE08-00025: WAV 08-00011 the owners, the Stephenson's, have presented changes in their project that have addressed our concerns. The project owners have stated that they are removing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor window from the bedroom that may have observation into our backyard. This window will be situated on the rear wall portion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor bedroom and will be oriented towards the rear portions of their lot. With this change there will be no window that has direct orientation into our backyard from the bedroom. Based on the Torrance Municipal Building codes there are requirements to have a window with ingress capability in each bedroom and by placing the window oriented towards the rear of the lot the project owners can meet the code requirements while addressing our concerns. The project owners have also stated they will only have a small casement or awning type window in the bathroom that is adjacent to the bedroom on the west wall of the proposed project. In conjunction the whole proposed footprint of the project has been moved 6 FT in a northerly direction towards the front of the lot which places the bathroom window observation towards the center of our easterly wall of our residence. The height and width of the proposed window and the footprint being shifted forward should therefore minimize the sector of observation significantly to only allow observation of the upper portions of our easterly wall. With these changes we feel that the project owners have met our concerns previously addressed in an e-mail dated 10 December 2008 5: 51PM to Mr. Oscar Graham, a member of the Torrance Community Development staff.

Per our conversation and your review of our plans and proposed changes I would like to submit this to the Torrance Community Staff to verify we have addressed your concerns. If there are any questions please let me know. Otherwise I will forward this statement to the staff by Wednesday COB to reflect our efforts to resolve the concerns of our neighbors in a professional manner. I appreciate your willingness to see both sides of the story and to hear our concerns and frustration with some of the inequities we have been dealt and are dealing with.

Mark and Orlye

06/01/2009

Mark Stephenson  
 2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)  
 (424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
 (310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)

<hr size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

**From:** CTSUNEISHI@aol.com [mailto:CTSUNEISHI@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 15, 2009 7:39 AM  
**To:** mstephenson002@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** JATSUMI@aol.com  
**Subject:** Re: 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint

Mark

Saturday afternoon after 1pm we are available.

Chris

In a message dated 5/13/2009 9:12:40 P.M. Pacific Daylight Time, mstephenson002@socal.rr.com writes:

Chris,

I have an out of state trip on Thursday and will not be back till Friday evening. Can you propose another time?

Mark

Mark Stephenson  
 2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)  
 (424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
 (310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)

<HR< U2:PLACE>size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

**From:** CTSUNEISHI@aol.com [mailto:CTSUNEISHI@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2009 5:56 PM  
**To:** mstephenson002@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** JATSUMI@aol.com  
**Subject:** Re: 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint

Mr. Stephenson

We can meet Thursday evening to look over the plans.

Chris Tsuneishi

---

Recession-proof vacation ideas. [Find free things to do in the U.S.](#)

---

Recession-proof vacation ideas. [Find free things to do in the U.S.](#)

**Graham, Oscar**

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 30, 2009 12:11 AM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar  
**Cc:** Lodan, Gregg; 'CHHOA'  
**Subject:** FW: 25636 Amber Leaf Road Revised Plans- HOA Application Packet  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Community Development Staff,

We are almost at the 30 day mark (June 5<sup>th</sup> 2009) since the CHHOA received our application and we have not had any interaction with the CHHOA element except the e-mail notification below that they have received our application. Per the e-mail we had expected to receive some type of coordination during the second week of May 15-22, but we have had no notification concerning this situation.

Per the CHHOA CCR's failure to provide a delivered disapproval document for an applicant's application packet after 90 days constitutes an approval of the proposed project. We are awaiting the CHHOA's coordination decision which we are expecting to receive prior to COB June 5<sup>th</sup> 2009. If there is no forthcoming effort on the CHHOA to interact with us on this situation then I will be in contact to arrange the City Council appellate process. Each additional day this situation continues to linger has a financial impact on my family. I do not want to be put in a position where we wait for the 90 day extended review period as defined by the CHHOA CCR's and then be officially notified on the 89<sup>th</sup> day that the HOA still has decided to block our project based upon their subjective prerogative. If there is no forthcoming notification prior to COB June 5<sup>th</sup> 2009 I will be under the assumption that the CHHOA will not approve my proposed revisions and as such I will pursue further actions to bring this situation to a close.

I am forwarding an email concerning our meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneishi with regards to their review and approval of our revised plans.

Mark Stephenson  
 2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)  
 (424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
 (310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)  
 size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

**From:** CHHOA [mailto:chhoa@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 08, 2009 6:51 AM  
**To:** Mark Stephenson  
**Subject:** Re: 25636 Amber Leaf Road Revised Plans- HOA Application Packet

Dear Mr. Stephenson

We did receive your plans and have scheduled meetings to respond to your request to build with new plans. You will hear from us next week.

David Henseler  
 Country Hills Association  
[chhoa@socal.rr.com](mailto:chhoa@socal.rr.com)  
[www.countryhillstorrance.com](http://www.countryhillstorrance.com)

----- Original Message -----  
**From:** Mark Stephenson  
**To:** OGraham@TORRNET.COM  
**Cc:** 'CHHOA'; 'Santana, Danny'; 'Lodan, Gregg'  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2009 10:56 PM  
**Subject:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road Revised Plans- HOA Application Packet

06/01/2009

To the Community Development Staff,

This is to officially inform the concerned parties a building application packet, CHHOA membership application and revised blueprints were sent by certified mail to the CHHOA PO Box Friday afternoon 1 May 2009. The stated documentation was delivered on May 4 2009 to the registered owner of the CHHOA PO Box 1253. The livable SF calculations on the revised blueprints were verified by the Community Development's review process. My wife and I are expecting some type of interaction with the CHHOA within 28-30 days (June 3<sup>rd</sup>). If there is no request to meet or any type of agreeable discussions prior to the 30 day notification period (by June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009), my wife and I will be in contact to schedule the City Council appellate meeting.

Mark Stephenson  
2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)

**Santana, Danny**

---

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2009 10:56 PM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar  
**Cc:** 'CHHOA'; Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road Revised Plans- HOA Application Packet  
**Attachments:** Certified Tracking -HOA App.jpg; Certified Tracking -Revised Plans.jpg; HOA Building Application\_1\_May\_2009.jpg; HOA Join Application\_05\_01\_2009.jpg

To the Community Development Staff,

This is to officially inform the concerned parties a building application packet, CHHOA membership application and revised blueprints were sent by certified mail to the CHHOA PO Box Friday afternoon 1 May 2009. The stated documentation was delivered on May 4 2009 to the registered owner of the CHHOA PO Box 1253. The livable SF calculations on the revised blueprints were verified by the Community Development's review process. My wife and I are expecting some type of interaction with the CHHOA within 28-30 days (June 3<sup>rd</sup>). If there is no request to meet or any type of agreeable discussions prior to the 30 day notification period (by June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009), my wife and I will be in contact to schedule the City Council appellate meeting.

Mark Stephenson  
2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)



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FAQs

# Track & Confirm

## Search Results

Label/Receipt Number: 7009 0080 0002 3719 3366

Associated Label/Receipt:

Detailed Results:

- Delivered, May 04, 2009, 11:24 am, TORRANCE, CA 90505
- Notice Left, May 02, 2009, 1:15 pm, TORRANCE, CA 90505
- Acceptance, May 01, 2009, 4:20 pm, TORRANCE, CA 90505

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<b>Total Postage &amp; Fees</b>	<b>\$ 47.65</b>

Postmark  
 05/01/2009

Sent To: *Country Hills Assoc.*  
 Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No.: *P.O. Box 1253*  
 City, State, ZIP+4: *Torrance, CA 90505*

PS Form 3800, August 2005 See Reverse for Instructions



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FAQs

# Track & Confirm

## Search Results

Label/Receipt Number: **7009 0080 0002 3719 3359**

Associated Label/Receipt:

Detailed Results:

- Delivered, May 04, 2009, 11:24 am, TORRANCE, CA 90505
- Notice Left, May 02, 2009, 1:23 pm, TORRANCE, CA 90505
- Acceptance, May 01, 2009, 4:21 pm, TORRANCE, CA 90505

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<b>Total Postage &amp; Fees</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$3.12</b>

Postmark Here: 40 5450 05/01/2009

Sent To: **COUNTRY HILLS ASSOCIATION**  
 Street, Apt. No., or PO Box No.: **P.O. Box 1253**  
 City, State, ZIP+4: **Torrance CA 90505**

Ps Form 3800, August 2006 See Reverse for Instructions

# Country Hills Association

chboa@socal.rr.com A Nonprofit Organization P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505

[www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com)

## Home Improvement Application – Fee \$10.00

This form must be submitted, along with required fee, before starting work.  
Mail completed applications to address above.

Please allow 30 days for your application to be acted upon after it is received.  
All fees are non-refundable, including disapproved applications.  
Checks should be made payable to "Country Hills Association."  
The fee will be raised to \$50.00 if you do not apply in advance.  
Note: It is each homeowner's responsibility to apply for all City required permits, if applicable.

Name of Homeowner: MARK F. STEPHENSON Date: 5/1/2009

Telephone Number(s): (310) 953-9328 EMAIL (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Country Hills Address: 25131 AMBER LEAF RD

Non-Resident Address: 2647 WOOD BURY DRIVE

### Improvement:

- |                                                       |                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Roof or Major Repair     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sundeck                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remodel/Addition/Enlargement | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping/Re-Landscaping     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driveway                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Fences                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Doors & Entrance Ways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paint/Stucco        | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Doors                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage/Gutters             | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Exterior Repairs         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balcony Enclosure            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other _____         |

Description: Please provide detailed plans, drawings, statements of work or specifications, along with material samples/colors, the name(s) of manufacturers, contractors. Please estimate work start and end dates. (You may write on reverse or attach description)

CERTIFICATION: I Certify, that I have read and that my request for repair, improvement, addition, remodel and/or enlargement is in compliance with the Country Hills Declaration of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and the City of Torrance Hillside and Coastal Overlay Code.

Mark F. Stephenson  
Homeowner/Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Licensed Contractor (when applicable)

5/1/2009  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Do Not Write Below This Line. ECC Use Only

Date Check Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Check: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Contact Date 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved }  
 Not Approved }  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

Form Updated: January 25, 2008

# Country Hills Home Owners' Association

chhoa@socal.rr.com A Nonprofit Organization P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505

www.CountryHillsTorrance.com

## Annual Association Members' Dues

Please complete the form below and enclose \$25 per residence payable to:  
Country Hills Association  
P.O. Box 1253,  
Torrance, CA 90505

9

Membership Dues January through December 2008

Name of Homeowner: MARK F. STEPHENS

Date: 5/1/2009 Amount Enclosed: \$ 25.00

Telephone Number(s): (310) 953-9328 1

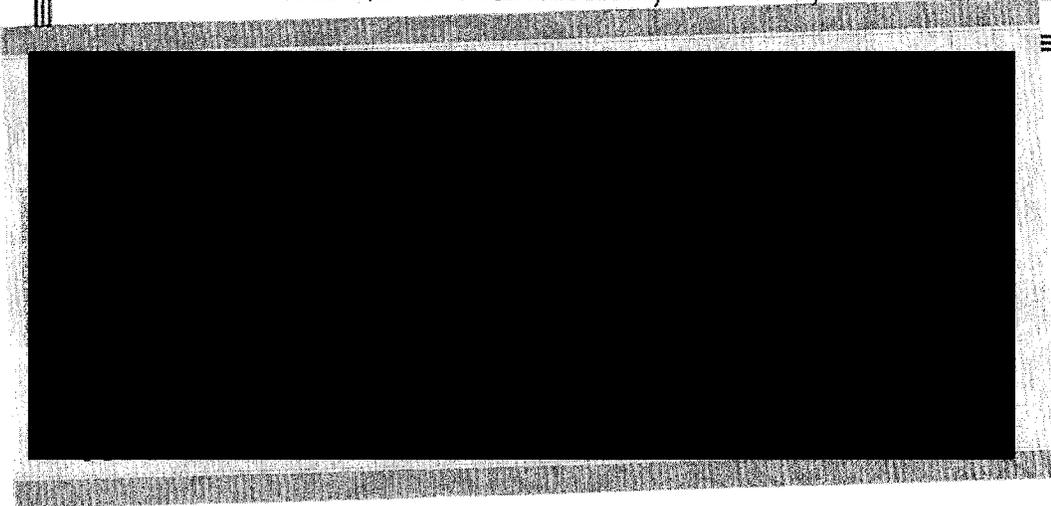
E-MAIL (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Country Hills

Address (es) 25636 ARBELL AVE ROAD

Non-Resident

Address: 2607 WOODBURY DRIVE, TORRANCE, CA 90503



**Graham, Oscar**

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2009 10:45 PM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar  
**Cc:** Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** FW: 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Oscar,

FYI and official public documentation purposes.

Mark Stephenson  
 2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)  
 (424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
 (310) 723-1110 Pager (Use the pager # during working hours 1<sup>st</sup>)

size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mailto:mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2009 10:41 PM  
**To:** 'CTSUNEISHI@aol.com'  
**Subject:** 25636 Amberleaf Road - Revised Blueprints and Reduced Footprint

Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneishi,

If at all possible I would like to meet with you and your wife to discuss your concerns or to show you the revised plans and see if your concerns have been mitigated so we can seek your recommendation to carry on with this project.

My wife and I are in the final stages of the application process and would like to discuss the mitigation processes we have implemented to address your privacy concerns.

Our total footprint has been reduced by approximately 600SF.

The rear portion of the back wall that would have overlooked your backyard has been moved forward towards the sidewalk by 6 feet.

The whole footprint of the house has been shifted forward towards the sidewalk by six feet.

The window in my son's room has been moved to the rear wall therefore there is no visual observation from my son's room into the main portion of your backyard.

Since the whole footprint has been shifted forward by 6 feet there is no visual observation from any room on the west wall into the main portion of your backyard either.

If there is any other concerns please contact me or my wife concerning this matter. I have decided to write this e-mail because I am not sure what your position is concerning you wanting to meet to discuss this item. As stated above we would like to discuss this with you in person so we can address your concerns and to see if we have mitigated them in an equitable manner. At the same time it is our intent to move forward with the City Council appeal process if there is no reply or response to this request so as to preclude the additional financial impact this drawn out approval process has already imposed on my family. We therefore are asking for you to review our changes and interact with us to determine if we have met your concerns prior to our decision to schedule the City Council appeal process.

Sincerely,

Mark and Orlye Stephenson

2607 Woodbury Drive  
 Torrance, CA 90503  
 (310) 953-9328 (H)

05/11/2009

**EXCERPT OF MINUTES**

√ **Minutes Approved**  
 ~~Minutes Subject to Approval~~

February 18, 2009

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION****1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:02 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2009 in the Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Busch, Gibson, Horwich, Skoll, Uchima, Weideman and Chairperson Browning.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Graham, Plans Examiner Noh, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Deputy City Attorney Sullivan and Fire Marshal Kazandjian.

**9. CONTINUED HEARINGS****9A. PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: MARK F. STEPHENSON**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story, single-family residence in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf Road.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Graham introduced the request.

Mark Stephenson, [REDACTED] Woodbury Drive, applicant, disputed claims by the Country Hills Homeowners Association (CHHA) that the project was not consistent with the area due to its size and height. He reported that 14 of 66 homes within a four-block area surrounding the subject property are over 3000 square feet, including 8 homes within 500 feet and 3 within 250 feet. With regard to height, he noted that two-story and even three-story homes are common in this area. He explained that he was willing to scale down the project, which as proposed has an FAR of 0.57, however, he is not sure what would be acceptable as some HOA members have indicated that even a FAR of 0.47 would not be acceptable and he would like to avoid the expense of going through several design iterations.

Orlye Stephenson, [REDACTED] Woodbury Drive, applicant, reported that the approval process has been very lengthy and hard on her family and they are eager to resolve these issues so they can start building their home.

Commissioner Busch asked about legal ramifications should the Planning Commission approve a project that conflicts with CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions). Deputy City Attorney Sullivan advised that the Planning Commission's review is limited to City requirements/standards and Commissioners should not consider CC&Rs, which are a private matter between the property owner and the homeowners association.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Planning Manager Lodan reported that the original homes in the Country Hills development range from approximately 1700 to 2500 square feet, however there are currently several houses over 3000 square feet as a result of modifications approved via the Hillside Overlay process.

Commissioner Busch questioned whether the Stephensons have discussed the project with their immediate neighbors. Ms. Stephenson reported that letters were sent to neighbors on either side and across the street inviting them to review the plans at a specific date and time and no one showed up, but she did speak with one neighbor who indicated he had no concerns about the project.

Commissioner Busch noted that he had a short conversation with the neighbor to the east (25634 Amber Leaf Road), who indicated that he was in favor of the project.

Commissioner Weideman expressed concerns about the size of the project, which at over 6100 square feet, would be the largest house in the area.

Mr. Stephenson stated that the subject lot is also the largest lot in the four block area; related his belief that the FAR was consistent with the area because there are 12 homes with FARs over 0.50 and 1 with an FAR of 0.68; and reiterated his willingness to downsize the project.

Commissioner Weideman questioned why the Stephensons chose to go forward with this hearing when they are still negotiating with Country Hills Homeowners Association.

Mr. Stephenson reported that he and his architect were looking at different options and he wanted it to be publicly stated as to what would be acceptable.

Ms. Stephenson explained that the slope of the lot makes it very difficult to build a two-story home without a Waiver of height requirements, noting that there used to be a two-story home on the now vacant lot. Mr. Stephenson added that in order to comply with the 27-foot height limitation, the lower level living area would have to be semi-subterranean.

Commissioner Horwich noted that the front page of the staff report mentions that the project remains unchanged from the original proposal presented in December 2008, which has an FAR of 0.57, however, within the report there's a memo from the Stephensons proposing to reduce the FAR to 0.50 by moving the exterior walls 1-1.5 feet inward.

Mr. Stephenson reported that they decided not to go forward with the alternate proposal after they were informed by staff that they would have to redo the plans and the silhouette to reflect these changes if they wanted to present this option to the Commission.

Commissioner Busch expressed concerns that there appeared to be a lack of preparation on the part of the applicants. He noted that Planning Commission hearings are not meant to be a negotiation process; that an applicant should try to resolve neighbors' concerns prior to a hearing; and that the plans submitted should represent the applicant's best efforts to comply with the requirements of the Hillside Ordinance.

Mrs. Stephenson wanted to clarify that they didn't know about the Country Hills Homeowners Association until the initial hearing in December. She explained that they sent a letter to the post office box listed on a document they received when the property closed escrow, but never heard anything back so they assumed that either the HOA no longer existed or they didn't care about the proposed project.

Commissioner Busch questioned whether the Stephensons have met with CHHOA in the two months since the December hearing.

Mr. Stephenson reported that they have had contact with CHHOA but have been unable to coordinate a meeting so they decided to go forward with this hearing in an effort to try to understand what would be acceptable.

In response to questions from the Commission, Planning Manager Lodan provided clarification regarding how the maximum height of a project is determined and advised that it would be possible to stay within the 27-foot height limitation if the garage was detached.

Chairperson Browning noted that the Country Hills development consists of approximately 480 homes and questioned how the Stephensons selected 66 homes for purposes of comparison.

Mr. Stephenson explained that he used the four blocks that comprise the notification area to compile his statistics; that he didn't know the boundaries of Country Hills because he has only lived in this area for two years; and that he compiled the information from the LA. County Tax Assessor's office and researching 480 properties would take too much time.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concerns that the Commission was getting sidetracked and requested that staff provide direction.

Planning Manager Lodan recommended that the Commission receive input from the audience and then decide whether to continue the hearing or take action to approve or deny the project as proposed.

The Commission briefly recessed from 8:00 p.m. to 8:07 p.m.

Chairperson Browning invited public comment and recommended that speakers focus on the Hillside Ordinance and not the CC&Rs of the homeowners association.

David Cornwell, [REDACTED] Windmill Road, legal counsel for CHHOA, wanted to clarify that CC&Rs trump City requirements, explaining that if a project does not comply with the CC&Rs, the HOA can obtain a restraining order to prevent its construction regardless of whether or not the City has approved it. He noted that there have been instances where structures have been required to be torn even with a valid permit from a public entity. He reported that the majority of homes in Country Hills are under 3000 square feet and CHHOA has strived to maintain the appearance of the original community and avoid "mansions." He pointed out that the proposed project is twice the size of any other structure in the community, with a few exceptions, and would take up almost the entire flat portion of the lot, which is stair-stepped with retaining walls. He contended that the project was massive and would detract from the neighborhood even though the FAR may be within City guidelines. He disputed the claim that the applicants were unaware of the CC&Rs, noting that the title insurance policy indicates when CC&Rs are recorded on a property and the broker must provide a copy to buyers. He noted that the Stephensons have yet to submit their plans to CHHOA or pay the small administrative fee. He stated that he thought Chairperson Browning had an obligation to recuse himself from voting in this matter because he lives in Country Hills and was at one point, president of the homeowners association.

Chairperson Browning noted that he disclosed the fact that he lives in Country Hills at the December 2008 hearing, as evidenced by the minutes from that meeting (page 98 of staff report), and explained at that time that his home is more than 500 feet away from the project; that he cannot see the project from his home; and that he is not a member of the homeowners association. He reported that City provides a conflict of interest map and this project is not within the area identified as a potential conflict of interest, therefore, he intended to continue serving as chair of this hearing and will vote according to what he believes to be in the best interests of the City.

Commissioner Busch recalled the Chairperson Browning made his disclosure at the very beginning of the previous hearing and encouraged him to continue chairing the hearing and to vote his conscience. He asked about Mr. Cornwell's claim that CC&Rs trump City requirements.

Mr. Cornwell clarified that should the City approve the project, the permit would still be valid, however, the HOA could get injunctive relief against the homeowner to prevent it from being built if it has not been approved by the HOA.

Commissioner Horwich stated that he has the utmost respect for the integrity of Chairperson Browning and thought Mr. Cornwell's suggestion that he not participate in this hearing was insulting.

Mr. Cornwell explained that he has an obligation to his clients to build a public record should there be future legal action, which limits the issues that can be considered to those that have been raised at this hearing.

Glen Majors, [REDACTED] Carolwood Lane, member of CHHOA Environmental Committee, expressed concerns about the size and height of the proposed project. He reported that the average size of homes in Country Hills is 2600 square feet and the proposed residence has over twice this square footage; that the average FAR is currently 0.39 and the original tract had an FAR of 0.23; and that this would be the tallest structure in the neighborhood and could be seen from as far south as Rolling Hills Road and Crenshaw. He also expressed concerns that the semi-subterranean garage

will require digging into the hillside and there has been a history of problems with water seepage underneath the Ralphs shopping center, which is adjacent to the subject property. He contended that the project's Mediterranean-style architecture did not conform to the standard Country Hills home, which features a gabled roof.

In response to Commissioner Busch's inquiry, Mr. Majors reported that the largest house in Country Hills is located on Misty Morning Road and has approximately 5100 square feet with an FAR of 0.67. He noted that this house was approved at a time when the HOA was less diligent.

Commissioner Skoll questioned whether staff was aware of the history of water seepage under the Ralphs shopping center, and Plans Examiner Noh stated that he was not personally aware of this, however, the applicant will be required to submit a complete soils report before any permits are issued.

David Henseler, [REDACTED] Singingwood Drive, president of Country Hills Homeowner Association, submitted emails from HOA members who were opposed to the project but unable to attend this hearing. He pointed out that the project includes an 18 x12 ½ foot deck on the second floor, which he believes will impact the privacy of immediate neighbors, and suggested that the neighbor Commissioner Busch spoke with might not have been aware of this deck. He called attention to the letter from the adjacent neighbors to the west at 2830 Sunnyglen Road (staff report – page 87) expressing concerns about the project's impact on their privacy and the loss of sunlight. He urged the Commission to protect the rights of those who wish to maintain the look of their community.

Chairperson Browning questioned whether Mr. Henseler could confirm that he has not been a member of CHHOA since he was appointed to the Airport Commission approximately 13 years ago, and Mr. Henseler indicated that he could only confirm that Chairperson Browning was not a dues-paying member at this time.

Commissioner Busch asked if staff had considered the privacy impact of the second floor deck.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff did not feel that the deck would create privacy impacts because it is set back 10-15 feet from the property line at its nearest point and reported that the case planner discussed the deck with the neighbor to the east and he had no concerns about privacy impact.

Jenifer Frial, [REDACTED] Amber Leaf Road, voiced objections to the project due to its size and height and submitted a petition signed by 27 neighbors. She noted that she and her husband specifically chose to purchase a home in Country Hills because they liked the conformity.

Responding to audience member comments, Mr. Stephenson reported that he responded to the email from the neighbors at 2830 Sunnyglen Road and proposed to change the location/ size of windows to mitigate the impact on their privacy. He noted that the impact will be further mitigated if the footprint of the house is moved forward to reduce the FAR as they have proposed. He disputed the claim that the home would be visible from Rolling Hills Road and Crenshaw, explaining that the berm to the rear of the Ralph's shopping center is approximately 7 feet higher than the silhouette. He explained that the hardship that necessitates the Waiver is the lot's 13 percent slope,

which makes the semi-subterranean garage the most feasible option in order to avoid massive retaining walls. He expressed his willingness to negotiate regarding the second-floor deck, which is not an essential part of the project. He reviewed his efforts to contact his neighbors to gain their input.

Commissioner Weideman asked about claims that the project's architectural style was not in harmony with the neighborhood.

Mr. Stephenson related his belief that the architecture is compatible with the neighborhood as evidenced by photographs he previously submitted that were included in the staff report.

Commissioner Weideman stated that it was unfortunate that this matter was continued in December since no changes were made to the project and two months have passed with no progress and suggested that the Stephensons could have gotten input on the project simply by knocking on neighbors' doors.

Commissioner Busch questioned whether the Stephensons would be amenable to downsizing the project to an FAR of 0.40, which would be approximately 4300 square feet.

Mr. Stephenson expressed concerns that the FAR includes the garage and double-counted stairways, so the actual living area would be much smaller.

Commissioner Uchima indicated that he was concerned about the size of the project and its compatibility with the neighborhood. He related his belief that it would be more efficient for the Stephensons to work out design issues with the HOA and gain their cooperation rather than butting heads with them and potentially ending up in a legal battle.

Ms. Stephenson stated that she thought it was unfair for the CHHOA to object to the project after they failed to respond to a written request for information sent before she and her husband hired an architect. She explained that they never would have bought the property if they knew they would be limited to an FAR of 0.40 and 1970s-style architecture.

Commissioner Horwich questioned whether the Stephensons would prefer that the Commission vote on the project this evening or if they would like to consider modifying the plans.

Mr. Stephenson stated that if he could come to an agreement with the HOA regarding an acceptable FAR, he would like to be able to revise the plans without having to redo the silhouette and certification.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff would not recommend waiving the silhouette requirement because it is a necessary tool to help determine the potential impact of a project on the view, light, air and privacy of neighbors.

Commissioner Horwich asked again if the applicants would like a continuance, and Ms. Stephenson indicated that she did not understand why the City was objecting to the project.

**MOTION:** Chairperson Browning moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

A brief discussion ensued, and it was the consensus of the Commission to deny the project without prejudice so the applicants could decide whether they would like to submit a revised project or appeal the decision to the City Council.

Chairperson Browning noted that the procedure for filing an appeal is outlined on the first page of the agenda.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved to deny PRE08-00025 and WAV08-00011 without prejudice. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Manager Lodan noted that Resolutions reflecting the Commission's action would be brought back for adoption at the next meeting.

###

**11C. PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: MARK F. STEPHENSON**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story, single-family residence in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf Road.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence from the applicant.

Chairperson Browning announced that he would be participating in this hearing even though he lives in the same tract because there is no conflict of interest. He explained that his home is more than 500 feet away from the proposed project; that he cannot see the project from his home; and that he is not a member of the Country Hills Homeowners Association.

Commissioner Busch noted that the supplemental material indicates that the applicant would like to change the roof pitch from 3:12 to 4:12, in which case staff was recommending that the hearing be continued so the plans and the silhouette could be revised. He questioned whether the applicant would like a continuance or proceed with the project as reflected in the current plans.

Mark Stephenson, 25636 Amber Leaf Road, applicant, stated that he planned to change the pitch of a portion of the roof, however, he did not believe it was necessary to continue the hearing because, according to his calculations, the change would result in an increase in height of only approximately 8 inches, not the 2 feet staff has calculated.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the Precise Plan process requires that the plans and silhouette reflect the exact structure to be built.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved to continue the hearing on PRE08-00025 and WAV08-00011 indefinitely. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Commissioner Horwich asked about the Planning Commission's obligation with regard to enforcing CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions).

Deputy City Attorney Sullivan advised that CC&Rs are a private matter between the homeowners association and residents who are part of the association and the City has no involvement in their enforcement.

Chairperson Browning questioned whether a project would come back to the Commission if it was approved by the Commission, but subsequently modified by a homeowners association.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that minor changes or those involving decreases in height and square footage could be handled through the sign-off process, but any substantial changes would be brought back to the Commission.

Planning Manager Lodan asked that anyone present in the audience for this hearing leave contact information with staff.

Mr. Stephenson expressed an interest in having the Commission consider the project without the change in roof pitch.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to reconsider the motion to continue this hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and failed to pass as reflected in the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Weideman.

