

# SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

PART 1: ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN  
PART 2: LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
PART 3: MEETING PROCEDURES



Prepared By

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

CALIFORNIA

July 3, 2007

## **SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GOALS**

The Single Family Design Board (SFDB) is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are:

- A. to protect the historic and architectural qualities of Santa Barbara;
- B. to protect the beauty and ecological balance of Santa Barbara's natural resources;
- C. to insure development and building consistent with the policies of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance;
- D. to promote high standards in architectural design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures;
- E. to improve the general quality of the environment and promote conservation of natural and manmade resources of the City;
- F. to encourage planning which is orderly, functionally efficient, healthful, convenient to the public, and aesthetically pleasing;
- G. to promote neighborhood compatibility;
- H. to encourage the preservation of pre -1925 and Hispanic styles of architecture;
- I. to promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of public scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation of open space, and variation of styles of architecture;
- J. to preserve creek areas through restoration, maintenance, and enhancement, and to discourage removal of significant trees and foliage removal; and
- K. to encourage landscape design that utilizes water-wise plants and the most efficient irrigation technology available for the protection and conservation of our water resources.

**SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES**  
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# INTRODUCTION

## **Purpose of the Single Family Design Board Guidelines.**

These Single Family Design Board (SFDB) Guidelines have been developed to guide development proposals to ensure high standards of design are maintained in development and construction in the City of Santa Barbara. The Guidelines are also intended to assist public understanding of the stated goals and adopted policies of the SFDB. In addition to SFDB-specific guidelines, there are Supplemental Design Guidelines found in a series of separate documents. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines are the most important document establishing the Single Family Design Board's criteria for reviewing plans throughout the City. Other Supplemental Design Guidelines provide additional information for some projects in certain areas of the City and for outdoor lighting standards. The Single Family Residential Design Guidelines provide the majority of architectural standards for SFDB review. The SFDB Guidelines contain Administrative Review criteria, landscaping standards, and meeting procedures.

## **SECTION 1 SFDB Background, Purpose, and Interpretation.**

- 1.1 **Background.** The Single Family Design Board was established by ordinance on June 8, 2007 as a result of the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO)/SFDB update process begun in 2004. The SFDB is composed of seven members, two of whom must be licensed architects, one a landscape architect, three other professionals in related fields such as design, engineering or landscape contracting, and one member must be from the public at large. A quorum consists of four members, two of whom shall be either a licensed architect or licensed landscape architect.
- 1.2 **Objective.** According to the City of Santa Barbara General Plan, "Santa Barbara has, as its primary goal, the provision of a particularly desirable living environment." Single-family homes have long contributed to the character of many neighborhoods in the city. The SFDB is charged with the responsibility to ensure homes are completed with high-quality designs that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, preserve the City's visual resources and promote long-term sustainability contribute to a desirable living environment. Further details about the goals of the SFDB in relationship to infill within neighborhoods, Hillside neighborhoods, neighborhood compatibility, and sustainability, see the "Introduction" section of the Single Family Residential Design Guidelines.

## **SECTION 2 Guideline Interpretation and Application.**

The SFDB is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are listed on the back side of the cover of this document. These guidelines help to define how SFDB carries out the goals.

These Guidelines are designed to guide the SFDB members and to the public as a whole; they are not intended to be binding in nature. Although failure to meet the Guidelines can form a basis for denial of a project, non-compliance with these Guidelines shall not be grounds to

invalidate any action taken by the SFDB, nor shall such non-compliance constitute a cause of action against the City or its officers, employees or agents concerning any matter.

All questions regarding the proper interpretation and application of these Guidelines shall be resolved by the SFDB or, upon appeal, the City Council.

**Relationship to the General and Coastal Plans.** The Santa Barbara General Plan contains policies and direction regarding the visual aspect of development, neighborhood compatibility and landscaping. General Plan and Coastal Plan policies and direction prevail over both the Zoning Ordinance and SFDB Guidelines.

**Relationship to Zoning Ordinance.** The Zoning Ordinance contains many standards with which development must comply. In the event of a conflict between these Guidelines and the Municipal Code, the Code requirements prevail over these Guidelines. These Guidelines are intended to augment the Municipal Code by providing complementary detail on the topics discussed.

**Relationship to Other SFDB Guidelines.** A number of other City Guidelines provide direction regarding architectural appearance, site design and landscaping. The other guidelines are listed below as “Supplemental Design Guidelines.” These SFDB Guidelines are generally compatible with the Supplemental Design Guidelines. These SFDB Guidelines are more detailed on some subjects than the Supplemental Design Guidelines. However, if these SFDB Guidelines and a Supplemental Design Guideline address the same issue, the Supplemental Design Guidelines applicable to the specific area or special district shall prevail over these SFDB guidelines.

**Relationship to Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO).** The NPO requires SFDB review and approval for certain single-family residential projects and other land form alterations within single-family zones. (See SBMC § 22.69.020 for a specific list of projects requiring review and approval by the SFDB.)

**Guideline Organization.** The SFDB Design Guidelines are divided into three main parts. Part 1 contains information about processing applications on properties with historic structures, green building information and architectural administrative review project approval criteria. Landscape guidelines for projects that require landscape plans are contained in Part 2. The SFDB Meeting Procedures in Part 3 provides background information and explains the SFDB’s meeting and review process and Staff’s role in SFDB agenda preparation.

### **SECTION 3 Supplemental Design Guidelines**

In addition to these SFDB Guidelines, other guidelines for specific types of development and for specific areas of the City have been prepared with input from the Historic Landmarks Commission, Architectural Board of Review, Planning Commission and others. Although many of the Supplemental Design Guideline documents are focused on areas of the City where commercial or multi-family development is more common, single-family development within the areas covered by the guidelines is subject to the Supplemental Design Guidelines. The Supplemental Design Guidelines include the following:

- A. **Single-Family Residence Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines apply to single-family houses constructed or altered in the Hillside Design District and to certain houses outside of the Hillside Design District. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist applicants and designers to design homes and home addition proposals that are compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- B. **Outdoor Lighting Design Guidelines.** These guidelines itemize acceptable standards for outdoor lighting installations throughout the City. The guidelines recommend specific outdoor lighting design standards to avoid excessive glare.
- C. **Passive Solar Design Guidelines and Recognition Program.** The best way to reduce energy consumption is through conservation. The Passive Solar guidelines encourage building siting, orientation, materials, construction techniques and landscaping to reduce long-term energy needs for new developments.
- D. **Solar Energy System Design Guidelines and Recognition Program.** This document specifies how to achieve a solar energy system that is high performing as well as aesthetically well integrated with its surrounding location, and therefore eligible for a recognition award from the City of Santa Barbara.
- E. **Urban Design Guidelines.** These guidelines apply to the City's Urban Grid. The intent of the guidelines is to ensure traditional design principles and pedestrian-friendly design concepts are incorporated into development proposals. The guidelines provide design criteria illustrations usable by design professionals, the public, and the SFDB to evaluate development proposal consistency with appropriate design principles.
- F. **Lower Riviera Special Design District Guidelines.** These guidelines ensure development surrounding the proposed Bungalow Haven Historic District is compatible with the District. The guidelines assist property owners, architects, contractors, and commissions and design review boards in designing projects that will be appropriate, compatible, and beneficial to the Special Design District and to assist the City in reviewing applications for new projects and alterations to structures within, and in close proximity to, the proposed Historic District.
- G. **Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines apply to the Upper State Street Area, an area generally on both sides of State Street from Constance Avenue to the westerly City limits. It also includes upper De la Vina Street from Constance Avenue to State Street; commercially developed areas along Hope Avenue, Hitchcock Way and La Cumbre Road and the commercial areas along Calle Real and Pesetas Way. The Upper State Street area is divided into 6 separate neighborhoods. It is recognized that each of these is different and requires unique architectural solutions. These Guidelines describe the different neighborhoods and provide assistance for design development to remain compatible with the neighborhoods. In addition, there are special landscaping guidelines for the Upper State Street Area.
- H. **Waterfront Area Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines establish a general design theme, which emphasizes the area's proximity to the ocean and Harbor areas. These Guidelines apply to all property in the area of the Harbor and Pershing Park, as well as properties south of U.S. Highway 101 between Castillo Street on the west and the City limits on the east.

- I. **Haley-Milpas Design Manual.** The purpose of these guidelines is to assist the people in the Haley-Milpas area in improving the appearance of their property. Goals in this area are to provide a more human-scaled and pedestrian environment; to give more attention to details to provide more interest and feeling; and to encourage mixed-use development to accommodate the mix of uses already existing in the area. U.S. Highway 101, Santa Barbara, Ortega, Salsipuedes and Haley Streets, and the properties facing Milpas Street bound this area.

# SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

## PART 1

### ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN



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# ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

## Purpose of the Architectural Design Guidelines

The Single Family Design Board (SFDB) Guidelines have been developed to guide development proposals to ensure high standards of design are maintained in development and construction in the City of Santa Barbara. The Guidelines are also intended to assist public understanding of the stated goals and adopted policies of the SFDB. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines are the most important document clarifying the Single Family Design Board's criteria for reviewing plans throughout the City. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines provide the majority of architectural standards for SFDB review. Historical significance information and energy efficiency/green building design information is included in this part of the SFDB Guidelines, rather than in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines. Administrative Review architectural design criteria for minor projects is the major topic of this part of the SFDB Guidelines.

## SECTION 1 Historical Significance – All Structures

Potential historical or architectural significance of existing project structures should be researched. Plans should show consideration for significant historical or architectural elements if any exist on the site. Existing sandstone walls, stairways and wrought iron gates should be preserved and included as a part of the overall plan. Consultation with the City's Urban Historian is recommended for demolition or alterations proposed for structures over 50 years of age.

## SECTION 2 Energy Efficiency, Green Building Design

The built environment has a profound impact on our natural environment, economy, health and productivity. Building green is a design and construction method that recognizes this impact and focuses on creating buildings that minimize the impact on the environment while positively affecting the economy and the health of the building occupants. To address these impacts, building green focuses on four major components:

- Energy and Water Conservation
- Site Planning
- Material and Resource Use Reduction
- Indoor Air Quality Improvements

Building green is encouraged as much as possible.

- 2.1 **Energy Efficiency.** Buildings shall be designed and oriented to maximize energy efficiency and conservation including lighting design. Feasible passive and active solar design principles are encouraged.
- 2.2 **Green Building Design.** The SFDB supports building designs that incorporate green building design principles and use energy efficiently. Buildings that conserve resources and use renewable sources of energy, including solar, wind, and biomass, are encouraged if the designs maintain an acceptable aesthetic quality and fit into the site and neighborhood.

Developing a plan for a green building design can reduce energy use, cool urban heat islands, and prevent storm-water runoff, as well as contribute to wildlife habitat and air quality. There are many ways to conserve resources during the building process.

Following are some examples of green building concepts:

- Selecting materials that have at least some recycled content can conserve natural resources and virgin materials.
- Selecting materials with less chemical or synthetic content, such as low VOC paints or adobe bricks, can reduce environmental toxins.
- Minimizing construction waste can ease the impact on landfills and resources.
- Installing water- and energy-efficient products and/or orienting a building and selecting landscaping in response to solar and breeze patterns can conserve resources while reducing operating costs.
- Selecting building materials made from easily renewable resources conserves non-renewable resources.

**SECTION 3 Administrative Approval Standards.** Various ABR review levels: Concept, Preliminary, In-Progress, Final, Review After Final and Consent Calendar are discussed in Part 3: Meeting Procedures. The following list of minor design alterations may be approved as a ministerial action by the Community Development Director or appointed representative without review by the SFDB.

**Projects eligible for Administrative Approval.** The following types of projects are eligible for administrative review and approval if the project complies with both the General Standards and the applicable Project Specific Standards for Administrative Review:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awnings</li> <li>• Additions-specified small one-story</li> <li>• Chimneys and Metal Flues</li> <li>• Color Changes - Exterior</li> <li>• Decks</li> <li>• Doors</li> <li>• Driveways/Paving/Minor Site Work</li> <li>• Fences</li> <li>• Garages</li> <li>• Landscape Improvements</li> <li>• Lighting: Exterior</li> <li>• Mechanical Equipment: General</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical Equipment: Rooftop Equipment</li> <li>• Manufactured Homes – One Story</li> <li>• Roofs (and “Reroofs”)</li> <li>• Sheds, Spas and Trash/Recycling Enclosures</li> <li>• Skylights</li> <li>• Soil Remediation Systems</li> <li>• Time extension – First 1 year extension</li> <li>• Trellises</li> <li>• Walls – Freestanding</li> <li>• Windows</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

### 3.1. General Administrative Review Standards

- A. **Design:** The architectural design of the addition, alteration or site change is compatible with the design of the house. One architectural style is required.
- B. **Materials:** The exterior finish materials of the proposed project match the existing exterior finishes of the structure.
- C. **Style:** Style is expressed through structural elements such as windows, doors, lighting, railings, trim, eaves, roof pitch, element proportions and materials. The style of the existing structure and proposed work (if different) are stated on the project plans. Wherever this document references a requirement for style compatibility, the following method is used to determine style compatibility. Staff may reference A Field Guide to American Houses or similar reference materials to confirm the proposed style classification. Staff will check for consistency of style of a structure's proposed elements with the elements for the chosen style as described in A Field Guide to American Houses or similar reference materials. Staff will also check that any patterns or materials created by the existing elements are repeated in the proposed work.
- D. **Additions:** Additions match the current architectural style of the building and are of the same materials, details and colors.
- E. **Alterations:** Alterations should match the current architectural style of the building or result in one architectural style. Major alterations that propose a unique architectural style for a neighborhood are not eligible for administrative review.
- F. **Colors:** Additions match the existing colors of the building, house siding or trim. Building alterations involving color changes may be re-painted or re-stained to match the existing colors of the structure provided there is no change from the original color. Similarly, exterior building components may be repaired or replaced as long as the visual intent and color remain the same. Simple color changes can be approved where original colors are substituted with colors from an SFDB-approved color palette. Bright or non-traditional color changes would require review and approval by the SFDB.
- G. **Scale:** The scale of all additions is compatible with the scale of the house, style of the building and neighborhood. The scale of a project is consistent with the prevailing development patterns of additions in the neighborhood. The review criteria utilized to determine correct scale shall be the degree of visibility of the proposals, plate heights, roof pitch and maximum building heights. Additions or alterations out of character with the neighborhood or incorrectly sited on the lot will be referred to the SFDB.

