

RESOLUTION NO. 4487

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE
ALMA AVENUE AREA

The City Council of the City of Walnut Creek does resolve as follows:

Section 1. Findings.

1. On January 31, 1985, the Walnut Creek Planning Commission held a public hearing to review a proposed specific plan for the "Alma Avenue area," an area bounded by Olympic Boulevard, California Boulevard, Bothelo Drive and I-680. At that time, oral and written evidence was presented.

2. Following the hearing, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. 2333 which, among other things, recommended that this Council adopt the proposed Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan with certain changes added by the Planning Commission.

3. On February 5, 1985, this Council held a public hearing on the adoption of the proposed Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan. At that time, oral and written evidence was presented.

4. Prior to acting on the proposed specific plan, this Council considered the proposed negative declaration together with the mitigation measures set forth therein. The City Council hereby finds on the basis of the initial study, comments received and the mitigation measures set forth in the negative declaration that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore approves the negative declaration.

5. This Council has reviewed the Planning Commission's findings set forth in Resolution No. 2333 and, by this reference, hereby adopts those findings and incorporates them herein, as though set forth in full at this point.

6. This Council hereby finds that the proposed Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan is consistent with the City's Core Area Plan, the General Plan for the area which includes the Alma Avenue Area.

7. This Council hereby finds that adoption of the proposed Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan is in the public interest.

Section 2. Adoption of Specific Plan.

The Alma Avenue Specific Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference, is hereby adopted.

Section 3. Effective Date.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Walnut Creek at a regular meeting thereof held on the 19th day of February, 1985, by the following called vote:

AYES: Councilmembers: Kovar, Hall, Hildebrand, Lucas, Mayor Murray

NOES: Councilmembers: None

ABSENT: Councilmembers: None


Mayor of the City of Walnut Creek

ATTEST:


City Clerk of the City of Walnut Creek

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Walnut Creek, County of Contra Costa, State of California at a regular meeting of said Council held on the 19th day of February, 1985.


City Clerk of the City of Walnut Creek

INTRODUCTION

The Alma Avenue Area Specific Plan establishes guidelines for development of this primarily residential neighborhood. It consists of a land use element and a circulation element. Development standards are included as a basis for preparation of detailed development proposals. Included in the Plan is also an implementation program which describes the actions necessary to achieve the proposed land uses.

The Plan is meant to be flexible enough to allow consideration of proposals which make minor adjustments to land use boundaries and circulation patterns while maintaining the integrity of the development concepts described in the Plan.






The Specific Plan is consistent with the Core Area Plan which envisions the Alma Avenue Area as a high density residential neighborhood with some ground level retail and office on the periphery.

LAND USE

The Alma Avenue area should accommodate an integrated development of high density residential uses with office commercial uses along Olympic Boulevard and ground level retail-commercial uses along the California Boulevard frontage. Height limits, shown on the plan map (Figure 1) will preserve views of Mt. Diablo from the areas where the highest density development is shown and enhance solar access for new housing. They will also enhance the entry into the proposed City Park.

To provide the greatest flexibility, residential development will be regulated by a maximum floor area to site area ratio (FAR) along with office-commercial development. A standard based on the maximum number of units per net acre encourages construction of larger, more expensive units, which may not fit the needs of persons who want to live downtown.

Table 1 lists land uses by acre under the Specific Plan. The maximum number of housing units would vary; 700 units averaging 1,200 square feet or 850 units averaging 1,000 square feet with an FAR of 1.5 and no bonus. The bonus for affordable housing would allow as many as 945 units. These maximum numbers would be reduced by as much as one half if parking is not provided in multi-level structures.

-  High Density Residential
-  Office - Commercial
-  Public Park
-  70 Maximum Building Height
-  Public Pedestrian Street
-  Residential over Retail
-  Road Alignment subject to Planning Commission approval