NOES: Commissioners Busch, Gibson, Horwich, Skoll, Uchima and  
Chairperson Browning.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 9A**

TO: Members of the Planning Commission  
 FROM: Development Review Division  
 SUBJECT: PRE08-00025: WAV08-00011 - Mark Stephenson  
 LOCATION: 25636 Amber Leaf Road

The applicant is requesting approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence, in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum building height. At the last Planning Commission hearing on December 17, 2008, the applicant asked for the project to be approved with a roof pitch of 4 in 12 even though the plans and silhouette were based on a 3 in 12 roof slope. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to continue the project indefinitely and allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved.

At this point, the applicant has decided not to make any modifications to the project, and he would like to move forward with the proposal as portrayed by the previously submitted plans and silhouette, including a roof pitch of 3 in 12.

The last report (December 2008), attachments and the minutes have been attached for your reference. Recent e-mail correspondence with the applicant has also been included.

In the judgment of staff, the project as conditioned does not appear to cause any adverse impact on the view, light, air or privacy of adjacent properties. For this reason, Staff continues to recommend approval of the project as conditioned.

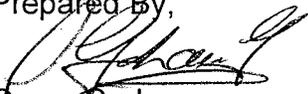
**PROJECT RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL****FINDINGS OF FACT IN SUPPORT OF APPROVAL OF THE PRECISE PLAN:**

Findings of fact in support of approval of the Precise Plan are set forth in the attached Resolution.

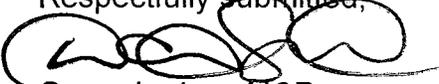
**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS, IF PROJECT IS APPROVED:**

Recommended conditions of the proposed project are set forth in the attached Resolution.

Prepared By,

  
 Oscar Graham  
 Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

  
 for: Gregg Lodan, AICP  
 Planning Manager

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Planning Commission Resolutions
2. Recent e-mail correspondence with applicant.
3. Previous Report and Attachments
4. Minutes from previous Planning Commission meeting (12/17/08)
5. Site Plan, Floor Plans, & Elevations

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 08-123**

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN CONJUNCTION WITH A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**PRE08-00025: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed

placement on the site. The project will not adversely impact the light, air and privacy of the neighboring properties ; and

- d) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, has been located planned and designed so as to cause the least intrusion on the views, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because the proposal does not impair any views of the surrounding properties and has been conditioned to prevent potential light, air or privacy impairments; and
- e) That the design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity because the exterior materials are of a high quality and the architectural style is in keeping with the architecture of the surrounding residences; and
- f) That the design will not have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity because the exterior will be treated with high-quality finishes equal to those of surrounding residences; and
- g) That granting such application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because a single-family residence is an appropriate use for this property; and
- h) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, would not cause or result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity because the proposed additions and resulting residence conforms to the Low-Density Residential Designation of the Land Use Element of the General Plan of the City of Torrance; and
- i) That it is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the building height, as there is no existing structure and as the applicant would not be able to preserve useable yard area if the total square footage was entirely built on the ground floor; and
- j) That denial of such an application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant because the only option for the applicant to increase the size of the previous home while preserving rear yard area is to distribute the new addition between the first and second stories. In addition, the proposed residence conforms to all code requirements, with the exception to the height which does not appear to have an adverse impact on the view, light, air and privacy of the surrounding properties; and
- k) That granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed residence complies with all zoning development standards. The proposed residence will cause no additional hazards, including traffic or fire hazards, there are no anticipated view impacts on neighboring properties as conditioned, there are other two story structures in the surrounding area and finally the proposal will upgrade a currently vacant property; and
- l) Denial of this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will constitute an unreasonable hardship because the proposed addition has provided all required setbacks and the residence, as

conditioned, would comply with code required lot coverage and floor area ratio requirements for the R-1 zone.

- m) Granting this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because there does not appear to be adverse impairments to view, light, air or privacy to original views of surrounding properties.

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission by the following roll call votes APPROVED PRE08-00025, subject to conditions:

AYES:                    COMMISSIONERS:

NOES:                    COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT:                COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN:               COMMISSIONERS:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that PRE08-00025, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;
3. That the maximum height of the residence at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of 35.60' as represented by the elevation of 138.35' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' based on a bench mark elevation of 100.72' located near the northeasterly corner of the property as shown on the official survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review)
4. That the height of the structure shall be certified by a licensed surveyor/engineer prior to requesting a framing or roof-sheathing inspection and shall not exceed

35.60' based on the elevation of 138.35' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' as indicated on the certified silhouette based on the benchmark elevation of 100.72' as shown on the survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review).

5. That an automatic electric roll-up garage door shall be installed for the new garage; (Development Review);
6. That exterior color and material samples shall be submitted to the Community Development Department for approval prior to the issuance of any building permits; (Development Review)
7. That the north facing window in bedroom # 2 (second floor) shall be replaced by a high clerestory window with a sill height of at least 6'-0" to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director (Development Review)
8. That the windows in the adjacent bathroom and laundry room shall be reduced to the minimum allowed by Code and shall feature obscure glazing hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
9. That the applicant shall provide a plan detailing the location, size, orientation, angle and technical specifications of the proposed solar panels subject to approval by the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
10. That the silhouette shall remain in place for at least 15 days through the appeal period, but no more than 45 days after the final public hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
11. That within 30 days of the final public hearing, the applicant shall remove the "Public Notice" sign to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
12. That 4" (minimum) contrasting address numerals are provided (Environmental Division)
13. That all conditions of other City Departments received prior to or during the consideration of this case by the Planning Commission shall be met.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 18th day of February, 2009.

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Chairman, Torrance Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA     )  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss  
CITY OF TORRANCE         )

I, Gregg Lodan, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, approved, and adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance at a regular meeting of said Commission held on the 18th day of February, 2009 , by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 08-124**

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT IN THE R-1 ZONE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise his plans and silhouette to accurately reflect the project he would like to get approved;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on February 18, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed height of the residence and retaining wall will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement on the site; and

- d) That the proposed height of the residence and retaining wall are mostly driven by the lot topography which features an up sloping terrain grade of fifteen percent (15%) towards the rear of the property;
- e) That the proposed building height will enable the applicant to provide a semi-subterranean garage which reduces the need for a more extensive and incompatible site grading;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission by the following roll call votes APPROVED PRE08-00025, subject to conditions:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that WAV08-00011, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Waiver 08-00011 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Waiver 08-00011 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;
3. That all conditions of other City Departments received prior to or during the consideration of this case by the Planning Commission shall be met.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 18th day of February, 2009.

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Chairman, Torrance Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA     )  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss  
CITY OF TORRANCE         )

I, Gregg Lodan, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, approved, and adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance at a regular meeting of said Commission held on the 18th day of February, 2009, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

**Graham, Oscar**

**From:** Graham, Oscar  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 27, 2009 11:32 AM  
**To:** 'Orlye Stephenson'; mstephenson002@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** RE: PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

Thanks for the clarification. You will be rescheduled for a hearing with the current plans (at 3/12 pitch, .57 FAR) and silhouette. We'll let you know as soon as we determine a hearing date.  
 Regards

Oscar Graham, Planning Assistant  
 Development Review Division  
 Community Development Department  
 CITY OF TORRANCE  
 Ph :(310) 618-5990  
 Fx :(310) 618-5829

**From:** Orlye Stephenson [mailto:orlye.stephenson@verizonbusiness.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 25, 2009 11:00 PM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar; mstephenson002@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** RE: PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

During our meeting on Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> we were specifically told by the staff that they needed a few days after the beginning of the year to review with management if new plans and silhouette were needed.  
 All we are trying to do is to lower the FAR from .57 to .50. We tried to accomplish this by moving the outside walls by 1 to 1.5 FT inwards.  
 We are doing this to ensure a least resource intensive process. Such minor changes do not warrant the incurred cost of redoing the plans, silhouette and re-certification since we still don't know how many more changes we will be requested to do.

Therefore we would like to go ahead and get rescheduled for a hearing on the first available date with the current plans (at 3/12 pitch, .57 FAR) and silhouette.

Sincerely

Stephensons  
 310-953-9328

**From:** Graham, Oscar [mailto:OGraham@TORRNET.COM]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 23, 2009 3:29 PM  
**To:** mstephenson002@socal.rr.com; Orlye Stephenson  
**Cc:** Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** RE: PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

Mr. & Mrs. Stephenson,  
 As you may recall, the reason why your case was continued by the Planning Commission the first time was because the plans and silhouette did not match your proposal. If you were to move forward with only the red marked plans and the same silhouette, the Planning Commission and our Department would not be in a position to adequately assess the proposal and make a recommendation or a decision. Therefore, we do need new plans and silhouette in order to schedule a new hearing for this project.

Regards,

02/09/2009

Attachment 2

Oscar Graham, Planning Assistant  
 Development Review Division  
 Community Development Department  
 CITY OF TORRANCE  
 Ph :(310) 618-5990  
 Fx :(310) 618-5829

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**From:** Orlye Stephenson [mailto:orlye.stephenson@verizonbusiness.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 23, 2009 7:59 AM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar; mstephenson002@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** RE: PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

Oscar is there a status on this, or do we need to come in to further discuss this.  
 We have been waiting on a status since our last meeting with you Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Sincerely  
 Stephenson

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**From:** Orlye Stephenson [mailto:orlye.stephenson@verizonbusiness.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 15, 2009 12:09 PM  
**To:** 'Graham, Oscar'; 'mstephenson002@socal.rr.com'  
**Cc:** 'Santana, Danny'; 'Lodan, Gregg'  
**Subject:** RE: PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

The Planning Commission statement or requirement was in regards to the pitch from 3/12 to 4/12. During our meeting with you we decided to remove that request and go with a 3/12 pitch as shown on the current plans and silhouette. The current silhouette is at a 3:12 and reflects the current plans you have on hand.

During our meeting with you on 12/23, we decided to take actions to decrease the FAR, reviewed the changes we were proposing which takes the current plans you have on hand from a FAR of .57 to .50.

We were under the impression this would be discussed with your management and see if our proposed changes could be used or reflected as red line markings on the current set of plans since we were only collapsing outside walls by 1 to 1.5 ft. We are asking to see if the proposed changes (red line markings) to our current submitted set of plans can be used so we can schedule the next Planning Commission meeting.

We decided to propose a reduction in our FAR to .50 to preclude having to go through additional iterations of review by the staff and Planning Commission processes as these events have a financial impact. Our decision was based on the realization that we do not have the resources or time to go through several Planning Commission iterations where we might reduce our FAR by an amount, change our plans, redo the silhouette and still not be approved. These undetermined events would add additional expenses and time to our budget and schedule and we are trying to minimize our expenses because we are in a rental house while doing this Planning Commission process.

We strongly believe that the proposed changes can easily be identified or reflected as red line changes on the current set of plans because we are only collapsing the exterior walls by 1-1.5FT to meet a .50 FAR.

Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated  
 Stephenson

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**From:** Graham, Oscar [mailto:OGraham@torrnet.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 15, 2009 11:24 AM  
**To:** Orlye Stephenson; mark.stephenson@ngc.com  
**Cc:** Santana, Danny; Lodan, Gregg  
**Subject:** PRE 08-00025 - Stephenson

02/09/2009

Re: 25636 Amber Leaf Rd.  
PRE08-00025 Stephenson

Mr. & Mrs. Stephenson,

Based on our last conversation, it is my understanding that you would like to go back before Planning Commission with a revised project. The revised project would reduce the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from .57 to .50. You would like to present this modified project to the Planning Commission, but you feel that new plans and new silhouette should not be required as you are not changing the interior configuration of the house, and you decrease the square footage of the house by reducing its overall width and length. You would like to present a spreadsheet explaining the changes instead of presenting new plans.

As you recall, the Planning Commission continued your case last time because the plans and silhouette did not accurately reflect your project. You were asked to modify the plans and the silhouette to reflect the actual project you were proposing, as required when you apply for a *Precise Plan of Development*. In order for us to take your case back to the Planning Commission, we will need to have plans and silhouette that accurately portray your proposed project as it is required in this type of cases, and as it was required by the Commission.

Regards,

Oscar Graham, Planning Assistant  
Development Review Division  
Community Development Department  
CITY OF TORRANCE  
Ph :(310) 618-5990  
Fx :(310) 618-5829

**SUPPLEMENTAL #1 TO AGENDA ITEM 11C****TO:** Members of the Planning Commission**FROM:** Development Review Division**SUBJECT(S):** PRE08-00025; WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON**LOCATION:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road

The attached correspondence was received subsequent to the preparation of the agenda item. The correspondence includes two emails and a letter from the applicant.

Staff continues to recommend approval of the project as shown on the plans and as conditioned. However, it has come to our attention that the applicant is proposing to change the roof pitch from 3:12 to a steeper 4:12 for the purposes of installing roof-mounted solar panels, as noted on page 23 of the attached letter. This change would increase the proposed building height by approximately 2'-0." Should the applicant wish to pursue this modified design, then Staff would recommend that the case be continued to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise the plans, elevations, the corresponding silhouette, and to obtain a new certification to reflect the modification requested.

Prepared by,



Osear Graham  
Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,



Gregg D. Lodan, AICP  
Planning Manager

## Attachments:

- 1) E-mails dated December 12, 2008
- 2) Letter dated December 14, 2008

**Graham, Oscar**

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**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2008 12:33 PM  
**To:** CHHOA@socal.rr.com  
**Cc:** orlye.stephenson@verizonbusiness.com; Graham, Oscar  
**Subject:** Questions Concerning the Property at 25636 Amber leaf Road  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

To Whom it May Concern,

If at all possible, I would like to speak to a CHHOA representative concerning what documentation is recommended for the CCHOA review concerning the proposed development of a resident at 25636 Amber Leaf Road. I am more than willing to provide the current set of plans I have to the HOA to review and further assist in their analysis of this proposed residence.

Please feel free to contact me at the below listed numbers at any time. I am including a pager number because I would like to see what needs to be resolved in the miscommunication for the application process to establish a repo ire that supports both sides of the interactions we may be engaged in.....

Mark Stephenson

2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager

**Graham, Oscar**

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**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]

**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2008 5:48 PM

**To:** Graham, Oscar

**Subject:** Notification of Applicants Request to Provide clarification documentation concerning Country Hills Homeowners Assoc (CHHA) Negative Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern.,

25636 AmberLeaf Road.

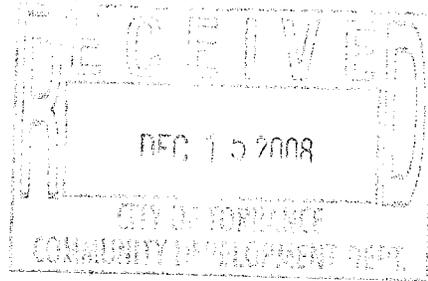
I am preparing documentation outlining the support efforts I have pursued to preclude this miscommunication between the CHHA and myself. I will also be providing specific information concerning some points of contention the CCHA has submitted as part of their recommendation to disapprove a non submitted application. I should have an electronic version of the documentation completed by Saturday.

I would like to ensure that my documentation is being presented as part of the pre review packet the council may be receiving on Monday.

Mark Stephenson

2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager

Mark F. Stephenson  
2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA, 90503



To Whom It May Concern,

In this document I would like to provide relevant factual information on the objections provided by the Country Hills Homeowners Association (CHHA) in the document referenced as "Objection to Proposed Construction of 25636 Amber Leaf Road", submitted to the Planning Commission on December 11, 2008.

General Overview – 25636 Amber Leaf Road is a vacant lot. Previous house was destroyed by a fire. My family and I just moved to Torrance 2 ½ years ago from Colorado Springs after retiring from service in the US Marine Corps and the US Army. We specifically selected South Torrance and decided to build a house because of the economic model. Accumulated appreciation in any home over 3-4 years is a risk factor I was not willing to consider.

I purchased the vacant lot in July 2007. Original intent was to submit our package with no waivers- Our current drawings for the house have a 3/12 pitch which puts it below 27 feet. Our original information from our architect was that the FAR did not include our garage. We just recently found out that the garage is part of the FAR. Under these assumptions we would have been standing in front of the Planning Commission with no waivers, FAR below .50 and the only issue the CHHA would have been able to object to would be our style and design considerations.

I would like to present this information in categories so there is somewhat of a grouping so the reader will not have to navigate back and forth between types of objections.

The objections will be addressed in the following groupings:

- I. City Of Torrance Hillside Overlay & Torrance Municipal Code.
- II. Country Hills Homeowners Association - CC&R issue.
- III. Neighbors Concern.

These are the only two personal concerns I have been informed of from the Community Development's Staff as of COB Friday 11 December 2008.

**I. City Of Torrance Hillside Overlay & Torrance Municipal Code.**

Information for a Neutral Decision Environment

The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation identifies subsections of Division 9 (Land Use) Article 4 Sections 6, 7, and 10 as specific areas of the code I am violating.

**Item #1** The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation stipulates that I am violating Section 91.41.7 (a, b, c, d) subsections per page 5 and 6 of their submitted objection paperwork.

1. Per <http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/1692.htm> - **SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - RESIDENTIAL.**  
 “Notwithstanding the provisions of this Article, no Precise Plan shall be required if the proposed development within the Hillside and Coastal Overlay Zone is for the purpose of constructing, remodeling or enlarging a dwelling, provided the following requirements are met:
  - a. 91.41.7(a) - The net interior area of the completed dwelling, whether it is new construction or remodeled or enlarged, including the area of the garage, whether attached or detached, will not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the area of the lot or parcel on which the dwelling is located;
  - b. 91.41.7(b) The dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged) will be one (1) story; and provided further that no portion of the roof of the dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, no portion of the remodeled or enlarged roof) will be used as a deck, sun-deck or patio, nor will any equipment or appurtenances be mounted on the roof or protrude through the roof (except for ordinary plumbing or heater vents) nor extend above the roof eave line; provided further that a chimney will be permitted if the portion extending above the roof eave line is no larger than the minimum dimensions required by the Torrance Building Code
  - c. 91.41.7(c) Except as provided in this subsection, no portion of the dwelling, in the case of new construction, will exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged shall not exceed the height of the lowest portion of the remainder of the dwelling, or fourteen (14) feet measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm, whichever is less. In the case of a down-sloping lot, no portion of the dwelling shall exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the top of the curb at the center point of the front property line. Vents and a chimney, as provided in subsection b) of this section, shall not be considered in the height measurements.
  - d. 91.41.7(d) The Planning Director has determined that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on other properties in the vicinity, and there is no significant public controversy thereon.”

2. This section is interpreted as the applicant will not have to file a Precise Plan if they meet the constraints of Division 9 Article 41 Section 91.41.7 (a,b,c and d)
3. I do not meet these requirements.
4. I am filing a precise plan.
5. Applicability of this section is incorrectly being misinterpreted or misrepresented.

**Item #2** The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation stipulates that I am violating Section 91.41.10 (a, b, b1 and b2) subsections per page 6 and 7 of their submitted objection paperwork.

1. **SECTION 91.41.10. LIMITATION ON INCREASES IN HEIGHT.** Per <http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/1692.htm>  
 91.41.10 “No enlargement in any building or structure, or any remodeling of any building or structure, shall be permitted which causes the height of such building or structure or any part thereof, to be higher than before the remodeling or enlargement, unless the Planning Commission (or City Council on appeal) shall find that:
  - a. 91.41.10(a) It is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the height;
  - b. 91.41.10(b) If such lack of feasibility is proved:
    - i. 91.41.10(b)(1) Denial of such application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant; and
    - ii. 91.41.10(b)(2) Granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity.”
  - c. 25636 Amber Leaf Road is an empty lot and was purchased as an empty lot.
  - d. City of Torrance DEMO Permit # BLD05-01929 was issued on 08/15/2005 per city records See Attachment #1
  - e. <http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/mapping/viewer.asp> and Attachment #2
    - i. Reflects the following information
 

1. Improvements	\$0.00
2. Personal Property	\$0.00
3. Fixtures	\$0.00
  - f. Simply stated – How can I be constrained to not enlarging a previously built structure unless I meet the above requirements if there is no structure on the lot?
  - g. Applicability of this section is incorrectly being misinterpreted or misrepresented.

**Item #3** The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation stipulates that I am violating Section 91.41.6(c) Planning and Design requirements per page 4, paragraph 3 & 4 of their submitted objection paperwork.

1. Applicability of this section is required and is executed when the decision is made by the Planning Commission. Below code Section is presented for reference only.
  - a. **SECTION 91.41.6. PLANNING AND DESIGN.**  
 (Amended by O-3477) Per <http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/1692.htm>  
 “No construction and no remodeling or enlargement of a building or structure shall be permitted unless the Planning Commission (or the City Council on appeal) shall find that the location and size of the building or structure, or the location and size of the remodeled or enlarged portions of the building or structure, have been planned and designed in such a manner as to comply with the following provisions:
    - i. a) The proposed development will not have an adverse impact upon the view, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity;
    - b) The development has been located, planned and designed so as to cause the least intrusion on the views, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity;
    - c) The design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity;
  
2. I will address each of the Country Hills Homeowners Association assertions as presented within the objection comments as shown on page 4 paragraph 7 of their submitted document.
  - a. “The applicant’s proposed construction of a 5032 SF, 35 FT tall “McMansion” is not in harmony with the master community of Country Hills.”
    - i. Height figure is incorrectly being misinterpreted or misrepresented.
    - ii. At a 3/12 pitch the height of the proposed residence is 26’ 5 7/8” – below the 27 Foot limit.
    - iii. At a 4/12 pitch the height of the proposed residence is 27’ 1 13/16”
    - iv. Country Hills Homeowners Association Representative has added the elevation change which is the distance from the lower portion of the lot to the residence’s pad area, to the height of the structure. This is approximately 8 FT in elevation change - when added to 27FT Max height = 35FT
    - v. Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation references the definition of “McMansion” from Wikipedia and provides this as the definition – “ A McMansion is a house with a floor area of between 3000 to 5000 SF in size,

often on small lots in homogeneous communities that are often produced by a developer”

- b. “It is replacing a 1988 SF home that was destroyed by a fire.”
- i. A microfiche retaining wall and basement application on file within the Torrance Safety and Health Dept. reflects an additional 576 SF was added to the original 1988 SF of 25636 Amber Leaf Road residence to bring it to a total of 2564 SF.
  - ii. Applicant has microfiche copies of this basement addition available for review. See Attachment #3
  - iii. Applicant may be incorrect because the statement above has not been fully validated.
  - iv. Microfiche records reflect a basement being added but cannot verify original SF of the above ground structure.
  - v. Applicant will redact this counterpoint if current research is proven to be incorrect.
- c. “The proposed McMansion is 253% the size of the home it is replacing”
- i. “McMansion” does not have a definition in the Torrance Municipal Building Code Division 9 Article 2 Sections 91.2.1 – 91.2.169 Definitions
  - ii. “McMansion” does not have an equivalent FAR threshold in the Torrance Municipal Building Code, or Hillside Overlay Division 9 Sections 91.41.1 – 91.41.14 Zone guidance.
  - iii. Incorrect percentage of increase calculation process presented by the Country Hills Home Association REP:
    - a. Country Hills Home Association representative's calculation were done in this manner
    - b.  $5032/1988 = 2.53 \text{ Factor} \times 100 \text{ Percent} = 253\%$
  - iv. Mathematically this is an incorrect method for determining percentage of increase. The correct method is below.
    - a.  $(X_2 - X_1/X_1) * 100 = \% \text{ of Increase}$
  - v. Correct figure of increase is calculated in this manner and yields a figure of approximately 134% increase that includes a 736 SF garage.
    - a.  $(6000-2564/2564) * 100 = 134.01\%$
- d. “And is not in harmony with any other home in Country Hills in size, exterior appearance, type, color, grade, height, location, gabled roof, or aesthetic look compared to other properties” and “There are no other McMansions in the master planned community of Country Hills.”
- i. Size Assertion
    - a. Definition of “McMansion” per Country Hills Home Association representative’s definition (pg5, paragraph 1) is used to identify the number of residences that currently meet their definition within a rectangular zone

from my lot. Rectangular zone demarcation provided below.

- i. Houses N from Amber Leaf to Windmill, West on Windmill, South on Fallen Leaf and East on Sunny Glen back to my residence.
  - b. Within approximately 20 Ft of the proposed residence there is a residence that has a square footage greater than 3000 SF.
  - c. Within approximately 250 Ft of the proposed residence there are 3 residences that have square footages greater than 3000 SF.
  - d. Within approximately 500 Ft of the proposed residence there are 8 residences that have square footages greater than 3000 SF.
  - e. Within the rectangular zone there are 12 residences that have square footages greater than 3000 SF.
  - f. See Attachment #4 25636 Amber Leaf Neighborhood Data Table
  - g. See Attachment #5a. 5a.1, 5b, 5b.1, 5c, 5c.1 Sample Queries from LA County Assessors to validate 25636 Amber Leaf Neighborhood Data Table.
- ii. Exterior Appearance Assertion
    - a. Photo Attachments are being attached to this packet in hard and soft copy to allow the Planning Commission to compare the architectural style that I am proposing to 3 residences that I feel are very similar within the rectangular zone area from my lot. See Attachment #6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D, 6E Architectural Conformity – Similar Architectures and Similar Roof Line Profiles within 100 - 1000 Ft of 25636 Amber Leaf Road
    - b. Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation reflects the homogenous nature of the neighborhood and I am respecting this architectural conformity by having an architectural style that is exceeding similar to homes that I am providing as attachments.
    - c. Architectural conformity can never be defined but at the same time there must be some reasonable consensus for families that want to live in an excellent community but do not want to live in a 60's style residence.
  - iii. Homogeneous Community Assertion
    - a. The assertion that a homogeneous community adds value is just an assumption.
    - b. Persons refrain from purchasing residences because of the residence's architectural style.
    - c. I am maintaining a homogeneous community by building a two or three story home.

- d. Within approximately 100 Ft of the proposed residence all of the homes are 2 and 3 story homes.
  - e. Within approximately 200 Ft of the proposed residence 14 out of 16 homes are two story homes. (14 out of 16 = 87.5%)
  - f. Within approximately 200 Ft of the proposed residence 3 out of 19 homes are three story homes. (3 out of 19 = 16 %)
  - g. Within approximately 500 Ft of the proposed residence 35 out of 37 homes are 2 or 3 story homes. (35 out of 37 = 95%)
  - h. Within approximately 500 Ft South (East Side Sunny Glen Drive) of the proposed residence 6 out of 12 homes are three story homes with higher heights than my proposal. (6 out of 12 = 50 %)
  - i. Within the rectangular zone of the proposed residence 61 out of 66 homes are 2 or 3 story homes. (61 out of 66 = 92.4%)
  - j. Within the rectangular zone of the proposed residence 13 out of 66 homes are three story homes. (13 out of 66 = 20 %)
  - k. See Attachment #4 25636 Amber Leaf Rd Neighborhood Data Table. Data acquired from LA County Assessor Office Website
- iv. Height Assertion
- a. Three story homes would equate to a minimum height of anywhere from 30FT+ to 35FT+ feet based upon these assumptions
  - b. 3 X 8FT Floors = 24FT plus the height of the rafters:
  - c. Height of the rafter for a 20 FT run (40FT Span) would be the length from the bottom of the rafter chord to the peak based on the rise per foot 4 inches X 20 FT= 80 inches Approx 7 ft for a 40 FT SPAN. (Rise/run = 4"/12" = 4/12 Pitch).
  - d. This implies that 3 story residences are higher than my proposed residences 27FT 1 & 13/16" height at a 4/12 pitch.
  - e. Within approximately 20 Ft of the proposed residence there is a 3 story home.
  - f. Within approximately 250 Ft of the proposed residence there are 3 residences that are 3 story high residences.
  - g. Within approximately 500 Ft South (East Side Sunny Glen Drive) of the proposed residence 6 out of 12 homes are three story homes with higher heights than my proposal. (6 out of 12 = 50 %)
    - i. 3 stories are approx MIN 31FT high
    - ii. Any 3 story home is approx. 15% Higher in height than my proposed home.

- iii. Min 4 FT+ greater than my 27' foot –  
 $31-27/27 \times 100 = 15\%$
- h. Within the rectangular zone there are 13 residences that  
 that are 3 story high residences
- i. See Attachment # 4 25636 Amber Leaf Neighborhood  
 Data Table
- v. Gabled Roof Assertion
  - a. Residence is employing gable and hip roofs
  - b. 95% of the residences employ gables and hip roof types  
 in some part of their roof footprint.
  - c. Approximately 40% of the residences employ a shed  
 roof
  - d. Residence is not employing Mansard, Gambrel, Shed,  
 Butterfly, A frame or geodesic type of roof.
- vi. Color Assertion
  - a. No color decision is identified on the site specific  
 application packet or the architectural drawings  
 submitted.

**Item #4** The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation stipulates that I am violating Section 91.41.7(b and c) Planning and Design requirements per page 5, paragraph 2 & 3 of their submitted objection paperwork.

1. Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation states “The applicant is proposing a completely new construction of 35 Ft in height or 250% of the code, plus a sun deck or patio viewing into the neighbor’s yard.” “In the event the applicant can reasonably demonstrate that his request is not a new construction then the following code limitation applies”
  - a. **SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - RESIDENTIAL.** Notwithstanding the provisions of this Article, no Precise Plan shall be required if the proposed development within the Hillside and Coastal Overlay Zone is for the purpose of constructing, remodeling or enlarging a dwelling, provided the following requirements are met:
  - b. 91.41.7(b) The dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged) will be one (1) story; and provided further that no portion of the roof of the dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, no portion of the remodeled or enlarged roof) will be used as a deck, sun-deck or patio, nor will any equipment or appurtenances be mounted on the roof or protrude through the roof (except for ordinary plumbing or heater vents) nor extend above the roof eave line; provided further that a chimney will be permitted if the portion extending above the roof eave line is no larger than the minimum dimensions required by the Torrance Building Code.
  - c. 91.41.7(c) Except as provided in this subsection, no portion of the dwelling, in the case of new construction, will exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the ground at finished grade,

but not including any berm. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged shall not exceed the height of the lowest portion of the remainder of the dwelling, or fourteen (14) feet measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm, whichever is less. In the case of a down-sloping lot, no portion of the dwelling shall exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the top of the curb at the center point of the front property line. Vents and a chimney, as provided in subsection b) of this section, shall not be considered in the height measurements.

- d. The Country Hills Home Association representative states in his own sentence that I am constructing a new home - "The applicant is proposing a completely new construction of 35 Ft in height or 250% of the code" yet states in another sentence that "In the event the applicant can reasonably demonstrate that his request is not a new construction then the following code limitation applies."
  - i. The Country Hills Home Association representative has defined a new application category that I cannot find in the Torrance Municipal Building Code or the Hillside Overlay codes.
    1. I cannot build over 14' in height because I am not submitting a Precise Plan.
    2. and "In the event the applicant can reasonably demonstrate that his request is not a new construction then the following code limitation (Section 91.41.7 Permitted Development (c) and Section 91.41.7 (b)) applies."
    3. Implies I have to meet the sections requirements and build a one story structure under 14' because per the Country Hills Home Association Representative's own words "his (applicant's) request is not a new construction then the following code limitation applies"
    4. Extraneous, incorrect interpretation of (Section 91.41.7 Permitted Development (c) and Section 91.41.7 (b))
  - ii. "The applicant is proposing a completely new construction of 35 Ft in height or 250% of the code"
    1. Incorrect percentage of increase calculation process presented by the Country Hills Home Association representative:
      - a. Country Hills Home Association representative. calculations were done in this manner
      - b.  $35/14 = 2.5$  Factor x 100 Percent = 250%
      - c. At a 3/12 pitch the height of the proposed residence is 26' 5 7/8" – below the 27 Foot limit.
      - d. At a 4/12 pitch the height of the proposed residence is 27' 1 13/16"

2. Mathematically this is an incorrect method for determining percentage of increase. The correct method is below.
    - a.  $(X_2 - X_1/X_1) * 100 = \% \text{ of Increase}$
  3. Correct figure of increase is calculated in this manner and yields a figure of approximately 92% increase
    - a.  $(27-14/14) * 100 = 92.0\%$
  4. Applicability of this section is incorrectly being misinterpreted or misrepresented.
- h. The Country Hills Home Association documentation states “plus a sun deck or patio viewing into the neighbor’s yard.”
- i. Country Hills Home Association Representative’s zone of influence is not applicable in this application for a precise plan.
  - ii. I am unable to find anywhere in the Country Hills Home Association Representatives objection paperwork any document signed by a power of attorney verifying that the property owners within the immediate vicinity of my property delegated their objection duties to the CHHA.
  - iii. Applicability of this section is incorrectly being misrepresented.
- i. “or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, no portion of the roof or dwelling will be used as a deck, sun deck or patio.”
1. No portion of my roof is being used as a deck, sun deck or patio.
  2. I am proposing to have a balcony from my second story master bedroom but no portion of my roof is being used to provide space for a deck, sun deck or patio.
  3. Misrepresentation or misinterpretation of my application packet documentation.

**Item #5** The Country Hills Homeowners Association documentation stipulates that I am violating Section 91.41.7(a) Permitted Development- Residential requirements per page 6, paragraph 7 of their submitted objection paperwork.

**1. SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT -**

**RESIDENTIAL.** “Notwithstanding the provisions of this Article, no Precise Plan shall be required if the proposed development within the Hillside and Coastal Overlay Zone is for the purpose of constructing, remodeling or enlarging a dwelling, provided the following requirements are met:

- a. 91.41.7(c) “Except as provided in this subsection, no portion of the dwelling, in the case of new construction, will exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged shall not exceed the height of the lowest portion of the remainder of the dwelling, or fourteen (14) feet measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm, whichever is less. In the case of a

down-sloping lot, no portion of the dwelling shall exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the top of the curb at the center point of the front property line. Vents and a chimney, as provided in subsection b) of this section, shall not be considered in the height measurements.

- j. This section is interpreted as the applicant will not have to file a Precise Plan if they meet the constraints of Section 91.41.7 (a)
- k. I have submitted a Precise Plan.
- l. Extraneous, incorrect interpretation of Section 91.41.7 (a)

Item #5a The Country Hills Homeowners Association objection stipulates for this identified code violation states that “by comparison, there are several homes within the 480 home Country Hills development with lot areas greater than 10,000 SF, many with significant berms or unbuildable hill sides. Many of these homes have up to 12 rooms while maintaining family size back yards. In the past 33 years, none of the owners have found it necessary to McMansion their homes or change the conforming aesthetic appearances of their home.”

12 Room Assertion – “Many of these homes have up to 12 rooms”

- 1. Within 250 Ft of my proposed residence according to the LA County Assessors Office there are 2 homes that have more than 12 rooms:
- 2. Assumption is that at a minimum there would be a family room and a kitchen within these residences- if not more (Office or Formal room).
  - a. One residence has 7 Bedrooms and 5 Baths + Min Assumption of 2 rooms = 14 Rooms
    - i. “In the past 33 years, none of the owners have found it necessary to McMansion their homes”
    - ii. On Page 1 paragraph 3 of the Country Hills Homeowners Association objection it states “These CC&Rs were recorded with the County of Los Angeles, California on 12 June, 1975 and remain enforced today.”
    - iii. Effective Year Built from LA County Assessor’s data for this 14 Room property reflects this was remodeled in 1981.
  - b. One residence has 6 Bedrooms and 5 Baths + Min Assumption of 2 rooms = 13 Rooms.
    - i. “In the past 33 years, none of the owners have found it necessary to McMansion their homes”
    - ii. On Page 1 paragraph 3 of the Country Hills Homeowners Association objection it sates “These CC&Rs were recorded with the County of Los Angeles, California on 12 June, 1975 and remain enforced today.”
    - iii. Effective Year Built from LA County Assessor’s data for this 13 Room property reflects this was remodeled in 1978.
  - c. With the rectangular zone of my lot the LA County Assessors data reflects 22 other homes with a minimum of 8 rooms that could possibly be 12 room residences.

## II. Country Hills Homeowners Association - CC&R issue.

In this category of objections I will address the Country Hills CC&R application issue. My initial point in this matter is yes – I have not submitted an application for the Country Hills Association Home Improvement because of a culmination of items discussed in detail below

### Item #1 page 1

The Country Hills Homeowners Association Objection #1 page 1 states – “The applicant has not complied with the Country Hills CC&Rs”:

Objection references I have not met the “minimum requirements which include:

1.
  - a. “A written description”
  - b. “Plans and Specifications”
  - c. “Schematics”
  - d. “Elevations”
  - e. “A plot plan showing the location of the proposed structure”

### Counterpoint

I am finding it hard to identify what exactly the Country Hills Homeowners Association wants to have submitted based upon the provided documentation that I have received. Per the Listed requirements below these were the documents I was initially perceived to be required to provide per the Country Hills Homeowners Association Home Improvement Application dated 3 October 2004 document (See Attachment #7). Which was the only document that I had received that identified what documentation they were requiring

2.
  - a. Detailed Plans or Drawings
  - b. Statements of Work or
  - c. Specifications
  - d. Material Samples and colors
  - e. Name of the manufacturers of the materials and samples
  - f. Contractors
  - g. Estimated Starting and Ending Dates

Their current list of requirements from their objection letter (1a-1e above) seems to be less resource intensive than the initial list directly above and their information requirements can be easily attained by reviewing my specifications.

I am still more than willing to provide a set of plans and available relevant information as the application packet that meets the requirements as listed above in 1a through 1e at any time for the Country Hills Homeowners Association.

### Issue #2 page 2

The applicant was aware of the existence of the Country Hills CC&Rs

### Objection #2 page 2 – Counterpoint

The applicant has checked his escrow documentation and believes the only documentation he received from the escrow closing process is the Attachment #7 Country Hills Home Association Improvement Application dated 3 October 2004.

The applicants title search documentation does not identify any CC&R's that were recorded on June 12, 1975, the date presented in paragraph 3 page 1 of the Country Hills Home Association recommendation for disapproval paperwork.

The applicant's Title Search Preliminary report will be available for review and verification of this statement at the public hearing.

The Country Hills Home Association Objection paperwork states in paragraph 2 page 2 that my submittal of the request for information letter to the Country Hills Association Home address "is further evidence the applicant would of received a copy of the CC&Rs from the escrow company."

My request for information letter was to clarify what policies and oversight processes were required because of the ambiguous definitions and undefined processes presented on the Country Hills Home Association Improvement Application dated 3 October 2004 Attachment #7. It specifically states "I would like to talk to somebody concerning the HOA, its policies, and oversight processes" in the letter. The Country Hills Home Association objection is based upon an assumption.

Attachment #7- Country Hills Association Newsletter dated 3 October 2004 is the only CHHA document that I received as part of my escrow documentation. This is the only document that I was working from that identified a Home Owner Association element in the area of the proposed development.

Several relevant points of review:

1. This document dated October 3, 2004 has only a phone number.
2. It does have an address – P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505
3. It does not have an e-mail address.
4. It does not have a website address.
5. The telephone number (310) 607-8443 is non functional and has been for approximately 15 months and prior to my support request letter dated 6 October 2007 – See Attachment #8 Initial Written Contact Letter to the CHHA
6. If you call this number at this moment you will hear that:
  - a. A click is initiated after 1 ring then
  - b. A message stating "Your call can not be answered at this time. Please try again later- Goodbye"
  - c. Then a dial tone because the circuit has been deconstructed.

I called the number provided on the newsletter several times prior to writing a letter dated 6 October 2007 requesting information concerning the HOA's oversight processes because I had purchased a parcel of land in the Country Hills area and wanted to find out additional information.

**I then sent a certified mailed letter requesting clarification** as what processes needed to be completed to support the Country Hill Homeowners Association

responsibilities and requirements. We would not have gone out of our way to send out a certified mail letter if we did NOT want to support their process.

I have contacted the phone number within the last 6 months and it still does not provide a voicemail service.

After not being able to talk to any representative or person concerning my possible site specific application and having sent a certified mailed letter to the HOA and not receiving any telephonic or written notification and

1. Not having an e-mail number nor
2. Not having a web address
3. I decided not to expend any additional level of effort to support this research process because:
  - a. The additional resources and documentation the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requirements were asking for would require me to incur additional expenses beyond what I would be required to provide for the city's site specific application process my family was deciding if we should pursue.
  - b. Secondly, the level of documentation required by the HOA would have posed an unreasonable level of effort and additional costs before I would have been able to weigh the financial impact of building a residence in such a constrained environment.

All of the listed elements below are the components that led me to make the decision I made concerning the miscommunication between the Country Hills Homeowners Association and myself.

Point # 1 The Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application presents a vague undefined application process as to when the property owner is to integrate this requirement into the city's site specific planning process.

In the provided copy of the letter there is not a structured process flow as to when the applicant's applicable information or notification process is required as part of the city's site specific planning process.

The newsletter merely states that "the form is to be submitted, along with the required fee, before starting work."

There is no clarification as to the meaning of "before starting work." There were several possible interpretations of the above statement.

- a. Submit the application and the reasonable documentation the Homeowner Association has requested once you decide you want to start building on the property you just purchased.  
This implies that any changes made by the owner or the Planning Commission would have to be reapproved by the CHHA.
- b. Submit the application and the reasonable documentation once your pre permit application process reaches a certain level of maturity and does not impose any additional financial costs to support the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requests. From a logical perspective this would be sometime after the site specific public hearing notification letter has been issued to see if there is any consternation with the proposed project.
- c. Nowhere in the "Please allow 30 days for your application to be acted upon after it is received" does it define at what decision point the Country Hills Association

Home Improvement Application is required to be submitted in conjunction with the site specific application process.

- i. The applicant was not sure if the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application would be required to be submitted 30 days prior to the submission of the city's site specific application so as not to impede the city's site specific application process.
- ii. The applicant was not sure if the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application would be required to be submitted 30 days after the submission of the city's site specific application so as to allow sufficient time for the applicant to have resourced a silhouette and not impede the city's site specific application process.
- iii. The applicant was not sure if the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application would be required to be submitted 30 days prior to picking up the applicant's building permit so as to have a semi mature decision set that could answer all of the requirements being imposed.
- iv. The applicant was not sure if the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application was required to be submitted 30 days prior to the last trade inspection before the final inspection which is when most of the exterior decisions they are requesting would be made approximately.

Point # 2 The Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requested information, documentation adds an additional level of effort and costs for the applicant in order to meet its application requirements.

The Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application newsletter states that "detailed plans, drawings, statements of work or specifications along with the material samples/colors, the name of the manufacturers, contractors and estimated starting and ending dates" per Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application dated October 3 2004, be furnished for their review.

Listed requirements:

1. Detailed Plans or Drawings
2. Statements of Work or
3. Specifications
4. Material Samples and colors
5. Name of the manufacturers of the materials and samples
6. Contractors
7. Estimated Starting and Ending Dates

Some of these requirements seem extraneous, excessive, and unrealistic unless the applicant has reached a level of maturity within their preparation for permit submission process. They are also significantly more costly and difficult to assimilate then the site specific application documentation requirements.

1. The Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application request for information is beyond the scope of any analysis of neighborly architectural conformity.
2. The intent of the association model was to ensure that extreme forms of non conformity were addressed in a responsible manner.

- a. Providing statements of work are well beyond the scope of ensuring architectural conformity.
  - i. What added value will a task breakdown of the construction project provide to the Country Hills Association?
  - ii. Why is there a higher level of validation and documentation required to be submitted as part of the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application process when compared to the city's site specific application.
  - iii. The site specific application process does not require a MSFT Project schedule, milestones chart, task description, basis of effort or a work breakdown schedule as part of the site specific application documentation, yet the requirements stated above imply the applicant has to provide this information prior to initiating the city's site specific application process.
- b. Detailed plans are an ambiguous definition.
  - i. Detailed plans can include inset details, landscaping, foundation plan sheets, excavation, grading, structural engineering, soils reports, surveys, window schedule, paint color scheme, are not required as part of the city's site specific application process.
  - ii. The site specific application process does not require this level of documentation.
  - iii. Under the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application this additional financial burden is imposed with no concern for the financial impact or the level of effort required to assimilate the requirements within the initial stages of an immature decision making process.
  - iv. Funding or submission of any of the above requested detailed plan items besides the documents required to meet the site specific application process is unjustified.
  - v. The requirement to provide material samples and colors implies that pre occupation building decisions and personal space choices have to be determined prior to the city's site specific application process.
  - vi. Any expenses related to this level of effort or submission of any samples or materials is beyond the scope of the city's site specific application requirements.
- c. The requirement to provide the contractor's names is well beyond the scope of ensuring architectural conformity.
  - i. What added value will a contractor's business info provide to the Country Hills Association?
- d. The requirement to provide the manufacturer's names for the samples is well beyond the scope of ensuring architectural conformity.
  - i. What added value will a manufacturer's business info for the samples requested provide to the Country Hills Association?
  - ii. Any expenses related to this level of effort or submission of any samples or material is beyond the scope of the city's site specific application requirements.

Point # 3 The Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requirements and scope implied it was the driving force behind the approval process by requesting the applicant to have almost all of the building processes defined and detailed, construction phase milestone decisions, documentation completed and samples available and ready for legal inspection prior to even submitting the city's site specific application.

- a. The city's site specific application process is the parent in this defined model yet the Country Hills Home Association Improvement Application requirements far exceed the analysis requirements the city is requesting to make a determination of the suitability of the project within the proposed community area.

Point # 4 The current unstructured regulatory guidance as defined during this application process has already imposed a relevant financial impact on my family.

- a. Torrance MBC does not identify that an applicant is required to have a silhouette as part of the site specific application process per MBC Sections 91.41.1-91.41.
  - i. This additional perceived requirement is approximately 17% of the \$24,000 I have expended to get to the public hearing stage of this residential construction decision making process.
- b. Torrance's Site Specific Application process imposes an additional financial expense on all property owners that have a sloped lot which is not applied to flat sloped property owners within the same Hillside community area.
  - i. A property owner with a lot slope of 4% or greater in the Hillside Overlay area that try's to build a 2 story house will be required to pay for a height waiver because of the identification of the "lowest adjacent grade is the contiguous plane between a structure's garage and the first floor level.
    1. 2 stories X 8 FT = 16 FT
    2. 7-8 Ft Roof Line – Average = 23-24FT of height.
    3. Slope of 4 % or more and the applicant has to pay for a waiver
    4. Non sloped lots in the Hillside Overlay area do not incur this additional constraint and expense.
    5. This is approximately an additional \$1,300.00 expense a property owner with a lot slope of 4% or greater in the Hillside Overlay area that is trying to build a 2 story house
- c. The Country Hill Homeowners Association had a duty to provide clear guidance and well defined processes to facilitate and support the mechanisms of community development.
  - i. It is an implied assumption that the applicant is required to expend resources to support all of the technical requirements to meet the Country Hill Homeowners Association Home Improvement Application process.
  - ii. Yet the ambiguity of the process and the requirements stipulated in the only document I had to follow, reemphasizes that I was forced to make a rational decision on the level of due diligence, additional effort, time and money I may have to expend sending in their

requested documentation to an element that I could not get in contact, ask questions or find out what specifically was required for their review.

- iii. With no clarification or communication from the HOA on specifically what was required after numerous attempts to find out, it is unreasonable for an organization or person to assume the applicant should be penalized with a negative recommendation from the HOA, to meet perceived requirements that were not clearly defined.
- iv. If the Country Hill Homeowners Association had taken the extra step after not hearing back from me, like I did, and sent a letter responding to my inquiries they would have received a copy of my plans as part of the site specific application packet I submitted to the Planning Commission.

### III. Neighbors Concern.

The last part of this second category of objections I will address are the concerns of the neighbor I have received from the Planning Commission Staff. The review of the processes I have followed will provide a framework to assess my due diligence.

Review of applicant's effort to support the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requirements and to establish a neighborly assimilation process.

Date	Actions	Outcome
Aug - Sept 2007	11-12 months before site specific application process was submitted (9/4/2008) applicant made several phone calls to provided telephone number on Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application dated October 3, 2004	
October 6 2007	11 months before site specific application process was submitted applicant sent a certified mail letter to the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application asking for clarification of their application process. See Attachment #8 Initial Written Contact Letter.	No telephonic notification or mail service notification was received.
August 24 2008	<p>Two (2) weeks before I submitted my site specific application packet I sent out a letter to each of my neighbors (aka an Open Lot meeting) within the immediate vicinity of my property. See Attachment #10 Open Lot Meeting Letter</p> <p>Letters to the addresses listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2830 &amp; 2834 Sunny Glen Drive (Right of Front of Property)</li> <li>2. 25634 &amp; 25632 Amber Leaf Road (Left of Front of Property) and</li> <li>3. 2833 &amp; 2837 Sunny Glen Drive (Across the street from the front of the property)</li> </ol> <p>The letter is self explanatory as it requested any person or property owner that wanted to review my plans, or discuss any possible impact my residence was going to be presenting to them <u>before I submitted my application</u>, to meet at the lot between the hours of 11:00 AM – 1:00PM Saturday 6 September, 2008. Additionally I stated that my family and I</p>	

	would be willing to flex our schedules to support any neighbors concerns – all they had to do was contact us and we would have adjusted our schedule to meet at an alternate time as clearly stated on the letter.	
6 September 08	Applicant and family were at the lot with several sets of freshly printed plans for any interested neighbors between the hours of 11:00 AM – 1:00PM. Applicant has phone camera documentation with date time stamp validation provided by a commercial ISP independent time protocol service of being on the lot during stated time.	We stood at the lot for 2 hours and no one showed to talk to us.
6 September 08	Mr. Chris Tsuneishi, neighbor to the South (Right), who has now voiced a concern for a privacy impact, was inadvertently able to talk to us after seeing us on the lot as he opened up his garage door and started to pull out with his vehicle	We asked if our letter about the meeting was received and he stated that they did. During this conversation there was never a request to see our plans or did he ask any questions concerning any possible privacy matters.
9 September 08	Applicant submits Site specific application packet	
14 October 08	Silhouette constructed	
11 December 08	Applicant is notified 6 days in advance of public hearing that 3 parties have documented objections to the proposed residence. Approximately 2 months after the silhouette was constructed and visible.	
12 December 08	Upon notification on 11 Dec 2008 that there was a HOA element that had submitted a negative recommendation the applicant has provided the Country Hills Association with its current contact information.	Email sent out 12 December 2008 @ 12:33PM See Attachment #9 Recent E-Mail Contact to the CHHA
12 December 08	Upon notification on 12 Dec 2008 that Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneishi have submitted a privacy concern observation that may impact their privacy.	The applicant called their residence at 12:25 PM 12 December and left a voice mail explaining that we are willing to discuss his issues.
12 December 08		Email sent out 12 December 2008 @ 12:33PM stating again I would be more than

		willing to discuss his issues.— See Attachment #11 Recent E-Mail Contact Letter to the Tsuneishi's.
	As of 14 December 2008 the applicant has not received any personal notification from any of the 6 neighbors that received the "Open Lot Meeting Letter" for any concerns.	
12 December 08	Received notification of Mr. Chamber's email as part of the Country Hills Home Association objection packet where he stated his concerns about the "high profile location of this property, the size of the house and the exterior design"	Placed a call around 12:55pm to Mr. Chambers to see if I could receive additional clarification as to specifics of his concerns. Basically I was informed that I did not need to be a "rocket scientist" to know that the house was too large and did not conform to the Country Hills area. Secondly I was informed not to "get weird on him" After asking Mr. Chambers what type of architectural style besides a 60s type would he recommend to meet his concerns the phone went dead.

I have not pursued any other contact with Mr. Chambers. Mr. Chamber's assertion that my lot is in a "high profile location" should be weighed carefully. The lot is located center mass of two streets (L shaped street) behind a major supermarket off of Crenshaw BLVD where it takes 4 changes of direction just to get to it. I am highly confident most persons if surveyed would not consider this to be a "high profile location."

I will not address any other concerns of Mr. Chamber's as the above provided content provides the data and information for the Planning Commission to make a professional assessment and decision.

### **Conclusion – Final Considerations**

I have weighed, with impartiality, each course of action and my level of responsibility towards the Country Hills community and I sincerely and professionally believe I have pursued a relative level of due diligence throughout my application process and have tried to support the Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requirements based upon the information I had at each decision point.

I do not feel that Country Hills Association Home Improvement Application requirements should impose any additional relevant financial impact on my family because of their undefined requirements.

I am currently paying rent for a 2700 SF home for my family and having to support the mortgage vehicle on the lot at the same time. My desire to go forward with the public hearing without a conveyance is based upon the cost of delay factor. Secondly I sincerely believe my wife and I have executed due diligence in our efforts to be assimilated into the Country Hills community.

I am more than willing to discuss any options for any concurrence in matters that may be presented at the public hearing. I reserve the right to assess the relevancy of the request and decide if I am going to expend resources to support that request which may be made of me or my family members.

My immediate concern in this matter is the lack of professional fiduciary responsibilities the Country Hills Association Home has presented in their documentation and the impact it may have on other neighbors that do not have all of the relevant facts before them to assess if my family is trying to acquire additional personal space rights that nobody else has in the immediate neighborhood.

I only state this because throughout the documentation process for this rebuttal there are numerous instances where specific content from their disapproval documentation is incorrect. I have spent the time documenting these points of misinformation because viewed in the whole they present a lack of professionalism and common decorum that I would expect of any forthright citizen.

As a retired US Army field grade officer with 22 years of service and after having spent a combat tour in Iraq as an Airborne Ranger, Senior jumpmaster in the 82 Airborne Division, I believe it is professionally reprehensible that a community HOA organization would officially present documentation with numerous glaring inconsistencies.

I will not have sufficient time to establish the detailed counterpoint framework I have presented here and hope this information is assimilated by the Planning Commission so as to provide a neutral environment.

I will let the presentation of the facts speak for themselves.

### **Administrative Request**

Lastly, I am administratively notifying the Planning Commission on my decision to pursue a 4/12 pitch on my roof during this site specific process.

I am planning on installing a photovoltaic (PV) system and under the guidance as defined in the Solar Rights Act amended by California Assembly Bill - AB 2473 I would like to officially request that the pitch of my roof be approved at a 4/12 pitch vice the current plan's depiction of a 3/12 pitch. This higher pitch will result in a relevantly higher level of solar collection efficiency which will increase the allowable rebate amount I am pursuing to support this personal environmental commitment.

This law became is effective as of 1/1/2005 and the intent of the law is that "local agencies not adopt ordinances that create unreasonable barriers to the installation of solar energy systems, including, but not limited to, design review for aesthetic purposes."

The following information is provided for review only. Per California Assembly Bill 2473, "local authorities shall approve applications through permit issuance and can only restrict solar installations based on health and safety reasons. It is thus intended to encourage installations by removing obstacles and minimizing permitting costs." Additional key changes limit aesthetic solar restrictions to those that cost less than \$2,000 and limits a building official's review of solar installations to only those items that relate to specific health and safety requirements or local, state and federal law.

Professionally I appreciate your service and staff's support in hearing both sides of the equation.