### 3.2. Administrative Review, Project-Specific Standards

- A. **Additions – Minor One-Story:** Minor one-story additions may be reviewed and approved administratively if all of the following apply to the project:
1. no second unit in resulting project;
  2. resulting home is less than 17' tall;
  3. addition is less than 50% of existing square footage in 1992;
  4. the project is less than 85% of the maximum FAR;
  5. less than 250 square feet is proposed to be added to the first floor;
  6. the addition is not highly visible from public viewing locations;
  7. there is no grading if the project site is greater than 15% slope;
  8. less than 100 cubic yards of grading is proposed for any lot;
  9. the addition complies with retaining wall guidelines; and
  10. the project has a two-star green building program rating and there is no vegetative roof in the proposed resulting project.
- B. **Awnings.** Small canvas awnings over window or door openings are compatible with the style and the colors of the existing house. Bright or non-traditional color changes require review and approval by the SFDB.
- C. **Chimneys and Metal Flues.** All of the following standards must be met.
1. Chimneys are either masonry or consistent with the style of the house.
  2. Metal flues are painted to match the roof color.
  3. The shape of the chimney is fairly uniform, i.e. there is no awkward extensive projection of exposed pipe beyond the top of the chimney in response to Building and Safety requirements.
- D. **Decks – Residential.** Decks over 200 square feet in area or decks elevated above the first floor level are not eligible for administrative approvals. Decks under 200 square feet in area are eligible for administrative approval if the following standards are met:
1. New decks are of a scale and style which is compatible with the structure to which the deck is attached.
  2. When viewed from a public viewing location, the proposed deck is not likely to be more noticeable than the structure it is attached to.
  3. When viewed from a public viewing location, the proposed deck is not likely to be more noticeable than other decks on adjacent properties or in the immediate neighborhood if no decks are on immediately adjacent properties.
  4. Deck wood is proposed to be left in a natural condition to weather or is proposed to be treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer or painted to match the color of the house or trim.

- E. **Doors.** All of the following standards must be met for administrative approval:
1. The type of proposed doors and color of frames are compatible with the architectural style of the residence and appear compatible with existing doors.
  2. If doors of additions are the same size and material as existing nearby doors, the proposed doors must match the existing nearby doors in appearance.
  3. Scale and height of doors are appropriate to the neighborhood.
- F. **Driveways/ Paving/ Minor Site Work – Residential.** Extensions, modifications, and additions to driveways may be reviewed and approved administratively if all of the following are satisfied:
1. Grading total is less than 50 cubic yards.
  2. There is no drainage impact on adjoining lots.
  3. Any paving or driveway additions or modifications are of the same materials as the existing paving or driveway materials.
  4. Any new driveway paving materials are compatible with the house and neighborhood.
  5. New paved parking areas are screened from public viewing areas through fencing, landscaping or other structures
  6. Any construction of a driveway or sitework in close proximity to a creek or that may result in adverse drainage conditions is not eligible for administrative approvals.
- G. **Fences.** Chain link, chicken wire, metal, plastic, vinyl, wire-mesh and unfaced cement block fence materials are not eligible for Administrative Staff Review. Fences not specifically excluded in the preceding sentence may be reviewed and approved administratively if all of the following are satisfied:
1. The fence is 8 feet or less in height.
  2. Lot Line Fences: Fence height, length and use of materials shall be compatible with the neighborhood.
  3. Wood fences constructed of smooth cedar, redwood, high-quality pressure treated pine, or comparable material and left in a natural condition to weather or be treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer.
- H. **Garages.** Garages placed at the same distance or closer to the street than the main house are not eligible for Administrative Review. Garages reviewed by Staff must be located further from the street than the main residence (i.e. “behind the house”).
- I. **Landscape Improvements.** Landscape improvements associated with projects under review shall be reviewed for consistency with landscape guidelines in the Single Family Design Board Guidelines: Part II, Landscape Design, and may be approved administratively if there is a clear consistency with the guidelines.
- J. **Lighting – Exterior.** Both of the following standards must be met for administrative approval.

1. Replacement or installation of additional fixtures are compatible in style, color and scale with the applicant's house.
  2. Lighting fixtures meet the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and Guidelines.
- K. **Manufactured Homes - One Story.** New one-story or additions to existing one-story manufactured homes outside of the Hillside Design District may be approved administratively if all the following standards are met:
1. Roof overhangs shall be 16" to 36" unless the proposed home style is modern or adobe with a parapet roof.
  2. Siding material shall be compatible with existing common siding materials in the neighborhood and of similar quality as the common siding materials in the neighborhood.
  3. Roof material shall be quality shingles or tiles in accordance with the roof material guidelines in this document.
- L. **Mechanical Equipment – General.** Equipment such as water heaters, water heater enclosures, electrical or gas metering equipment and pool and spa equipment must be located and screened as follows in order to be eligible for administrative approval:
1. If the new mechanical equipment is installed at ground level, it is placed as close to the dwelling as practical and screened from view through fencing, landscaping or other structures. Landscape screening, the preferred method of screening, is indicated on project plans to be maintained.
  2. All cables connecting outdoor equipment are properly secured and/or buried in the ground.
  3. All pool and spa equipment is located as far away from adjoining properties as reasonably practical in consideration of neighbors, and the equipment's property line decibel level must be consistent with the Noise Ordinance.
- M. **Mechanical Equipment - Rooftop Equipment.** Transmitting antennas are not eligible for administrative approvals. Satellite and other rooftop equipment reviewed by Staff must comply with the following standards.
1. Equipment is screened.
  2. The screening proposal presents an integrated appearance with the overall building.
  3. If equipment will be visible from off-site locations, despite screening or in cases where only vegetative screening is used, the equipment is painted the same color as the roof or adjacent background, as specified by Staff.
- N. **Porches.** If all of the following standards are met, residential porches may be administratively approved.
1. The porch is a traditional porch design in that it is raised less than six feet above the sidewalk level or finished grade, whichever is higher, and has no exposed understory.
  2. The type and color of proposed porch materials are compatible with the architectural style of the structure.

3. The porch railing and supports are designed so that the front door is easily visible from the street.
  4. The porch alignment with the structure complements the existing structure's architectural alignment, patterns and features.
  5. The porch is modest in scale and the porch roof is not higher than 12 feet.
  6. The proposed porch roofing matches the roofing material of the structure.
- O. **Roofs.** S-Tile roofs are not eligible for administrative approvals. In order to be reviewed and approved by Staff, roofs (including new roofs and "reroofs") must comply with the following standards:
1. The type and color of roofing material is compatible with the architectural style of the structure.
  2. Roofs of additions or accessory buildings match the roof of the structure.
- P. **Sheds, Spas and Trash/Recycling Enclosures.** All of the following standards must be met in order to be eligible for administrative review and approval:
1. The spa, shed or enclosure area is 150 square feet or less.
  2. Accessory structures are located in consideration of neighbors and appropriately screened.
  3. Materials match site fencing or the main structure's materials and colors.
  4. Any mechanical equipment associated with the structure meets the mechanical equipment administrative approval criteria above.
- Q. **Skylights.** The cumulative impacts of exposed roof equipment shall be a consideration when determining the appropriate size, quantity and type of skylights proposed. Skylights must meet the following requirements for administrative Staff approval eligibility.
1. There are no more than five skylights proposed for a building.
  2. Skylights are compatible with the architectural style of the building and with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
  3. Skylights are located so that they are not visible from the front of the building or a street.
  4. Skylights follow one of the following standards:
    - a. Proposed skylights are flat and made of non-reflective materials; or
    - b. Will not be visible from off-site locations; or
    - c. Are screened by the building form, landscaping, or a parapet.
- R. **Soil Remediation Systems – Temporary (1-Year).** Eligible for administrative approval if screened with 6-foot-high chain-link fencing with redwood slats, and shrubs or vines are planted or placed in pots surrounding the enclosure. The ventilation stack must be painted to match the color of the nearest background.
- S. **Time Extension.** Pursuant to Section 22.69.090 of the Municipal Code, the first

request for an extension of an SFDB approval may be reviewed and approved administratively. Any subsequent extensions requests are placed on the SFDB Consent Calendar.

- T. **Trellises.** Chain link, chicken wire, metal, plastic, vinyl, wire-mesh and unfaced cement block trellis materials are not eligible for Administrative Staff Review. Trellises are eligible for administrative approval if all of the following are satisfied:
1. The trellis covers less than 250 square feet and is less than 12 feet tall.
  2. Constructed of smooth cedar, redwood, high-quality, pressure-treated pine or comparable material and left in a natural condition to weather or be treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer.
  3. Lot line trellises' height, length and use of materials are compatible with the neighborhood.
- U. **Walls – Residential (Freestanding Only, Not Retaining).** Walls of non-traditional material, such as unfaced concrete block, railroad ties, faux materials or plaster walls in hillside areas are not eligible for administrative approvals. Walls approved administratively must meet all the following criteria:
1. Less than 4 feet tall
  2. Less than 50 cubic yards of grading outside the main building footprint for the wall project
  3. Similar in character with other walls visible in the neighborhood from public viewing locations
  4. Hillside Design District Walls: shall follow all Single Family Design Guidelines regarding blending with the natural surroundings.
  5. Lot Line Walls: Wall height, length and use of materials shall be compatible with the neighborhood.
- V. **Windows.** The proposed use of vinyl windows or aluminum frame windows where no aluminum frame windows previously existed on the property is not eligible for administrative approvals. Both of the following standards must be met for Administrative Staff approval:
1. The type of windows and color of frames are compatible with the architectural style of the house.
  2. Windows of additions match the windows of the house.

# SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

## PART 2

### LANDSCAPE DESIGN



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# INTRODUCTION

**Purpose of the Guidelines.** To provide general and specific guidelines for landscape plan design and installation throughout single-family neighborhoods in the City. Landscaping should be used as a unifying element within a project to enhance a building site and help achieve project compatibility with existing surroundings while complying with applicable policies and regulations.

**Relationship to the Santa Barbara General Plan and Coastal Plan.** The Santa Barbara General Plan contains policies and direction regarding landscaping in the Land Use, Conservation and Seismic Safety Elements. City scenic routes, tree preservation, creek protection and other topics are covered in the elements. The Coastal Plan also contains landscaping direction; especially regarding bluff-top development, views from Highway 101, and tree preservation and protection. General Plan and Coastal Plan policies and direction prevail over both the Zoning Ordinance and SFDB Guidelines.

**Relationship to the Santa Barbara Zoning Ordinance.** The Santa Barbara Municipal Code contains specific standards that must be met in landscape plans, including:

- planting material standards (28.87)
- water conservation (22.08)
- tree maintenance (15.24)
- vegetation removal (22.10)

Code requirements prevail over these guidelines. These guidelines are intended to augment the Municipal Code by providing further guidelines and details to complement topics in the Code, as well as to provide guidelines on additional topics.

**Why SFDB Landscape Guidelines?** Many projects subject to SFDB review are required to have landscape plans. Projects in some areas, such as the Hillside Design District or the downtown grid, are subject to Supplemental Design Guidelines (See, discussion in Part 1 of these SFDB Guidelines) which include direction regarding landscaping. However, many SFDB projects are not in an area with Supplemental Design Guidelines. These SFDB Landscape Guidelines clarify and expand on SFDB criteria for reviewing required landscape plans throughout the City.

**Relationship to Supplemental Guidelines.** In general, this document is compatible with the Supplemental Design Guidelines listed in the Introduction. However, where there are two guideline sets applicable to a project addressing the same issue, the Supplemental Design Guideline that applies to the specific area, special district, or specific topic would prevail over these SFDB guidelines.

**Relationship to Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO).** These SFDB Landscape Guidelines are intended to guide the SFDB regarding landscape issues when making NPO findings pursuant to Municipal Code § 22.69.050.

**Relationship to Other City Handouts.** The City provides full color handouts which provide specific techniques on how to comply with the Landscape Design Standards for Water Conservation and other sustainable landscaping techniques. Full-color handouts regarding sustainable and water-wise landscaping are available in the 630 Garden Street lobby area and on-line at:

[www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Departments/PW/WCBrochuresAndMore.htm](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Departments/PW/WCBrochuresAndMore.htm)

- **Lawn Alternatives**, City of Santa Barbara Water Conservation Program
- **Sustainable Landscaping**: Resource Efficient Landscapes for Santa Barbara County, Santa Barbara County Water Agency and City of Santa Barbara Public Works Department
- **How to Be Water-Wise in Your Garden**, Family of Santa Barbara Water Providers
- **How to Water Your Garden**, Sunset, 2000.
- **Water-Wise Gardening for California: Advice and Design Ideas for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**, the Editors of Sunset

Also see [www.sbwater.org](http://www.sbwater.org) for additional water-saving information.

**Guideline Organization.** The SFDB landscaping guidelines are broken into four sections. The first section describes when Landscape Plans are required and licensing requirements. The second section consists of general landscape guidelines applicable to all projects. Vegetation removal guidelines and their relationship with NPO vegetation removal findings is described in the third section. The last section covers special constraint area guideline topics.

## **SECTION 1            Landscape and Irrigation Plan Applicability**

### **1.1.    Landscape Plans**

#### **A.    Applicability.**

1. **Single-Family Home Projects.** The SFDB requires a landscape plan for all new single-family residential units.
2. **Single-Family Home Property Projects with Terracing Components.** Landscape plans are required where terracing projects occur in the hillside area. The plans are required to ensure fire hazard landscaping issues are addressed and to stabilize and beautify graded areas.
3. **Major Addition or Alteration Projects.** Projects involving substantial additions or alterations to existing developed sites may require landscape plans when:
  - existing landscaped areas are proposed for removal or alteration and/or
  - new landscaping improvements are proposed.
4. **Projects with Grading Work or Vegetation Removal.** Projects which propose substantial landscaping changes as a result of grading work or vegetation removal may require landscape plans or additional landscaping information submittal at the SFDB's discretion.
5. **Projects Which Involve Historic, Archaeological, or Environmental Resource or Hazards and Projects with Potential Public View Impacts.** Landscape improvements and a landscape plan may be required to address aesthetic concerns in the following cases:
  - when a proposed improvement involves a historic, archaeological, or environmental resource or hazard, and/or
  - to lessen potential project impacts to public scenic views.

6. **Planning Commission Projects.** A Landscape Plan is required for projects subject to Planning Commission review unless waived.
- B. **Exemptions.** Minor projects with landscaping that is not visible to the public may be exempt from the above requirements as determined by the SFDB. In these instances, proposed landscaping may be shown on the site plan rather than on a separate landscape plan.
- C. **Plan Contents.** Landscape plans must be submitted prior to the SFDB Preliminary Review hearing. Landscape plans shall indicate:
1. Location, size, species and common name of existing and proposed trees, shrubs, plants and turf.
  2. Any trees proposed for removal indicated with an "X."
  3. Total landscaped area in square feet.
  4. Total proposed water-wise and non-water-wise planting areas in square feet and as a percentage of total area landscaped with plants. "Water-wise" plants are required for 80% or more of residential project landscaped areas.
  5. Location of any proposed paved surfaces.
  6. Site and lot landscape and hardscape area percentages.
  7. Existing and proposed landscaping for street parkway strips fronting the subject property.
  8. Irrigation plans, except when the SFDB waives this requirement. An irrigation plan must include the City Water Conservation compliance statement at final approval. Refer to Landscape Design Standards for Water Conservation § 22.080.020 for further irrigation plan requirements.
  9. For projects in the High Fire Hazard Area, additional submittal requirements apply (see Appendix B); for example:
    - Indication of which existing and proposed vegetation is native and indication of existing native vegetation to be retained.
    - Include the method used to remove vegetation (e.g. mechanical or hand cutting).
    - Delineate landscape zones around structures following plant placement suggestions per Appendix B (0-30 ft., 30–50 ft., 50–70 ft. and 70–100 ft.)

