



Sunnyvale

Consideration of Useable Open Space in Required Front Yards

City Council, February 26, 2019

Scope

2012 Study Issue

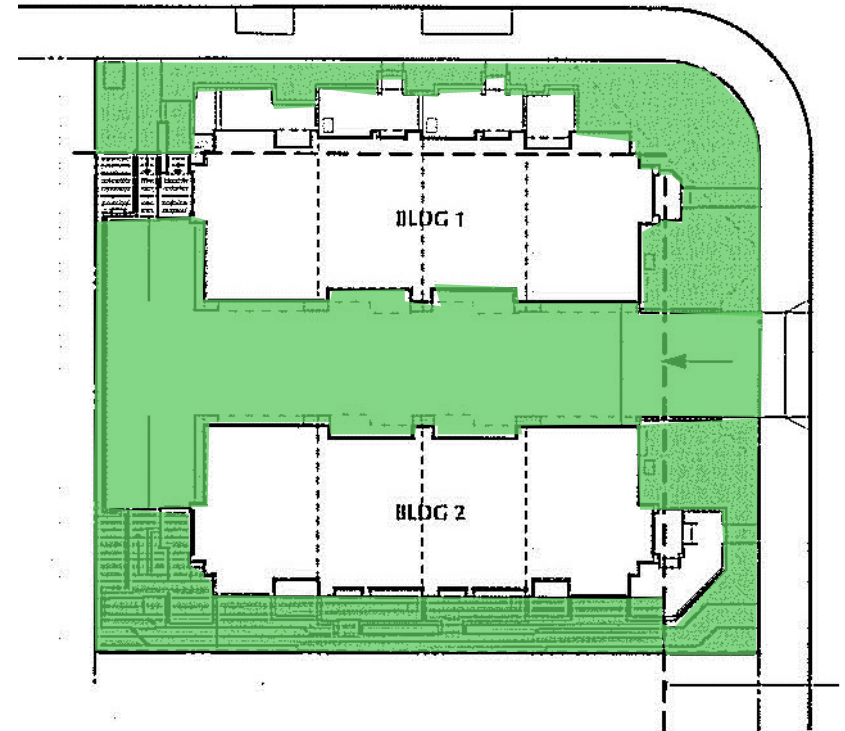
- Sponsored by Planning Commission
 - ◆ Multiple townhouse projects requesting deviation
 - ◆ Address changes in development that emphasize active street frontage
- Develop
 - ◆ Specific zoning standards, or
 - ◆ Guidelines

Staff Research

- ❖ Existing Sunnyvale Requirements
- ❖ Other Cities
- ❖ Past Projects with Approved Deviations

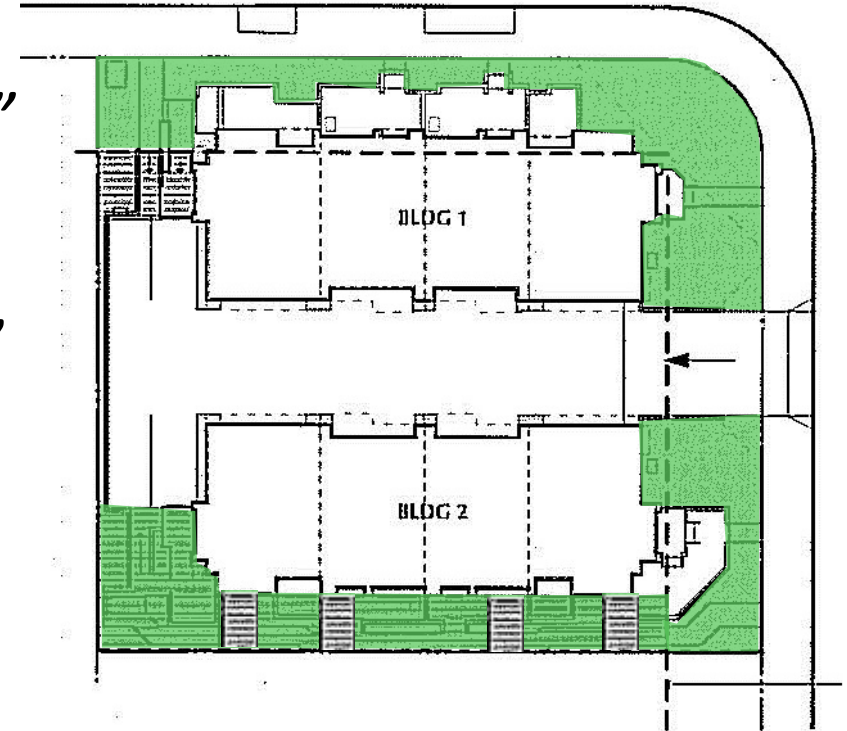
“Open” Area

- An area not covered by structures
- Includes:
 - ◆ Parking areas
 - ◆ Landscaping
 - ◆ Pool areas
 - ◆ Utility areas
 - ◆ Patios, etc.