Mark F. Stephenson  
Orlye Stephenson

## List of Attachments

1. Attachment #1 City of Torrance DEMO Permit # BLD05-01929 issued on 08/15/2005 per city records.
2. Attachment #2 Screen Page dated 13 December 2008 reflecting a query from the LA County Assessors website for the applicant's property to reflect the lot does not have a structure.  
<http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/mapping/viewer.asp>
3. Attachment #3 A copy of a copied microfiche retaining wall and basement application from the Torrance Safety and Health Dept. reflects an additional 576 SF was added to the original 1988 SF of 25636 Amber Leaf Road residence to bring it to a total of 2564 SF.
4. Attachment #4 25636 Amber Leaf Neighborhood Data Table
5. Attachment #5a. 5a.1, 5b, 5b.1, 5c, 5c.1 Sample Queries from LA County Assessors to validate 25636 Amber Leaf Neighborhood Data Table.
6. Attachment #6A, 6B, 6C, 6D, 6E Architectural Conformity – Similar Architectures and Similar Roof Line Profiles within 100 - 1000 Ft of 25636 Amber Leaf Road
7. Attachment #7 Country Hills Homeowners Association Home Improvement Application dated 3 October 2004
8. Attachment #8 Initial Written Contact Letter to the CHHA
9. Attachment #9 Recent E-Mail to the CHHA
10. Attachment #10 Open Lot Meeting Letter
11. Attachment #11 Recent E-Mail Contact Letter to the Tsuneishi's

**CITY OF TORRANCE**  
**BUILDING PERMIT RECORD**  
**BUILDING PERMITS**  
**AUGUST 2005**

**Attachment # 1 Rebuttal to**  
**CHHA Disapproval**  
**Recommendation -Property**  
**Owner Stephenson**

DATE ISSUED	PERMIT	OWNER	LOCATION	VALUATION	DESCRIPTION
8/11/2005	BLD05-01855	YABU KIYOHISA & AKIKO	17811 ST ANDREWS PL	18,000	SINGLE STORY RES ADDITION
8/11/2005	BLD05-01905	TAMER LILLIAN	22425 KATHRYN AVE	7,000	SINGLE FAMILY RES REMODEL
8/11/2005	BLD05-01908	MASSMAN STEPHEND	20440 ANZA AVE	100,100	MULTI-FAMILY REROOF
8/11/2005	BLD05-01909	TOLNAI LESLIE JR & KAREN	19353 FLAVIAN AVE	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/11/2005	BLD05-01910	MAH GENE J & POY J & FAMILY TRUST	2689 231ST ST	5,300	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/11/2005	BLD05-01912	MAXINE HAWK	2604 EL DORADO ST	1,831	RESIDENTIAL BLOCK WALL
8/11/2005	BLD05-01913	JACKSON LAMAR A	3355 175TH ST	21,655	SINGLE STORY RES ADDITION
8/11/2005	BLD05-01916	BARRETT SUZANNE E	5137 ZAKON RD	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/11/2005	BLD05-01917	WU CHIEN K & SIEN HA W & FAMILY TRU	22110 CATHANN PL	19,300	SINGLE FAMILY RES REMODEL
8/11/2005	BLD05-01918	BURDEN JEFFREY & JESSICA & J J & J	20801 FELKER DR	5,300	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/11/2005	BLD05-01919	OGURA SHOZO & YASUKO	2409 178TH ST	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/12/2005	BLD05-01278	HONEYWELL INTERNATIONAL	2525 190 ST	20,000	TEN IMP TO COM BLDG "HONEYWELL"
8/12/2005	BLD05-01377	ELLENOR ANGELA M & DWAYNE T	4809 CARSON ST	58,000	SINGLE STORY RES ADDITION
8/12/2005	BLD05-01888	JACOBS JANET HERALB	2565 237TH ST	5,300	COMMERCIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD04-02903	HONDA BRUCE & JOANNE	2433 229TH PL	150,000	TWO STORY RES ADDITION
8/15/2005	BLD05-01894	REILLY REYNOSO ANDREA	21505 TALISMAN ST	800	RESIDENTIAL ADDITION
8/15/2005	BLD05-01923	KRIKORIAN JACK & JEAN NE	20701 VICTOR ST	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD05-01924	NGUYEN TRUONG	21605 MARJORIE AVE	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD05-01928	COHEN JERRY & CYNTHIA & HARRY & ROS	16514 KRISTIN AVE	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD05-01929	PENIR JAMES E & SHARON E	25616 AMBER LEAF RD	100	DEMOLITION OF SINGLE BLDG
8/15/2005	BLD05-01931	CUNNINGHAM TRAVIS & MARIA M	1448 ENGRACIA AVE	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD05-01932	CHASE SAMMIE W & PATRICIA D	18005 ST ANDREWS PL	5,300	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/15/2005	BLD05-01936	UNGAR CHARLES D & JANET	23304 EVALYN AVE	1,500	RESIDENTIAL REROOF
8/16/2005	BLD04-00972	190TH STREET INDUSTRIAL, LLC	2263-81 190TH ST	170,670	NEW TWO STORY COM BLDG "TORR FWY BUS CTR"
8/16/2005	BLD05-00635	JUNAIDEAN ABDUL & NUZKIYA	2855 GRAMERCY AVE	168,000	RESIDENTIAL ADDITION
8/16/2005	BLD05-00637	JUNAIDEAN ABDUL & NUZKIYA	2855 GRAMERCY AVE	10,680	NEW DETACHED GARAGE
8/16/2005	BLD05-00784	JUNAIDEAN ABDUL & NUZKIYA	2855 GRAMERCY AVE	100	DEMOLITION OF SINGLE BLDG

11:00:48:50 h

Saturday, December 13, 2008

0508bldg.pdf - Adobe Reader  
 File Edit View Document Tools Window Help  
 6 AMBER LEAF RD | 115% | 1/8

0508bldg.pdf | Documents | http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/ | Microsoft Edge | J-stair | 0508bldg.pdf

# ATTACHMENT 2 Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval Recommendation

Property Assessment Information System

Records for this property are kept at the South District Office.  
[How frequently is the information updated on this site?](#)

### Property Information

Assessor's ID No. 7547-013-014  
Site Address 25636 AMBER LEAF RD  
TORRANCE CA 90505  
Property Type Single Family Residence  
Region / Cluster 14.114159  
Tax Rate Area (TRA) 09340

[Click Here to View Assessor's Map](#)  
[Click Here to View Index Map](#)

### Recent Sales Information

Latest Sale Date 06/29/2007  
Indicated Sale Price \$565,005

[Search for Recent Sales](#)

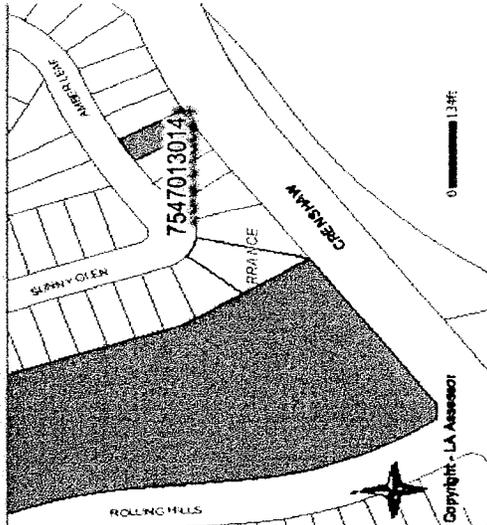
### 2008 Roll Values

Recording Date 06/28/2007  
Land \$576,300  
Improvements \$0  
Personal Property \$0  
Fixtures \$0  
Homeowners Exemption \$0  
Real Estate Exemption \$0  
Personal Property Exemption \$0  
Fixture Exemption \$0

[Click Here for 2008 Annual Tax](#)  
[I have a question regarding my property tax payment.](#)

### Estimate Supplemental Tax

### Property Boards / P...



Copyright: LA Assessor

Parcel Viewer - Windows Internet Explorer  
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help  
Norton Identity Safe  
Google  
Parcel Viewer  
Assessor's Home Page Search Menu Feedback Help/FAQs  
Los Angeles County  
Office of the Assessor

Internet  
Saturday, December 13, 2008  
Los Angeles County  
Parcel Viewer - Windo...  
ECHA Disapproval  
Microsoft PowerPoint

# RETAINING WALL DETAIL

SCALE - 1/2" = 1'-0"

STRUCT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - ARCHITECT  
 3000 PARKWAY DRIVE, SUITE 111  
 TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA 90503  
 PHONE: 379-4975 379-3800

## RETAINING WALL LINEAR DESIGN DATA:

### a) SURCHARGE LOAD AT RETAINING WALL



W<sub>1</sub> = 1009 / 2.75 = 367  
 W<sub>2</sub> = 1009 / 11 = 91.7  
 F = 55420 / 5 = 11084

MAX. COMB. OF LOADS AT 1.000' FROM

W<sub>1</sub> = 1009 / 2.75 = 367  
 W<sub>2</sub> = 1009 / 11 = 91.7  
 F = 55420 / 5 = 11084

### b.) ATM. ABOUT TOP:

ITEM	LOAD <sup>o</sup>	ARM <sup>1</sup>	MOM <sup>1-0</sup>
STEM	944	4.5	4248
BASE	825	2.75	2268
WARTH	550	2.5	675
BLDG	550	4.5	1575
SUB TOT			+ 8766
OVERLOAD	458	1.85	- 847
SURCHARGE	486	2.5	- 1215
SURCHARGE P	129	3.55	- 458

RESULT = 4469 / 2764 = 1.62' - 1/8" BASE

### c.) STEM:

M = 4469 1-0  
 A<sub>s</sub> = 4469 / (1.44 (9.8)) = 326 #/FT  
 USE #5 @ 8" OC

### d.) FLX STRESS:

f<sub>m</sub> = 4469 \* 12 / (12 (9.8)) = 260

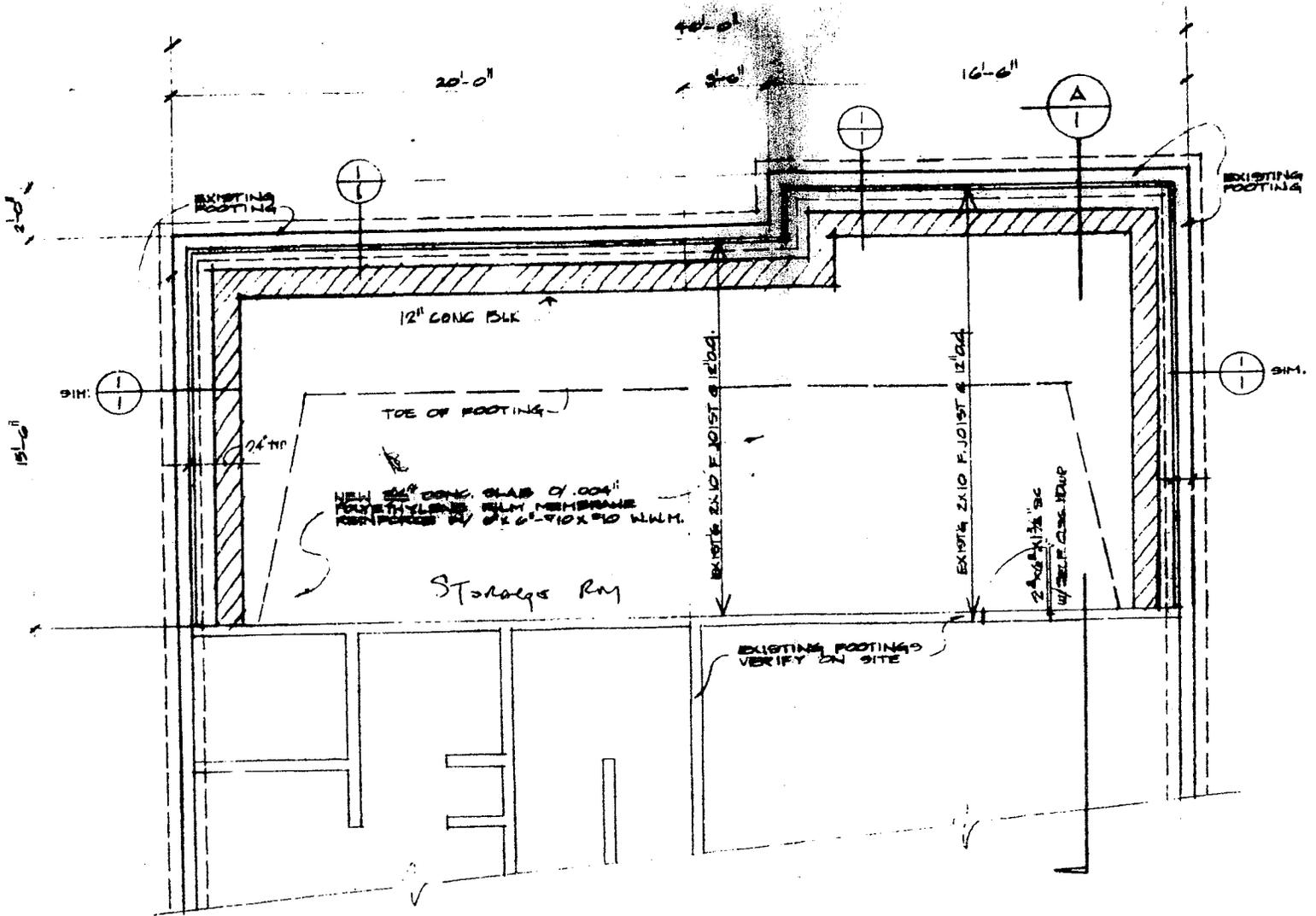
### WARTH PERFORMERS:

C = 2.75 \* 1.52 = .75  
 P<sub>1</sub> = 294 (1 ± 0.613) / 5.0  
 P<sub>1</sub> = 0, P<sub>2</sub> = 897 #/FT



11/25/01





FOUNDATION PLAN

SCALE - 1/4" = 1'-0"

APPROVED  
DEPT. OF BUILDING AND SAFETY  
CITY OF TORRANCE

*Handwritten signature*

ATTACHMENT #3

25636 Amber Leaf RD Residential Data Sheet  
 Attachment # 4 Stephenson  
 Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval  
 Recommendation

Occupation Index	Boundary Description	Address	AIN-CIRCLE SF	Add Garage	YR Built	BDRMS	BATHS	Stories	Count	Lot Size	FAR	Adj FAR +Garage
1	TR=31334 LOT 12	2830 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-01	2501	1976	4	4	3	3	7260	0.344490	0.399587
2	TR=31334 LOT 11	2834 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-01	2050	1976	3	3	2	2	6670	0.307346	0.367316
3	TR=31334 LOT 10	2838 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-01	1988	2388	3	3	2	2	6000	0.331333	0.398000
4	TR=31334 LOT 9	2842 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-01	2050	1976	3	3	2	2	6000	0.341667	0.408333
5	TR=31334 LOT 8	2846 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2501	1976	4	4	3	3	6000	0.416833	0.483500
6	TR=31334 LOT 7	2850 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2474	1976	4	4	2	2	6000	0.412333	0.479000
7	TR=31334 LOT 6	2854 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2567	1976	4	4	3	3	6000	0.427833	0.494500
8	TR=31334 LOT 5	2858 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2050	1976	3	3	2	2	6000	0.341667	0.408333
9	TR=31334 LOT 4	2862 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2501	1976	4	4	2	2	6000	0.416833	0.483500
10	TR=31334 LOT 3	2866 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2501	1976	4	4	3	10	6000	0.416833	0.483500
11	TR=31334 LOT 2	2870 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2747	1976	4	4	3	3	6220	0.441640	0.505949
12	TR=31334 LOT 1	2874 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-013-00	2050	1976	4	4	3	12	6220	0.329582	0.393891
				400					13			
CST1Left	TR=31334 LOT 52	2833 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-03	2162	1976	4	3	2	2	7100	0.304507	0.360845
CST2Left	TR=31334 LOT 53	2837 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-03	2193	1976	4	3	2	2	6000	0.365500	0.432167
CST3Left	TR=31334 LOT 54	2841 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2193	1976	4	3	2	2	6000	0.365500	0.432167
CST4Left	TR=31334 LOT 55	2845 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	1692	2092	3	2	2	2	6000	0.282000	0.348667
CST5Left	TR=31334 LOT 56	2849 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2193	1976	3	3	2	2	6000	0.365500	0.432167
CST6Left	TR=31334 LOT 57	2853 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2193	1976	3	3	2	2	6000	0.365500	0.432167
CST7Left	TR=31334 LOT 58	2857 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2436	2836	3	3	2	2	6000	0.406000	0.472667
CST8Left	TR=31334 LOT 59	2861 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2193	1976	3	3	2	8	6000	0.365500	0.432167
CST9Left	TR=31334 LOT 60	2865 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	1692	2092	3	2	1	1	6890	0.245573	0.303628
CST10Left	TR=31334 LOT 61	2869 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2178	2578	3	2	2	2	6030	0.361194	0.427529
CST11Left	TR=31334 LOT 62	2873 SUNNYGLEN RD	7547-010-04	2162	2562	3	3	2	11	6200	0.348710	0.413226
									Sub Total Count	23		

25636 Amber Leaf RD Residential Data Sheet  
 Attachment # 4 Stephenson  
 Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval  
 Recommendation

Location Index	Boundary Description/Address	AIN-CIRCLE/SF	YR Built	BDRMS	BATHS	Stories	Lot Size	FAR
1	*TR=31334 LOT 12 25636 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-013-01 6000	2008	5	4	2	10750	0.556140 0.489488
2	*TR=31334 LOT 14 25634 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-013-01 3062	1979	5	3	2	10620	0.288324 0.325989
3	*TR=31334 LOT 15 25632 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,178	1976	4	3	2	7090	0.307193 0.363611
4	*TR=31334 LOT 16 25630 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,193	1976	3	3	2	6200	0.353710 0.418226
5	*TR=31334 LOT 17 25628 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 1,692	1976	3	3	2	6000	0.282000 0.348667
6	*TR=31334 LOT 18 25626 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,178	1976	4	3	2	6000	0.363000 0.429667
7	*TR=31334 LOT 19 25624 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,193	1976	4	3	2	6000	0.365500 0.432167
8	*TR=31334 LOT 20 25622 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,045	1976	3	3	2	6360	0.321541 0.384434
9	*TR=31334 LOT 21 25620 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,193	1976	4	3	2	6000	0.365500 0.432167
10	*TR=31334 LOT 22 25618 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,178	1976	4	3	2	7430	0.293136 0.346972
11	*TR=31334 LOT 23 25616 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-00 2,614	1976	5	3	2	6930	0.377201 0.434921
12	*TR=31334 LOT 24 25614 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2,193	1976	4	3	2	11	6670 0.328786 0.388756
13	*TR=31334 LOT 25 25612 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2,045	1976	3	3	2	6750	0.302963 0.362222
14	*TR=31334 LOT 26 25610 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 1,692	1976	3	2	2	6000	0.282000 0.348667
15	*TR=31334 LOT 27 25608 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 1,877	1976	3	3	2	6100	0.307705 0.373279
16	*TR=31334 LOT 28 25606 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2,178	1976	4	3	2	6090	0.357635 0.423317
17	*TR=31334 LOT 29 25604 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2,614	1976	5	3	2	6110	0.427823 0.493290
	*TR=31334 LOT 30 25602 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2,162	1976	4	3	2	17	7400 0.292162 0.346216
							500 FT Total C	29

Location Index Access to the Right of the Property	Boundary Description Address	AIN-CIRCLE SF	YR Built	BDRMS	BATHS	Stories	Lot Size	FAR	Adj FAR +Garage
M1Left	TR=31334 LOT 51 25623 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-03 4095	1976	7	5	1	10540	0.388520	0.426471
M2Left	TR=31334 LOT 50 25621 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-03 2614	1976	5	3	2	6000	0.435667	0.502333
M3Left	TR=31334 LOT 49 25619 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-03 2178	1976	4	3	1	6000	0.363000	0.429667
M4Left	TR=31334 LOT 34 25607 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-02 2162	1976	5	3	2	6030	0.358541	0.424876
M5Left	TR=31334 LOT 33 25605 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2402	1976	4	3	2	9200	0.261087	0.304565
M6Left	TR=31334 LOT 32 25603 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2614	1976	5	3	2	8220	0.318005	0.366667
M7Left	TR=31334 LOT 31 25601 AMBER LEAF RD	7547-010-01 2193	1976	4	3	2	6080	0.360691	0.426480
				500 FT	Total C	33			
M1Left	TR=31334 LOT 48 2834 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-03 2288	1976	4	3	2	7350	0.311293	0.365714
M2Left	TR=31334 LOT 47 2838 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-03 2178	1976	4	3	2	6000	0.363000	0.429667
M3Left	TR=31334 LOT 46 2842 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-03 2162	1976	3	3	2	6000	0.360333	0.427000
M4Left	TR=31334 LOT 45 2846 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-03 4631	1976	6	5	2	7570	0.611757	0.664597
M5Left	TR=31334 LOT 44 2848 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-03 2614	1976	5	3	2	8940	0.292394	0.337136
M6Left	TR=31334 LOT 43 2850 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2667	1976	5	3	2	5780	0.461419	0.530623
M7Left	TR=31334 LOT 42 2852 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2501	1976	4	4	2	6370	0.392622	0.455416
M8Right	TR=31334 LOT 41 2854 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2614	1976	5	3	2	7480	0.349465	0.402941
M9Right	TR=31334 LOT 40 2857 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2195	1976	3	3	2	7150	0.306993	0.362937
M10Right	TR=31334 LOT 39 2853 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2193	1976	3	3	2	6410	0.342122	0.404524
M11Right	TR=31334 LOT 38 2849 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2178	1976	4	3	2	6030	0.361194	0.427529
M12Right	TR=31334 LOT 37 2845 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 2077	1976	3	3	2	6030	0.344444	0.410779
M13Right	TR=31334 LOT 36 2841 MISTY MORNING RD	7547-010-02 1692	1976	3	2	2	6000	0.282000	0.348667
				500 FT	Total C	40			
				500 FT	Total C	40			

Location Index	Boundary Description/Address	AIN-CIRCLE/SF	YR Built	BDRMS	BATHS	Stories	Lot Size	FAR	Adj FAR +Garage
North Side of Windmill M@CRN/Rolling	TR=31332 LOT 5 : 25549 Rolling Hills Way/Crm Windmill	7547-009-00 2588	1976	5	3	2	7070	0.366054	0.422631
ing W-2 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 6 2827 Windmill	7547-009-00 2072	1976	4	3	2	7780	0.266324	0.317738
ing W-3 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 7 2831 Windmill	7547-009-00 2028	1976	3	3	3	7920	0.256061	0.306566
ing W-4 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 8 2835 Windmill	7547-009-00 2499	1976	4	4	3	6990	0.357511	0.414735
ing W-5 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 9 2839 Windmill	7547-009-00 2072	1976	4	3	2	7000	0.296000	0.353143
ing W-6 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 10 2841 Windmill	7547-009-01 2028	1976	3	3	3	7000	0.289714	0.346857
ing W-7 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 11 2845 Windmill	7547-009-01 2696	1976	4	4	3	7000	0.385143	0.442286
ing W-8 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 12 2849 Windmill	7547-009-01 2072	1976	4	3	3	7000	0.296000	0.353143
ing W-9 From Crm-North	TR=31332 LOT 13 2853 Windmill	7547-009-01 2028	1976	3	3	2	7000	0.289714	0.346857
ing W-10 From Crm-North Side	TR=31332 LOT 14 2857 Windmill	7547-009-01 2499	1976	4	4	2	7000	0.357000	0.414143
ing W-11 From Crm-North Side	TR=31332 LOT 15 2901 Windmill	7547-009-01 2072	1976	4	3	2	7000	0.296000	0.353143
ing W-12 From Crm-North Side	TR=31332 LOT 16 2905 Windmill	7547-009-01 2028	1976	3	3	3	7000	0.289714	0.346857
ing W-13 From Crm-North Side	TR=31332 LOT 17 2909 Windmill	7547-009-01 2072	1976	4	3	3	7000	0.296000	0.353143
ing W-14 From Crm-North Side	TR=31332 LOT 18 2913 Windmill	7547-009-01 2499	1976	4	4	3	6920	0.361127	0.418931
South Side of Windmill									
ing W-1 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 74 2838 Windmill	7547-010-06 1692	2092	1976	3	2	6429	0.263182	0.325401
ing W-2 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 73 2842 Windmill	7547-010-05 2253	2653	1976	3	2	6000	0.375500	0.442167
ing W-3 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 72 2846 Windmill	7547-010-05 1877	2277	1976	3	2	6000	0.312833	0.379500
ing W-4 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 71 2850 Windmill	7547-010-05 2908	3308	1976	5	2	6000	0.484667	0.551333
ing W-5 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 70 2854 Windmill	7547-010-05 1692	2092	1976	3	2	6000	0.282000	0.348667
ing W-6 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 69 2858 Windmill	7547-010-05 2193	2593	1976	3	2	6000	0.365500	0.432167
ing W-6 From Crm-South	TR=31334 LOT 68 2862 Windmill	7547-010-05 2548	2948	1976	4	2	6620	0.384894	0.445317
allen Leaf Rd North-1	TR=31334 LOT 67 25602 Fallen Leaf	7547-010-05 2756	3346	1976	4	2	5880	0.468707	0.569048
allen Leaf Rd North-2	TR=31334 LOT 66 25604 Fallen Leaf	7547-010-05 2178	2668	1976	4	2	5640	0.386170	0.473050
allen Leaf Rd North-3	TR=31334 LOT 65 25606 Fallen Leaf	7547-010-05 1692	2092	1976	3	1	7000	0.241714	0.296857
allen Leaf Rd North-4	TR=31334 LOT 64 25608 Fallen Leaf	7547-010-05 1877	2277	1976	3	2	6350	0.295591	0.358583
allen Leaf Rd North-5	TR=31334 LOT 63 25610 Fallen Leaf	7547-010-04 2045	2445	1976	3	2	7080	0.288842	0.345339
Total # of 3 Stories- rectangle Area						14: Total Count	65		

Parcel Viewer - Windows Internet Explorer

http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/jmapping/viewer.asp

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Norton Identity Safe Log-Ins

Google Go

City of Torrance - Hillside Area Torrance, CA Municipal Code

Parcel Viewer X

Settings Tools

Assessor's Home Page Search Menu Feedback Help/FAQs

Property Assessment Information System

Records for this property are kept at the South District Office

# ATTACHMENT 5a Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval - Recommendation - Stephenson

**Property Information**  
(How frequently is the information updated on this site?)

Assessor's ID No. 7547-010-031  
Site Address 2848 MISTY MORNING RD  
TORRANCE CA 90505  
Property Type Single Family Residence  
Region / Cluster 14 / 14159  
Tax Rate Area (TRA) 09340

[Click Here to View Assessor's Map](#)  
[Click Here to View Index Map](#)

**Recent Sales Information**  
(Latest Sale Date)

Indicated Sale Price  
[Search for Recent Sales](#)

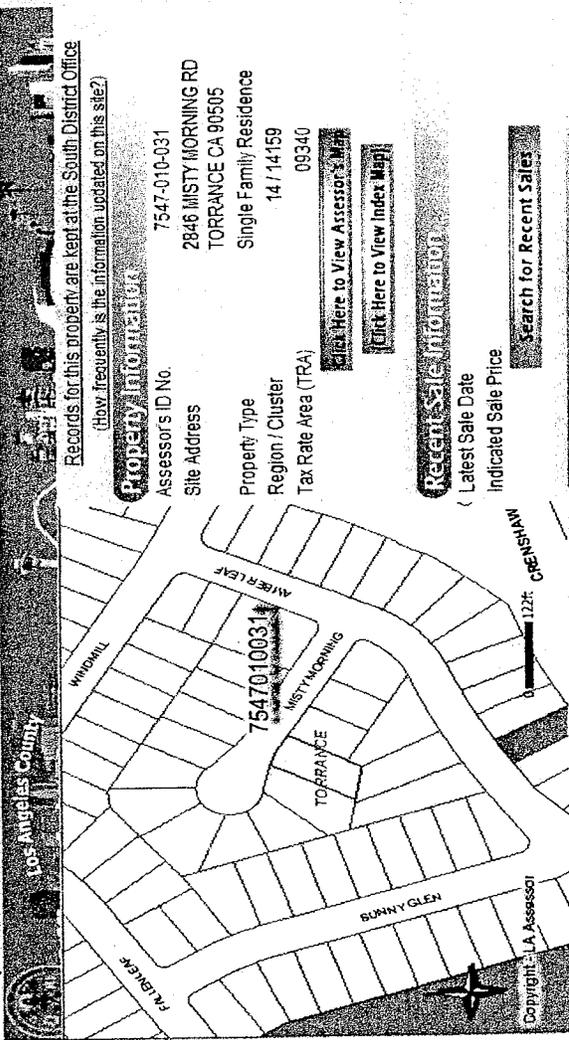
**2008 Roll Values**

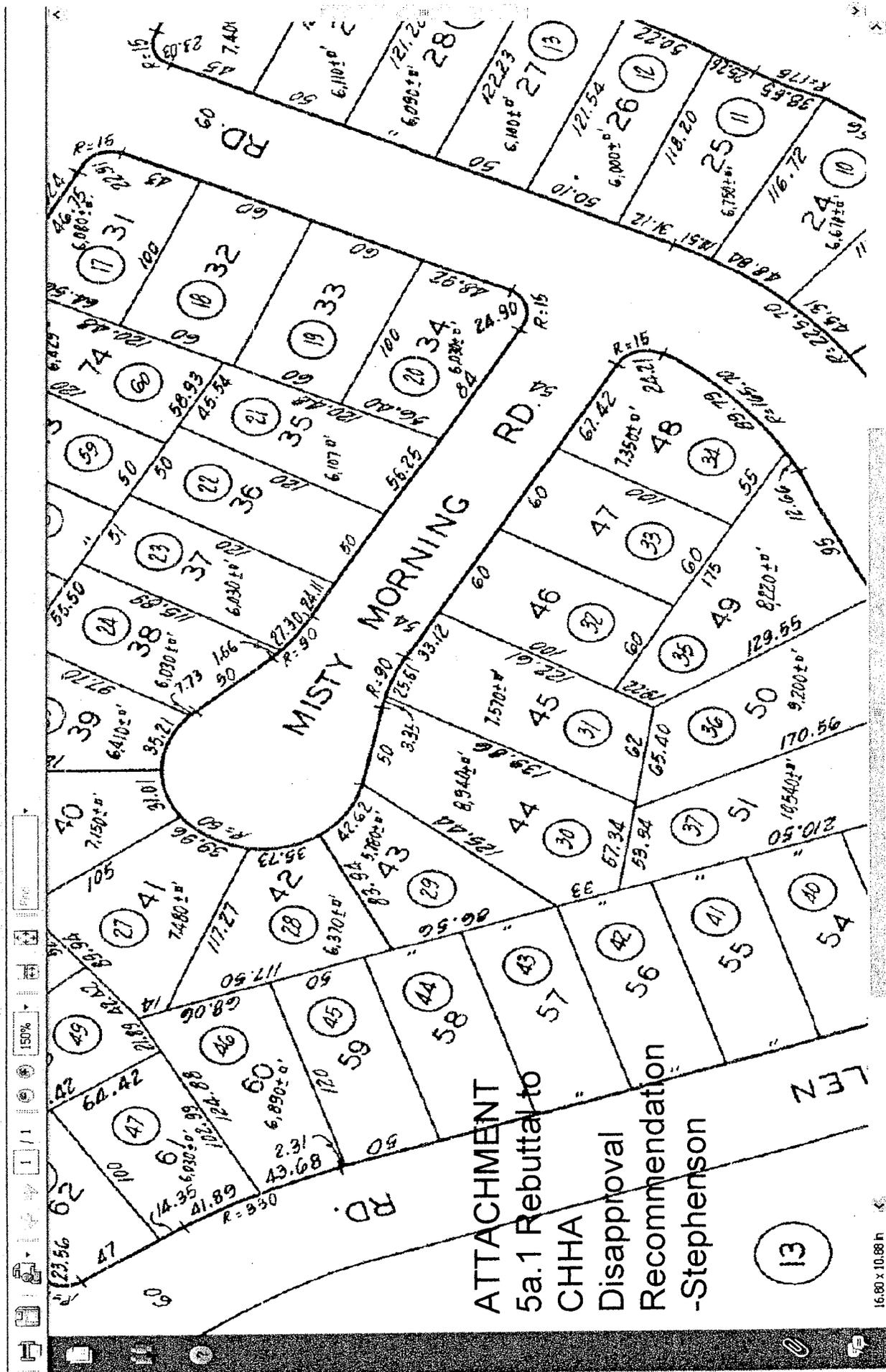
Recording Date	08/14/1976
Land	\$115,524
Improvements	\$521,553
Personal Property	\$0
Fixtures	\$0
Homeowners' Exemption	\$7,000
Real Estate Exemption	\$0
Personal Property Exemption	\$0
Fixture Exemption	\$0

[Click Here for 2008 Annual Taxes](#)  
(I have a question regarding my property tax payment!)