Final Landscape Plans may also be required to include additional planting, specifications, and erosion control measures.

## 1.2 Licensing Requirement

- A. **General.** Unlicensed persons may prepare landscape plans for minor work involving single residential units, or projects consisting only of landscaping for 5,000 square feet or less. (Please refer to current State Landscape Architects Practice Act, Business and Professions Code § 5615 et seq.)

However, the SFDB may require a licensed landscape architect to prepare plans for these projects in the following circumstances:

1. The unlicensed person's landscape or irrigation plan submittals are determined inadequate or otherwise do not meet minimum review standards.
2. The proposed project involves extensive grading, revegetation or improvements with unique or sensitive habitats or environments.

## **SECTION 2      General Guidelines.**

Landscaping is considered an integral part of a project's design. Landscaping can enhance the City's natural beauty. Landscaping can complement new development as well as provide neighborhood cohesiveness. Landscaping embellishes and enhances new construction. Landscape plans should reflect consideration of overall site aesthetics. However, avoid using landscaping to correct problems of design, privacy or bulk. The architecture of a building should be of sufficient aesthetic quality to stand alone regardless of potential landscape changes over time. Landscaping improvements should:

- complement architecture;
- provide outdoor privacy areas;
- provide screening for undesirable views;
- provide usable and functional open space; and
- use appropriate water-wise plants, limited turf and efficient irrigation design principles.

The following general guidelines apply to all types of landscaping proposals:

- 2.1 **Site Layout and Massing.** Landscape massing refers to plant material that creates an appearance of substantial vegetation. The landscape plan should balance plant material and hardscape site elements such as walkways and walls.
  - A. **Lot Landscape Coverage.** Landscape massing shall provide for a generous overall percentage of plant landscaping in relation to the site and lot hardscape. Paved areas should be minimized and planting areas maximized.
  - B. **Neighbor Screening.** Where appropriate, consider screening plants, such as hedges, to create privacy between neighbors. Special care to ensure mature hedge heights and sizes will fit the space is needed to ensure only a minimal amount of pruning is necessary for maintenance. Hedges shall comply with SBMC §28.87.170.
  - C. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** Landscaping visible from the street should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood in plant type and scale. Site elements such as walls, steps, fences, etc. should be compatible with neighborhood elements in scale, color and materials.
  - D. **Trees for Shade and Weather Protection.** Canopy, skyline, and specimen trees shall be provided for shade and weather protection.

- 2.2 **Plant Selection.** Plant selection for the landscape plan should consider principles of sustainable landscaping and be sensitive to the elements described below.
- A. **Blending with Existing Vegetation.** Blend the type, coloring, size, and height of proposed vegetation into existing vegetation.
  - B. **Growth.** Consider appropriate plant selection and location to:
    - 1. Reduce the potential for normal plant material growth to significantly block an adjacent property's primary scenic view or sunlight (solar access), and/or
    - 2. Achieve privacy screening and produce a desired aesthetic result. Select plants that can grow to the necessary screening height without having to be pruned.
    - 3. Ensure vegetation scale consistent with public view preservation called for in the Coastal Plan and General Plan (e.g. Land Use Element City Scenic Routes).
  - C. **Adaptability.** Emphasis shall be placed on the concept of "Right Plant/Right Place." Select plants that are naturally adapted to the growing conditions of the site: soil type, slope, climate tolerance, space limitations, etc.
  - D. **Native and Mediterranean Plants.** Use native plants whenever possible. Where non-native species are used, emphasize plants from other Mediterranean climate regions.
  - E. **Invasive Plants.** Avoid invasive plant use, especially in, or adjacent to, environmentally sensitive habitat areas. Carefully select plants to avoid species that might migrate from the landscape and become "weeds." (Refer to the attached List of Invasive Plants, Appendix C, published by the California Exotic Pest Plant Council.)
  - F. **Fire Retardant Landscaping.** Use fire retardant landscaping where possible. See Section 4.3 High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Design and Appendix B for information about High Fire Hazard Area landscaping requirements. A list of plants which are highly flammable and should not be planted in the High Fire Hazard Area is included in Appendix B.
  - G. **Plant Spacing and Height.** Space plants according to their mature size, allowing for plant maturation without crowding or root damage. Consider mature plant height to avoid unnecessary pruning and hedging, especially under windows and eaves of structures and along property lines.
  - H. **Group by Plant Needs.** Plants with similar cultivation, watering and sun/shade requirements should be grouped together into hydrozones and designated to separate appropriate valve types, per SBMC §22.080.020.
  - I. **Limit Turf.** Use turf only in areas where appropriate for recreational uses. Adhere to turf reduction percentage requirements in SBMC §22.080.020. Consider lawn alternative species.

- 2.3 **Sustainability Principles.** Guidelines throughout this document support sustainable principles. Landscape and irrigation system design should reflect consideration of sustainable landscaping principles and be sensitive to elements described below. Also, see the additional sustainability concepts in Special Area Guidelines, Section 4.
- A. **Preserve Existing Vegetation.** Preserve existing vegetation and significant trees as much as possible (See Section 3, Tree and Vegetation Preservation).
  - B. **Natural Features and Graded Areas.** Avoid unnecessary grading and removal of soil. Protect existing natural features and re-vegetate graded areas as soon as possible.
  - C. **Climate Buffering.** Use landscaping to control sun and wind. For example, the use of deciduous trees and/or vines on the south sides of buildings can provide passive heat in the winter and cooling in the summer.
  - D. **Erosion-Prone Areas.** Consistent with the Seismic Safety Element, species that add weight to a hillside (such as ice plant) shall be avoided on steep hillsides or adjacent to bluff top areas susceptible to erosion. Deep-rooted species that assist in stabilizing slopes and control erosion are encouraged.
  - E. **Water Efficiency.** Water-efficient landscaping is mandatory per SBMC 22.080.020. Landscaping and irrigation shall be planned with consideration for water conservation through use of water-wise plant species, water-efficient irrigation systems and other methods listed in SBMC §22.080.020, including using drip irrigation and mulching and designing irrigation to minimize runoff .
  - F. **Reducing Runoff.** Plant species that require significant watering (such as turf) shall be avoided on steep hillsides or narrow pathways, planters and parkways. Such areas are difficult to irrigate without significant runoff. Note the requirements in SBMC §22.080.020
  - G. **Irrigation.** Use water-efficient irrigation systems, including drip irrigation, micro sprayers, bubbler and rotating spray nozzles. Use smart irrigation controllers and rain sensors. Note the requirements in SBMC §22.080.020
  - H. **Waste Minimization.** Sustainable landscape planning that protects the environment by using minimal resources and creating minimal waste is encouraged.
  - I. **Stormwater Management.** Santa Barbara neighborhoods most commonly drain to local creeks, which then flow to the ocean. Non-point source pollution such as pesticides and fertilizers from lawns, heavy metals from driveways and pet waste pose a significant threat to the quality of life on our beaches and streams. Stormwater should be viewed as a resource with environmental and educational significance that can give unique character to neighborhood landscapes. Bioswales, infiltration areas, vegetated filter strips, porous paving, rainwater cisterns, and rainwater gardens should be incorporated into site design to allow biofiltration of sediment and pollutants, to slow down potentially damaging flows, and to increase the presence of nature within the community. These measures are very attractive, low tech, low cost, low maintenance and provide significant

benefits to our environment. Appropriate choice of plantings and irrigation for the site helps reduce urban runoff and the subsequent non-point source pollution.

- J. **On-Site Water Retention and Natural Drainage.** Use methods to retain water on the site to recharge groundwater and to use for future watering (e.g. cisterns). Design landscaping to enhance natural drainage and biofiltration of pollutants through the use of bioswales, detention basins and other techniques.
- K. **Permeability and Percolation.** Use urban runoff/pollution control Best Management Practices to maximize the permeability of sites and on-site percolation of runoff. For example, design projects to minimize paved areas, collect runoff on-site, or maximize hardscape area permeability with brick or pavers on sand.
- L. **Drainage Flow.** Use natural watercourses, earth swales, v-ditches, drywells and water dissipation devices to enhance drainage flow on and through the site.

2.4 **Street and Driveway Design.** Street and driveway designs should utilize the following design concepts.

- A. **Grading, Exposed Excavations and Retaining Walls.** Design streets or driveways to limit grading quantities and steep, exposed excavations and avoid the use of retaining walls where possible.
- B. **Street and Driveway Widths.** Limit street and driveway widths to reduce paving quantity and encourage slower vehicle speeds, while providing adequate access. Consider the use of ribbon driveways, pavers and other materials that decrease the amount of pavement and increase permeability. Please note, applicants must consult with the Fire Department and Transportation Division regarding alternative paving methods.
- C. **Garage Orientation.** Where possible, orient driveways and garages to be street-friendly, so that garage or carport openings are not facing directly onto streets.
- D. **Sidewalk Widths.** Provide street sidewalk widths that allow for landscaped parkways to buffer pedestrians from street traffic.
- E. **Street Trees.** City street trees should be incorporated into a project when none exist and/or at locations recommended by the SFDB or City Arborist and the Street Tree Master Plan. Any street tree removal is subject to Park Commission approval.
- F. **Plants and Irrigation in Parkway.** Water-wise plants are required and turf is prohibited in parkways. Drip irrigation or low precipitation rate sprinklers/bubblers are encouraged and irrigation must be designed to minimize runoff. See the City's list of recommended plants for parkways.

### SECTION 3 Tree and Vegetation Preservation

3.1 **General.** Development should be sensitive to existing mature trees as they are a valued community resource. The SFDB's goal is to prevent unnecessary tree removal. Mature

trees should be integrated into project design rather than removed. All feasible options should be exhausted prior to tree removal.

- A. **Goal.** Existing tree preservation and protection shall be a primary goal of a landscape design.
- B. **Projects Proposing Tree Removal.** If existing tree preservation is not possible, tree loss may result in required tree replacement(s) or possible project denial.
- C. **General Tree Replacement Standards.** Trees four (4) inches in diameter or greater at four (4) feet above grade in height removed shall be replaced on site on a minimum one-to-one basis, unless an alternative replacement ratio is deemed necessary as part of the environmental review process. The standard required mitigation for tree loss is a 3:1 ratio replacement. This standard can also be increased up to 10:1 depending on the type of tree removed, lot size, and size and expected survival rate of replacement trees.

The appropriate replacement size shall be determined through the environmental review process in conjunction with SFDB review depending on the size and biological value of the tree and on-site conditions. (See Native and Specimen Tree Protection and Replacement Standards, below).

- D. **Native and Specimen Tree Protection and Replacement Standards.** Consistent with Conservation Element Visual Resources Policy 4.0 and Biological Resource Policy 4.0, efforts shall be made to preserve trees. In particular, native trees, including oak trees and specimen trees are subject to the following guidelines:
  - 1. **Earth Disturbance Prohibitions.** No earth disturbance is allowed in the circular area one-third the distance of the overall canopy/dripline as measured from the trunk. (For example, if the tree canopy is 30 feet, no work can be done in the first 10 feet from the outside edge of the trunk in all directions.) In other areas under the canopy/dripline, earth may only be disturbed with hand tools.
  - 2. **Arborist's Report.** Any work within the general vicinity of the dripline of a native or specimen tree may require an Arborist's Report. If an Arborist's Report is required, the SFDB may defer to the report's recommendations.
  - 3. **Paving.** Paving and other non-permeable surface encroachment under native and specimen tree canopy/driplines should be minimized. For oak trees, no paving is allowed under the canopy due to their sensitivity to paving. If paving or other non-permeable surfaces encroach within a canopy, no more than 25% of the total area beneath the canopy/dripline can be covered and paving may only be placed by hand or with hand tools.
  - 4. **Distance from Structures.** The edge of the mature native or specimen tree canopy/dripline should remain a minimum of five (5) feet from all new structures.
  - 5. **Protection Notes.** Proposed projects which may impact existing native or specimen trees are required to submit Tree Protection notes as part of the

final landscape submittal. Notes shall be located on all site and/or grading plans.

6. **Replacement Dimensions.** If it is determined that a native or specimen tree is to be removed, the diameter of the required replacement tree(s) will be equal to or greater than one-quarter the diameter of the existing tree (e.g., a 12-inch-diameter oak will be replaced with one measuring no less than 3 inches). Smaller tree replacement sizes than this formula may be specified in some cases to ensure replacement tree availability.

- 3.2 **Vegetation Removal and Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO).** There are specific vegetation removal types and quantities that may require a vegetation removal permit and SFDB review. For example, the Fire Department requires weed abatement in specific areas of the City; a vegetation removal permit may be required for some forms of weed abatement. Please refer to SBMC Chapter 22.10 for exemption categories.

NPO findings are made for appropriate grading and for native tree protection on hillsides. The SFDB strongly encourages native vegetation preservation. SFDB NPO findings must be made for project approval.

- 3.3 **Landscape Maintenance/Conditions of Approval.** The SFDB may conditionally approve projects to maintain landscaping to allow natural tree growth to mature heights. It is unlawful to cut down or otherwise destroy trees as outlined in Chapter SBMC §15.24. Tree removal and excessive pruning of trees is considered destruction and shall be considered a violation of SFDB conditions of approval for required landscaping.

## SECTION 4      **Special Areas**

- 4.1 **Hillside Residential Landscape Design.** Landscaping in hillside areas should be sensitive to the community's view of the new development, as well as the view from the subject property. Plantings should soften the appearance of new home, major addition, and retaining wall project components. The following guidelines are specific to hillside areas of the City.

- A. **Appearance.** Landscaping should visually diminish the mass of structures as viewed from the community. Plantings should be selected from a palette of California native plants or Mediterranean plants that blend into the hillside and frame views. Plantings should not distract from the natural hillside profile. For example, palm tree installation would be discouraged, especially along ridgelines. Also, brightly colored flowers such as begonias planted to cover large areas of publicly visible fences and walls would be discouraged because they contrast with the surrounding hillside when viewed from a distance.

- B. **Natural Surroundings.** Oak woodlands, steep slopes, bluffs, creeks, watersheds, or other native habitats should be evaluated by a biologist, arborist, or landscape architect to determine the appropriate landscape plant selection and maintenance to minimize negative effects on natural areas.

- C. **Grading.** Grading should be minimized.

- D. **Slope Failure.** In the event of slope failure, a soils engineer, geologist or landscape architect may be required to recommend appropriate mitigation for plantings and/or irrigation installation as well as erosion control measures.
- E. **Erosion Control Measures.** Erosion control measures should also be included on hillside landscape plans. Also, refer to the Seismic Safety Element Landslides Hazard Reduction recommendations section.

