

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

214



**FROM:** TLMA – Planning Department

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
January 27, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Countywide Design Guidelines – Wall Standards for New Residential Developments;  
ALL/ALL [\$7,500]

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors direct the Planning Department to modify the adopted Countywide Design Guidelines, as recommended by the Planning Commission, for new residential developments to allow for “commercial grade” vinyl or other similar material on side and rear yards not open to public view.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary**

The TLMA Planning Department has received several requests from the building industry to modify the Countywide Design Guidelines to allow for vinyl fencing or other similar material. Currently, the guidelines as adopted by the Board of Supervisors require masonry or similar material, along the front yard returns, the side, and the rear yard property line. Technological advancements in fencing technology now provide synthetic materials that are aesthetically pleasing, with many design options, and of long-lasting quality, as alternatives to the traditional options of wood or masonry fencing.

(Continued on next page)

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Juan C. Perez, TLMA Director/  
Interim Planning Director

Departmental Concurrence

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost:	POLICY/CONSENT (per Exec. Office)
COST	\$ 7,500	\$ N/A	\$ \$7,500	\$ N/A	Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NET COUNTY COST	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> Planning Department Budget/NCC				<b>Budget Adjustment:</b> N/A	
				<b>For Fiscal Year:</b> N/A	

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:** APPROVE  
BY   
Tina Grande  
**County Executive Office Signature**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

- A-30
- 4/5 Vote
- Positions Added
- Change Order

**Prev. Agn. Ref.:** | **District:** All | **Agenda Number:**

**3 - 17**

**BACKGROUND:**

**Summary (continued)**

Three workshops were conducted at the Planning Commission on May 15, 2013, June 17, 2013, and July 17, 2013. At the first workshop on May 15<sup>th</sup>, the Commission directed staff to provide more detailed information regarding the durability of the vinyl fencing, cost comparisons to block, lifespan, and impacts of exposure to high temperatures associated in the Coachella Valley.

At the June 17<sup>th</sup> workshop, a fence contractor provided the Planning Commission with a presentation which addressed the Commission's concerns regarding vinyl fencing. At the conclusion of the second workshop, the Commission directed staff to prepare a scope of service to modify the adopted guidelines to include vinyl fencing or other similar material. At the July 17<sup>th</sup> workshop, Commissioner Leach volunteered her time to draft proposed text changes and a memorandum to the Board, in order to reduce the cost of preparing the update to the guidelines. The estimated revised budget to complete this task is now a total of \$7,500 for staff time and processing costs which includes two public hearings, and staff coordination to complete this task.

The Commission, by a vote of 5-0, supported allowing vinyl fencing or other similar material as an option when the fence is not in public view. A masonry wall would still be required along the front yard returns and where the wall is in public view. County staff will develop a standard of acceptable commercial-grade material.

Please find attached a memorandum from the Planning Commission summarizing the request, the three workshops, and the proposed language change to the Countywide Design Guidelines.

**Impact on Citizens and Businesses**

During the Planning Commission workshops, it was noted that the vinyl fencing materials and installation is approximately \$20 to \$30 per lineal foot less than a standard masonry block wall, which will help reduce the cost of home construction, while maintaining the aesthetic standards by utilizing long-lasting, "commercial grade" material.

**SUPPLEMENTAL:**

**Additional Fiscal Information**

The estimated cost of \$7,500 to complete is mainly for staff time, which is included in the Planning Department's budget. No additional NCC is being requested with this action.

**ATTACHMENT**

- A. Memorandum from the Planning Commission dated August 21, 2013.



RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

## Memorandum

**PLANNING  
COMMISSIONERS  
2013**

**1<sup>st</sup> District**  
Charissa Leach

**2<sup>nd</sup> District**  
Edward Sloman

**3<sup>rd</sup> District**  
John Petty  
Chairman

**4<sup>th</sup> District**  
Bill Sanchez  
Chairman

**5<sup>th</sup> District**  
Jan Zuppardo

**Planning Director**  
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**Legal Counsel**  
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Counsel

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951 955-3200

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951 955-1811

**Date:** August 21, 2013

**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Planning Commission

**RE:** Countywide Design Guidelines – Wall Standards for New Residential Developments

The Planning Department has received several requests from the Building Industry to modify the County Wall and Fence Standards to allow for vinyl or other similar material. The Planning Commission agreed that another option for side and rear yard fencing that retains the high quality development standards specified within the Countywide Design Standards was an item worth considering. Three workshops were conducted before the Planning Commission, on May 15, 2013, June 17, 2013 and July 17, 2013 to discuss this request. The Commission asked staff for detailed information regarding durability of the vinyl material, cost comparisons to block, lifespan and exposure to our high desert temperatures.