[Estimate Supplemental Taxes](#)

**Property Boundaries**  
\*TR=31334 LOT 45





Parcel Viewer - Windows Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Norton Identity Safe Log-ins

Google City of Torrance - Hillside Area Torrance, CA Municipal Code Parcel Viewer

http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/mapping/viewer.asp

20 blocked Check Look for Map Send to

Settings Page Tools

Assessor's Home Page Search Menu Feedback Help/FAQs

Los Angeles County

Office of the Assessor

Site Address: 25623 AMBER LEAF RD  
TORRANCE CA 90506

Property Type: Single Family Residence

Region / Cluster: 14 / 14159

Tax Rate Area (TRA): 09340

[Click Here to View Assessor's Map](#)

[Click Here to View Index Map](#)

**Recent Sale Information**

Latest Sale Date

Indicated Sale Price

[Search for Recent Sales](#)

**2008 Roll Values**

Recording Date	01/21/2004
Land	\$73,863
Improvements	\$214,229
Personal Property	\$0
Fixtures	\$0
Homeowners' Exemption	\$7,000
Real Estate Exemption	\$0
Personal Property Exemption	\$0
Fixture Exemption	\$0

[Click Here for 2008 Annual Taxes](#)

(Have a question regarding my property tax payment?)

**Estimate Supplemental Taxes**

**Property Boundaries**

\*TR=31334 LOT 51

**Building Description**

Improvement 1

Square Footage: 4,095

Year Built / Effective Year Built: 1976 / 1981

# ATTACHMENT

## 5b Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval Recommendation -Stephenson



Parcel Viewer - Windows Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Norton Identity Safe

Go City of Torrance - Hillside Area Torrance, CA Municipal Code Parcel Viewer

http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/mapping/viewer.asp

20 blocked

Check Look for Map

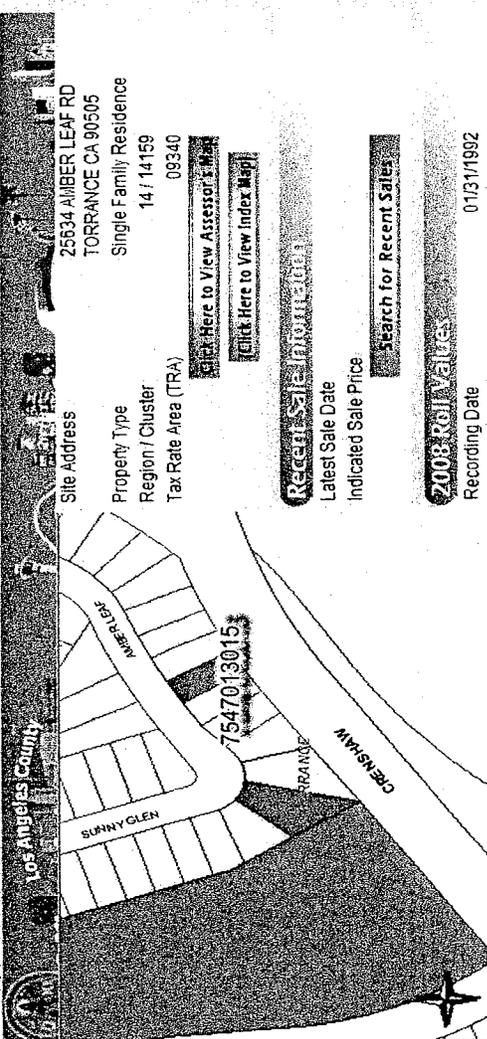
Settings

Page Tools

Assessor's Home Page Search Menu Feedback

Help/FAQs

Property Assessment Information System



Site Address  
25634 AMBER LEAF RD  
TORRANCE CA 90505

Property Type  
Single Family Residence

Region / Cluster  
14 / 14159

Tax Rate Area (TRA)  
09340

[Click Here to View Assessor's Map](#)

[Click Here to View Index Map](#)

# ATTACHMENT 5c Rebuttal to CHHA Disapproval - Recommendation - Stephenson

**Recent Sale Information**

Latest Sale Date  
Indicated Sale Price

[Search for Recent Sales](#)

**2008 Roll Values**

Recording Date	01/31/1992
Land	\$66,183
Improvements	\$191,306
Personal Property	\$0
Fixtures	\$0
Homeowners Exemption	\$7,000
Real Estate Exemption	\$0
Personal Property Exemption	\$0
Fixture Exemption	\$0

[Click Here for 2008 Annual Taxes](#)

(I have a question regarding my property tax payment)

**Estimate Supplemental Tax**

**Property Boundaries**

\*TR=31334 LOT 14

**Building Description**

Improvement 1

Square Footage 3,062

Year Built 1976

Parcel Viewer - Microsoft Excel - A

Documents and Settings

Microsoft Excel - A

25634 Amber Leaf

Documents and Settings

Microsoft Excel - A

Internet

Saturday, December 13, 2008

10:51 AM



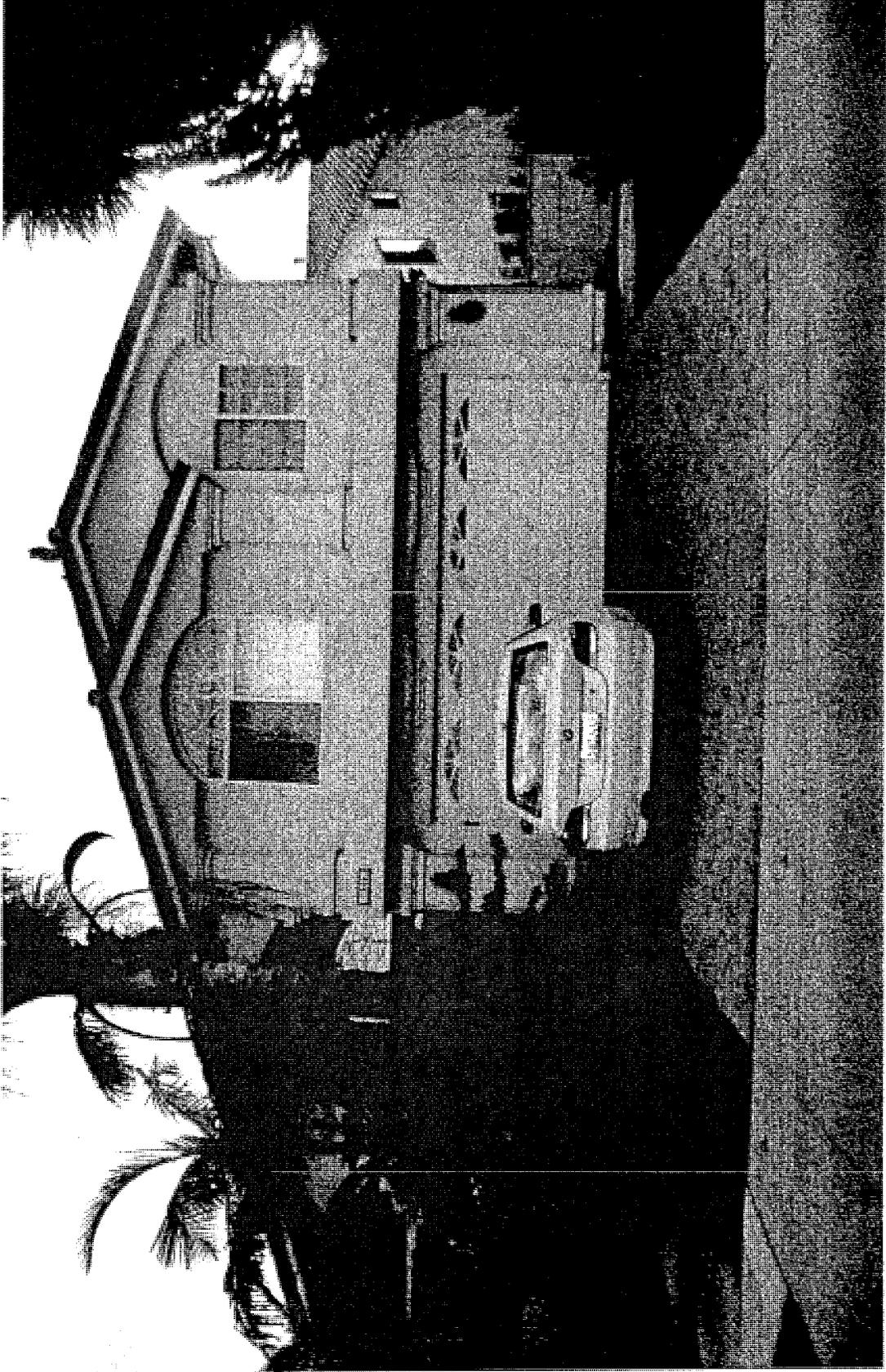
Country Hills Neighbor - 2 BLKS From 25636 Amber Leaf RD Property  
3025 Soft Wind Way – Multiple Gable and Hip and Shed Roof Profiles



Saturday, December  
13, 2008

Att. # 6A Architectural Conformity –  
within 100/1000 Ft - 25636 Amber Leaf Road

Country Hills - 500 Feet From 25636 Amber Leaf RD Property  
2846 Misty Morning (Front View) – Similar Roof Profiles & Architecture



Saturday, December  
13, 2008

Att. #6B Architectural Conformity –  
within 100/1000 Ft - 25636 Amber Leaf Road

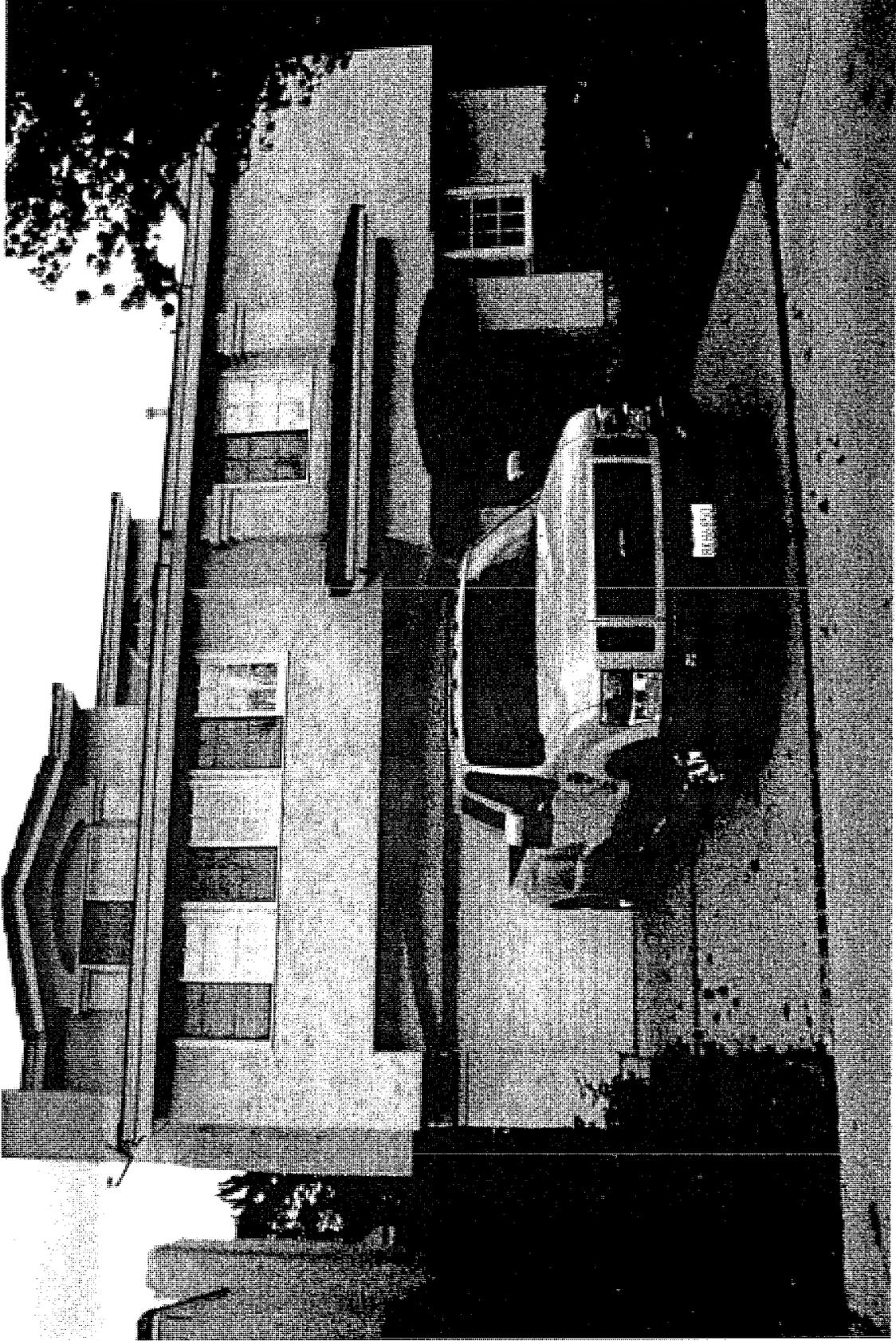
Country Hills - 500 Feet From 25636 Amber Leaf RD Property  
2846 Misty Morning (Side View) – Similar Roof Profiles & Architecture



Saturday, December  
13, 2008

Att. #6C Architectural Conformity –  
within 100/1000 Ft - 25636 Amber Leaf Road

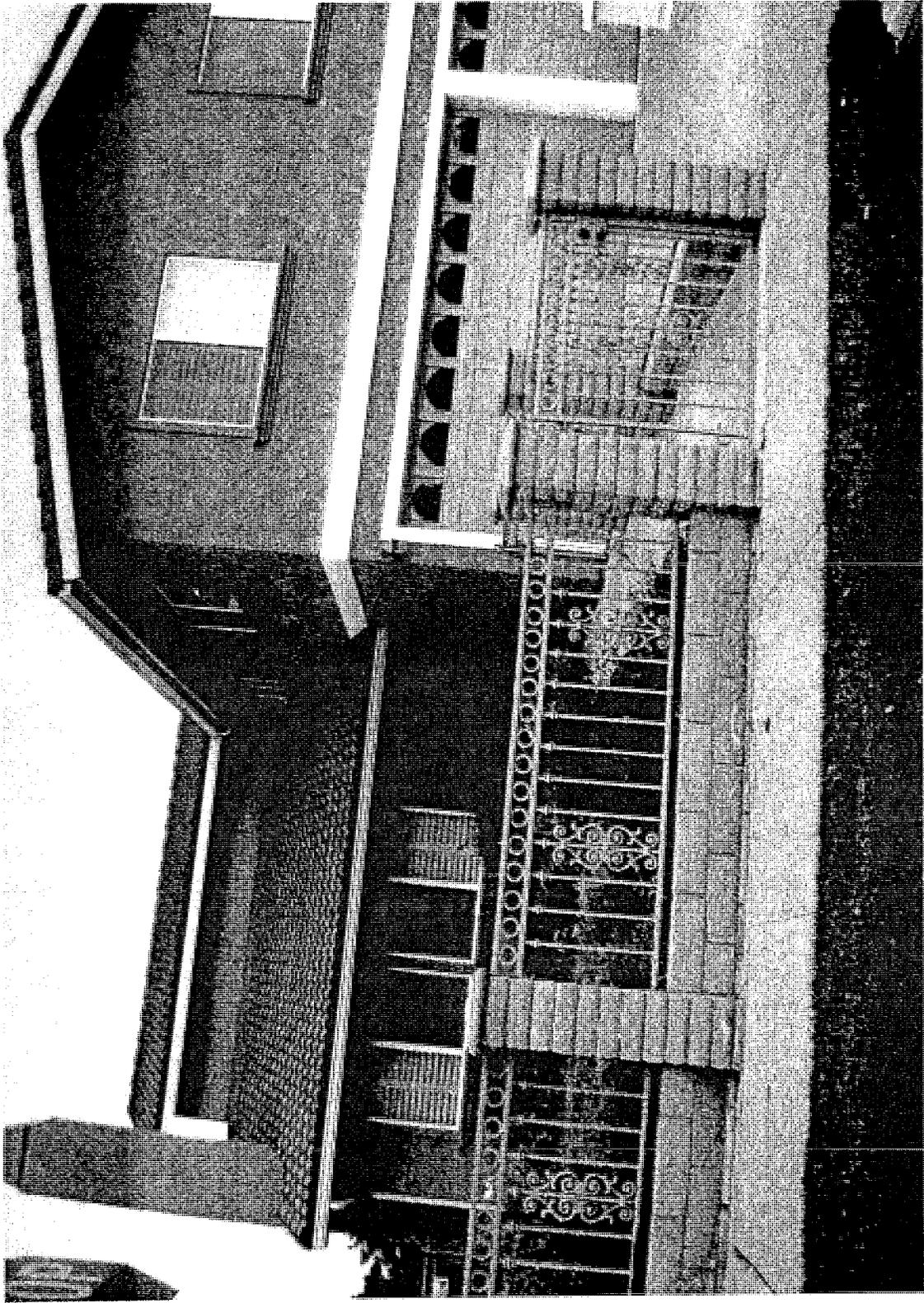
Country Hills 6 Houses South From 25636 Amber Leaf RD Property  
2866 Sunny Glenn – Similar Roof Profiles & Architecture



Saturday, December  
13, 2008

Att. #6D Architectural Conformity –  
within 100/1000 Ft - 25636 Amber Leaf Road

Country Hills - 2 BLKS From 25636 Amber Leaf RD Property  
25602 Fallen Leaf Rd – Similar Roof Profiles & Architecture



Saturday, December  
13, 2008

Att. #6E Architectural Conformity –  
within 100/1000 Ft - 25636 Amber Leaf Road

# Country Hills Association Newsletter

October 3, 2004

**310-607-8443 A Nonprofit Organization P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505**  
**ECC VOICEMAIL NUMBER: 310-607-8443**

COUNTRY HILLS ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 1253 TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA 90505

### Home Improvement Application – Fee \$10.00

**This form to be submitted, along with required fee, before starting work.**  
Mail completed applications to address above.

Please allow 30 days for your application to be acted upon after it is received. All fees are non-refundable, including disapproved applications. Checks should be made payable to "Country Hills Association." Call the voicemail number for assistance. It is each homeowner's responsibility to apply for all City required permits, if applicable. The fee will be raised to \$50.00 if you do not apply in advance.

Name of Homeowner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL(optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Country Hills Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Resident Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Improvement:**

- |                                                |                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New roof              | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping (where walls or fences are part of it) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remodel or Addition   | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Fences                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driveway              | <input type="checkbox"/> Doors (including garage)                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows               | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair (no fee req'd)*                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paint/Stucco | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other _____                             |

\* "No fee" does not apply to repair to improvement that was not approved. If no fee is required your check will be returned to you.

**Description:** Please provide detailed plans, drawings, statements of work or specifications, along with material samples/colors, the name(s) of manufacturers, contractors. Please estimate work start and end dates. (You may write on reverse or attach description)

.....  
*Do Not Write Below This Line. ECC Use Only*

Date Received:

Owner Contact Date 1:

Date 2:

- Approved
- Not Approved

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACHMENT #7  
25636 AMBERLEAF RD

To Whom It May Concern,

I am trying to acquire information on the Country Hills Association. I just recently purchased a parcel of land at 25636 Amber Leaf Road and I have been informed there is a HOA associated with the neighborhood area.

I would like to talk to somebody concerning the HOA and its policies and oversight processes.

If someone could contact me at the below listed POC info I would sincerely appreciate it.

"Your assistance in this matter is sincerely appreciated."

Sincerely

*Mark Stephenson*

Mark Stephenson  
(310) 812-3807 (W)  
(310) 953-9328 (H)

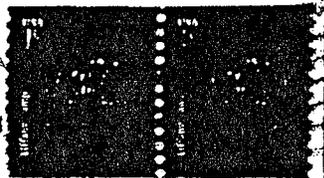
*CHHOA@SoCal.rr.com*

*LM 10-9  
10-18  
10-19*

*MARK STEPHENSON  
2607 WOODBURY DRIVE  
TOLLANCE, CA 90503*

SANTA ANA CA

06 OCT 2007 PM



*Country Hills Association  
P.O. Box 1253  
Torrance, CA 90505*

50505+0253



ATTACHMENT # 8  
25636 AMBER LEAF RD

**Mark Stephenson**

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2008 12:33 PM  
**To:** 'CHHOA@socal.rr.com'  
**Cc:** 'orlye.stephenson@verizonbusiness.com'; 'OGraham@TORRNET.COM'  
**Subject:** Questions Concerning the Property at 25636 Amber leaf Road

To Whom it May Concern,

If at all possible, I would like to speak to a CHHOA representative concerning what documentation is recommended for the CCHOA review concerning the proposed development of a resident at 25636 Amber Leaf Road. I am more than willing to provide the current set of plans I have to the HOA to review and further assist in their analysis of this proposed residence.

Please feel free to contact me at the below listed numbers at any time. I am including a pager number because I would like to see what needs to be resolved in the miscommunication for the application process to establish a repo ire that supports both sides of the interactions we may be engaged in.....

Mark Stephenson

2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager

Attachment # 9 CHHA Rebuttal

## Attachment # 10 CHHA Rebuttal Documentation

August 24, 2008

Dear Neighbors,

We, the Stephenson family, are the current owners of the empty lot at 25636 Amber Leaf Rd. We purchased the lot last July and have been working ever since on the plans for our new home.

As we are preparing to submit a hillside site plan to the Torrance Community Development, my wife and I would like to extend an invitation to answer any questions you may have concerning this project.

In order to facilitate this process we will be at the lot site on Sept 6 2008 from 11:00 AM to 1:00PM to answer any of your questions. If you have any questions and are not able to attend please do not hesitate to contact us so we can see if we can meet at an alternate time.

We look forward to meeting all of you.

Sincerely,

The Stephenson Family

(310) 953-9328 (H)

**Mark Stephenson**

**From:** Mark Stephenson [mstephenson002@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 12, 2008 5:44 PM  
**To:** 'CTSUNEISHI@aol.com'  
**Subject:** Privacy Concern for Proposed Residence at 25636 Amber Leaf Rd

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneishi,

My wife and I would like to talk to you concerning some of your concerns on the privacy issue that has been raised for our proposed project. First all I would like to say that we have the highest regard for your concerns and sincerely appreciate the friendly interactions we have had in our 2-3 meetings.

We are open to any suggestion you may have and have detailed plans to identify which mitigation techniques we may be able to pursue to meet your privacy concerns.

We are more than willing to meet you at any time to discuss your concerns and work towards a mutually beneficial decision for both of us. Both Orlye and I have been impressed with your willingness to accommodate the planning process and the sincerity of your efforts to assist us as we move through the hurdles of trying to build a residence.

We feel that your concerns can be met with minimal impact but would like to ensure we understand what your concerns are as this will ensure we can minimize the amount of miscommunication that usually happens in these circumstances. I think by showing you what options are available or can be done this may allow you to feel more comfortable with the changes. Trying to explain the changes w/o plans is difficult at best and may lead to a misunderstanding that we are not willing to hear your concerns and address them in professional manner.

I am enclosing all of our personal contact information.

Mark Stephenson

2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(310) 953-9328 (H)  
(424) 731-1779 (Cell)  
(310) 723-1110 Pager

Attachment #11 CHHA Rebuttal

12/14/2008

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 11C****CASE TYPE & NUMBER:** Precise Plan of Development– PRE08-00025**NAME:** Mark Stephenson**PURPOSE OF APPLICATION:**

Request for approval of a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence with semi-subterranean garage in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District, in the R-1 Zone.

**LOCATION:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road**ZONING:** R-1: Single-Family Residential Zone / Hillside Overlay District**ADJACENT ZONING AND LAND USE:**

NORTH: R-1; Hillside Overlay District, Three-story Single Family Residence

SOUTH: R-1; Hillside Overlay District, Two-story Single Family Residences

EAST: R-1; Hillside Overlay District, Two-story Single Family Residence

WEST: C-5; Hillside Overlay District, Shopping Center

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** Low Density Residential**COMPLIANCE WITH GENERAL PLAN:**

Yes, a two-story single-family residence with attached garage complies with the Low-Density Residential designation.

**EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS AND /OR NATURAL FEATURES:**

The property is currently vacant but it was previously developed with a two story single-family residence with an attached garage.

**ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS:**

New construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2).

**BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:**

*Project Description:* The applicant is requesting approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence with a semi-subterranean garage level. The property is a pie shaped lot that is 10,750 square feet in area, and it is located in the R-1 Zone, in the Hillside Overlay District. The lot is currently vacant but it was previously developed with a two story single-family residence with an attached garage built in 1976. This house was severely damaged by a fire in 2004, and subsequently demolished in 2006.

The applicant is proposing the construction of a new two-story single family residence with a semi-subterranean two-car garage. The total area for the project is 6,160 sf. On the lower floor, the project features a split level design which includes a semi-subterranean two-car garage, an entry foyer, kitchen, family room, one bedroom, as well as living and dining rooms. On the second floor, the project includes the construction of a master suite, media room, laundry, and three additional bedrooms. There is a 219 sf balcony along the southerly house elevation which takes access from the master suite on the second floor. The proposed front setback is approximately 20.11' ft. at the closest point, the northerly side yard setback is 6.00' and the easterly side yard setback is 6.91' at the closest point. The proposed rear yard setback is approximately 30.50'. Based on the Topographical Survey and the Height & Location Certification, the remodeled residence will be 35.60' in height from the lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' to the highest ridge elevation of 138.35', based on a benchmark elevation of 100.72'.

The following project summary was prepared by Staff; however, it should be noted that these calculations differ from the calculations shown on the plans. As required by Code, the Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) needs to include the garage. In addition, the stairs and any open ceiling area with an overall height of more than 17'-0', need to be counted twice (first and second floor). For this project, Staff has calculated the F.A.R. to be .57. Staff has also reviewed information for several neighboring properties and found out that the F.A.R for these houses ranges from .31 to .74., with total squares footages ranging form 2,092 sf to 4,454 sf.

#### Project Information

• Lot Size	10,750 sq. ft.
• Proposed Lower Level (including garage)	3,217 sq. ft.
• Proposed Upper Level	2,943 sq. ft.
• Proposed Improvements Total	6,160 sq. ft.

#### Calculations

• Allowed Lot Coverage	40.00 %
• Proposed Lot Coverage	32.85 %
• Proposed Floor Area Ratio	.57 %
• Proposed Building Height	35.60 ft.

*Project Analysis:* A Precise Plan of Development is required because the property is located within the Hillside Overlay District and the new construction is over fourteen feet in height. The Hillside Ordinance requires that the Planning Commission make a series of findings relating to the design of the project and its potential impact on the

view, light, air and/or privacy of properties in the vicinity. The applicant has responded to this requirement in the Hillside Ordinance Criteria Response Sheet (Attachment #5). The applicant was also required to construct a silhouette to demonstrate potential impacts (Attachment #4). A licensed engineer has verified the height of the silhouette and staff made a field inspection.

Based on staff observations of the house and the silhouette, there do not appear to be adverse impacts to the view or air of surrounding properties by the proposed new construction. It does not appear that there are any significant views that occur across the roof of the remodeled home for the neighbors located adjacent to the property.

In terms of privacy and natural light, Staff has had conversations with both adjacent neighbors at 25634 Amber Leaf Rd. and 2830 Sunnyglen Rd. The neighbor to the south on Amber Leaf Rd. stated that he had no concerns with the project and was pleased to see the site being developed. However, the neighbor to the north on Sunnyglen Rd. stated that she was concerned with the height and mass of the proposed project as she feels that privacy and natural light around her rear yard will be adversely impacted. Staff has included a letter from this neighbor as she will not be able to attend the Planning Commission Hearing.

Because of the location of the proposed house, Staff sees how there may be potential privacy impacts to the neighbor's rear yard area. Therefore, a condition has been added that the north facing window in bedroom # 2 (second floor) shall be replaced by a high clerestory window with a sill height of at least 6'-0". In addition, Staff recommends that the windows in the adjacent bathroom and laundry room shall feature obscure glazing. Staff has checked with the Building and Safety Division and there would be no egress or ventilation issues resulting from the use of a clerestory window in bedroom #2, as long as the size of the other window in the room is not decreased and the total opening size for all windows in the room equals at least eight percent (8%) of the room area. In terms of natural light, there may be potential impacts to this neighbor at 2830 Sunnyglen Rd. early in the morning due to the prevailing path of the sun, however, the large amounts of mature landscaping and tall trees to the southeast of the project may already be impacting the neighbor's light in the same direction.

The applicant is requesting a height Waiver to allow the proposed house to be 35.60' ft. tall. Staff notes that most of the building will have height of 26.5' ft which is under the 27'-0" height limit in the R-1 Zone. The only area where the house will feature a height of 35.6' is in the rear half of the garage where a portion of the house sits on top of the semi-subterranean garage. As the proposed home and the semi-subterranean garage are attached and do not have a minimum separation of 6'-0", the Torrance Municipal Code requires that the height be measured from the lowest adjacent grade (the northeast corner of the garage) to the highest point of the structure (the main roof ridge of the house). Staff notes that this neighborhood

features several houses that are three-stories in height and exceed the 27'-0" height limit in the R-1 Zone. These houses were built in the mid-seventies when neither the Hillside Overlay District nor the current 27'-0" building height restriction were in place. There are seven three-story houses within the 500 feet notification area for this site, and they are common in the tract overall, particularly on up sloping lots such as this one.