4.2 **Creeks, Water Courses and Wetlands.** Projects near creeks, water courses and wetlands are subject to the following guidelines. These projects should also be designed with special consideration for consistency with Sustainability Guidelines 2.3.

- A. **Degradation Prohibition.** Development in and adjacent to creeks shall not degrade the creeks or their riparian environments. Where existing creeks, watercourses, and/or wetlands provide a natural environment, avoid removal of these environments.
- B. **Native Plant Species.** Protect, maintain, enhance, and/or restore native plant species and vegetation in areas along natural creeks, watercourses and wetlands.
- C. **Expert Use.** Consult a licensed landscape architect and/or biologist to provide recommendations and/or specifications to plant, protect or revegetate a site. In many cases, a biologist will be required to participate in the development of restoration and/or revegetation plans.
- D. **Immediately Adjacent Landscaping.** Only native, non-invasive vegetation shall be planted immediately adjacent to creeks, watercourses and wetlands. Also, see Conservation Element and Local Coastal Plan direction regarding development on bluffs.
- E. **Buffer Landscaping.** Vegetative buffers shall be provided between natural areas and developed or high-use areas. Buffer vegetation should be native, but may include non-native vegetation if it is non-invasive.

4.3 **High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Design**

- A. **Vegetation Modification Zone.** Provide or create a vegetation modification zone around structures consistent with Fire Department High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Guidelines. The guidelines specify drought-tolerant and fire-resistant plants to reduce wildfire risks. Please consult with the Fire Department's Wildland Interface Specialist.
- B. **Native and Fire Retardant Vegetation.** Native and fire retardant vegetation use is encouraged for major cut and fills slope landscaping where development occurs on hillsides.

City of Santa Barbara

LANDSCAPE DESIGN STANDARDS  
FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Adopted June 27, 1989

I. **Introduction**

It is the policy of the City of Santa Barbara to promote the efficient use of water. These standards are intended to promote such efficiency while allowing the maximum possible flexibility in designing attractive and cost effective landscapes. The standards were adopted by the Council of the City of Santa Barbara on June 27, 1989 as Resolution No. 89-077. The effective date of the standards is July 27, 1989.

II. **Definitions**

- A. **Landscaped Area**: All areas that are proposed to be planted or to be covered with permeable material as a part of a development proposal.
- B. **Drought Tolerant Plants**: Those plants that are likely, after becoming established, to remain healthy in the proposed location on irrigation limited to twelve inches of water per square foot per year.
- C. **Design Review Board**: The Architectural Board of Review or Landmarks Committee or any joint meeting of these two boards.

III. **Applicability**

Compliance with these standards is mandatory for all landscaping proposed as a part of projects that are subject to review by the Architectural Board of Review or Landmarks Committee. (SBMC Section 22.80.020)

IV. **Exceptions**

Exceptions to these standards may be granted only by the design review board having jurisdiction and only after making a finding that the exception will promote equivalent or greater water conservation. Requests for exceptions shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the City at the time of making application for review by the design review board.

V. **Compliance Requirements**

- A. All lawns shall utilize turf species listed as low water use varieties on the most recent list of low water use species published by the University of California Cooperative Extension.
- B. Turf shall not be used on slopes of 20% or greater.
- C. Except where additional lawn area is specifically determined by the design review board to be intended for passive or active recreational use, the following restrictions shall apply:
  - 1. Commercial projects shall be designed without the use of turf.
  - 2. In projects other than commercial projects, including residential and institutional type projects, no more than 20% of the landscaped area shall be planted in lawn and/or non-drought tolerant plants.
- D. All planted areas, except those with lawns, groundcover, or other low lying shrubs, shall include mulch material to an average thickness of at least two inches throughout, except in the immediate vicinity of plant stems.
- E. Irrigation systems shall be designed such that there are separate valves serving each of the following areas:
  - 1. Lawn areas;
  - 2. Areas planted with non-drought tolerant plants; and
  - 3. Areas planted with drought tolerant plants.
- F. Irrigation systems shall be designed to prevent overspray and run-off. Areas of sprinkler coverage shall be shown on the irrigation plan.
- G. A written list of irrigation stations, and the precipitation rates of those stations in inches per hour, shall be included on the irrigation plan.
- H. Drip, trickle, or other low volume irrigation shall be provided on at least 25% of the landscaped area.

VI. **Recommended Additional Measures**

The following components are recommended for inclusion at the option of the designer, except when in conflict with other code requirements:

- A. Provide tensiometers in conjunction with automatic irrigation controllers, where appropriate, installed in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.

- B. Where appropriate as an alternative to automatic irrigation control, use metering valves designed to apply a specified amount of water.
- C. Where feasible, provide permeable paving instead of asphalt or concrete on patios, walkways, and parking areas.
- D. Avoid use of turf and spray-type irrigation systems in areas that have a relatively high perimeter-to-area ratio, such as parkways, medians, and narrow beds.
- E. In cases where structural or horticultural requirements do not conflict, provide infiltration trench, drywell, cistern, or other means to prevent rain gutter and pavement run-off from leaving the site.
- F. Provide soils amendments as appropriate to improve moisture holding properties of the soil.
- G. Provide check valves at the low end of irrigation lines to prevent unwanted draining of irrigation lines.

VII. **Submittals**

- A. Applicants subject to mandatory compliance shall provide all relevant information on the landscape plans, including common and botanical names for plant and turf species, calculations of allowable areas of lawn area and non-drought tolerant plants, required areas of drip/trickle irrigation, and specific requests for any exception to the requirements of these standards. Requests for exception must be accompanied by documentation demonstrating that the finding of equivalent or greater water conservation can be made.
- B. A landscape architect, licensed under the laws of the State of California, shall state on the plans that the landscape design complies with the mandatory elements of these standards.

EXCEPTION: On projects that are limited to one single family residence and on projects consisting solely of landscaping and not more than 5,000 square feet thereof, the owner of the property and a landscape contractor licensed under the laws of the State of California shall also be authorized to state that the plans are in compliance with these standards.

A City-approved format shall be used for all statements of compliance.

VIII. **Determination of Conforming Installation**

A landscape architect, licensed under the laws of the State of California and listed with the Building Official as an eligible special inspector, shall inspect the completed installation prior to final building permit approval and shall determine in writing that the installation substantially conforms to the approved plans.

EXCEPTION: On projects that are limited to one single family residence and on projects consisting solely of landscaping and not more than 5,000 square feet thereof, the owner of the property and a landscape contractor licensed under the laws of the State of California shall also be authorized to perform such inspection and conformance determination.

A City-approved format shall be used for all conformance determinations.

IX. **Compliance Verification**

Verification of compliance with these standards, as applicable, shall be by the Community Development Department and the design review board in accordance with the following requirements:

- A. No development application shall be scheduled for final review by the design review board unless the plans contain all required information and a statement of compliance in accordance with Section VII above.
- B. The design review board shall be authorized to interpret, but not to waive, the requirements of these standards. Any appeal of a decision of the design review board regarding these standards shall be by the process established for appeal of other decisions of the board.
- C. No building permit shall be issued unless the statement of compliance required by Section VII above has been included on the final landscape plans submitted for plan check.
- D. No building permit shall be given final approval prior to receipt by the Building Official of a written determination of conformance as required by Section VIII above.



City of Santa Barbara  
Fire Prevention Bureau

**High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Guidelines**  
**Ordinance #5257**

The following landscape guidelines should be utilized to incorporate fire resistant landscaping on all parcels within the High Fire Hazard area. The guidelines meet the requirements for the Fire Department "Minimum Brush Clearance Standards," per Appendix IIA of the California Fire Code (2001 Edition), as adopted by Ordinance #5257. These standards apply to all parcels within the High Fire Hazard area (See "Minimum Brush Clearance Standards" handout). Fire resistant landscaping with proper plant spacing and maintenance can impede the progress of a wildfire, reduce its intensity, and provide a safe buffer to protect a structure.

Incorporation of the High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Guidelines into the review process will assist the City in complying with existing regulations for vegetation modification, balance the aesthetic beauty of our area, protect our resources, and reduce the risk associated with wildfire and habitat resources.

**Guidelines**

Landscape plans submitted for review shall include the following:

- A vegetation plan that details existing native vegetation with species name and locations.
- Include on the vegetation plan which plants will be removed or retained.
- Include the method used to remove vegetation (for example: mechanical or hand cutting).
- Landscape plans should include new plantings with species name and specific location of plantings to scale.
- Recommendations for plant placement should be followed as outlined in Table 1.
- Landscape plans must delineate landscape zones around all structures for a distance of 100 feet as follows:

- Zone 1 - (0-30 feet from structure)
- Zone 2 - (30 to 50 feet from structure)
- Zone 3 - (50 to 70 feet from the structure)
- Zone 4 - (70 to 100 feet or greater from the structure)

All landscape plant species must be fire resistant (See enclosed Desirable Qualities for Fire Resistant Landscape Plants, Table 2). Certain plant species are considered to be undesirable in the High Fire Hazard area landscape. The enclosed list of Undesirable Plant Species (Table 3) should not be planted within 100 feet of any structure, unless listed otherwise.

Slopes over 20% are at increased risk from wildfire, therefore the Fire Department recommends additional vegetation modification for a total distance of 150-200 feet from any structure.

Many homes in the High Fire Hazard area do not have the space surrounding their property to obtain the 100-foot clearance. Using the above zone concept becomes critical on these properties.

**Table 1: Recommendations for Plant Placement**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>ZONE 1<br/>0 – 30 feet</p>                  | <p>This area is closest to a structure. It provides the best protection against the high radiant heat that result during a wildfire. Plants should be low growing, irrigated plants. Focus should be on ground covers not more than 12 inches in height or succulents. Use non-flammable materials for paths, patios, and mulch. Trees should not be planted closer than 15 feet from a structure.</p>   |
| <p>ZONE 2<br/>30 – 50 feet</p>                 | <p>Maintain a reasonably open character in this area. Plant low growing ground covers and succulents resistant to fire. Shrubs up to 3 feet can be planted but should have at least 18 feet spacing between other shrubs or other trees. Shrubs can be planted in clusters not more than 10 feet in diameter, but should have at least 18 feet between clusters. Do not plant shrubs underneath canopy of trees. Trees should be spaced at least 30 feet apart to prevent crowns from touching once fully grown.</p> |
| <p>ZONE 3<br/>50 – 70 feet</p>                 | <p>This area should have native and Mediterranean plantings that require irrigation and should not be higher than 4 to 6 feet. Shrubs should be spaced at least 18 feet away from each other. Shrubs can be planted in clusters not more than 10 feet in diameter, but should have at least 18 feet between clusters. Trees should be spaced at least 30 feet apart to prevent crowns from touching once fully grown.</p>  |
| <p>ZONE 4<br/>70 – 100 feet<br/>or greater</p> | <p>This zone is furthest from the structure. Plantings once established need no irrigation. There is no limit to height. Shrubs planted in this area should have 18 feet spacing or be planted in clusters with at least 18 feet spacing. Trees can be planted in groups or with individual spacing at least 30 feet from other trees.</p>   |
| <p>SLOPES &gt;<br/>20%</p>                     | <p>If additional vegetation modification is required on slopes over 20% vegetation should be reduced through thinning of existing plants, pruning, removal of dead material, and removal of fire ladders (Fire ladders exist if a fire's flames can spread from the ground into shrubs and trees up to a house).</p>   |

**TABLE 2 - Desirable Qualities for Fire Resistant Landscape Plants**

Plant qualities that are desirable for fire resistant plants are:

- Ability to store water in leaves or stems.
- Produces limited dead and fine material.
- Extensive root systems for controlling erosion.
- Plant has high levels of salt or other non-resinous compounds within its tissues that can contribute to fire resistance.
- Ability to withstand drought.
- Plants that are low growing in form.
- Ability to withstand severe pruning.
- Low levels of volatile oils or resins.
- Ability to resprout after a fire.

### Table 3: Undesirable Plant List

Certain plants are considered to be undesirable in the landscape due to characteristics that make them highly flammable. These characteristics can be either physical or chemical. Physical properties would include large amounts of dead material retained within the plant, rough or peeling bark, and the production of profuse amounts of litter. Chemical properties include the presence of volatile substances such as oils, resins, wax, and pitch. Certain native plants are notorious as species containing these volatile substances.

Plants with these characteristics should not be planted in High Fire Hazard areas. They are referred to as target species since their partial or complete removal is a critical part of hazard reduction. The following is a list of plants that should be avoided within the landscape zones defined in Table 1.

### Undesirable Plant Species

| Natives   | Domestics  |
|---|--|
| <i>Adenostoma fasciculatum</i> – Chamise            | <i>Acacia</i> species  |
| <i>Adenostoma sparsifolium</i> – Red Shank          | <i>Casuarina</i> species - Beefwood  |
| <i>Artemesia californica</i> – California Sagebrush | <i>Cortadera</i> species – Pampas Grass  |
| <i>Baccharis</i> species (low growing form OK)      | <i>Cupressus</i> species – Cypress   |
| <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i> – Common Buckwheat    | <i>Eucalyptus</i> species – Eucalyptus   |
| <i>Olneya tesota</i> - Iron wood                    | <i>Juniperous</i> species – Juniper (except species which grow less than 1 foot) |
|   | <i>Melaleuca</i> species   |
|   | <i>Pennisetum</i> - Fountain Grass   |
|   | <i>Pinus</i> species – Pine  |
|   | <i>Schinus molle</i> – California pepper tree (within 50 feet of structure)      |

Other plants may be considered undesirable because of their ability to naturalize and become a pest. These types of plants should be avoided, especially in sensitive riparian or coastal areas where they could become established and compete with native vegetation.

On steep slopes care should be taken to avoid erosion problems created or enhanced by vegetation removal. Deep rooted ground covers and landscape plants should be utilized to hold soil in place. Avoid shallow rooted ground covers. For example, iceplant while an effective ground cover on flat surfaces would be undesirable on a steep slope because its shallow rooted nature may increase erosion when the root zone becomes saturated during heavy rains, exposing bare soil. In areas where target species compromise the total vegetation, partial removal is recommended to obtain Fire Department “Minimum Brush Clearance Requirements.”