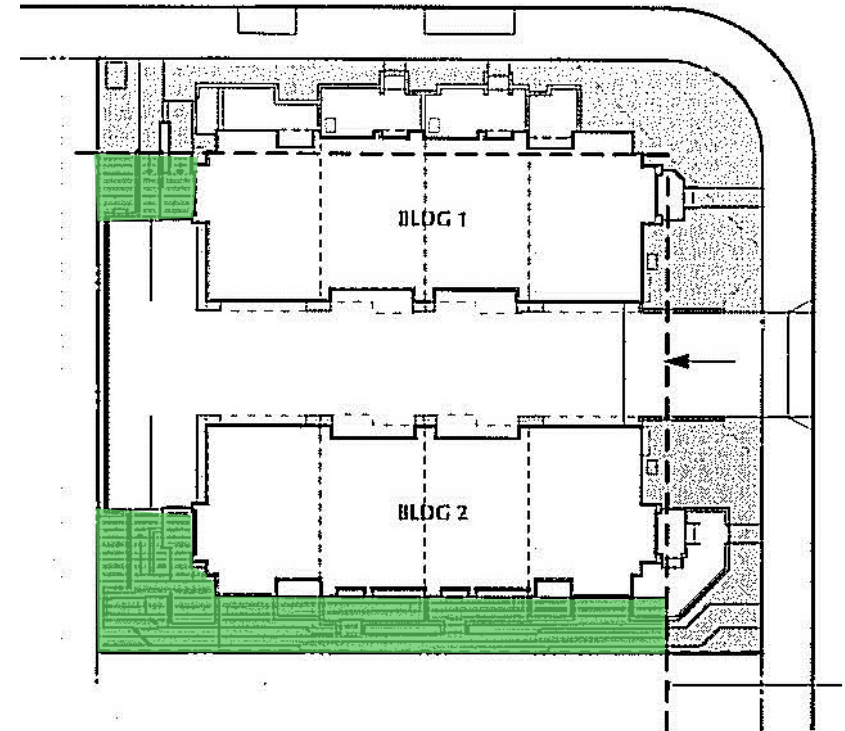
Landscaped Area

- *“Portion of a site planted with vegetation utilized for screening or ornamentation”*
- **Includes:** Trees, ground cover, shrubs, vines, flowers, lawns
 - ◆ May include rock or stone and structural or decorative features (<30%)
- **Excludes** parking areas, storage areas, driveways, decks, and specifically permitted unenclosed uses.



Useable Open Space

- *“An outdoor or unenclosed area or recreation building for active and passive open space activities.”*
- **Locations:** ground, roof, balcony, deck, porch, pool area, patio, terrace, recreation building
- **Excludes:**
 - ◆ Parking/Driveway
 - ◆ Utility, service or storage areas
 - ◆ Front yard setback



Existing Requirements: Useable Open Space

- Prohibited in Required Front Yard
- Minimums:
 - ◆ **General:** 200 s.f. area & 12-foot dimension
 - ◆ **Private balconies:** 80 s.f. area & 7-foot dimension
 - ◆ **Roofs, decks or porches:** 120 s.f. area & 10-foot dimension
 - ◆ **Private Useable Open Space:** 80 s.f. /unit (R-4 and R-5)
- Lawrence Station Area Plan (LSAP)
 - ◆ Allowable in required front yard—if consistent with the character of the street

Other Cities

City	Useable Open Space in Allowed in Front Yard?
Mountain View	Yes “open area” certain zoning districts
Palo Alto	Discretionary
Redwood City	No
Santa Clara	No UOS requirement

Sunnyvale: Past Projects with UOS Deviation

Project Address	UOS Placement Deviation	UOS Size (s.f.)
N. Fair Oaks / Taylor	No	385
Cortez / S. Bernardo	Yes	524
S. Bernardo	Yes	524
Noriega Avenue	Yes (50% of FY)	426
Maria Lane	Yes	427

Sunnyvale Past Projects with UOS Deviation (*continued*)

- Commonalities for Deviation Requests
 - ◆ Townhome project with 10 or fewer units
 - ◆ Located in R-3 Zoning District
 - ◆ Corner lots with two required front yards
 - ◆ Parcels less than 25,000 s.f.



Potential Options

- Certain zoning districts
- Project size
- Location (e.g. corner lots)
- Allow portion of required front yard
- Only if no deviation/variance requested on the required front yard

Staff and Planning Commission Recommendations

STAFF

- Multi-family residential projects
 - ◆ R-3, R-4, and R-5 zoning districts
- Up to 50% of the required front yard setback area
 - ◆ Provided no front yard deviation/variance requested

PLANNING COMMISSION

- ... *provided large species trees can be planted*