The applicant is also proposing the construction of a 7'-0" feet tall retaining wall in the northerly side yard area and adjacent to the semi-subterranean garage. Staff notes that Planning Commission approval is also required for any retaining wall taller than 5'-0" in height. The proposed wall is a continuation of the retaining wall that separates the house from the semi-subterranean garage and it will provide the structural support necessary at this location, similarly to the adjacent house on Sunnyglen. Staff does not foresee any adverse impacts resulting from the construction of this retaining wall. The plans also mention the use of solar panels on the roof but no specific details are provided. Staff recommends that the applicant shall provide a plan detailing the location, size, orientation and technical specifications of the proposed solar panels subject to approval by the Community Development Director.

The square footage of the proposed house is divided between both stories, so that the applicant is able to preserve useable yard area that would not be available if the square footage were added to the first story only. It should also be noted that the square footage calculations count the stairwell and the vaulted ceiling foyer area once on each story as required by Code.

In the judgment of staff, this project as conditioned, does not appear to cause adverse impacts on the view, light, air or privacy of adjacent properties. The applicant has prepared a plan that complies with the R-1 standards, meets the open space requirements and is within the allowable lot coverage. The proposed house will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or to the property of other persons located in the vicinity in that it will enhance the value of the property. The proposed house will not interfere with the orderly development of the City because all proposed additions will provide the Code required setbacks, the proposed plan conforms to lot coverage, and it provides on-site parking required by the Municipal Code. The land use as a single family residence complies with the Zone and General Plan designation. For these reasons, staff recommends approval of the request as conditioned.

**PROJECT RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL.**

**FINDINGS OF FACT IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT:**

Findings supporting approval of the project are set forth in the attached Planning Commission Resolution.

**RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS, IF PROJECT IS APPROVED:**

Recommended conditions for the project are set forth in the attached Planning Commission Resolution.

Prepared by



Oscar Graham  
Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,



Gregg Lodan, AICP  
Planning Manager

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Planning Commission Resolution
2. Location and Zoning map
3. Code Requirements
4. Silhouette Certification
5. Hillside Ordinance Criteria Response Sheet
6. Correspondence from neighbor at 2830 Sunnyglen Rd.
7. Correspondence from Country Hills Homeowners Association
8. Site Plan, Floor Plan and Exterior Elevations

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 08-123**

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE IN CONJUNCTION WITH A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**PRE08-00025: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Precise Plan of Development filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement on the site. The project will not adversely impact the light, air and privacy of the neighboring properties ; and
- d) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, has been located planned and designed so as to cause the least intrusion on the views, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because the proposal does not impair any views of the surrounding properties and has been conditioned to prevent potential light, air or privacy impairments; and

- e) That the design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity because the exterior materials are of a high quality and the architectural style is in keeping with the architecture of the surrounding residences; and
- f) That the design will not have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity because the exterior will be treated with high-quality finishes equal to those of surrounding residences; and
- g) That granting such application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because a single-family residence is an appropriate use for this property; and
- h) That the proposed residence, as conditioned, would not cause or result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity because the proposed additions and resulting residence conforms to the Low-Density Residential Designation of the Land Use Element of the General Plan of the City of Torrance; and
- i) That it is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the building height, as there is no existing structure and as the applicant would not be able to preserve useable yard area if the total square footage was entirely built on the ground floor; and
- j) That denial of such an application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant because the only option for the applicant to increase the size of the previous home while preserving rear yard area is to distribute the new addition between the first and second stories. In addition, the proposed residence conforms to all code requirements, with the exception to the height which does not appear to have an adverse impact on the view, light, air and privacy of the surrounding properties; and
- k) That granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because the proposed residence complies with all zoning development standards. The proposed residence will cause no additional hazards, including traffic or fire hazards, there are no anticipated view impacts on neighboring properties as conditioned, there are other two story structures in the surrounding area and finally the proposal will upgrade a currently vacant property; and
- l) Denial of this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will constitute an unreasonable hardship because the proposed addition has provided all required setbacks and the residence, as conditioned, would comply with code required lot coverage and floor area ratio requirements for the R-1 zone.
- m) Granting this request to increase the interior floor area of the building to more than 50% of the area of the lot will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity because there does not appear to be adverse impairments to view, light, air or privacy to original views of surrounding properties.

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission by the following roll call votes APPROVED PRE08-00025, subject to conditions:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that PRE08-00025, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Precise Plan of Development 08-00025 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;
3. That the maximum height of the residence at the highest point of the roof shall not exceed a height of 35.60' as represented by the elevation of 138.35' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' based on a bench mark elevation of 100.72' located near the northeasterly corner of the property as shown on the official survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review)
4. That the height of the structure shall be certified by a licensed surveyor/engineer prior to requesting a framing or roof-sheathing inspection and shall not exceed 35.60' based on the elevation of 138.35' and a lowest adjacent grade of 102.75' as indicated on the certified silhouette based on the benchmark elevation of 100.72' as shown on the survey map on file in the Community Development Department; (Development Review).

5. That an automatic electric roll-up garage door shall be installed for the new garage; (Development Review);
6. That exterior color and material samples shall be submitted to the Community Development Department for approval prior to the issuance of any building permits; (Development Review)
7. That the north facing window in bedroom # 2 (second floor) shall be replaced by a high clerestory window with a sill height of at least 6'-0" to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director (Development Review)
8. That the windows in the adjacent bathroom and laundry room shall be reduced to the minimum allowed by Code and shall feature obscure glazing hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
9. That the applicant shall provide a plan detailing the location, size, orientation, angle and technical specifications of the proposed solar panels subject to approval by the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
10. That the silhouette shall remain in place for at least 15 days through the appeal period, but no more than 45 days after the final public hearing to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
11. That within 30 days of the final public hearing, the applicant shall remove the "Public Notice" sign to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director; (Development Review)
12. That 4" (minimum) contrasting address numerals are provided (Environmental Division)
13. That all conditions of other City Departments received prior to or during the consideration of this case by the Planning Commission shall be met.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 17th day December, 2008.

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Chairman, Torrance Planning Commission

ATTEST:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA     )  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss  
CITY OF TORRANCE         )

I, Gregg Lodan, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, approved, and adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance at a regular meeting of said Commission held on the 17th day December, 2008, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

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Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 08-124**

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A WAIVER TO EXCEED THE MAXIMUM HEIGHT IN THE R-1 ZONE AND A RETAINING WALL OVER FIVE FEET IN HEIGHT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH A PRECISE PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT AS PROVIDED FOR IN DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 41 OF THE TORRANCE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TWO-STORY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE ON PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT, IN THE R-1 ZONE AT 25636 AMBER LEAF.

**WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance conducted a public hearing on December 17, 2008 to consider an application for a Waiver filed by Mark Stephenson to allow a Waiver to exceed the maximum height in the R-1 Zone in conjunction with a Precise Plan to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf;

**WHEREAS**, due and legal publication of notice was given to owners of property in the vicinity thereof and due and legal hearings have been held, all in accordance with the provisions of Division 9, Chapter 6, Article 2 of the Torrance Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, new construction of one single family residence in a residential zone is Categorically Exempted by the 2008 Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act; Article 19, Section 15301 (e) (2); and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance does hereby find and determine as follows:

- a) That the property is located at 25636 Amber Leaf
- b) That the property is identified as Lot 13 of Tract 31334, in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California;
- c) That the proposed height of the residence and retaining wall will not have an adverse impact upon the light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity because of the proposed placement on the site; and
- d) That the proposed height of the residence and retaining wall are mostly driven by the lot topography which features an up sloping terrain grade of fifteen percent (15%) towards the rear of the property;

- e) That the proposed building height will enable the applicant to provide a semi-subterranean garage which reduces the need for a more extensive and incompatible site grading;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission by the following roll call votes APPROVED PRE08-00025, subject to conditions:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that WAV08-00011, filed by Mark Stephenson to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence on property located in the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf, on file in the Community Development Department of the City of Torrance, is hereby APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. That the use of the subject property for a single-family residence shall be subject to all conditions imposed in Waiver 08-00011 and any amendments thereto or modifications thereof as may be approved from time to time pursuant to Section 92.28.1 et seq. of the Torrance Municipal Code on file in the office of the Community Development Director of the City of Torrance; and further, that the said use shall be established or constructed and shall be maintained in conformance with such maps, plans, specifications, drawings, applications or other documents presented by the applicant to the Community Development Department and upon which the Planning Commission relied in granting approval;
2. That if this Waiver 08-00011 is not used within one year after granting of the permit, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the Community Development Director for an additional period as provided for in Section 92.27.1;
3. That all conditions of other City Departments received prior to or during the consideration of this case by the Planning Commission shall be met.

Introduced, approved and adopted this 17th day December, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Torrance Planning Commission

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA     )  
 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss  
 CITY OF TORRANCE        )

I, Gregg Lodan, Secretary to the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, approved, and adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Torrance at a regular meeting of said Commission held on the 17th day December, 2008, by the following roll call vote:

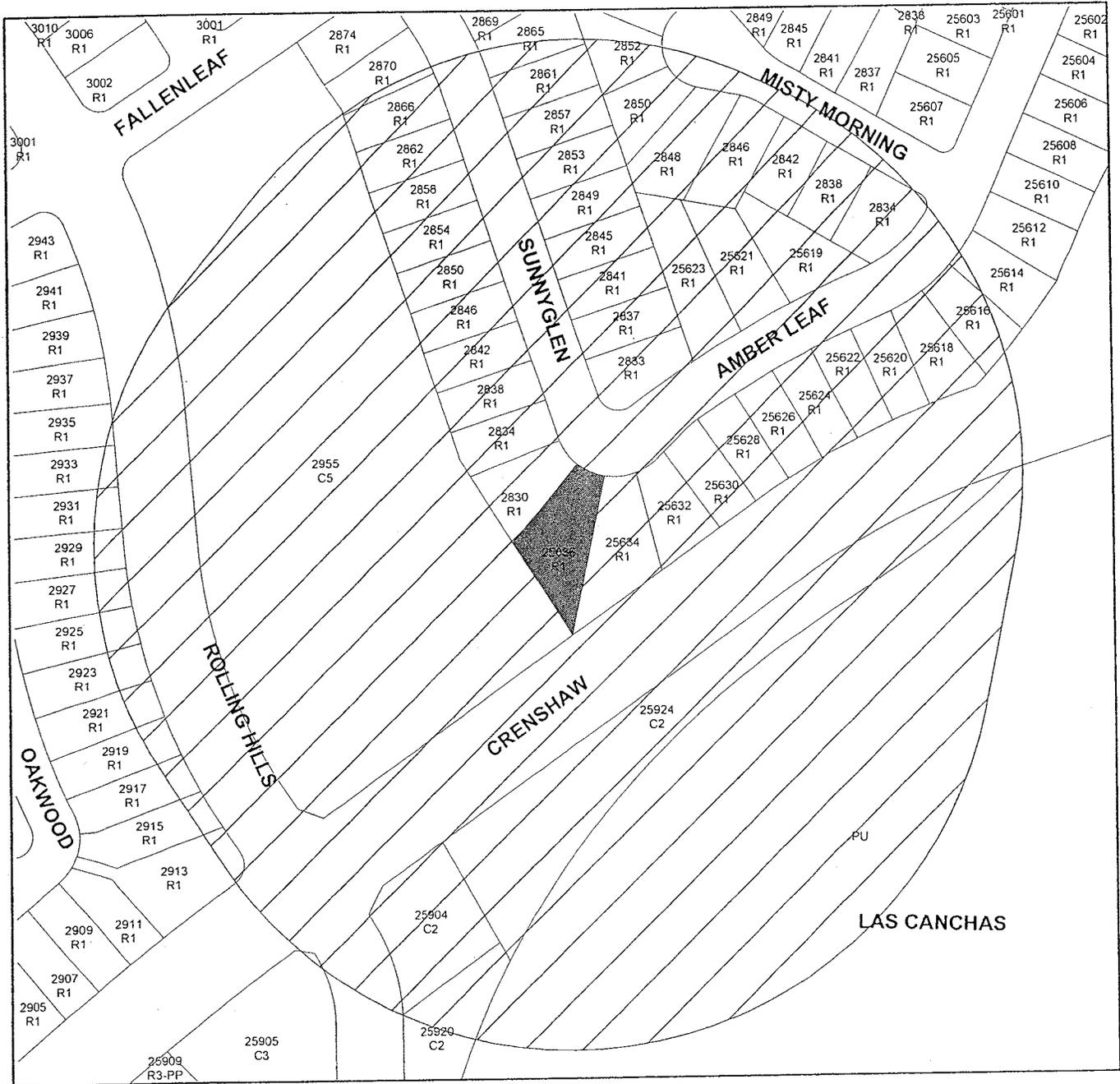
AYES: COMMISSIONERS:

NOES: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN: COMMISSIONERS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission



**LOCATION AND ZONING MAP**

25636 Amberleaf Road  
 PRE08-00025  
 WAV08-00011

**LEGEND**

- Notification Area
- 25636 Amberleaf Road

0 70 140 280 Feet

### **CODE REQUIREMENTS**

The following is a partial list of code requirements applicable to the proposed project. All possible code requirements are not provided here and the applicant is strongly advised to contact each individual department for further clarification. The Planning Commission may not waive or alter the code requirements. They are provided for information purposes only.

#### **Building and Safety:**

- Comply with the State energy requirements.
- Provide underground utilities.
- Pre-wire for cable television.
- Show location of pool equipment on the plans.

#### **Environmental Division:**

- The front yard of any property zoned for residential use shall not be more than 50% paved (City code sec. 92.5.14)
- The property shall be landscaped prior to final inspection (City code sec. 92.21.9)
- Provide 4" (minimum) contrasting address numerals for residence.
- Mechanical / Electrical equipment shall not be located in any side yard.

#### **Engineering:**

- A construction and excavation (C&E Permit) is required from the Community Development Department , Engineering Permits and Records Division, for any work in the public right-of-way.
- Replace portion of broken sidewalk per City of Torrance standards.

#### **Grading:**

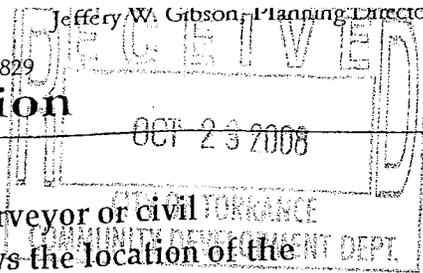
- Obtain grading permit prior to issuance of building permit.
- Submit two copies of grading / drainage plan with soil investigation report. Show all existing and proposed grades, structures, required public improvements and any other proposed drainage structures.



City of Torrance, Planning Department  
3031 Torrance Torrance, CA 90503 (310) 618-5990 FAX (310) 618-829

Jeffery W. Gibson, Planning Director

# Height and Location Certification



The survey must be performed by a licensed land surveyor or civil engineer and should be accompanied by a map which shows the location of the bench mark and the locations where the measurements were taken. The map should also show the location of existing and proposed structures.

## SILHOUETTE CERTIFICATION

I have surveyed the silhouette located at 25630 AMBERLEAF ROAD  
(address)

on 10/21/08, based on plans submitted to the City of Torrance  
(date)

by STEPHENSON / MCE DESIGN on \_\_\_\_\_, The survey was taken  
(applicant/architect) (date)

from a bench mark located at NORTHWEST CORNER "1/4 T ROE 30826"  
(address)

(attach map) which established a base elevation of 100.72'.

The ridge line/highest point of the roof was determined to have an elevation of 138.35'.

The plans indicate that the elevation should be 138.39'.

*I certify that I have measured the location of pertinent features located on the subject property. Based on the plans submitted to the Planning Department, I have verified that the silhouette/construction accurately represents the proposed structure in terms of height, building envelope, location on the site, and all setbacks.*

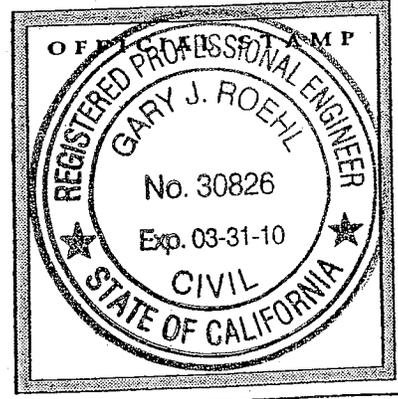
GARY J. ROEHL  
NAME (please print)

RCE 30826  
LS/RCE#

*Gary J. Roehl*  
SIGNATURE

(310) 542-9433  
PHONE

10/22/08  
DATE



Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

07-428





CITY OF TORRANCE – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

TO BE SUBMITTED WITH HILLSIDE PRECISE PLAN APPLICATION PRE \_\_\_\_\_

GIVE FACTS TO SUBSTANTIATE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA BY WHICH THE PLANNING COMMISSION MAY GRANT THIS HILLSIDE PRECISE PLAN. IT IS MANDATORY THAT THESE CRITERIA BE MET BEFORE THE CITY MAY LEGALLY GRANT A HILLSIDE PRECISE PLAN: AND, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON THE APPLICANT TO PROVE TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE CITY THAT THE CRITERIA ARE MET:  
(To be completed by all applicants)

1. Planning and Design (91.41.6)

- a. The following facts demonstrate that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact upon the view, light, air and privacy of other properties in the vicinity:

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listed on the attached form

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- ~~b. The following planning, design and locational considerations will insure that the proposed development will cause the least intrusion on the views, light, air, and privacy of other properties in the vicinity:~~

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- c. The following design elements have been employed to provide an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity:

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- d. The following aspects of the design insure that the development will not have a harmful impact upon the land values and investment of other properties in the vicinity:

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- e. Granting this application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity for the following reason (s):

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- f. The proposed development will not cause or result in an adverse cumulative impact on other properties in the vicinity, for the following reasons:

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2. LIMITATION IN INCREASES IN HEIGHT (91.41.10) (To be completed by applicant for a Precise Plan that would increase the height of any part of the building to a height greater than that of the existing building)

a. It is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the height, demonstrated by the following facts:

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b. Denial of this application would constitute an unreasonable hardship for the following reason (s):

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c. Granting this application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity for the following reason (s):

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3. LIMITATION IN INCREASE IN BUILDING SPACE LOT COVERAGE (91.41.11)

(To be completed by applicant for a Precise Plan that would increase the interior floor area of the building to more that 50% of the area of the lot.) N/A *Mark [Signature]*

- a. Denial of this application would constitute an unreasonable hardship for the following reason (s):

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- b. Granting this application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity for the following reason (s):

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CITY OF TORRANCE – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

City of Torrance

Precise Site Plan Submission From:

Mark F. Stephenson  
2607 Woodbury Drive  
Torrance CA 90503 (310) 953-9328 (H)

Property Address: 25636 Amberleaf Road

1a. The proposed property will be another 2 story residence in a sea of 2 story residences. 34/36 residences within 300' of the property are 2 story residences. 80/86 residences within 500' of the property are 2 story residences. It is also less obtrusive compared to some of the other residences within the notification radius of the proposed site. 8/35 or 23% of the homes within 300' of the proposed residence have FARs greater than the proposed residence.

1b. The proposed property is being built with a 3' subterranean area to reduce the silhouette of the structure when observed from the lower elevations of the lot. All of the offsets and height allowances are within the hillside ordinance allowances.

1c. The proposed residence has a Mediterranean architectural style. Its shape and layout are closely similar to the architectural models within the neighborhood.

1d. Any type of statistical analysis of the real estate market always reflects the fact that newer built homes help to appreciate the market values of the surrounding neighborhood.

1e. Leaving a vacant lot in a mature residential area will be detrimental to public welfare. Unattended observation of the lot and the inability to control access to the lot's elevated berm system could also be detrimental to the public welfare.

1f. See statements above

2a. If the average graded plane is less than 112' then any waiver for the height limitation is necessitated for the following reasons. If a height waiver is not approved, the first floor level of the residence will have a subterranean height of approximately 4' or greater. Under this circumstance the amount of sunlight available to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor will be significantly reduced. In conjunction the livability of the subterranean area is decreased as the further down the footprint has to be below grade. Having to live in a kitchen area where a person has to look up at an elevated window to see the exterior grade is not acceptable to any person trying to enjoy their property rights.

2b. The cost differential in engineering a retaining wall per additional foot of height is approximately 10% more than the planned retaining wall costs which is a significant cost. Each additional foot of subterranean area requires additional excavation costs, additional compaction time, additional footing costs, additional form costs, additional rebar costs, additional plumbing costs, additional electrical costs, additional waterproofing costs, additional French drain costs, and additional concrete finishing costs. If the decision is to lower the proposed footprint then this is an unnecessary burden being imposed based

upon the multitude of residences that have not had to adhere to this type of possible building constraint. Lastly the livability factor is highly relevant in this scenario. Having to live in a house where the occupants will have to look up to observe the outside while inside the house main living areas (family room and kitchen) is unacceptable based upon the fact that other residences within the area of notification have not been required to adhere to this constraint.

2c. See 1e

**Graham, Oscar**

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**From:** CTSUNEISHI@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 10, 2008 5:51 PM  
**To:** Graham, Oscar  
**Cc:** JATSUMI@aol.com  
**Subject:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road

Dear Mr. Graham,

I am Chris Tsuneishi, of 2830 Sunnyglen Road, Torrance, who's property is directly west of the site 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance. This property is up for public hearing on December 17, 2008 for which I cannot make. I have concerns about the proposed structure that would be next door.

My main concern is in regards to the back of the proposed structure. Their house appears to go all the way to the back yard retaining wall with a two story structure. It would have an unobstructed view of my backyard over our 6 foot high fence and would not allow any privacy for anyone in my backyard at any time. It would also block the sunlight over the whole east side of my yard. I have small children and frequently use our backyard and fear that I will lose any privacy on my property because they will have a clear view of my entire yard. We also have planters in the Southeast corner of our lot that I fear might be affected by the change in light. The previous structure had a backyard, and the previous house had similar depth on their property as our house does on ours, so at no point were they able to overlook our yard.

Please note my concerns regarding the proposed structure for 25636 Amber Leaf Road since I will not be able to make the public hearing.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

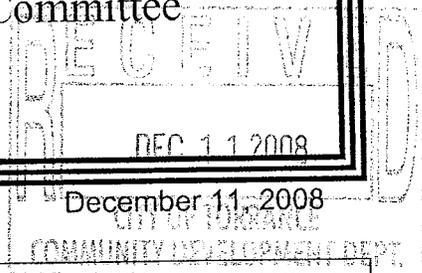
Chris & Janice Tsuneishi  
(310) 517-9133

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**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com



December 11, 2008

City of Torrance  
 Planning Commission  
 3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
 Torrance, CA 90503-5015

City of Torrance  
 Community Development Department  
 3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
 Torrance, CA 90503-5015

Subject:  
 Objection to Proposed Construction of  
 25636 Amber Leaf Road  
 Torrance, CA 90505-7102  
 APN - 7547-0130-14  
 PRE 08-00025  
 WAV 08-00011  
 Applicant: Mark F. Stephenson

Gentlemen:

The Country Hills Environmental Control Committee (ECC) and the Country Hills Homeowners' Association (CHHOA) are in objection to approval by the City of Torrance Planning Commission or Community Development Department of PRE 08-00025 and proposed construction of a Single Family Residence located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance, California 90505-7102.

The proposed Residential Construction, lies within the planned community development known as Country Hills.

Country Hills is a master planned community of 480 conforming custom single family homes located between Hawthorne and Crenshaw Boulevards and intersected by Rolling Hills Road. To preserve the integrity and quality of living in Country Hills all property owners, residents and absentee owners are covered by a Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's). These CC&R's were recorded with the County of Los Angeles, California on June 12, 1975 and remain enforced today.

Stewardship and oversight of the CC&R's is the responsibility of the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee.

All property owners acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Country Hills CC&R's prior to the close of escrow of purchase of their property. A copy of the CC&R's and Home Improvement Application form are also available on line at the Country Hills website, [www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com).

**The Applicant has not complied with the Country Hills CC&R's**

The applicant Mark F. Stephenson has not complied with the minimum requirements of the Country Hills CC&R's which among other requirements requires a submission to the Country Hills Environment Control Committee of detailed: (1) A

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

written description; (2) Plans and Specifications; (3) Schematics; (4) Elevations; and (5) A plot plan showing the location of the proposed structure or improvements.

**The Applicant was aware of the existence of the Country Hills CC&R's**

Prior to the transfer of title and ownership on or about June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007 the applicant would have received a copy of the CC&R's from the escrow company and/or title company. This fact is further evidenced by the attached letter post marked October 06, 2007, mailed by the applicant to the correct Homeowners' Association PO Box address.

In response to that October 6<sup>th</sup> letter, Mr. David Henseler, President of the Homeowners' Association made three (3) phone call attempts on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to reach the applicant. Mr. Henseler was only able to reach an answering device. In each phone call, Mr. Henseler, left a message, identified himself, left a return phone number and E-mail address. In each message, Mr. Henseler stated that Country Hills does have a Homeowners' Association and that the Association does have an active set of CC&R's. The applicant made no further attempt to contact Mr. Henseler, or the Country Hills Homeowners' Association.

It was only by casual drive by of 25636 Amber Leaf Road on Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008, that Homeowners' Association observed the profile sticks and first became aware of any planned construction. This was follow up by a visit to the Community Development Department office on Monday December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

It was this drive-by, observation of the profile sticks, the visit to the Community Development Depart, and the failure of the Applicant to notify the Country Hills ECC that led the Country Hills Homeowners' Association to raise its objections to this planned construction.

**Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions**  
**Country Hills Home Owners' Association**

**Article II, Section 8.** = "Restriction on Improvement. No improvement, building, fence, residence, dwelling unit or other man-made structure of any type shall be constructed or maintained upon any Lot until the plans and specifications thereof, the appearance and color thereof, the height and size therefore, a plot plan showing the location thereof and the location of all trees which when mature will reach a height of over four feet (4'), appropriate grading plans, if requested, and a soils report for the site upon which the structure is to be or is located, if requested, shall have been approved by the Environmental Control Committee. No change in the exterior appearance, type,

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

color, grade, height or location of any such structure shall be made without the prior written approval of the Environmental Control Committee; and no act or condition prohibited by the provisions of Article III of the Declaration shall be initiated, done or suffered upon any Lot, except where the Environmental Control Committee has found that because of unique or emergency circumstances such as act or condition may be allowed and has given its prior written approval thereof."

**Article II, Section 4(a)** = "The Committee may require the submission to it of any or all of the following documents which it determines to be reasonably appropriate to the activity for which consent is requested:"

- (1) A written description;
- (2) Plans and Specifications;
- (3) Schematics;
- (4) Elevations; and
- (5) A plot plan showing the location of the proposed structure or improvements.

**Article II, Section 4(b)** = "All submissions to the Environmental Control Committee shall (1) be in triplicate, (2) show the address of the party submitting the same, (3) be deemed made when actually received by the Committee at its address at Country Hills Home Owners' Association, Environmental Control Committee, PO Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505 or such other place as may be designed in writing by the Committee from time to time, and (4) state in writing the specific matters as to which approval is sought."

**Article II, Section 4(c)** = "Any approval, disapproval or other action by the Committee pursuant to this Declaration shall be effective only if made by certificate in writing, stating the Committee's action as having been joined in by at least a majority of members as the time such action is taken, signed by such joining members with their signatures acknowledged for recording. Any action so certified shall constitute the action of the Committee and the certificate thereof shall promptly be mailed, postage prepaid, to the address specified by the submitting party, Any such certificate when so made, signed and mailed shall be irrevocable, shall constitute conclusive evidence of that action of the Committee and may be relied upon by any person, including but not limited to, any Owner and any title insurance company."

The Applicant has not complied with the above article sections of the CC&R's and is not granted any approval of this project by the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee.

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**  
 PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

**Article 41 - R-H Hillside and Local Coastal Overlay Zone**

The proposed Construction at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance also lies within the Hillside Overlay District of the City of Torrance and is subject to Torrance Municipal Code ARTICLE 41-R-H HILLSIDE AND LOCAL COASTAL OVERLAY ZONE, Sections 91.41.1 through 91.41.14.

We believe that proposed construction is inconsistent with several sections of the Hillside Overlay Code. The following is a preliminary listing of those inconsistencies with the Code.

**SECTION 91.41.6. PLANNING AND DESIGN.**

"No construction and no remodeling or enlargement of a building or structure shall be permitted unless the Planning Commission (or the City Council on appeal) shall find that the location and size of the building or structure, or the location and size of the remodeled or enlarged portions of the building or structure, have been planned and designed in such a manner as to comply with the following provisions:"

§ 91.41.6(c) = "The design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity;

**Objection:** Country Hills is a master planned housing development of 480 conforming custom homes designed in the mid 1970's. The development was considered to be one of the best master planned residential communities in Torrance and possibly the South Bay. The homes are strategically placed to provide the maximum consideration for light, privacy and aesthetic look to each of the adjacent homes. The large one, two and three story homes are offered with 10 different floor plans, with 2 to 4 unique exterior designs options per floor plan and gabled roofs. All of the homes are built on large lots providing for spacious family size back yards.

The planned community of Country Hills has remained in tact for more than 33 years. Part of the attraction and market value of the individual homes is due to long running integrity and continuity of the development as a whole and the assurance that the continuity will be sustained into the foreseeable future.