## CalEPPC List of Exotic Plants of Greatest Ecological Concern in California

Species in bold have invaded the Southwest California ecological region, in which Santa Barbara is located. For more information, see: [www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/pdf/Inventory2006.pdf](http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/pdf/Inventory2006.pdf)

◆ = Alert status has been issued by the CalEPPC

High

- Aegilops triuncialis* (barb goatgrass)
- ◆ ***Alternanthera philoxeroides*** (alligatorweed)
- Ammophila arenaria*** (European beachgrass)
- Arundo donax*** (giant reed)
- Brassica tournefortii* (Saharan mustard, African mustard)
- Bromus madritensis ssp. rubens*** (=B. **rubens**) (red brome)
- Bromus tectorum* (downy brome, cheatgrass)
- Carpobrotus edulis*** (Hottentot-fig, iceplant)
- Centaurea maculosa*** (=C. **bibersteinii**) (spotted knapweed)
- Centaurea solstitialis*** (yellow starthistle)
- Cortaderia jubata*** (jubatagrass)
- Cortaderia selloana*** (pampasgrass)
- Cytisus scoparius*** (Scotch broom)
- Delairea odorata*** (=Senecio **mikanioides**) (Cape-ivy, German-ivy)
- Egeria densa*** (Brazilian egeria)
- Ehrharta calycina*** (purple veldtgrass)
- ◆ ***Eichhornia crassipes*** (water hyacinth)
- ◆ *Euphorbia esula* (leafy spurge)
- Foeniculum vulgare*** (fennel)
- Genista monspessulana*** (French broom)
- Hedera helix***, ***H. canariensis*** (English ivy, Algerian ivy)
- ◆ ***Hydrilla verticillata*** (hydrilla)
- Lepidium latifolium*** (perennial pepperweed, tall whitetop)
- ◆ ***Ludwigia hexapetala*** (=L. **uruguayensis**) (Uruguay water-primrose)
- Ludwigia peploides ssp. montevidensis*** (creeping water-primrose)
- Lythrum salicaria* (purple loosestrife)
- ◆ ***Myriophyllum aquaticum*** (parrotfeather)
- Myriophyllum spicatum* (Eurasian watermilfoil)
- Onopordum acanthium*** (Scotch thistle)
- Rubus armeniacus*** (=R. **discolor**) (Himalaya blackberry, Armenian blackberry)
- ◆ *Salvinia molesta* (giant salvinia)
- ◆ *Sesbania punicea* (red sesbania, scarlet wisteria)
- ◆ *Spartina alterniflora hybrids* (smooth cordgrass, Atlantic cordgrass)
- ◆ *Spartina densiflora* (dense-flowered cordgrass)
- Spartium junceum*** (Spanish broom)
- Taeniatherum caput-medusae*** (medusahead)
- Tamarix parviflora* (smallflower tamarisk)
- Tamarix ramosissima*** (saltcedar, tamarisk)
- Ulex europaeus* (gorse)
- Moderate
- Ageratina adenophora*** (croftonweed, eupatorium)
- Ailanthus altissima*** (tree-of-heaven)
- ◆ ***Asparagus asparagoides*** (bridal creeper, smilax asparagus)
- ◆ ***Asphodelus fistulosus*** (onionweed)
- Atriplex semibaccata*** (Australian saltbush)
- Avena barbata*** (slender wild oat)
- Avena fatua*** (wild oat)
- Brassica nigra*** (black mustard)
- Bromus diandrus*** (riggut brome)
- ◆ ***Cardaria chalepensis*** (=C. **draba ssp. chalepensis**) (lens-podded whitetop)
- Cardaria draba*** (hoary cress)
- Carduus pycnocephalus*** (Italian thistle)
- Carpobrotus chilensis*** (sea-fig, iceplant)

Moderate (continued)

- Centaurea calcitrapa* (purple starthistle)
- Centaurea melitensis* (Malta starthistle, tocalote)
- Chrysanthemum coronarium* (crown daisy)
- Cirsium arvense* (Canada thistle)
- Cirsium vulgare* (bull thistle)
- Conium maculatum* (poison-hemlock)
- Cynara cardunculus* (artichoke thistle)
- Cynodon dactylon* (bermudagrass)
- Cynosurus echinatus* (hedgehog dogtailgrass)
- Cytisus striatus* (Portuguese broom, striated broom)
- Dipsacus sativus* (fuller's teasel)
- ◆ *Dittrichia graveolens* (stinkwort)
- Ehrharta erecta* (erect veldtgrass)
- ◆ *Ehrharta longiflora* (long-flowered veldtgrass)
- ◆ *Emex spinosa* (spiny emex, devil's thorn)
- Eucalyptus globulus* (Tasmanian blue gum)
- ◆ *Euphorbia terracina* (carnation spurge)
- Festuca arundinacea* (tall fescue)
- Ficus carica* (edible fig)
- Geranium dissectum* (cutleaf geranium)
- Hirschfeldia incana* (shortpod mustard, summer mustard)
- Holcus lanatus* (common velvetgrass)
- Hordeum marinum*, *H. murinum* (Mediterranean barley, hare barley, wall barley)
- ◆ *Hypericum canariense* (Canary Island hypericum)
- Hypericum perforatum* (common St. Johnswort, klamathweed)
- Hypochaeris radicata* (rough catsear, hairy dandelion)
- Leucanthemum vulgare* (oxeye daisy)
- Linaria genistifolia* ssp. *dalmatica* (=L. *dalmatica*) (Dalmation toadflax)
- Lolium multiflorum* (Italian ryegrass)
- Lythrum hyssopifolium* (hyssop loosestrife)
- Mentha pulegium* (pennyroyal)

- ◆ *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* (crystalline iceplant)
- Myoporum laetum* (myoporum)
- Nicotiana glauca* (tree tobacco)
- Oxalis pes-caprae* (buttercup oxalis, yellow oxalis, Bermuda buttercup)
- Pennisetum setaceum* (crimson fountaingrass)
- Phalaris aquatica* (hardinggrass)
- Potamogeton crispus* (curlyleaf pondweed)
- ◆ *Retama monosperma* (bridal broom)
- Rumex acetosella* (red sorrel, sheep sorrel)
- Sisymbrium irio* (London rocket)
- Torilis arvensis* (hedgeparsley)
- Trifolium hirtum* (rose clover)
- Vinca major* (big periwinkle)
- Vulpia myuros* (rattail fescue)
- ◆ *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican fan palm, Washington palm)

Limited

- Acacia melanoxylon* (black acacia, blackwood acacia)
- Agrostis avenacea* (Pacific bentgrass)
- Agrostis stolonifera* (creeping bentgrass)
- Bassia hyssopifolia* (fivehook bassia)
- Brassica rapa* (birdsrape mustard, field mustard)
- Briza maxima* (big quackinggrass, rattlesnakegrass)
- Bromus hordeaceus* (soft brome)
- Cakile maritima* (European sea-rocket)
- Cardaria pubescens* (hairy whitetop)
- Carduus tenuifolius* (slenderflower thistle)
- Cotula coronopifolia* (brassbuttons)
- Crataegus monogyna* (English hawthorn)
- Dactylis glomerata* (orchardgrass)
- Descurainia sophia* (flixweed, tansy mustard)
- Echium candicans* (pride-of-Madeira)
- Erodium cicutarium* (redstem filaree)
- Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (red gum)
- Hypochaeris glabra* (smooth catsear)

Limited (continued)

- Iris pseudacorus*** (yellowflag iris)  
***Lobularia maritima*** (sweet alyssum)  
***Marrubium vulgare*** (white horehound)  
***Medicago polymorpha*** (California burclover)  
***Myosotis latifolia*** (common forget-me-not)  
***Olea europaea*** (olive)  
***Parentucellia viscosa*** (yellow glandweed, sticky parentucellia)  
***Pennisetum clandestinum*** (kikuyugrass)  
***Phoenix canariensis*** (Canary Island date palm)  
***Picris echioides*** (bristly oxtongue)  
***Piptatherum miliaceum*** (smilograss)  
***Plantago lanceolata*** (buckhorn plantain, English plantain)  
***Poa pratensis*** (Kentucky bluegrass)  
***Polypogon monspeliensis*** and *subsp.* (rabbitfoot polypogon, annual beardgrass, rabbitfoot grass)  
***Pyracantha angustifolia*, *P. crenulata*, *P. coccinea*, etc.** (pyracantha, firethorn)  
***Ranunculus repens*** (creeping buttercup)  
***Raphanus sativus*** (radish)  
***Ricinus communis*** (castorbean)  
***Robinia pseudoacacia*** (black locust)  
***Rumex crispus*** (curly dock)  
***Salsola paulsenii*** (barbwire Russian-thistle)  
***Salsola tragus*** (Russian-thistle)  
***Saponaria officinalis*** (bouncingbet)  
***Schinus molle*** (Peruvian peppertree)  
***Schinus terebinthifolius*** (Brazilian peppertree)  
***Schismus arabicus*, *S. barbatus*** (mediterraneangrass)  
***Senecio jacobaea*** (tansy ragwort)  
***Silybum marianum*** (blessed milkthistle)  
***Sinapis arvensis*** (wild mustard, charlock)  
***Tamarix aphylla*** (athel tamarisk)  
***Undaria pinnatifida*** (wakame)  
***Zantedeschia aethiopica*** (calla lily)

# SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

## PART 3

### **MEETING PROCEDURES**



Prepared By

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

CALIFORNIA

Revised

July 3, 2007

## **SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GOALS**

The Single Family Design Board (SFDB) is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are:

- A. to protect the historic and architectural qualities of Santa Barbara;
- B. to protect the beauty and ecological balance of Santa Barbara's natural resources;
- C. to insure development and building consistent with the policies of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance;
- D. to promote high standards in architectural design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures;
- E. to improve the general quality of the environment and promote conservation of natural and manmade resources of the City;
- F. to encourage planning which is orderly, functionally efficient, healthful, convenient to the public, and aesthetically pleasing;
- G. to promote neighborhood compatibility;
- H. to encourage the preservation of pre -1925 and Hispanic styles of architecture;
- I. to promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of public scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation of open space, and variation of styles of architecture;
- J. to preserve creek areas through restoration, maintenance, and enhancement, and to discourage removal of significant trees and foliage removal; and
- K. to encourage landscape design that utilizes water-wise plants and the most efficient irrigation technology available for the protection and conservation of our water resources.

# SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

## MEETING PROCEDURES

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## **SECTION 1 Introduction, Interpretation and Application**

The general purpose of the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) meeting procedures is to guide applicants to better understand the SFDB's meeting and review process and staff's role in SFDB agenda preparation. The SFDB architectural design and landscape design guidelines (parts 1 and 2) have been developed to ensure that high standards of design are maintained in development and construction in the City of Santa Barbara. In addition to the meeting procedures and SFDB Design Guidelines contained in this document, there are supplemental design guidelines found in a series of separate documents.

These meeting procedure guidelines are designed to provide direction to the SFDB members and to the public as a whole. Nothing herein shall be interpreted in a manner contrary to the requirements of State law or the Municipal Code and in the event of a conflict between the requirements of State law or the Municipal Code and these guidelines, State law or the Municipal Code shall prevail. All questions regarding the proper application of these Guidelines shall be resolved by the SFDB or, upon an SFDB action appealed to the City Council.

Staff will make periodic updates to the SFDB Guidelines to implement preferred procedures and guidelines and reflect changes in the regulatory environment.

## **SECTION 2 General Information and Procedures.**

### **2.1 General Information.**

- A. **Meeting Dates and Location.** The Full Board SFDB meetings occur every other Monday beginning at 3:00 P.M. in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, Community Development Department, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, California. The SFDB meetings may be televised live on the local Government Access channel. Agenda items are scheduled as time-certain with the final item scheduled for no later than 8:00 P.M. Please note changes may occur to the meeting agendas due to postponement of items as described in Section 2.7.B.

If a holiday falls on Monday, meetings will be held on the following Tuesday or at the discretion of the Board. The Consent Calendar review occurs at 11:00 A.M. on the same day and it is also held in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, California.

Occasionally there is a need to cancel a regular meeting or to hold a special meeting. Dates and times of such meetings shall be posted in the usual manner.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Planning Division at (805) 564-5470. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

- B. **Applications and Filing.** Application instructions are available at the Community Development Department/Planning Counter at 630 Garden Street and on-line. Business hours are 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Monday through Thursday and every other Friday. For a current list of office hours, and a schedule of Friday closures,

please visit the City's website at [www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov), or call (805) 963-0611.

Applications are accepted for the next available agenda based on a first-come-first-serve basis. Filing applications may be required by appointment only; appointments may be requested by calling 805-564-5578. Applications will be date-stamped and submittal times are logged to assist Staff in determining project priority. Projects requiring a noticed hearing will be scheduled accordingly after an application is received. For example, approximately two and a half weeks is needed in order to schedule a project that requires a noticed hearing. Applications deemed incomplete by Staff or which have major zoning issues identified through a zoning plan check process shall not be placed on an agenda. Staff will also consider the following factors when scheduling items: availability of City Staff, review level required, expected public comment and number of items submitted.

- C. **Licensing Advisory.** The Business and Professions Code of the State of California and the Municipal Code of the City of Santa Barbara restrict preparation of plans for certain project types to licensed professionals. Applicants are encouraged to consult with Building and Safety or Planning Staff to verify requirements for their specific projects.

Unlicensed persons are limited to the preparation of SFDB plans for:

- Single family dwellings of wood frame construction and not more than two stories and a basement in height;
- Landscaping improvements of less than 5,000 square feet for single-family dwellings. See additional information regarding landscape plan licensing advisories in Part II of these Guidelines.

- D. **Application Completeness.** Due to the high volume of projects that require SFDB review, it is important for applicants to submit complete applications. (Please refer to the handout available at the Planning Counter entitled Design Review Submittal Packet, which describes the elements of a complete application.) Failure to submit a complete application may result in Planning Staff refusing to accept the application at the counter or the inability to place a project item on the next available agenda. The SFDB may deem an application incomplete, for example, if the application submittal lacks sufficient photographs or does not provide required information.

- E. **Notice and Posting.** Both the regular agenda and consent calendar are posted for public review on the outdoor bulletin board at 630 Garden Street adjacent to the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, and in the Planning and Zoning Counter area at 630 Garden Street. Agendas and minutes are also available on the Community Development Department's website a minimum of 72 hours prior to each meeting at [www.santabarbaraca.gov/sfdb](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/sfdb).

- F. **Fees.** Fees are based on the size, scope and type of project proposed. Staff will determine appropriate application fees based on the current fee resolution adopted by the City Council. Staff at the Planning Counter can provide the most recent information, and the fee schedule is available on-line at:

[www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Home/Forms/planning.htm](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Home/Forms/planning.htm)

**G. Staff Contact.**

Community Development Department  
 Planning Division  
 630 Garden Street  
 Phone: (805) 564-5470 Fax: (805) 897-1904  
 Website: [www.santabarbaraca.gov](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov)  
 e-mail: [SFDBSecretary@santabarbaraca.gov](mailto:SFDBSecretary@santabarbaraca.gov)  
 or Planning Technician, in the following format:  
 FirstInitialLastName@santabarbaraca.gov

- 2.2 **Agenda Organization.** Agendas for a meeting are organized on an approximate "time certain" basis. The following agenda order usually applies. However, the agenda times are subject to change in that an item may be heard either earlier or later than noted in the approximate schedule due to continuances or postponements of agenda items. It is recommended that people arrive at least 15 minutes before the approximate time for their item of interest.

Wherever the proposed Floor to Lot Area Ratio (FAR) exceeds 85% of the maximum FAR allowed under the Municipal Code or 85% of the recommended FAR in the Single Family Design Guidelines, or wherever a covered deck area exceeds 400 square feet, a notation will be made on the agenda for the item.