During our June 17, 2013 workshop we were fortunate enough to have a presentation from Fenceworks, Inc. a fence contractor that installs vinyl fences throughout Southern California. As a contractor that offers a variety of fencing options, they were able to address our above mentioned issues as well as educate us on the vinyl material. In summary; we learned that today's quality vinyl fences generally, have a limited, 50 year to a lifetime warranty; that under normal use includes, rot, peeling, splitting, flaking, blistering, corrosion, abnormal discoloration, etc.

We were pleased to hear that choices for vinyl fencing that were not possible in the past are available today. With a variety of light colors and with the ability to utilize materials that look like natural wood grain, we are no longer limited to a just a white solid vinyl fence.

Our concern regarding heat exposure was addressed as well. We learned that quality vinyl is weather and color consistent tested in Phoenix, Arizona in accordance to ASTM (*American Society for Testing and Materials*) requirements. It was also pointed out that vinyl fencing materials and installation is approximately \$20 to \$30 per lineal foot less than a standard masonry block wall, depending on style and material.

Subsequent to our three workshops, we unanimously voted to support the request to include solid vinyl fencing as an option within the Countywide Design Guidelines. Therefore, the Planning Commission respectfully requests that the following language, within the Countywide Design Guidelines, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 13, 2004, be amended, as follows:

II. RESIDENTIAL

G. Walls and Fencing. Walls and Fencing shall be designed in accordance with the following standards:

- Front yard return walls shall be constructed of masonry (slump stone or material of similar appearance, maintenance, and structural durability) and shall be a minimum of five feet in height.
- Side yard gates are required on one side of front yard, and shall be constructed of wrought iron, wood, vinyl or tubular steel. Side and rear yard fencing shall be masonry, slump stone, **solid vinyl** or other material of similar appearance, maintenance, and structural durability. Chain link fencing is not permitted. All construction must be of good quality, **and** sufficient durability, **and meet minimum standards**, with an approved stain and/or sealant to minimize water staining. (Applicants shall provide specifications which shall be approved by the Planning Department).



- All new residences constructed on lots of less than 20,000 square feet shall include rear and side yard fencing constructed of masonry block **or solid vinyl** which is a minimum of five (5) feet in height. The maximum height of walls or fencing shall be six (6) feet in height. In the desert areas, block walls are discouraged on the perimeter in favor of increased setbacks with extensive drought tolerant landscaping, berms and fencing such as split rails.

- Except for the desert areas, all lots having rear and/or side yards facing local streets or otherwise open to public view shall have fences or walls constructed of decorative block, stucco, or other attractive and durable material.
- Corner lots shall be constructed with wrap-around decorative block wall returns. (Note: exceptions for the desert area discussed above.)
- Side yard gates are required on one side of the home and shall be constructed of powder-coated wrought iron, vinyl or tubular steel.
- Wrought iron or tubular steel fence sections may be included within tracts where view opportunities and/or terrain warrant its use. Where privacy of views is not an issue, tubular steel or wrought iron sections should be constructed in perimeter walls in order to take advantage of casual view opportunities.
- Wrought iron, tubular steel, wood, vinyl, or chain link fences or gates are allowed where a residence is being constructed on a lot of at least 20,000 square feet.
- Wood fencing, where permitted, shall be constructed with galvanized steel posts set in concrete to a minimum depth of 24 inches with domed caps. Wood fencing or other like-material walls are not permitted along reverse frontage areas.
- Community perimeter or theme walls shall be solid walls located where view opportunities are not available. Plain concrete block walls are not permitted along reverse frontage areas. Brick, slump stone, tile, textured concrete, stucco on masonry or steel framing or other material walls which require little or no maintenance are required. Use of ivy or other vegetative material to soften and punctuate the appearance of walls and reduce the likelihood of graffiti is strongly encouraged. The use of capping in conjunction with other vertical design elements to temper the top line of the wall is also encouraged.
- Swimming pool fencing shall meet all County safety provisions of the Building Code. Fences around swimming pools shall have an outside surface free of protrusions, cavities, or other physical characteristics that would serve as handholds or footholds that could enable a child below the age of five to climb

The definition of a quality vinyl fence was a topic of concern also. The Commission agreed that we need to specify a level of high quality to include in the Countywide Design Guidelines. We were informed that although there are not common terms for levels of qualities, there are standards that must be met for the higher quality fence products. It seems that requiring a minimum standard would let the public know that we are looking for a 'Commercial Grade' product. We have included a standard quality vinyl fence detail that can be utilized by the Planning Department in their review of the required specification submittal.

**The Planning Commission has concluded that this modification, maintains the high quality design standards for new residential development specified by the Countywide Design Standards, but allows for variety and project uniqueness; while providing for development cost savings, which in-turn will help reduce the cost of housing within Riverside County.**

**Note that the Planning Department will continue to review all wall/fence specifications, as indicated in the guidelines. We have included some photos of the potential product for your review.**

**The Planning Commission wishes to thank-you for your consideration of this item.**