The applicant's proposed construction of a 5,032 sq/ft, 35 foot tall "McMansion" is not in harmony with the master planned community of Country Hills. It is replacing a 1,988 sq/ft, 9 room, 3 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom home that was destroyed by fire. The proposed McMansion is 253% the size of the home it is replacing and not in harmony with any other home in Country Hills in size, exterior appearance, type, color, grade, height, location, gabled roof, or aesthetic look compared to other properties.

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

**Note:** Wikipedia defines a McMansion as "A McMansion is a house with a floor area of between 3,000 to 5,000 square feet (280–460 m<sup>2</sup>) in size, often on small lots (the house itself often covering a larger portion of the land than the yard in a more conventional design), in homogeneous communities that are often produced by a developer". — The term was first introduced in 1990.

There are no other McMansions in the master planned community of Country Hills.

**SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - RESIDENTIAL**

**§91.41.7(c)** = "Except as provided in this subsection, no portion of the dwelling, in the case of new construction, will exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged shall not exceed the height of the lowest portion of the remainder of the dwelling, or fourteen (14) feet measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm, ..."

**§91.41.7(b)** = "The dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged) will be one (1) story; and provided further that no portion of the roof of the dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, no portion of the remodeled or enlarged roof) will be used as a deck, sun-deck or patio,...."

**Objection:** The prior home at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, was destroyed by fire. The residual structure, including the foundation was completely removed. "Scraped to the ground". The Applicant is proposing a completely new construction of 35 feet in height or 250% of the code, plus a sun-deck or patio viewing into the neighbor's yard.

In the event the Applicant can reasonably demonstrate that his request is not a new construction, then the following code limitation applies."

**SECTION 91.41.10. LIMITATION ON INCREASES IN HEIGHT.**

"No enlargement in any building or structure, or any remodeling of any building or structure, shall be permitted which causes the height of such building or structure or any part thereof, to be higher than before the remodeling or enlargement, unless the Planning Commission (or City Council on appeal) shall find that:

**§91.41.10(a)** = "It is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the height;"

**§91.41.10(b)** = "If such lack of feasibility is proved:"

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

§91.41.10(b)(1) = "Denial of such application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant; and"

§91.41.10(b)(2) = "Granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity."

**Objection:** The applicant's proposed construction of a 5,032 sq/ft, 35 foot tall McMansion is replacing a 1,988 sq/ft, 9 Room, 3 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom home that was destroyed by fire. The applicant must demonstrate that it is not feasible to meet the requirement of this code.

**SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT – RESIDENTIAL**

§91.41.7(d) = "The Planning Director has determined that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on other properties in the vicinity, and there is no significant public controversy thereon."

**Objection:** The planned community of Country Hills has remained in tact for more than 33 years. Part of the attraction and market value of the individual homes is due to long running continuity and integrity of the development as a whole and the assurance that the continuity will be sustained into the foreseeable future.

The applicant's proposed construction of a McMansion is not in harmony with the master planned community of Country Hills. The Country Hills Homeowners' Association will rigorously defend this 33 year legacy of continuity and integrity of the development as a whole.

§91.41.7(a) = "The net interior area of the completed dwelling, whether it is new construction or remodeled or enlarged, including the area of the garage, whether attached or detached, will not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the area of the lot or parcel on which the dwelling is located."

**Objection:** While the FAR calculation of this proposed home of 47% is apparently within the code. It does not automatically [the FAR] permit abuse of the code. The code does not automatically permit "McMansionization" of a home within a planned community of aesthetically conforming homes, protected by CC&R's.

A significant portion of the lot included in the calculation includes a steep berm or un-buildable hill going up to the back of the Ralph's parking lot. The footprint of the structure covers the majority of the buildable yard. Refer to definition of a McMansion above.

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com

December 11, 2008

By comparison, there are several homes within the 480 home Country Hills development with lot areas greater than 10,000 sq/ft, many with significant berms or un-buildable hill sides. Many of these homes have up to 12 rooms while maintaining family size back yards. In the past 33 years, none of the owners have found it necessary to McMansion their homes or change the conforming aesthetic appearance of their homes.

**SECTION 91.41.4 PUBLIC HEARING.**

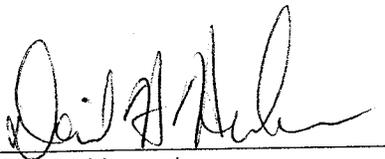
§91.41.4 (b) = "The applicant shall have the burden of proving that all the requirements of this Article [41] have been met."

**Objection:** The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate why he cannot feasibly live within the requirements of the Country Hills CC&R's and the Hillside Overlay code. To date he has not provided such proof. The Applicant has several floor plans and exterior options to select from within the planned community of Country Hills, including replacing the preexisting floor plan and structure destroyed by fire.

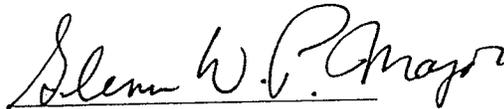
**Our Request to the Planning Commission:**

The Country Hills Homeowners' Association respectfully requests that the Applicant's request for approval be rejected, withdrawn or postponed.

Sincerely;



David Henseler  
 President;  
 Country Hills Homeowners' Association



Glenn W. P. Major  
 Member;  
 Environmental Control Committee

Attachments: 1) Letter from Applicant; Mark Stephenson; 2) E-mail Letter from Chuck Chambers and 3) CHHOA – Home Improvement Application – (Blank Sample)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am trying to acquire information on the Country Hills Association. I just recently purchased a parcel of land at 25636 Amber Leaf Road and I have been informed there is a HOA associated with the neighborhood area.

I would like to talk to somebody concerning the HOA and its policies and oversight processes.

If someone could contact me at the below listed POC info I would sincerely appreciate it.

"Your assistance in this matter is sincerely appreciated."

Sincerely

*Mark Stephenson*  
Mark Stephenson

(310) 812-3807 (W)

(310) 953-9328 (H)

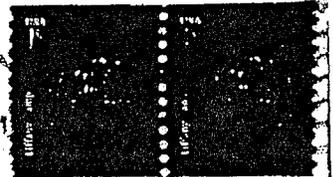
CHHOA@SoCal.rr.com

Lm 10-9  
10-18  
10-19

MARK STEPHENSON  
2607 WOOD BUCKY DRIVE  
TOLLANCE, CA 90503

SANTA ANA CA

06 OCT 2007 PM



Country Hills Association  
P.O. Box 1253  
Tollance, CA 90505

50505+0253



[glenn.major@att.net](mailto:glenn.major@att.net)

---

**From:** "Chuck Chambers" <chuckchambers@hotmail.com>  
**To:** <glenn.major@att.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 11, 2008 9:40 AM  
**Subject:** New House Poposal for Country Hills

Country Hills Association;

I am writing you do share my concerns about the proposal for the new home on Amber Leaf Road in Torrance. There are several issues that need to be addressed before this project moves forward and I trust the City of Torrance will resolve these problems as soon as possible.

Having lived in Country Hills for over 25 years and having sold over one hundred homes in the neighborhood as a real estate Broker, I have first hand experience with the neighborhood and the property values here. My concerns are centered around the two concerns of quality of life for the neighborhood and current and future values of the neighboring homes.

Most of the people who buy homes in Country Hills do so because of the conforming look of the neighborhood. This conforming look is due, in no small part, to the well thought out ideas of the builder when the area was originally planned. Any compromise of these ideals, even by one house, will destroy the integrity of the entire neighborhood. And property values will be reduces as well.

To summarize my concerns, I think it is important that the plans for the new house are reviewed with the following issues fully addressed:

1. The new home must be in full compliance with the existing guidelines of the Torrance Hillside Overlay zone and all current building codes.
2. The new home must be in full compliance with the existing Country Hills C.C. & R.'s and the Environmental Control Committee guidelines.

I think it would also be important that the owners of the property demonstrate the ability to complete the project from start to finish, The last thing we need in the neighborhood is another half-finished project like the Sunrise development at the west entrance to Country Hills.

The high profile location of this property makes it essential that it is build in harmony with the existing homes in the neighborhood. The size of the house, the roof line, the exterior design must all mesh with the current look of the Country Hill, area. I trust that the City of Torrance will realize its responsibilities before moving forward with this project.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chuck Chambers

Chuck Chambers P.V. Realty  
75 Malaga Cove Plaza Suite #3  
Palos Verdes Estates, California  
90274 (310) 378-0488 phone  
(310) 378-2050 fax  
[chuckchambers@hotmail.com](mailto:chuckchambers@hotmail.com)

[www.CountryHillsUpdate.com](http://www.CountryHillsUpdate.com)  
"Specializing in Country Hills Real Estate Since 1977"

# Country Hills Association

chhoa@socal.rr.com *A Nonprofit Organization* P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505

[www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com)

## Home Improvement Application – Fee \$10.00

**This form must be submitted, along with required fee, before starting work.**  
Mail completed applications to address above.

**Please allow 30 days for your application to be acted upon after it is received.**  
All fees are non-refundable, including disapproved applications.  
Checks should be made payable to "Country Hills Association."  
The fee will be raised to \$50.00 if you do not apply in advance.  
Note: It is each homeowner's responsibility to apply for all City required permits, if applicable.

Name of Homeowner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Country Hills Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Resident Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Improvement:**

- |                                                       |                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Roof or Major Repair     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sundeck                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remodel/Addition/Enlargement | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping/Re-Landscaping     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driveway                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Fences                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Doors & Entrance Ways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paint/Stucco        | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Doors                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage/Gutters             | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Exterior Repairs         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balcony Enclosure            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                    |

**Description:** Please provide detailed plans, drawings, statements of work or specifications, along with material samples/colors, the name(s) of manufacturers, contractors. Please estimate work start and end dates. (You may write on reverse or attach description)

**CERTIFICATION:** I Certify, that I have read and that my request for repair, improvement, addition, remodel and/or enlargement is in compliance with the Country Hills Declaration of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and the City of Torrance Hillside and Coastal Overlay Code.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Homeowner/Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Licensed Contractor (when applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

.....  
*Do Not Write Below This Line. ECC Use Only*

Date Check Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Check: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Contact Date 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 2: \_\_\_\_\_

- Approved }  
 Not Approved }

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

**11C. PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: MARK F. STEPHENSON**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story, single-family residence in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf Road.

**Recommendation**

Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of correspondence from the applicant.

Chairperson Browning announced that he would be participating in this hearing even though he lives in the same tract because there is no conflict of interest. He explained that his home is more than 500 feet away from the proposed project; that he cannot see the project from his home; and that he is not a member of the Country Hills Homeowners Association.

Commissioner Busch noted that the supplemental material indicates that the applicant would like to change the roof pitch from 3:12 to 4:12, in which case staff was recommending that the hearing be continued so the plans and the silhouette could be revised. He questioned whether the applicant would like a continuance or proceed with the project as reflected in the current plans.

Mark Stephenson, 25636 Amber Leaf Road, applicant, stated that he planned to change the pitch of a portion of the roof, however, he did not believe it was necessary to continue the hearing because, according to his calculations, the change would result in an increase in height of only approximately 8 inches, not the 2 feet staff has calculated.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that the Precise Plan process requires that the plans and silhouette reflect the exact structure to be built.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Busch moved to continue the hearing on PRE08-00025 and WAV08-00011 indefinitely. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Commissioner Horwich asked about the Planning Commission's obligation with regard to enforcing CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions).

Deputy City Attorney Sullivan advised that CC&Rs are a private matter between the homeowners association and residents who are part of the association and the City has no involvement in their enforcement.

Chairperson Browning questioned whether a project would come back to the Commission if it was approved by the Commission, but subsequently modified by a homeowners association.

Planning Manager Lodan explained that minor changes or those involving decreases in height and square footage could be handled through the sign-off process, but any substantial changes would be brought back to the Commission.

Planning Manager Lodan asked that anyone present in the audience for this hearing leave contact information with staff.

Mr. Stephenson expressed an interest in having the Commission consider the project without the change in roof pitch.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to reconsider the motion to continue this hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Busch and failed to pass as reflected in the following roll call vote:

AYES: Commissioner Weideman.

NOES: Commissioners Busch, Gibson, Horwich, Skoll, Uchima and  
Chairperson Browning.

**SUPPLEMENTAL #1 TO AGENDA ITEM 9A**

**TO:** Members of the Planning Commission

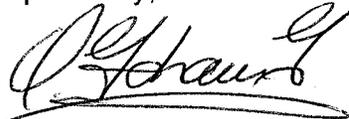
**FROM:** Development Review Division

**SUBJECT(S):** PRE08-00025; WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON

**LOCATION:** 25636 Amber Leaf Road

The attached correspondence was received subsequent to the preparation of the agenda item. Staff continues to recommend approval of the request as conditioned.

Prepared by,



Oscar Graham  
Planning Assistant

Respectfully submitted,



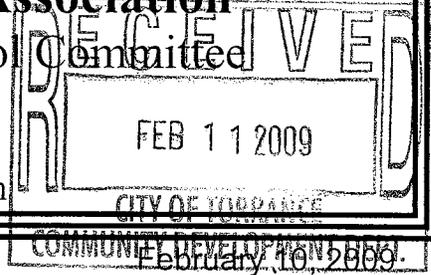
for: Gregg D. Lodan, AICP  
Planning Manager

**Attachments:**

- 1) Letter from Home Owner Association

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
Country Hills Environmental Control Committee

PO Box 1253  
Torrance, CA 90505  
E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com



City of Torrance  
Planning Commission  
3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 90503-5015

City of Torrance  
Community Development Department  
3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 90503-5015

Subject:  
Objection to Proposed Construction of  
25636 Amber Leaf Road  
Torrance, CA 90505-7102  
APN - 7547-0130-14  
PRE 08-00025  
WAV 08-00011  
Applicant: Mark F. Stephenson

Gentlemen:

The Country Hills Environmental Control Committee (ECC) and the Country Hills Homeowners' Association (CHHOA) are in continued objection to approval by the City of Torrance Planning Commission or Community Development Department of PRE 08-00025 and proposed construction of a Single Family Residence located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance, California 90505-7102.

**SECTION 91.41.7 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - RESIDENTIAL.**

**§91.41.7(d)** = The Planning Director has determined that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on other properties in the vicinity, and there is no significant public controversy thereon.

On December 11, 2008 the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee and the Country Hills Homeowners' Association filed an objection to the proposed construction at 25636 Amber Leaf Road as planned. All objections raised in that December 11<sup>th</sup> letter remain in effect and shall be deemed incorporated into this current updated objection. — See December 11<sup>th</sup> objection attached.

**Modification to the December 11, 2008 objection:**

The Planning Department on December 17, 2008, to more accurately reflect the true size of the proposed construction, revised its calculation of the square footage and FAR to 6,160 SqFt and 57% from that shown on the plans of 5,032 SqFt and 47% respectively. This represented a 1,128 SqFt increase or 22% correction. The CHHOA appreciates the Planning Department's corrections.

The CHHOA & ECC objections were based on the lower square footage and FAR shown on the plans and reviewed in the Community Development Department's office on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
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February 10, 2009

To the extent the revised calculation would revise our December 11<sup>th</sup> objections; our objections to this proposed construction are enhanced, rather than lessened. The Applicant has not taken steps to mitigate the concerns of the CHHOA & ECC.

Our objections are focused on, but are not limited to the following items: 1) Height, 2) Size, 3) Subterranean garage, and 4) Aesthetic non-conformity with Country Hills

**Height Waiver:**

The Applicant is requesting a height waiver to 35.60 feet. This request materially exceeds Torrance's single-family residential codes, whether they are the more restrictive Hillside Overlay Code or the General Municipal Code for Single-Family Residences.

Under the Hillside Overlay code, all new construction shall not exceed fourteen (14) feet<sup>1</sup>. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the structure shall either be restricted to one (1) story<sup>2</sup> or no higher than the structure it is replacing<sup>3</sup>.

Under the Torrance Municipal Code for Single-Family Residences outside the Hillside Overlay area, all significant remodeling and/or newly constructed two story homes shall be no higher than twenty-seven (27) feet<sup>4</sup>.

The CHHOA & ECC vigorously oppose granting of the requested height waiver.

**Size – Abuse of the FAR:**

The FAR% calculation does not automatically grant "McMansionization" rights to an owner. The current FAR% request to build a 6,160 SqFt home is 57% or a 14% deviation from the Hillside Overlay Code. On the surface, this deviation from the code may or may not appear significant.

However had the applicant's plan been proposed for any of the fourteen (14), 6,000 SqFt lots immediately to the west<sup>5</sup> of the applicant's property on Sunnyglen Road

<sup>1</sup> §91.41.7(c)

<sup>2</sup> §91.41.7(b)

<sup>3</sup> §91.41.10

<sup>4</sup> S91.4.2

<sup>5</sup> Addresses 2837 through 2862 Sunnyglen Road. The street name changes from Amber Leaf Road to Sunnyglen at the applicant's westerly property line.

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(same street, name change); the FAR% would exceed 102.6%. The applicant's request would more than likely be rejected. *This is an abusive use of the FAR.*

The FAR calculation is calculated on both home size and lot size. The "standard" lot size in Country Hills averages 6,550<sup>6</sup> SqFt. However certain lots, located on un-buildable hillside slopes, cul-de-sacs ends and corner lots were allocated a greater lot size square footage. In fact 6.5% or 32 lots were allocated more than 10,000 SqFt because of these factors. One lot exceeds 14,300. The applicant's property is a 10,750 SqFt corner lot. Conversely, 33 premium city view lots primarily on Carolwood Lane and Briarwood Drive have lot sizes 5,200 SqFt or less<sup>7</sup>.

**Intelligence of Design:**

In designing and permitting the development of Country Hills in the early 70's, the Developer and the City of Torrance became partners in the final approval of the Development. Together the Developer and the City had three theoretical design approaches to choose from.

One would have been to allocate the lot sizes on a grid methodology of 6,500 SqFt identical lots and increase the housing density to 505 homes. If the 12.5 acre De Portola Park had been eliminated an additional 83 homes could have been added.

A second approach could have been to design and build individual homes based on the current lot size allocation. This could have resulted in 6,000 to 7,000 SqFt homes built adjacent to or across the street from 2,500 SqFt homes and still be within the 50% FAR guideline.

The third approach could have been to design a set of aesthetically conforming plans that would blend into the topography of the land regardless of the lot sizes.

The Developer and the City of Torrance used an Intelligence of Design approach and chose the third option. This resulted in a set home designs with an average square footage of 2,609<sup>8</sup> SqFt, (including garage space<sup>9</sup>) with an average deviation of +/- 271 SqFt or +/- 10.4%. The average FAR is 39.5% with an average deviation of +/- 6.4%

<sup>6</sup> The average lot size for the 448 homes with lot sizes less than 10,000 SqFt.

<sup>7</sup> Actual lot sizes range from 4,957 to 14,340 SqFt

<sup>8</sup> Source: North American Title Company property reports

<sup>9</sup> Assumes an average garage size of 420 SqFt

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The applicant's request for a 6,160 SqFt Mediterranean style (Applicant's description) home is more than twice the size (236%) of the Intelligence of Design approach used by the City of Torrance in permitting this development.

**Not a sustainable argument:**

Constructed between 1975 and 1977, Country Hills homes were designed large and remain large today. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average size of American single family homes increased from 1,700 SqFt in 1976 to 2,469 SqFt in 2006.

The A.I.A. and others project that the average size of U.S. homes will start to decrease in the near future. In part due to the environmental impact of constructing, maintaining and operating larger scale homes. Even with energy efficient appliances and alternative energy resources, large homes tend to add larger scale and more energy consuming amenities to fill up the space. The cost of maintenance, (painting etc.) and cleaning increases with the size of the home.

Some experts suggest that the McMansion style homes of the 1990's will go the way of the large scale Victorian homes of the 1900's as current homeowners experience the high cost and environmental impact of large homes. Particularly in light of today's economic and real estate market conditions. The Victorian homes of the 1900's actually declined in value and many were torn down due to lack of replacement buyers. The argument that larger homes, especially those more than twice the U.S. average and local development, improves surrounding home values *is not a sustainable argument*.

The CHHOA & ECC vigorously oppose granting a permit to build a home that is excessive in size and more than twice the size of the average Country Hills home.

**Subterranean Garage:**

In order to stay within a 35.60 foot requested height waiver the Applicant is planning a 3 foot semi-subterranean two car garage. The applicant will be required to dig at least 5 feet deep into the property to establish footings, etc. This property sits adjacent to and on the downhill slope from the Ralph's shopping center. Over the years there have been concerns of underground water and other contaminant migration under the shopping center. The CHHOA & ECC has not seen any soil or other mitigation tests or reports that address the potential impact to Country Hills homes as a result of digging this subterranean garage.

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Under Article II, Section 8 of the Country Hills Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions, the ECC has the right to request a soils report for the site upon which the structure is to be located. This may include receiving comments and opinions of risks from the owners of the adjacent shopping center. The Torrance Planning Commission should also make a similar request. The prudent approach that should be used: "Check before you dig."

**Ruling by Exception:**

The Applicant seeks approval by exception. He points out 4 examples of homes that vary from the Country Hills accepted plan as his for justification for approval. The CHHOA & ECC acknowledge that there are 6 to 8 homes [out of 480] in the development that vary either in size or aesthetic conformity from the CC&R's and/or the Hillside Overlay Code. These exceptions were not the result of affirmative approval but rather from "sliding through" the approval process in periods of time when oversight by the ECC and the Torrance Planning Department was less diligent. These exceptions however represent less than 2% of the entire Country Hills development.

Stated conversely, more than 98% of the homeowners over a 33 year period have been compliant with the CC&R's and Hillside Overlay Code. In the past three decades several homes in Country Hills have been damaged by fire or landslide to the extent of being "yellow" or "red" tagged. These affected homeowners chose to repair or rebuild their homes back to the original Country Hills design. This high voluntary homeowner compliance rate is part of the reason for periodic lax ECC oversight.

Both the Applicant and the ECC agree that the most extreme exception in Country Hills is 2846 Misty Morning Road. This home is a 5,051 SqFt non conforming structure built on a 7,570 SqFt lot. Almost twice the size of the average Country Hills home. The Misty Morning Road home expansion would be rigorously fought today. The Applicant's proposed home, *however* is more than 1,100 SqFt is larger than the Misty Morning Road property. — See attached graph.

**Analogy to Trespassing:**

Assume a "No Trespassing" sign had been posted on a piece of property for more than 30 years. More than 98% of the population obeyed the No Trespassing restriction. As a result oversight and enforcement was light. However return to increased oversight and enforcement cannot be blocked simply due to examples of prior failures.

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The Applicant's proposal is trespassing on the community of Country Hills. The Applicant's request cannot be forcibly granted or imposed on Country Hills simply on the grounds of pointing out other prior trespasses.

**Desire to Not Conform:**

The Applicant makes the statement: "*Architectural conformity can never be defined but at the same time there must be some reasonable consensus for families that want to live in an excellent community but do not want to live in a 60's style residence.*" This is a reasonably clear statement that the Applicant does not desire to comply with the aesthetic conformity of Country Hills.

Torrance's Motto is "A Balanced City" not a "Homogeneous City" and not an "I Want It My Way City". The attractiveness of Torrance is derived from the diversity of its neighborhoods. From the Old Town Neighborhood section with its 30's through 50's era craftsman style homes, to the Hollywood Riviera coastal homes, to the modern gated communities near Madrona Marsh. Each of these neighborhoods has an attractive style and appeal that families want when they decide to move there. Country Hills is one of those neighborhoods.

According to the City of Torrance web site, there are thirty-two (32) recognized Homeowner Associations. Each of these Homeowner Associations has established their individual set of standards and enforcement for their community. Combined, these standards define the "*reasonable consensus for families that want to live in an excellent community*". A reasonable due diligence review of Torrance would have revealed this fact.

The CHHOA & ECC are vigorously opposed to granting a permit to build a non-conforming Mediterranean style McMansion home in the aesthetically conforming neighborhood of Country Hills.

**They are compatible:**

The Country Hills Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's), recorded on June 12, 1975 and the City of Torrance, Hillside and Coastal Overlay Code adopted in 1977 are compatible with each other when read together. In order to prevent incompatible or oversize development, both have established guidelines for review and approval of new, remodeled or enlarged homes. The only difference lays in the fact that the CC&R's apply only to the homes of Country Hills while the Overlay Code applies to the greater hillside area of Torrance. However over the past three decades, neither have been deemed unreasonable or over burdensome.

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**Burden of Proof**

§91.41.4 (b) = "The applicant shall have the burden of proving that all the requirements of this Article [41] have been met."

The burden of proof requirement does not rest upon the City of Torrance Planning Commission or the Country Hills Environment Control Committee, but rather with the Applicant. To date the Applicant has not provided such proof.

The Applicant has several excellent floor plans and exterior options to select from within the planned community of Country Hills, including replacing the preexisting floor plan and structure destroyed by fire.

**Application of Code:**

Prior to rendering its decision, the Planning Commission is encouraged to remember that the Hillside Overlay Code shall take precedence over other codes and requirements where the requirements and standards of the Overlay Code are more restrictive.

§Section 91.41.2 = Nothing contained in this Article shall be deemed to repeal any provision of this Code, and the requirements of all preexisting zones in existence in the area encompassed by this Overlay Zone shall be and remain in full force and effect in addition to the requirements of the Overlay Zone, except that the requirements of the Overlay Zone shall be applied where the requirements and standards contained therein are more restrictive than those of the preexisting underlying zones.

**Application of CC&R's:**

To the best of our knowledge, Country Hills is the only non-gated community in the City of Torrance covered by a recorded Declaration of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions. Country Hills CC&R's should not be given any less consideration by the Planning Commission than those CC&R's of a gated community.

**Our Request to the Planning Commission:**

The Country Hills Homeowners' Association and the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee respectfully request that the Applicant's request for approval be rejected or withdrawn.

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**  
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**In the Event:**

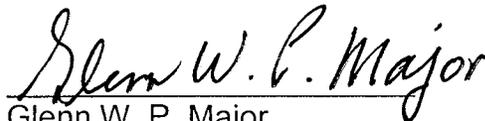
*In the event* that the Planning Commission does approve this project, we request that it be stipulated that the Applicant secure a completion bond or insurance. The Country Hills Homeowners' Association and the City of Torrance cannot accept the potential for an incomplete and abandoned structure in its neighborhood

Based on informal estimates, the total costs to complete this home ranges from \$1.3 million to \$1.8 million. This includes the land purchased plus the cost of larger upgraded amenities associated with a 6,160 SqFt home. This; in a neighborhood of \$900,000 homes. It cannot be assumed that construction of this home will raise the average value of 479 other homes in the community by 44% to 100% in the near future. Given today's financial environment, it is hard to imagine the Applicant can receive adequate construction financing to complete this project.

Sincerely:



David Henseler  
 President;  
 Country Hills Homeowners' Association



Glenn W. P. Major  
 Member;  
 Environmental Control Committee



Steven Sweet  
 Member  
 Environmental Control Member



Deborah Zito  
 Member;  
 Environmental Control Committee

Country Hills Torrance web site: [www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com)

Attachments:

1. Square Foot Comparison Graph
2. December 11, 2008 filed objection to proposed construction.

Applicant's Proposed Home Exceeds the Worst Case Size Exception by more than 1,100 SqFt

More than 98% of the Country Hills Homes have complied with the CC&R's in both aesthetics and size.

The Applicant seeks to force approval by sighting exception and non-compliance by less than 2% of the homes.