Instructions for the SFDB regarding the review level that may take place for the project are indicated in bold capital letters in parentheses after each item.

**A. General Business**

1. Public Comment
2. Approval of minutes
3. Consent Calendar
4. Announcements, requests by applicants for continuances and withdrawals, and future agenda items
5. Reports from subcommittees
6. Potential project violations
7. Discussion items

**B. Appeals**

**C. Concept Review (continued items first, followed by new items)**

**D. Preliminary Review (continued items first, followed by new items)**

**E. In-Progress Review**

**F. Final Review (continued items first, followed by new items)**

**G. Review After Final**

## 2.3 Notices.

- A. **Consent and Full Board Items.** Some projects require a noticed hearing before the SFDB. When a noticed hearing is required, written notice of the hearing is mailed to the applicant, the owners of the 20 closest lots, and the owner of any lot within 100 feet of the project. In addition, notice of the hearing is posted on the site of the proposed project and “door to door” flyer noticing must be given to residents on the 20 closest lots. If a project requires another land use decision by the City Council, Planning Commission, or Staff Hearing Officer, the notice for the first Design Review hearing shall comply with the notice requirements for that hearing body. The purpose of these notices is to provide an early opportunity for adjacent property owners and occupants to comment on development proposals that may impact their property. (Please see Santa Barbara Municipal Code § 22.68.040 for the types of applications that require a noticed hearing and the specific noticing requirements).

In addition to the mailed notice described above, the City will mail meeting agendas to “interested parties” associated with a parcel or project. A member of the public may request to become an “interested party” in one of the following three ways: 1) Indicate he or she wishes to be listed as “interested party” on a “Request to Speak” form available during SFDB hearings, 2) Submit correspondence to the SFDB secretary via U.S. mail or email requesting to be listed as an interested party, or 3) Visit the Planning and Zoning Counter at 630 Garden Street and request to be listed as an interested party.

If the Community Development Director determines that plan substitutions constitute a substantial change from the previously noticed plan (including, but not limited to, changes to the project’s, size, bulk, scale, form or design), the Community Development Director may require the project to be re-noticed for another public hearing. The Community Development Director may also require an additional noticing fee to be paid by the applicant in these cases.

- B. **Pre-SFDB Review Applicant Workshop.** Single family home project proposals in excess of 100% of the maximum FAR specified in the Municipal Code are required to have a workshop prior to the first SFDB hearing for the project. The applicant is required to invite all property owners within 100 feet of the project to a workshop held at least 10 days after the workshop invitation is mailed. The workshop invitation must include a description of the proposed project. A workshop invitation must also be mailed to the City Planning Division to the attention of the Single Family Design Board Planning Technician. The applicant must show plans and a project description at the workshop and listen to any neighbor concerns. The applicant is responsible for summarizing the workshop results to the SFDB at the first Concept Review hearing.

## 2.4 Project Presentation / Plan Substitution

- A. **Plan Presentation.** All levels of review with the exception of the Consent Calendar require the presentation of the project by the applicant or the applicant's representative. If no one is available to present an item on behalf of the applicant, the agenda item shall be continued indefinitely. The

applicant or the applicant's representative will be responsible for rescheduling the project. Applicants may always submit additional information, architectural details, or notes on additional plan sheets at the hearing when the additional information is consistent with the agendized project (the plans submitted at the time the plans were agendized).

- B. Plan Substitution.** Plans originally submitted and filed with an SFDB application are generally not allowed to be substituted by applicants at the time of the scheduled meeting date. This policy is intended to ensure that approvals are not obtained without proper Staff oversight and to ensure an adequate opportunity for public review prior to the meeting. The exceptions to this general policy are explained below.
1. Plans may not be substituted at the first mailed noticed Concept Review Hearing or when a Preliminary or Final Approval is being requested.
  2. Plans may be substituted at non-mailed notice Concept or In-Progress reviews if the following conditions have been met:
    - (a) Proposed site plan does not have any changes that would require a Zoning Modification; and
    - (b) Proposed building heights, site plans and elevations are substantially consistent with agendized plans; and
    - (c) The project has the same level of zoning compliance as agendized plans; and
    - (d) A completed Plan Substitution form is submitted to Staff if the new substitute plans are not substantially consistent with agendized plans, the new plans will be agendized for a future meeting.

## 2.5 Public Hearings and Public Comments

- A. Official public hearings, whereby a mailed notice of a project has been sent to nearby property owners and other interested parties, will be announced by the Chair as an opportunity for public comment prior to SFDB comment on plans. No more than one mailed notice public hearing is required to be held at the SFDB on any particular development project unless the project has changed substantially from the original application. For agenda items which are not official mailed-notice public hearings, the Chair will invite members of the public, who have submitted request to speak forms, to speak on the items prior to SFDB comment. For agenda items that are not public hearings, if no member of the public has submitted a request to speak form, the Chair may commence with SFDB review of the items without announcing a public comment opportunity. For all agenda items, speakers who wish to comment on a project may be asked to limit their speaking time to no more than two minutes. The SFDB may adjust the length of time each person speaks based on the number of people who wish to speak. In order to manage meeting length, Staff will generally limit the total number of mailed noticed public hearings scheduled per SFDB meeting to no more than four.

- B. The SFDB recommends that interested neighbors work together either to organize their comments or to select one person to represent the neighborhood and speak on the group's behalf. The following examples of public comment types are appropriate:

- aesthetic issues
- design issues
- neighborhood compatibility
- compliance with the "Good Neighbor Guidelines"

Comments on topics that may not be within the SFDB's purview, such as the following, are discouraged:

- site land use or zone designation
- project affordability

- C. The SFDB shall consider public comments directly related to aesthetic issues involving neighborhood compatibility, architecture and landscaping issues. The Board may also consider neighborhood input regarding Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance compliance findings, such as grading, tree removal and/or mass, bulk, and scale of the development. These general guidelines are in place to manage meeting duration each week.

2.6 **Review Levels.** See the SFDB Checklist available at the Planning counter or the City's website for specific submittal requirements for each level of review.

- A. **Site Concept Review.** The following project types are required to undergo a Site Concept Review:

1. Vacant lots in the Hillside Design District
2. Vacant lots with an average slope of 15% or more
3. Projects where entire main building structure demolition is proposed

A "Site Constraints Analysis" submittal is required for this review. The first concept review for a vacant Hillside Design District lot site does not include any building drawings to keep the focus on an objective review of site constraints.

The Site Constraints Analysis is necessary to properly evaluate whether site constraints may impact the location and siting of proposed new structures. The Site Constraints Analysis is intended to aid SFDB and applicants in identifying advantages and disadvantages of alternative building sites on a lot. The SFDB may direct the development proposal to be on the most appropriate portion of the lot and provide initial direction regarding a range of appropriate sizing of development. This can potentially save applicants time and cost. For example, without this initial review, costly and time-consuming redesigns could result if major concerns with chosen building sites are discovered later in the review process.

The Site Constraints Analysis must include the following on a site plan:

1. complete topographic information identifying slope ranges
2. significant vegetation features
3. view corridors
4. ridgelines
5. soil constraints
6. significant biological features
7. existing drainage patterns

**B. Concept Review.**

1. Concept review is an informal review process during which no formal action is taken. Applicants are required to submit a complete site plan but encouraged to present preliminary sketches and/or conceptual drawings. SFDB comments are made that give the applicant general directions for future review but are not binding on future discussion of the item.

The SFDB or Staff may limit a project to two (2) concept reviews prior to Staff Hearing Officer or Planning Commission review.

2. The SFDB may request a site visit or story poles to be placed at the site prior to taking action on the application. For single family homes, the SFDB may also determine in Concept Review that additional submittals are required to help determine the project's consistency with Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Findings (See Section 2.8.B for a list of the findings). Additional submittals are required when a single-family home project exceeds 85% of the maximum FAR, unless waived by the SFDB.
3. Concept review considers broad issues such as site planning, general architectural style and the project's relationship to its site and neighborhood.
4. Concept review is required prior to any other City reviews (such as environmental review, Planning Commission, etc.), and before any formal action is taken by the SFDB. Preliminary approval is not usually granted at a Concept Review level. Generally, an application should receive "positive comments" from the SFDB prior to the project's placement on another review body's hearing agenda.
5. A concept review does not result in formal action and, therefore, may not be appealed.

**C. Preliminary Review.**

1. Preliminary Review is a formal review of an application prior to preparation of working drawings. The plans should reflect all applicable Planning Commission conditions and City Departmental conditions of approval.
2. Preliminary approval is the most important approval of plans and determines the site plan configuration and design that must be followed in

- the working drawings. Any substantial changes between concept review and preliminary review will result in the project returning to the concept level.
3. All significant elements of any facet of the architectural appearance, landscaping and site/building orientation must be found consistent with the applicable Guidelines in order to receive approval at this level of review.
  4. Environmental review, Planning Commission approvals, and other discretionary review, if required, must be completed prior to Preliminary Approval.
  5. For purposes of Government Code Section 65950, a preliminary approval shall be considered to be "approval" of the project by the SFDB and concludes the discretionary phase of project review. It shall constitute the substantive SFDB design approval of the project which is appealable; however, final approval is still required prior to building permits.
- D. **In-Progress Review.** Applicants are encouraged to participate in In-Progress Review, which occurs after Preliminary Approval. If the SFDB has expressed concern about a specific item (e.g. details, colors, etc.) the applicant may be requested to submit "In Progress" drawings to assure that the drawings are consistent with the Preliminary Approval.
- E. **Final Review.** Final Review is a formal review of completed working drawings, prior to submittal for a building permit.
1. Final plans will be approved if they are in substantial conformance with the plans given preliminary approval. If the applicant proposes substantial changes to the plans, a new preliminary approval will be required. All Planning Commission Conditions of Approval shall be included on the plans.
  2. All details, color samples, door hardware and exterior lighting fixtures shall be included for review. The Design Review Final Approval Submittal Checklist indicating sheet numbers where plan details are located within plan sets must be submitted with the final proposed details.
  3. A Final Review approval may be obtained subject to conditions that allow minor details to return on the Consent Calendar.
- F. **Vacant Hillside Design District Lots Special Requirement.** Complete engineering details must be submitted prior to obtaining Final SFDB approvals for vacant lots in the Hillside Design District. Also see the Site Constraints Analysis requirements as part of a Site Concept Review, in Section 2.6.A.
- G. **Review After Final.** Review After Final occurs when there is a proposed change to a project after final approval of the project has been granted. Plans submitted should include all information on drawings, which reflect the proposed changes. If changes are not clearly delineated or shown, they cannot be construed as approved. Additional fees are charged for review after final. Any changes to a project for which "review after final" approval is requested shall be

subject to a substantial conformance determination for conformance with the Final Approval.

- H. **Consent Calendar.** The Consent Calendar is meant to expedite the review of minor projects. One SFDB member who is assisted by Staff reviews the Calendar. Applicants are advised to attend but are not required to attend or make a presentation of the project. A recommendation regarding each item on the Calendar is made to the full SFDB for action. Such recommendation is not final until acted upon by the SFDB. The SFDB may take an item off the Consent Calendar to be considered by the Full SFDB. The SFDB may also direct some projects or portions of projects to the Consent Calendar for review. In addition, Staff has been delegated the discretion to place the following items on the Consent Calendar when appropriate:
1. Minor upper floor addition where the upper story already exists and the amount of proposed square footage is small.
  2. Addition of trash enclosures if they meet minimum ordinance requirements, complement the building's architecture and are not within public view.
  3. Additional landscaping on an existing site or minor changes to proposed landscaping of an approved project.
  4. Minor exterior or site changes.
  5. Time extensions beyond the first time extension for minor projects.
  6. Any project within categories listed below under "Minor Alterations Eligible for Administrative Staff Approval."
- I. **Minor Alterations Eligible for Administrative Staff Approval.** Some minor design alterations may be approved as a ministerial action by the Community Development Director or appointed representative without review by the SFDB. The Community Development Director or appointed representative has the authority and discretion to refer any minor design alteration to the SFDB if the alteration has the potential to have an adverse effect on the architectural integrity of the building, structure or surrounding property. SFDB Staff also may refer any projects which do not appear to comply with the Single-Family Design Guidelines up to the SFDB Consent Calendar or Full Board.

All projects which qualify for Administrative Staff Review are subject to general compliance with adopted design guidelines and any specific design standards applicable to the project as stated. Not all project types have specific administrative approval criteria. The Administrative Staff Review process is limited to the types of additions or alteration projects in the following list of projects eligible for administrative review.

Projects eligible for Administrative Approval (if General Administrative Review Standards and applicable Project Specific Review Standards, listed in Part I: Architectural Design Section 3 are met):

- Awnings
- Additions-specified small one-story
- Chimneys and Metal Flues
- Color Changes - Exterior
- Decks
- Doors
- Driveways/Paving/Minor Site Work
- Fences
- Garages
- Landscape Improvements
- Lighting: Exterior
- Mechanical Equipment: General
- Mechanical Equipment: Rooftop Equipment
- Manufactured Homes – One Story
- Roofs (and “Reroofs”)
- Sheds, Spas and Trash/Recycling Enclosures
- Skylights
- Soil Remediation Systems
- Time extension – First 1 year extension
- Trellises
- Walls – Freestanding
- Windows

J. **Construction without Permit (“As-Built”).** The SFDB shall review as-built applications with the same degree of scrutiny and consideration afforded other proposed new projects utilizing the following criteria:

1. As-built work shall comply with all adopted design guidelines or be made to comply.
2. As-built work constructed or completed without benefit of review by the SFDB may be subject to denial if the work is deemed unacceptable.
3. Materials used and construction quality shall be evaluated by the SFDB when determining if the as-built work is acceptable as constructed.

## 2.7 Procedure for Continuances, Postponements, Referrals, and Absences.

A. **Continuances.** A continuance is the carrying forward of an item under discussion to a future meeting. To be considered for a continuance, the applicant must attend the meeting and make a presentation. An application may be continued (i) at the request of the applicant, or (ii) by action of the SFDB. Unless a continuance is necessary in order for the SFDB to receive reports or other information, the SFDB Chair should offer the applicant the option of agreeing to the continuance or requesting that the SFDB give the project an up or down vote at the present meeting. A noticed hearing item may be continued to a “date certain” without renoticing, or may be continued indefinitely, subject to renoticing.

B. **Postponements.** A postponement is deferral of the consideration of an agenda item to a future meeting. No discussion or presentation takes place on the date a postponement occurs. To be considered for a postponement, the applicant must contact SFDB Staff prior to the meeting date and state the reason(s) justifying the postponement. If an application has been postponed more than twice, the SFDB may deny the application “without prejudice” to a future application. Without prejudice means the SFDB will have no reservations or pre-formed opinions in reviewing a resubmitted project.

1. Applicants that request a postponement before 4:30 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the meeting date will be scheduled on the next available agenda that complies with applicable noticing requirements.
  2. If an applicant fails to request a postponement before 4:30 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the meeting date, the item will be postponed indefinitely. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact staff in order to reschedule the item for consideration. An applicant that fails to timely request a postponement shall pay a rescheduling fee.
  3. The agenda schedule is subject to change as cancellations occur; applicants are encouraged to arrive 15 minutes early. Applicants that arrive late for their scheduled agenda item may be postponed indefinitely unless the SFDB agrees to hear the item and if time permits.
  4. SFDB Staff may rearrange the agenda item order after agenda publication in order to minimize time gaps in the meeting due to cancellations or postponements. The SFDB Staff-person may also consult with the SFDB Chair to assist in scheduling discussion items and to determine appropriate time allocations for projects when long agendas are planned.
- C. **Consent Calendar Referrals to Full Board.** Items that are referred from the Consent Calendar to the Full SFDB by the Consent Calendar reviewer will be heard at the beginning of the Full SFDB meeting if time permits. The SFDB may choose to have the item scheduled at the Full SFDB on the next available agenda. If the Full SFDB pulls an item from the SFDB Consent Calendar and makes a motion to refer it to the Full SFDB, no additional conditions or requirements can be placed on that item unless the applicant is notified or has been given the opportunity to be present for the discussion. Staff will notify the applicant when an item is referred to the Full SFDB and SFDB could not approve the Consent Calendar item as presented. Items referred from the Consent Calendar to the Full SFDB shall be rescheduled on the next available agenda.
- D. **Absences at Consent Calendar.** Although not recommended, applicants need not be present for consideration of items on the Consent Calendar. Staff may present projects when applicants are absent. If an applicant does not attend the Consent Review, project approval may be delayed. If an applicant is absent, the project would not be denied on the Consent Calendar, instead, the project would be continued indefinitely.

## 2.8 Decisions.

- A. **General Findings to Approve Single-Family Projects.** In order to approve all single-family projects, the SFDB shall make the findings outlined in **Subsection A of Section 22.69.050** and included in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.

**Neighborhood Preservation Findings (SBMC §22.69.050.A) – All Projects**

1. **Consistency and Appearance.** The proposed development is consistent with the scenic character of the City and will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.
  2. **Compatibility.** The proposed development is compatible with the neighborhood, and its size, bulk, and scale is appropriate to the site and neighborhood.
  3. **Quality Architecture and Materials.** The proposed buildings and structures are designed with quality architectural details. The proposed materials and colors maintain the natural appearance of the ridgeline or hillside.
  4. **Trees.** The proposed project does not include the removal of or significantly impact any designated Specimen Tree, Historic Tree or Landmark Tree. The proposed project, to the maximum extent feasible, preserves and protects healthy, non-invasive trees with a trunk diameter of four inches (4") or more measured four feet (4') above natural grade. If the project includes the removal of any healthy, non-invasive tree with a diameter of four inches (4") or more measured four feet (4') above natural grade, the project includes a plan to mitigate the impact of such removal by planting replacement trees in accordance with applicable tree replacement ratios.
  5. **Health, Safety, and Welfare.** The public health, safety, and welfare are appropriately protected and preserved.
  6. **Good Neighbor Guidelines.** The project generally complies with the Good Neighbor Guidelines regarding privacy, landscaping, noise and lighting.
  7. **Public Views.** The development, including proposed structures and grading, preserves significant public scenic views of and from the hillside.
- B. **Special Additional Findings Required to Approve Hillside Design District and Sloped Lot Findings – Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance.** (SBMC §22.69.050.B) In the Hillside Design District or on a lot or a building site that has an average slope of 15% or more, the following two additional findings must be made for project approval:
1. **Natural Topography Protection.** The development, including the proposed structures and grading, is appropriate to the site, is designed to avoid visible scarring, and does not significantly modify the natural topography of the site or the natural appearance of any ridgeline or hillside.
  2. **Building Scale.** The development maintains a scale and form that blends with the hillside by minimizing the visual appearance of structure(s) and the overall height of structures.

- C. **Grading Permits.** (SBMC §22.69.020.E) For grading permits reviewed by the SFDB pursuant to SBMC §22.69.020.E, in addition to the NPO findings specified above, the following two findings must be made for project approval:
1. No significant increase in siltation or decrease in water quality of streams, drainages or water storage facilities to which the property drains; and
  2. No substantial loss of southern oak woodland habitat.
- D. **Vegetation Removal Permits** (SBMC §22.69.020.F) For vegetation removal permits reviewed by the SFDB pursuant to SBMC §22.69.020.F, in addition to the NPO findings specified above, the following three findings must be made for project approval:
1. Will result in no significant increase in siltation or decrease in water quality of streams, drainages or water storage facilities to which the property drains; and
  2. Will result in no substantial loss of southern oak woodland habitat; and
  3. Will comply with all applicable provisions of Chapter 22.10, "Vegetation Removal," of this Code.
- E. **Project Denials.** The SFDB may deny a project if it is inconsistent with applicable guidelines. SFDB shall deny a project if one or more required findings cannot be made (See SBMC Sections 22.69.050, 22.69.020 or 28.92.110, also listed above and included in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines). The SFDB should state reasons for a project denial in the motion for denial.

## 2.9 Action, Appeals, and Expiration of Approval.

- A. **Time Limits on Approvals.** Conceptual comments are valid for one year. SFDB preliminary approval is valid for one year from the date of the approval unless a time extension or final approval has been granted. Final approval is valid for two years from the date of final action unless a time extension has been granted or a Building Permit has been issued.
- B. **Time Extensions.** Time extensions may be requested and granted in accordance with the provisions of Santa Barbara Municipal Code §22.69.090. The time periods specified for final approval shall not include any period of time during which (i) a moratorium on the issuance of building permits, imposed after the final approval, is in effect; or (ii) a lawsuit involving the preliminary or final approval is or was pending in a court of competent jurisdiction.
- C. **Appeal of SFDB Decision.** Any action of the SFDB on an application for preliminary or final approval may be appealed to the City Council in accordance with Section 22.69.080 and Chapter 1.30 of the Municipal Code. An appeal is limited to the scope of action. The standards of review at each level of review are explained in Section 2.6. If a project is approved by the SFDB, the Preliminary Approval decision is the critical decision on the design elements of the project that should be appealed. Otherwise, the Final Approval decision may be appealed only on the basis that it is inconsistent with the Preliminary

Approval. If a project was granted an approval without a Preliminary Approval decision, the Final Approval decision is the substantive decision that may be appealed.

The letter of appeal stating the reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within ten (10) calendar days of the contested action together with the appropriate appeal fee.

- D. **Re-Filing a Denied Project.** When an application is denied by the SFDB, the same application cannot be refiled with the SFDB for one year, unless the application is substantially changed from the original. The changes to a denied application that is refiled within one year must mitigate the reason for denial. An application may also be denied “without prejudice” by the SFDB, which may allow an applicant to re-file a similar application without waiting one year.

#### 2.10 **Plan Check and Building Permit.**

- A. **Preliminary Zoning Plan Check.** All development applications are reviewed prior to SFDB agenda placement for zoning compliance. The project applicant is responsible for verifying compliance with all applicable codes and regulations.
- B. **Building Plan Check.** Following Final SFDB Approval, applicants may submit plans to the Building and Safety Division for plan check. SFDB Staff is not responsible for routing plans to Building and Safety for building permits. If any changes are made to plans during the Building Plan check code compliance process that would alter the exterior appearance of the building(s), Staff shall decide if the revised plans require further SFDB review. When the plans have completed the plan check process and all corrections have been made, SFDB Staff will stamp the plans and sign the zoning clearance/design review approval stamp in order to allow issuance of a building permit.
- C. **Building Permit.** Building permits are required to be issued for most SFDB approvals in order to verify and inspect compliance with SFDB approvals. Changes to a project during construction may necessitate Review After Final approval by the SFDB or Staff.

### **SECTION 3           Jurisdiction.**

3.1 **SFDB Jurisdiction.** The SFDB shall review and take action to approve, conditionally approve, or deny all applications for:

- A. **Building Permits: Single-Family Residential.** (Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance.) Applications for building permits, together with any plans, elevations, site plans and other materials required by the City to construct, alter, or add to the exterior of a lot with one single-family residential unit or related accessory structure in any zone shall be referred to the SFDB for review if the project fits one of the following descriptions. As described in Sections 2.6.H and 2.6.I, some projects are eligible for Administrative or Consent Calendar Review.

1. **Previous Approvals/Construction.** Design Review was previously required in the past two years (from Certificate of Occupancy or final inspection); or if the cumulative scope of work from permits in the past two years will trigger design review (SBMC §22.69.020.J)
2. **Building Height and Floor Area Criteria.**
  - (a) The portion of the building that is being constructed, altered, or added is taller than one story and a basement, or 17' or taller in building height (measured from natural or finished grade, whichever is lower) (SBMC §22.69.020.C.1and2).
  - (b) Net floor area of all stories of all buildings on the site (including garages and carports) will exceed 4,000 square feet (SBMC §22.69.020.C.3).
3. **Special Design Districts.**
  - (a) Located in the Hillside Design District AND the average slope of the lot or building site is 20% or greater; (SBMC §22.69.020.B.2)
  - (b) Located in the Hillside Design District and, on any slope, a structural alteration to the existing roof form or re-roof (excluding "like for like" re-roof) (SBMC §22.69.020.b.2).
  - (c) Located in the Mission Area Special Design District (SBMC §22.69.020.B.1)
  - (d) New development located in the Lower Riviera Survey Area – Bungalow District (SBMC §22.69.070.E). Alterations to existing development in the Lower Riviera Survey Area is reviewed on a case-by-case basis (SBMC §22.69.070)
4. **Upper Story Decks or Balconies.** Construct, alter, or add a deck or balcony on the second or higher floor (including roof decks) that will be greater than 3' deep or 7' wide (SBMC §22.69.020.C.4)
5. **Grading, Walls, Fences or Vegetation Removal Permits.**
  - (a) Grading permits (SBMC §22.69.020.E)
  - (b) Vegetation removal permits (SBMC §22.69.020.F)
  - (c) Walls, fences, or gates over 8' in height located in any portion of the front yard (SBMC §22.69.020.C.6)
  - (d) Retaining walls over 6' in height (SBMC §22.69.020.C.5)
7. **Manufactured or Moved Home.** Installation of a manufactured home, mobile home, or factory-built home (SBMC §22.69.020.C.7)
8. **Relocation of a Single-Family Residential Unit.** (SBMC§22.69.020.C.8)
9. **Subdivision Grading Plans.** In single family zones only (SBMC §22.69.020.D).

- B. **Retaining Walls.** Any retaining wall project proposals in the following categories are subject to Design Review, even if a building permit is not required:
  - 1. Retaining walls located on a lot or building site with an average slope of 15% or greater (SBMC §22.69.020.G.1); or
  - 2. Any retaining walls located on a lot adjacent to or on a lot that contains an ocean bluff; (SBMC §22.69.020.G.2); or
  - 3. Multiple retaining walls with a combined height of 6' that are not separated by either a building or 10' of horizontal distance (SBMC §22.69.020.G.3)
- C. **Outdoor Lighting.** Any change of, or addition to, the outdoor lighting of any building or property subject to SFDB review, even if an electrical permit is not required.

## SECTION 4 Meeting Conduct.

### 4.1 General Procedures

- A. **Robert's Rules of Order.** The SFDB has adopted Robert's Rules of Order for the formal conduct of meetings. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of meetings unless otherwise provided by these Guidelines or as may be determined appropriate by the Chair of the SFDB. However, the general meeting procedures tend to be less formal.
- B. **Discussions Outside of Regularly Noticed Meetings.** It shall be a general policy of the SFDB that private discussions between applicants and SFDB members, or groups of SFDB members shall not be initiated or encouraged by SFDB members. If a discussion does occur, it does not constitute official action or recommendations of the SFDB and does not reflect the consensus of the entire SFDB, nor shall it be construed as an interpretation of the SFDB's policies. SFDB members are encouraged to inform the SFDB of such ex-parte discussions at regularly scheduled meetings.
- C. **Quorum.** Four members, two of whom shall be either a licensed architect or a licensed landscape architect, constitute a quorum. No preliminary or final approval shall be given unless at least four members, including two licensed architects or landscape architects, vote on the motion. Any member with a disqualifying conflict pursuant to the Political Reform Act or Government Code section 1090 shall not be counted toward achieving a quorum. For projects proposing square footage over a maximum required floor area, at least five members must be present to consider the item, if less than five members are present, such items must be postponed.
- D. **Abstention on Continued Items.** A member shall not vote or comment on a continued project if the member was not present during consideration of the project at the most recent meeting at which the project was considered unless the member has reviewed the plans and read the minutes of the relevant portions of that meeting. Any member may make comments at the request of the applicant.

1. An applicant's request that a member abstain from voting or commenting at a meeting, and a member's expression of intent to abstain, shall be made prior to the start of the applicant's presentation at that meeting.
  2. This policy on abstention shall not apply to concept review.
  3. If members abstain under this policy so that fewer than four members are eligible to vote on a project, the applicant can (i) withdraw all of the requests for abstention and waive any objection, or (ii) the project shall be postponed to allow a quorum of eligible members.
- E. **Brown Act Meeting Rules.** The SFDB meetings (including, at times, meetings of the SFDB Subcommittees) shall be governed by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Govt. Code Section 54950 et seq.) with the general purpose to ensure government decision-making occurs in public.
- F. **Conflict of Interest.** Members must comply with all laws and regulations prohibiting participation by officials in making decisions for which they may have a conflict of interest under State law, in particular the Political Reform Act of 1974.
- G. **Staff Assistance.** Staff shall assist the SFDB and the general public through the SFDB process. Any Staff comments shall be stated at the beginning of each review.
- H. **SFDB Member Attendance.** If a member cannot attend a meeting, the member is asked to contact Staff at the earliest possible opportunity prior to the meeting date.
- I. **SFDB Member Compensation.** Members receive \$50 compensation for each full board meeting attended and \$25 for each Consent Calendar meeting completed.
- J. **SFDB Member Site Visits.** A site visit may be conducted to a proposed development site when additional site information is required prior to SFDB comment or action on a project. Staff shall notify SFDB members and the public of scheduled organized or drive-by site visits via notation on the meeting agenda.
- K. **Story Pole Requirements.** The SFDB may require story pole installation by applicants to gain a better understanding of the proposed height, size, bulk and scale of a project and its relationship to the surrounding community and potential view impacts. Coordination with the Planning Commission for story pole placement and site visit is recommended. The installation shall follow the City's adopted criteria for story pole placement and installation standards. See Section 5, Story Poles, for more information about residential story pole requirements.

#### 4.2 Officer Election

- A. **Chairperson.** As soon as practical following the first day of January of every year, the SFDB shall elect one of its members to serve as Chairperson.
- B. **Vice Chairperson.** Following the election of the Chairperson, the SFDB shall

elect a Vice-Chairperson who will conduct meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

- 4.3 **Subcommittees/Advisory Committees.** The SFDB may establish one or more subcommittees comprised of three or fewer members appointed by the Chairperson and confirmed by the SFDB. Any membership by an SFDB member on a subcommittee or other board, commission or committee, not selected by the City Council, shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the SFDB.