2846 Misty Morning

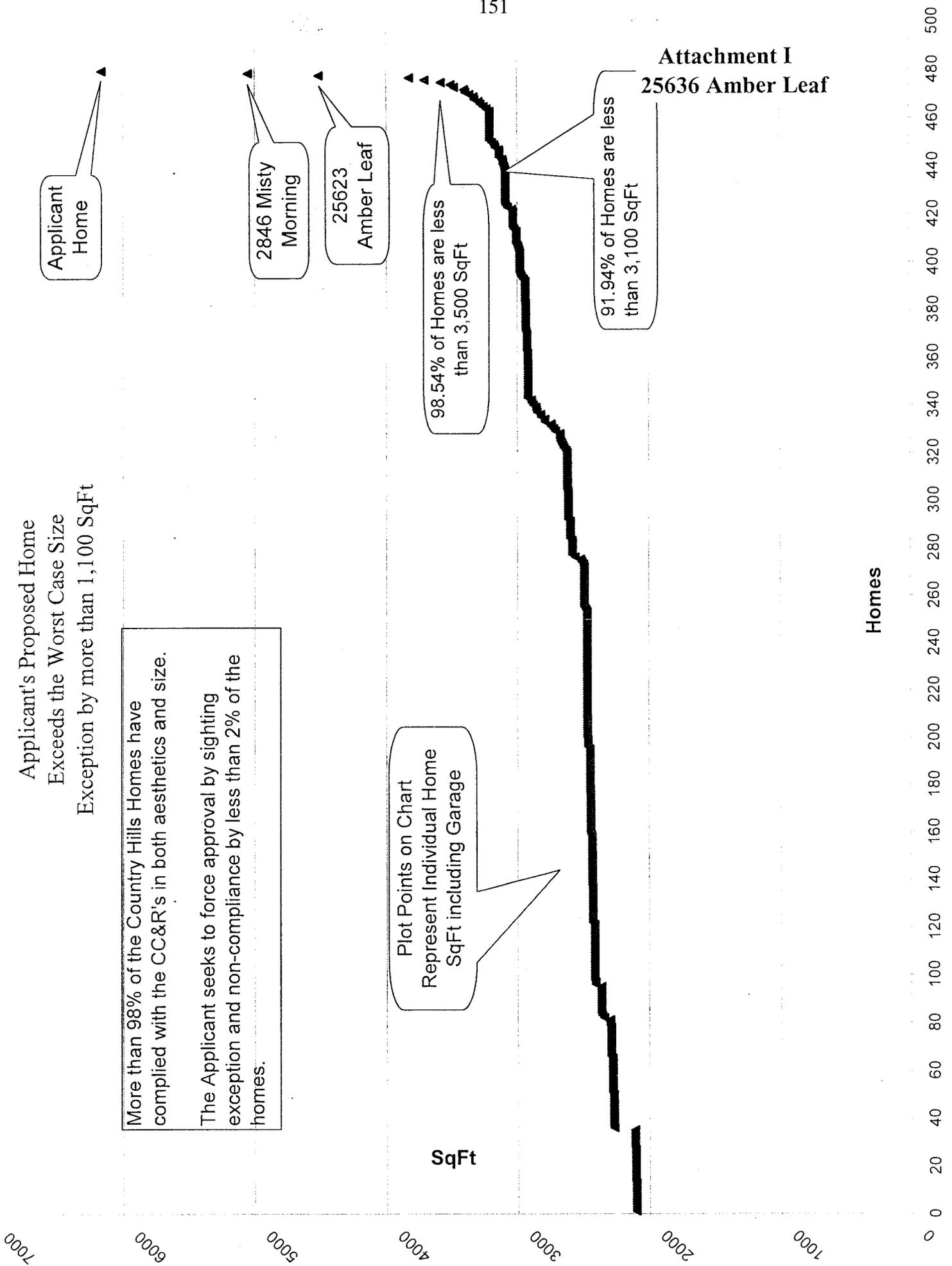
25623 Amber Leaf

Plot Points on Chart Represent Individual Home SqFt including Garage

98.54% of Homes are less than 3,500 SqFt

91.94% of Homes are less than 3,100 SqFt

Attachment I 25636 Amber Leaf

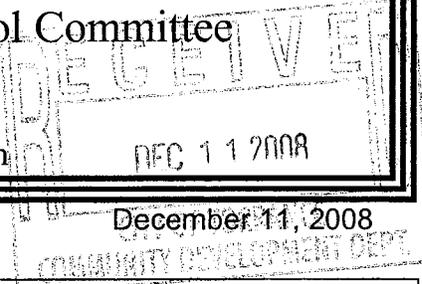


Homes

SqFt

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

PO Box 1253  
 Torrance, CA 90505  
 E-mail CHHOA@socal.rr.com



December 11, 2008

City of Torrance  
 Planning Commission  
 3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
 Torrance, CA 90503-5015

City of Torrance  
 Community Development Department  
 3031 West Torrance Boulevard  
 Torrance, CA 90503-5015

**Subject:**  
 Objection to Proposed Construction of  
 25636 Amber Leaf Road  
 Torrance, CA 90505-7102  
 APN - 7547-0130-14  
 PRE 08-00025  
 WAV 08-00011  
 Applicant: Mark F. Stephenson

Gentlemen:

The Country Hills Environmental Control Committee (ECC) and the Country Hills Homeowners' Association (CHHOA) are in objection to approval by the City of Torrance Planning Commission or Community Development Department of PRE 08-00025 and proposed construction of a Single Family Residence located at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance, California 90505-7102.

The proposed Residential Construction, lies within the planned community development known as Country Hills.

Country Hills is a master planned community of 480 conforming custom single family homes located between Hawthorne and Crenshaw Boulevards and intersected by Rolling Hills Road. To preserve the integrity and quality of living in Country Hills all property owners, residents and absentee owners are covered by a Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's). These CC&R's were recorded with the County of Los Angeles, California on June 12, 1975 and remain enforced today.

Stewardship and oversight of the CC&R's is the responsibility of the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee.

All property owners acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Country Hills CC&R's prior to the close of escrow of purchase of their property. A copy of the CC&R's and Home Improvement Application form are also available on line at the Country Hills website, [www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com).

**The Applicant has not complied with the Country Hills CC&R's**

The applicant Mark F. Stephenson has not complied with the minimum requirements of the Country Hills CC&R's which among other requirements requires a submission to the Country Hills Environment Control Committee of detailed: (1) A

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
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written description; (2) Plans and Specifications; (3) Schematics; (4) Elevations; and (5) A plot plan showing the location of the proposed structure or improvements.

**The Applicant was aware of the existence of the Country Hills CC&R's**

Prior to the transfer of title and ownership on or about June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007 the applicant would have received a copy of the CC&R's from the escrow company and/or title company. This fact is further evidenced by the attached letter post marked October 06, 2007, mailed by the applicant to the correct Homeowners' Association PO Box address.

In response to that October 6<sup>th</sup> letter, Mr. David Henseler, President of the Homeowners' Association made three (3) phone call attempts on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to reach the applicant. Mr. Henseler was only able to reach an answering device. In each phone call, Mr. Henseler, left a message, identified himself, left a return phone number and E-mail address. In each message, Mr. Henseler stated that Country Hills does have a Homeowners' Association and that the Association does have an active set of CC&R's. The applicant made no further attempt to contact Mr. Henseler, or the Country Hills Homeowners' Association.

It was only by casual drive by of 25636 Amber Leaf Road on Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008, that Homeowners' Association observed the profile sticks and first became aware of any planned construction. This was follow up by a visit to the Community Development Department office on Monday December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

It was this drive-by, observation of the profile sticks, the visit to the Community Development Depart, and the failure of the Applicant to notify the Country Hills ECC that led the Country Hills Homeowners' Association to raise its objections to this planned construction.

**Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions**  
**Country Hills Home Owners' Association**

**Article II, Section 8.** = "Restriction on Improvement. No improvement, building, fence, residence, dwelling unit or other man-made structure of any type shall be constructed or maintained upon any Lot until the plans and specifications thereof, the appearance and color thereof, the height and size therefore, a plot plan showing the location thereof and the location of all trees which when mature will reach a height of over four feet (4'), appropriate grading plans, if requested, and a soils report for the site upon which the structure is to be or is located, if requested, shall have been approved by the Environmental Control Committee. No change in the exterior appearance, type,

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**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

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December 11, 2008

color, grade, height or location of any such structure shall be made without the prior written approval of the Environmental Control Committee; and no act or condition prohibited by the provisions of Article III of the Declaration shall be initiated, done or suffered upon any Lot, except where the Environmental Control Committee has found that because of unique or emergency circumstances such as act or condition may be allowed and has given its prior written approval thereof.

**Article II, Section 4(a)** = "The Committee may require the submission to it of any or all of the following documents which it determines to be reasonably appropriate to the activity for which consent is requested:"

- (1) A written description;
- (2) Plans and Specifications;
- (3) Schematics;
- (4) Elevations; and
- (5) A plot plan showing the location of the proposed structure or improvements.

**Article II, Section 4(b)** = "All submissions to the Environmental Control Committee shall (1) be in triplicate, (2) show the address of the party submitting the same, (3) be deemed made when actually received by the Committee at its address at Country Hills Home Owners' Association, Environmental Control Committee, PO Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505 or such other place as may be designed in writing by the Committee from time to time, and (4) state in writing the specific matters as to which approval is sought."

**Article II, Section 4(c)** = "Any approval, disapproval or other action by the Committee pursuant to this Declaration shall be effective only if made by certificate in writing, stating the Committee's action as having been joined in by at least a majority of members as the time such action is taken, signed by such joining members with their signatures acknowledged for recording. Any action so certified shall constitute the action of the Committee and the certificate thereof shall promptly be mailed, postage prepaid, to the address specified by the submitting party, Any such certificate when so made, signed and mailed shall be irrevocable, shall constitute conclusive evidence of that action of the Committee and may be relied upon by any person, including but not limited to, any Owner and any title insurance company."

**The Applicant has not complied with the above article sections of the CC&R's and is not granted any approval of this project by the Country Hills Environmental Control Committee.**

**Country Hills Homeowners' Association**  
**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

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**Article 41 - R-H Hillside and Local Coastal Overlay Zone**

The proposed Construction at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, Torrance also lies within the Hillside Overlay District of the City of Torrance and is subject to Torrance Municipal Code ARTICLE 41-R-H HILLSIDE AND LOCAL COASTAL OVERLAY ZONE, Sections 91.41.1 through 91.41.14.

We believe that proposed construction is inconsistent with several sections of the Hillside Overlay Code. The following is a preliminary listing of those inconsistencies with the Code.

**SECTION 91.41.6. PLANNING AND DESIGN.**

"No construction and no remodeling or enlargement of a building or structure shall be permitted unless the Planning Commission (or the City Council on appeal) shall find that the location and size of the building or structure, or the location and size of the remodeled or enlarged portions of the building or structure, have been planned and designed in such a manner as to comply with the following provisions:"

§ 91.41.6(c) = "The design provides an orderly and attractive development in harmony with other properties in the vicinity;

**Objection:** Country Hills is a master planned housing development of 480 conforming custom homes designed in the mid 1970's. The development was considered to be one of the best master planned residential communities in Torrance and possibly the South Bay. The homes are strategically placed to provide the maximum consideration for light, privacy and aesthetic look to each of the adjacent homes. The large one, two and three story homes are offered with 10 different floor plans, with 2 to 4 unique exterior designs options per floor plan and gabled roofs. All of the homes are built on large lots providing for spacious family size back yards.

The planned community of Country Hills has remained in tact for more than 33 years. Part of the attraction and market value of the individual homes is due to long running integrity and continuity of the development as a whole and the assurance that the continuity will be sustained into the foreseeable future.

The applicant's proposed construction of a 5,032 sq/ft, 35 foot tall "McMansion" is not in harmony with the master planned community of Country Hills. It is replacing a 1,988 sq/ft, 9 room, 3 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom home that was destroyed by fire. The proposed McMansion is 253% the size of the home it is replacing and not in harmony with any other home in Country Hills in size, exterior appearance, type, color, grade, height, location, gabled roof, or aesthetic look compared to other properties.

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**Note:** Wikipedia defines a McMansion as "A McMansion is a house with a floor area of between 3,000 to 5,000 square feet (280–460 m<sup>2</sup>) in size, often on small lots (the house itself often covering a larger portion of the land than the yard in a more conventional design), in homogeneous communities that are often produced by a developer". — The term was first introduced in 1990.

There are no other McMansions in the master planned community of Country Hills.

**SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT - RESIDENTIAL**

**§91.41.7(c)** = "Except as provided in this subsection, no portion of the dwelling, in the case of new construction, will exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm. In the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged shall not exceed the height of the lowest portion of the remainder of the dwelling, or fourteen (14) feet measured from the ground at finished grade, but not including any berm, ..."

**§91.41.7(b)** = "The dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, the portion remodeled or enlarged) will be one (1) story; and provided further that no portion of the roof of the dwelling (or in the case of remodeling or enlargement, no portion of the remodeled or enlarged roof) will be used as a deck, sun-deck or patio,...."

**Objection:** The prior home at 25636 Amber Leaf Road, was destroyed by fire. The residual structure, including the foundation was completely removed. "Scraped to the ground". The Applicant is proposing a completely new construction of 35 feet in height or 250% of the code, plus a sun-deck or patio viewing into the neighbor's yard.

In the event the Applicant can reasonably demonstrate that his request is not a new construction, then the following code limitation applies."

**SECTION 91.41.10. LIMITATION ON INCREASES IN HEIGHT.**

"No enlargement in any building or structure, or any remodeling of any building or structure, shall be permitted which causes the height of such building or structure or any part thereof, to be higher than before the remodeling or enlargement, unless the Planning Commission (or City Council on appeal) shall find that:

**§91.41.10(a)** = "It is not feasible to increase the size of or rearrange the space within the existing building or structure for the purposes intended except by increasing the height;"

**§91.41.10(b)** = "If such lack of feasibility is proved:"

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**Country Hills Environmental Control Committee**

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**§91.41.10(b)(1)** = "Denial of such application would result in an unreasonable hardship to the applicant; and"

**§91.41.10(b)(2)** = "Granting the application would not be materially detrimental to the public welfare and to other properties in the vicinity."

**Objection:** The applicant's proposed construction of a 5,032 sq/ft, 35 foot tall McMansion is replacing a 1,988 sq/ft, 9 Room, 3 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom home that was destroyed by fire. The applicant must demonstrate that it is not feasible to meet the requirement of this code.

**SECTION 91.41.7. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT – RESIDENTIAL**

**§91.41.7(d)** = "The Planning Director has determined that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on other properties in the vicinity, and there is no significant public controversy thereon."

**Objection:** The planned community of Country Hills has remained in tact for more than 33 years. Part of the attraction and market value of the individual homes is due to long running continuity and integrity of the development as a whole and the assurance that the continuity will be sustained into the foreseeable future.

The applicant's proposed construction of a McMansion is not in harmony with the master planned community of Country Hills. The Country Hills Homeowners' Association will rigorously defend this 33 year legacy of continuity and integrity of the development as a whole.

**§91.41.7(a)** = "The net interior area of the completed dwelling, whether it is new construction or remodeled or enlarged, including the area of the garage, whether attached or detached, will not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the area of the lot or parcel on which the dwelling is located;"

**Objection:** While the FAR calculation of this proposed home of 47% is apparently within the code. It does not automatically [the FAR] permit abuse of the code. The code does not automatically permit "McMansionization" of a home within a planned community of aesthetically conforming homes, protected by CC&R's.

A significant portion of the lot included in the calculation includes a steep berm or un-buildable hill going up to the back of the Ralph's parking lot. The footprint of the structure covers the majority of the buildable yard. Refer to definition of a McMansion above.

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By comparison, there are several homes within the 480 home Country Hills development with lot areas greater than 10,000 sq/ft, many with significant berms or un-buildable hill sides. Many of these homes have up to 12 rooms while maintaining family size back yards. In the past 33 years, none of the owners have found it necessary to McMansion their homes or change the conforming aesthetic appearance of their homes.

**SECTION 91.41.4 PUBLIC HEARING.**

§91.41.4 (b) = "The applicant shall have the burden of proving that all the requirements of this Article [41] have been met."

**Objection:** The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate why he cannot feasibly live within the requirements of the Country Hills CC&R's and the Hillside Overlay code. To date he has not provided such proof. The Applicant has several floor plans and exterior options to select from within the planned community of Country Hills, including replacing the preexisting floor plan and structure destroyed by fire.

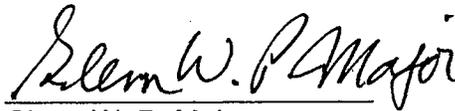
**Our Request to the Planning Commission:**

The Country Hills Homeowners' Association respectfully requests that the Applicant's request for approval be rejected, withdrawn or postponed.

Sincerely;



David Henseler  
 President;  
 Country Hills Homeowners' Association



Glenn W. P. Major  
 Member;  
 Environmental Control Committee

Attachments: 1) Letter from Applicant; Mark Stephenson; 2) E-mail Letter from Chuck Chambers and 3) CHHOA – Home Improvement Application – (Blank Sample)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am trying to acquire information on the Country Hills Association. I just recently purchased a parcel of land at 25636 Amber Leaf Road and I have been informed there is a HOA associated with the neighborhood area.

I would like to talk to somebody concerning the HOA and its policies and oversight processes.

If someone could contact me at the below listed POC info I would sincerely appreciate it.

"Your assistance in this matter is sincerely appreciated."

Sincerely,

*Mark Stephenson*  
Mark Stephenson  
(310) 812-3807 (W)  
(310) 953-9328 (H)

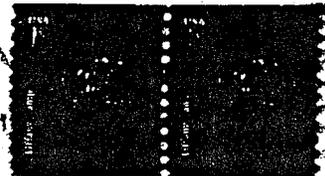
*CHHOA@SoCal.rr.com*

*LM 10-9  
10-18  
10-19*

MARK STEPHENSON  
2607 WOODBURY DRIVE  
TOLLANCE, CA 90503

SANTA ANA CA

06 OCT 2007 PM



*Country Hills Association  
P.O. Box 1253  
Tollance, CA 90505*

30505+0253



[glenn.major@att.net](mailto:glenn.major@att.net)

---

**From:** "Chuck Chambers" <chuckchambers@hotmail.com>  
**To:** <glenn.major@att.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 11, 2008 9:40 AM  
**Subject:** New House Poposal for Country Hills

Country Hills Association;

I am writing you do share my concerns about the proposal for the new home on Amber Leaf Road in Torrance. There are several issues that need to be addressed before this project moves forward and I trust the City of Torrance will resolve these problems as soon as possible.

Having lived in Country Hills for over 25 years and having sold over one hundred homes in the neighborhood as a real estate Broker, I have first hand experience with the neighborhood and the property values here. My concerns are centered around the two concerns of quality of life for the neighborhood and current and future values of the neighboring homes.

Most of the people who buy homes in Country Hills do so because of the conforming look of the neighborhood. This conforming look is due, in no small part, to the well thought out ideas of the builder when the area was originally planned. Any compromise of these ideals, even by one house, will destroy the integrity of the entire neighborhood. And property values will be reduces as well.

To summarize my concerns, I think it is important that the plans for the new house are reviewed with the following issues fully addressed:

1. The new home must be in full compliance with the existing guidelines of the Torrance Hillside Overlay zone and all current building codes.
2. The new home must be in full compliance with the existing Country Hills C.C. & R.'s and the Environmental Control Committee guidelines.

I think it would also be important that the owners of the property demonstrate the ability to complete the project from start to finish, The last thing we need in the neighborhood is another half-finished project like the Sunrise development at the west entrance to Country Hills.

The high profile location of this property makes it essential that it is build in harmony with the existing homes in the neighborhood. The size of the house, the roof line, the exterior design must all mesh with the current look of the Country Hill, area. I trust that the City of Torrance will realize its responsibilities before moving forward with this project.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chuck Chambers

Chuck Chambers P.V. Realty  
75 Malaga Cove Plaza Suite #3  
Palos Verdes Estates, California  
90274 (310) 378-0488 phone  
(310) 378-2050 fax  
[chuckchambers@hotmail.com](mailto:chuckchambers@hotmail.com)

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12/11/2008

# Country Hills Association

chhoa@socal.rr.com *A Nonprofit Organization* P.O. Box 1253, Torrance, CA 90505

[www.CountryHillsTorrance.com](http://www.CountryHillsTorrance.com)

## Home Improvement Application – Fee \$10.00

This form must be submitted, along with required fee, before starting work.  
Mail completed applications to address above.

Please allow 30 days for your application to be acted upon after it is received.  
All fees are non-refundable, including disapproved applications.  
Checks should be made payable to "Country Hills Association."  
The fee will be raised to \$50.00 if you do not apply in advance.  
Note: It is each homeowner's responsibility to apply for all City required permits, if applicable.

Name of Homeowner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Country Hills Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Resident Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Improvement:**

- |                                                       |                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Roof or Major Repair     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sundeck                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remodel/Addition/Enlargement | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping/Re-Landscaping     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driveway                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Fences                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Doors & Entrance Ways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paint/Stucco        | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage Doors                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage/Gutters             | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Exterior Repairs         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balcony Enclosure            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                    |

**Description:** Please provide detailed plans, drawings, statements of work or specifications, along with material samples/colors, the name(s) of manufacturers, contractors. Please estimate work start and end dates. (You may write on reverse or attach description)

**CERTIFICATION:** I Certify, that I have read and that my request for repair, improvement, addition, remodel and/or enlargement is in compliance with the Country Hills Declaration of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and the City of Torrance Hillside and Coastal Overlay Code.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Homeowner/Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Licensed Contractor (when applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

.....  
*Do Not Write Below This Line. ECC Use Only*

Date Check Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Check: \_\_\_\_\_  
Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Contact Date 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 2: \_\_\_\_\_

- Approved
- Not Approved

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_



We the undersigned appreciate the CC&R's of our community Country Hills. The CC&R's protect our property values by making sure people do not do things to their homes that are out of place for the neighborhood. We are opposed to any new construction that would be significantly different from the houses around it, in size, height, style or color. We would also strongly object to any above ground decks.

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
DAVID HENSELER	3210 Singingwood	David Henseler
RYAN ADCKOCK	3027 OAKWOOD LN.	Ryan Adcock
LOUANNE GILMORE	3027 OAKWOOD LN.	
MARSHA SCHILLING	3321 CANDLEWOOD RD	Marsha Schilling
RICHARD NEIGER	3033 Softwindwy	Richard Neiger
GILBO GLAVAN	2909 OAKWOOD LN	Gilbo Glavan
EARL FRANKS	3119 CAROLWOOD LN	Earl Franks
SUZANA ROCKHOLD	3225 CAROLWOOD LN <sup>TORR.</sup>	Suzana Rockhold
Glenn Major	3206 CAROLWOOD LN	Glenn Major
ERICK GOLDSTEIN	2940 BRIDGEWOOD DR.	Erick Goldstein
Kenee Gamm	3207 Singingwood Dr.	Kenee Gamm
Kris Carmona	3207 Singingwood Dr.	Kris Carmona
ALAIN MARTINEZ	3211 Singingwood Dr.	Alain Martinez
JULIE MARTINEZ	3211 SINGINGWOOD DR.	Julie Martinez
Karen Greenberg	3210 Singingwood Dr.	Karen Greenberg
Rosalpina Herold	3210 Singingwood Dr.	Rosalpina Herold
ROZENA HEROLD	3209 Singingwood Drive	Rozena Herold
DAVID CORNWELL	3017 WINDMILL	David Cornwall
Steve Sweet	3019 CAROLWOOD LANE	Steve Sweet

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** "Linda Fong" <fongla@yahoo.com>  
**To:** "CHHOA" <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:05 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: HOA and Planning Commission

David (CHHOA)

I am responding to this email. I have been a resident and owner to my home in Country Hills since this track of homes were built. I do not like the idea of having a Mansion size home built in this track. I oppose to the Mediterranean style. We have a problem with some of the exterior colors but to have a home with an architectural design and size should not be approved. If this is approved, then that will open up doors for others to follow and will lose the concept here in Country Hills.

Homeowner,  
Linda Fong  
fongla@yahoo.com

---

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** "Robert Woolsey" <rjwoolsey@sbcglobal.net>  
**To:** "CHHOA" <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Cc:** <Undisclosed-Recipient@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 18, 2009 7:20 AM  
**Attach:** Opposition to PRE 08-00025 WAV08-00011.doc  
**Subject:** Re: Fw: HOA and Planning Commission

Dear Mr. Henseler:

My wife and I are very opposed to the new "house" that Mr. Mark Stephenson is planning for our Country Hills community at 25636 Amber Leaf Road in Torrance, California 90505.

I am out of the area for the Planning Commission meeting on Wednesday, February 18. However, I am taking this opportunity to attach my letter of opposition, and I encourage you to use it as part of your argument against this intrusive mansion-like structure.

I generally try to maintain my family's privacy, and abide by the zoning restrictions, CCRs, and bylaws of our community without intruding on the privacy of my neighbors. However, on this occasion, I feel compelled to present my argument.

Best regards,  
Robert A. Woolsey

---

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** <foxan22@aol.com>  
**To:** <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 5:31 PM  
**Subject:** Mansion Home

Would our CC&R's stop this size and type of home? We may have to sue under the CC&R's.

I am against the size and type of the proposed home.

I will not be able to attend the Planning Commission meeting.

Please pass on this E-mail.

Thanks,

Richard Johnson and Anne Fox, Homeowners  
3349 Cabdlewood Rd., Torrance

---

**A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!**

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** <Arnoldpar4@aol.com>  
**To:** <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:03 PM  
**Subject:** Re: HOA and Planning Commission

I am against having a 6000 + sq.ft. home in our Country Hills area ...A structure that large will have a negative affect on my neighbors ...I would agree to a home no larger than 4000 sq.ft.  
Arnold Holstein, 3114 Singingwood Dr., Torrance, Ca. 90505.....Feb. 12, 2009

---

The year's hottest artists on the red carpet at the Grammy Awards. AOL Music takes you there.

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** <fisherlw@aol.com>  
**To:** <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 9:21 PM  
**Subject:** Re: HOA and Planning Commission

David,

I agree with your assessment. It is not appropriate for Country Hills. Unfortunately, I'll be on travel next week and cannot attend. Please include my dissenting view.

Thanks again for all your work!

Larry Fisher  
2920 Briarwood Drive  
310-874-9776(c)  
310-534-5004(h)

---

**CHHOA**

---

**From:** "George Ciampa" <gciampa@sbcglobal.net>  
**To:** "CHHOA" <chhoa@socal.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 13, 2009 12:33 AM  
**Subject:** Re: HOA and Planning Commission

Thank you Dave. I will be in Palm Springs where I am spending a great deal of time. Thank you for sending this. Please submit the following:

**Dear Mayor Scotto, City Council Members and Planning Commission,**

**As a resident of Country Hills for 33 years, past president and past Environmental Committee Member and Director, I want to go on record opposing the planned construction of a residence on Amberleaf as submitted. This is not in compliance with our neighborhood. It doesn't even come close to fitting in with Country Hills environs. Please do not allow anything built there that does not blend with the surrounding homes. Thank you.**

George Ciampa  
LET FREEDOM RING a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization  
3304 Whiffletree Lane  
Torrance, CA. 90505  
(310) 539-4345  
(310) 408-2345 cell  
Email: gciampa@sbcglobal.net  
www.letfreedomringforall.org

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# Daily Breeze

21250 HAWTHORNE BLVE, STE 170 \* TORRANCE CALIFORNIA 90503-4077  
(310) 543-6635 \* (310) 540-5511 Ext. 398

## PROOF OF PUBLICATION (201 5.5 C.C.P.)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

County of Los Angeles,

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the County aforesaid; I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above-entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the printer of the THE DAILY BREEZE

a newspaper of general circulation, printed and published \_\_\_\_\_

in the City of Torrance\*  
County of Los Angeles, and which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of County of Los Angeles, State of California, under the date of \_\_\_\_\_

June 10, 1974

Case Number SWC7146

that the notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy (set in type not smaller than nonpareil), has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement there of on the following dates, to-wit

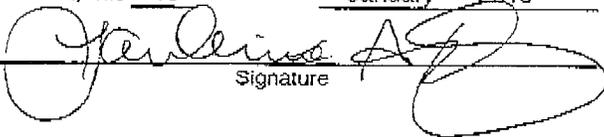
January 15,

all in the year 2010

the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated at Torrance

California, this 15 January 2010

  
Signature

This space is for the County Clerk's Filing Stamp

Proof of Publication of

DB

DB 1-71  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a Public Hearing will be held before the Torrance City Council at 7:00 p.m., January 26, 2010 in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, California, on the following matter:

**PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011, Mark Stephenson:** City Council consideration of an appeal of a Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story single family residence with semi-subterranean garage in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height, on property located in the Hillside Overlay District of the R-1 Zone at 25636 Amber Leaf Road.

Material can be reviewed in the Community Development Department. All persons interested in the above matter are requested to be present at the hearing or to submit their comments to the City Clerk, City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503, prior to the public hearing.

If you challenge the above matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Community Development Department or the office of the City Clerk prior to the public hearing, and further, by the terms of Resolution No. 88-19, you may be limited to ninety (90) days in which to commence such legal action pursuant to Section 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development Department at (310) 618-9990. If you need a special hearing device to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 618-2870. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title III).

For further information, contact the **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DIVISION** of the Community Development Department at (310) 618-9990.

**SUE HERBERS  
CITY CLERK**

Pub: January 15, 2010

\*The Daily Breeze circulation includes the following cities: Carson, Compton, Culver City, El Segundo, Gardena, Harbor City, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Marina Del Rey, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Palos Verdes, Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, San Pedro, Torrance and Wilmington

**PROOF OF SERVICE BY MAIL**

I, the undersigned, am a resident of the County of Los Angeles, State of California, over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to the within action. I am employed by the City of Torrance, 3031 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance California 90503.

On January 13, 2010, I caused to be mailed 91 copies of the within notification for City Council PRE08-00025, WAV08-00011: MARK STEPHENSON to the interested parties in said action by causing true copies thereof to be placed in the United States mail at Torrance California.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed January 13, 2010 at Torrance, California.

Denise Aoki

(signature)

**CITY OF TORRANCE**  
**Community Development Department**  
**3031 Torrance Boulevard**  
**Torrance, CA 90503**

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For further information, contact the **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DIVISION** of the Community Development Department at (310) 618-5990.

Publish: January 15, 2010

**SUE HERBERS**  
**CITY CLERK**

Fifty eight (58) mailed to residents and thirty three (33) mailed to HOA on 01/13/10. da

# NOTICE Of Public Hearing

**CITY COUNCIL**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **CITY COUNCIL** will hear a request for **consideration of an appeal of a Planning Commission denial of a Precise Plan of Development to allow the construction of a new two-story singly family residence in conjunction with a Waiver to exceed the maximum height on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone.**

Applicant: **Mark F. Stephenson** Case Type: **PRE08-00025**  
& Case No. (s): **WAV08-00011**

Location: **25636 Amber Leaf Road**

Hearing date: **January 26, 2010** Time: **7:00 PM**

Place of hearing: **Council Chambers, City Hall, 3031 Torrance Boulevard**

FOR INFORMATION CALL THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AT (310) 618-6990

CITY OF TORRANCE  
POSTED BY  
*O.G.*  
DATE: *1/14/10*

**NOTICE  
Of Public Hearing**

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