## **SECTION 5 Single-Family Submittal Requirement Levels.**

The SFDB may require plan additional submittals beyond those outlined below if needed to determine project consistency with required project findings for any project. Staff may make recommendations and advisories to both the SFDB and applicants regarding the potential applicability submittal requirements for any project. The SFDB may also waive additional submittal requirements under 6.2 and 6.4, if the submittals would not help the Board determine consistency with required findings for a project.

- 5.1 **Standard.** All applications must meet standard submittal requirements as listed in the Design Review Submittal requirements handout available at the Planning and Zoning Counter and posted on-line on the City's website.
- 5.2 **Additional Submittal Requirements Related to FAR Guidelines and Maximums.** Projects proposed to be over 85% of a maximum regulatory FAR have additional plan submittal requirements. Projects proposing higher than a maximum regulatory FAR (over 100%) are subject to Planning Commission Modification FAR submittal requirements. Additional submittal requirements for each submittal level are outlined in handouts available at the Planning and Zoning Counter, including: "20 closest homes data" or "reports", streetscape outline silhouettes, panoramic streetscape photographs, perspective drawings, three-dimensional models or computer simulations, and neighborhood workshop provisions, and landscape plans.
- 5.3 **Projects Over 250 Cubic Yards of Grading.** Additional standards for Hillside Design District projects or projects on lots with a 15% slope or greater which propose more than 250 cubic yards of grading outside the building footprint must meet the following requirements:
- A. A licensed civil or structural engineer must prepare the grading plans.
  - B. Some Planning Commission approved grading mitigation measures commonly applied as conditions of approval regarding hours of grading, dust control, equipment, and other grading topics will be required as standard conditions for all grading projects.
  - C. An on-site pre-consultation meeting with Building and Safety Staff and the building contractor, engineer and grading crew with equipment present on the day of grading commencement prior to beginning project grading must be completed.
  - D. A grading report at the completion of all (rough) grading is required to be submitted by the engineer for the project.

- 5.4 **Projects Over 500 Cubic Yards of Grading.** A 3-dimensional model or 3-dimensional AutoCAD computer simulation presentation of the project is required if grading is proposed to exceed 500 cubic yards outside of the main building footprint.
- 5.5 **Projects Over 4,000 Square Feet.** Where projects result in a net floor area exceeding 4,000 square feet, the new square footage must meet or exceed the standards for a two-star rating under the Santa Barbara Contractor Association's Built Green Program. Applications must incorporate green components from the most appropriate "Checklist" available at the following website: [www.builtgreensb.org/builders/checklist.html](http://www.builtgreensb.org/builders/checklist.html). The components and point tallies must be included on plans to receive a final approval. Applicants must enroll in the Built Green program to receive the full handbook of information and to attend an orientation regarding the Built Green Program.

## **SECTION 6 Story Poles – Residential Projects.**

- 6.1 **Purpose.** All proposed new Single Family Residential Structures and additions/alterations to existing Single Family Residential structures may require visual aids to determine consistency with the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO). The purpose of story poles is to assist the Single Family Design Board (SFDB), staff and interested neighbors (and if proposal is appealed, the Planning Commission and/or Council) in determining consistency regarding appropriate size, bulk and scale; height; neighborhood compatibility and/or minimizing impacts on important public views.
- 6.2 **Definitions.** "Visual aids" may include, but not be limited to, story poles, photo simulations, models and/or other means to assist in understanding a project's size, bulk and scale in relation to the neighborhood and/or its effects on important public scenic views. In most cases, story poles are the primary visual aid used or selected to demonstrate the project's size.
- 6.3 **When Required.** Whenever any portion of a new single family residential building or new addition exceeds 17 feet in height from existing grade and exceeds some of the listed criteria below, story poles and story pole plans may be required. The SFDB, HLC (or staff, when the requirement is obvious) will determine whether and to what extent story poles and plans are required. Most determinations of story pole applicability will be made at the Concept Review level. This determination will be based on the following criteria. Each criteria type includes how likely and to what extent poles and plans will be required.
- A. **High FAR Applications.** Single Family Residential proposals with a total project Floor to Lot Area Ratio exceeding a maximum (100%) regulatory FAR will require a full level of story pole installation unless the requirement is waived by the SFDB. Projects over 85% of a maximum required or recommended FAR, but under the maximum (100%) required or guideline FAR, may require some form of story poles if requested by the SFDB.
- B. **Upper Story Applications.** Single Family Residential proposals involving a second floor or above addition covering 50% or more of the first floor will likely require some form of story poles unless waived. This type of project will likely be required to provide full level story pole or visual aids as detailed below. Factors

that may trigger this requirement are the following:

- High vertical design elements including steep roof pitch, high volumes, 10 feet or greater plate heights and towers.
- Neighborhood context where buildings are proposed that are significantly taller than other structures in the immediate neighborhood (20 closest homes); or

C. **High Visibility Locations.** Single Family Residential proposals, based on location, may be required to provide full level or standard level story pole requirements or visual aids as detailed below. Factors that may trigger the level of this requirement are the following:

1. For Hillside Design District projects, projects with a potential visual impact to the streetscape.
2. Significant topography of the building site and significant property slope.
3. In open hillside areas, near ridgelines and adjacent to public views.

D. **Hillside Area Locations.** Single Family Residential proposals located within the Hillside Design District may be required to provide full level or standard level story pole requirements or visual aids as detailed below. Factors that may trigger the level of this requirement are the following:

1. Significant topography of the building site and percentage or degree of property slope.
2. Potential looming nature and height of the proposal.
3. The proposed structure(s) will likely involve blockage or substantial reduction of an important public scenic view or will likely violate good neighbor policies and guidelines related to privacy or private view concerns.

E. **Zoning Modifications.** Single Family Residential projects that propose zoning modifications into required setbacks may be required to provide basic level story pole requirements or visual aids as detailed below.

F. **Other Bases.** Single Family Residential proposals where concerns are raised from public testimony or from written comments that the Board considers legitimate concerns **may be required** to meet story pole or visual aid requirements as deemed appropriate by the Board and as detailed below.

Exceptions to the requirements for and the extent of providing the story poles or visual aids will be determined by the SFDB or HLC (See Section 5.5) at the project's first meeting (or subsequent meetings if the Board/Commission feels significant changes have been made to project design to merit story poles or other visual aids). If all or some story poles are required, full requirements for certification and photo documentation are to be provided.

#### 6.4 Levels of Story Pole Installations.

- A. **Full Level.** All major building forms, corners, ridges, eaves, rakes, outer plate heights (not the outer edge of the eaves), and ridgelines shall be shown with vertical poles and string lines. In addition, stake and string or chalk the property lines where they are not clear and outline the building footprint(s) with stakes and strings or chalk lines. All roof planes shall be outlined to show the full body of the structure. Also, mark all trees proposed to be removed with bright tape or stakes.
- B. **Standard Level.** Selected building forms as determined by the Board or Commission shall be shown with vertical poles and, where requested, string lines. Poles at all building corners at correct heights are to outline portions of selected roof forms. Show the location of any stakes or chalk/string lines used to outline the building footprint.
- C. **Basic Level.** Selected locations at highest building elements as determined by the Board or Commission shall be shown with vertical poles only. Poles are to have colored flag/tape markers at specified heights and at the highest ridge roof point where there is the greatest view impact. Locate any stakes or chalk/string lines used to outline the building footprint.

Other visual aids may be requested in addition to or as an alternative to story pole placement (see Section 5.6).

#### 6.5 Criteria for Exceptions.

One or more of the following criteria will be used by the SFDB and Planning Division to determine if an exception from the story pole requirement will be granted:

- A. The proposed structures are clearly consistent in terms of size, bulk and scale with other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.
- B. The proposed structure is the same height or smaller than other existing buildings or homes in the immediate neighborhood (as determined by a 20 closest home analysis).
- C. The proposed structure(s) will not obstruct scenic view corridors, including those of the ocean and mountains, and clearly comply with good neighbor policies and guidelines.
- D. The proposed structures will not be on or project above a topographic ridgeline.
- E. The existing condition of the site (dense vegetation, existing buildings, etc.) does not allow for adequate story pole installation. If this is the case, one or more of the other types of visual aids will be required.

NOTE: See the Design Review Board Submittal Requirements handout available at the Planning and Zoning Counter (630 Garden Street) for basic photograph requirements for all submittals.

## 6.6 Story Pole Plan Approval Process

- A. **Submittal.** Submit to City staff the Story Pole Plan using the site plan for the project.
1. Show location and height of each pole.
  2. Show location of major plate heights and ridgelines to be identified in the field. Focus on major ridgelines and wall plate lines along the building edges. The goal is to show a simple “box” that outlines the mass of the building. It is not necessary or appropriate to include all of the articulations. Do not forget to account for proposed changes in grade with depictions of proposed finished height and elevation notations.
  3. Show location of any stakes or chalk/string lines used to outline the building footprint.
  4. A legend shall be included on the Story Pole Plan that shows the location of each story pole with a symbol for each story pole that includes its number location and height. In addition, all stake locations and all chalk/string line locations shall be noted.
- B. **Review.** City staff will review the Story Pole Plan for completeness and accept or ask for revisions. Hardships or unique aspects of proposed installation preventing full compliance and timing requirements can be resolved with staff at that time.
- C. **Timing.** Story poles are to be completed at least (3) three calendar days prior to the scheduled SFDB or HLC review meeting date as agreed and arranged with the review Board/Commission. Planning Staff shall notify the SFDB or HLC as soon as verification is provided that the story poles have been erected. The applicant must submit photos of the story poles to Planning Staff as verification that the installation is complete. The installation shall stay in place at least two days after the design review site visit and scheduled SFDB meeting date. This extended time period may be waived by the SFDB if the story pole placement will result in a safety issue, hardship or substantial obstructions to the existing use of the property. The SFDB may require certain projects to have a longer installation period in advance of public hearings to allow for more opportunity for review. The applicant may also choose to leave the installation in place until the appeal period is over. For projects which also require Planning Commission review due to Coastal Development Permit or other requirements, the Planning Commission will view the story poles.
- D. **Adequacy.** City staff will attempt to review story pole installations for adequacy prior to SFDB or HLC notification. However, review of photographs may be an acceptable form of verification. In the event required story poles are not installed, or are inadequate, the applicant will be requested to install or improve the story poles and the project hearing will then be continued to a future date to allow the decision making board or commission to make an additional site visit.
- E. **Agenda.** Public agendas will note either an organized site visit or individual unscheduled site visits. Applicants’ privacy requirements will be respected when

determining the arrangements for site visits.

- F. **Photographic Record.** Once the story poles are in place, the applicant shall photograph the story pole installation, including any angles from which it is visible to the public. Polaroid photos are not acceptable. Where the project has the potential to affect important public scenic views, additional photos from more distant points may be required. Include a plan or map showing the locations from which the photos were taken and the direction of the photos (i.e., with an arrow), keyed to the photos. The record shall be submitted to the Planning Division as soon as the installation is complete and prior to removal of the story poles. It is recommended that at least one of the photos include a person next to a story pole to provide scale. In addition, prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the project, the applicant will be required to submit photographs of the completed building from the same locations as the photographs taken of the story pole installation for recordation purposes.
- G. **Certification.** Story pole installation shall be certified by the licensed professional (surveyor, engineer, architect, landscape architect or contractor) who installs the story poles or by the licensed professional who prepares the story pole plan. The certification shall be submitted to staff after installation of the story poles and before their removal. See attached certification form.

#### 6.7 Story Pole Installation Procedures

- A. **Materials.** Story poles should be made of 2x lumber, PVC piping or other sturdy material and should be properly braced for safety purposes. The connections used to show ridgelines and plate heights should be made of bright construction tape or netting and installed in such a way to remain taut during the review period. Other materials may be acceptable, subject to approval by the Planning Division.
- B. **Placement.** Identify what level of story poles is being required, and complete as specified. Also, mark all trees proposed to be removed with bright tape or stakes. If there is substantial grading that will result in tall and/or long retaining walls, the Planning Division may request that their location and height be marked on the property. The number and placement of story poles may be reduced in order to reduce costs, subject to consultation with the Planning Division or Board or Commission to assure that there will be sufficient story poles to illustrate the end product. Please note that a licensed professional, such as a surveyor, engineer, architect, landscape architect or contractor, must either carry out or certify installation.
- C. **Examples.** As records of story pole installations become more available, a notebook containing examples may be available at the Planning and Zoning Counter at 630 Garden Street.

#### 6.8 Other Visual Aids. In some cases, additional visual aids may be required or recommended. The requirements for these are outlined below.

- A. **Photo Simulations.** These may be required on a case-by-case basis, as

determined by the Planning Division.

1. Photo simulations shall be completed using either panoramic photographs or several photographs put together. Polaroid photographs are not acceptable. A computer simulation may be used. Photo simulations shall be mounted and be foldable to 8½" x 11" size.
  2. At a minimum, the proposed project shall be shown as an overlay over the existing property, showing the existing buildings on either side of the proposed project for a minimum of one parcel in either direction. The photographs should be taken at eye level (approximately 5 feet above grade). Reduce proposed building elevations to match the scale of the photographs and overlay on the site photograph. Color the elevation to match the proposed materials. If landscaping is shown, it shall be shown at no more than five (5) years' growth unless it is included as a separate overlay. It is important to verify the accurate depiction of plate height, overall roof height and other measurements.
  3. Include a map or plan showing the locations from which the photos were taken and the direction of the photos (i.e., with an arrow), keyed to the photos.
- B. **Three-Dimensional Massing Model.** In some cases, a massing model showing both the project and structures in the immediate neighborhood may be required, as determined by the Planning Division. Design details are not required; however, all roofing variations, wall articulation and eave lines (including plate heights) must be shown. Major trees should also be included as part of the model. Changes in topography in the area covered by the model must be shown accurately.
- C. **Perspective Drawings.** In some cases, perspective drawings from one or more prominent viewpoints may be required, as determined by the Planning Division. All roofing variations, wall articulation and eave lines (including plate heights) must be shown. Major trees should also be shown. These drawings must be drawn from the viewpoint of a person (approximately 5 feet above grade).
- D. **Rendered Streetscape Elevations.** In some cases, a rendered streetscape elevation may be required. The elevation may need to show all of the buildings on the block, including the proposed new building. This elevation should be no less than 1/8" scale and should be in color. An additional plan sheet might include building elevations that are color-coordinated to show the setback from the street (0 to 5 feet, 5 to 10 feet, etc.).
- E. **Comparative Building Study.** In some cases, a comparison to existing buildings will be required. This will assist in visualizing the size of a building in comparison to other well-known buildings of a similar size in the City. The City will soon have scale drawings of several well-known buildings available for use at design review board, Planning Commission and City Council meetings.