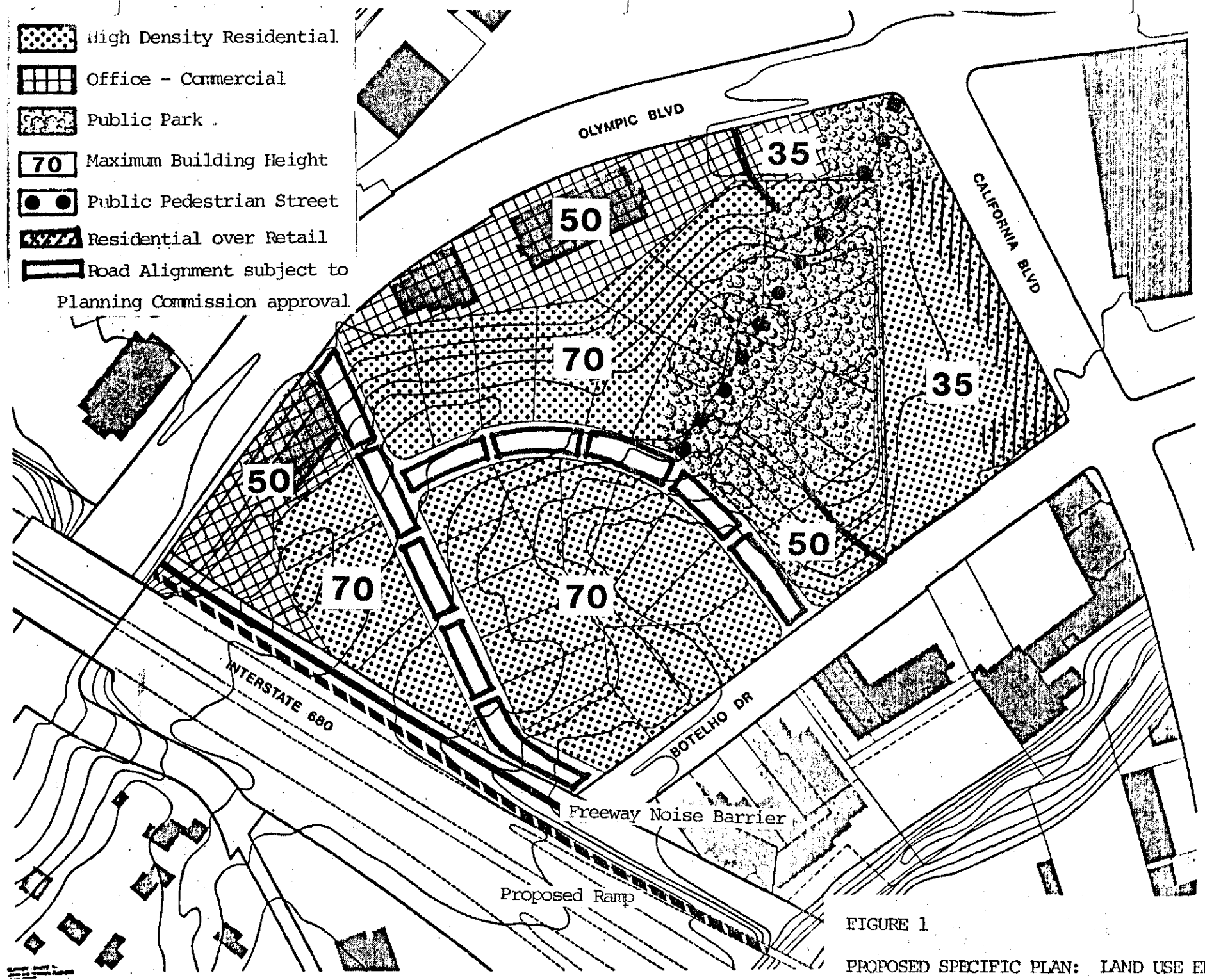


FIGURE 1

PROPOSED SPECIFIC PLAN: LAND USE ELEMENTS

Table 1: PROPOSED LAND USES
ALMA AVENUE SPECIFIC PLAN

| | <u>Acres</u> |
|--|--------------|
| Plaza | .20 |
| Open Space - Public | 2.00 |
| Residential | 7.79 |
| Residential/Retail | 1.96 |
| Street Right of Way | 1.38 |
| Office Commercial | 3.07 |
| Potential number of units | 700-850 |
| Potential number of units with density bonus for pro- vision of affordable units | 945 |

Land Use Categories

- A. **Office-Commercial.** (Maximum FAR .75). This land use category is applied to land along Olympic Boulevard. The principal permitted uses are administrative and professional offices; secondary uses could include retail and service businesses and restaurant facilities that would be leased space within office buildings.

Commercial Development Standards. Applicable development standards are those set by the City's O-C, Office-Commercial Zoning District.

- B. **High Density/Multi-Family Residential.** (Maximum Base FAR 1.5; maximum FAR with affordable housing bonus 2.0) The principal permitted use is high density, multiple-family housing; secondary uses could include street level retail and service uses along California Boulevard subject to floor area limits to be established by the Planning Commission. Floor area ratio for the purpose of this calculation is the ratio of the gross floor area of all the buildings on the lot to the gross area of the lot.

Additional floor area over the base FAR will be permitted for projects that include at least 20 percent of the units reserved for occupancy by low- and moderate-income households, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for this metropolitan area. At least 40 percent of these units (8 percent of all units) must be reserved for low-income households.

Transfer of FAR within the Alma Avenue area will be permitted between parcels shown as open space and residential upon a finding by the Planning Commission that development rights cannot be utilized on the site from which they are being transferred. Once development rights are transferred, a deed restriction must be recorded specifying remaining development potential.

FAR will be computed prior to any dedication of parkland. Land that is proposed for park beyond that which would be dedicated should be reserved for a reasonable period, then acquired by the City either with in lieu fees or money advanced. If this additional land is not acquired, the developer will be allowed to build on it with any remaining allowable FAR.

Residential Development Standards. The following standards will be used to regulate site planning and design of specific residential projects proposed for the Alma Avenue Area.

Minimum lot area and lot width: 15,000 square feet and 100 feet. This standard is intended to encourage site assembly and large-scale development of the area.

Maximum base floor area ratio (FAR): 1.5

Minimum base floor area ratio (FAR): .75

Maximum FAR bonus for low and moderate income housing: 0.5

Maximum building height: 70 feet, not to exceed 35 feet in designated view corridors surrounding the entrance to the park. The Planning Commission reserves the authority to effect the transition between height zones.

Open space requirement: 20% of site area; may be private outdoor living space exclusive of decks or balconies, or common area open space. Public open space dedicated to meet the requirements of the City's Subdivision Ordinance shall not be credited toward this open space requirement.

Screening: Exterior storage, electrical and mechanical systems should be screened and trash and refuse collection and disposal facilities should be enclosed by a solid fence or hedge no lower than the facilities themselves.

Parking: 1 space per bedroom, but in no case fewer than 1.25 spaces per unit. Required spaces may be located up to 200 feet from the residential building they serve. Off-site parking should be permitted if located on a site under the same ownership. This parking standard may be reduced if parking studies submitted at the time of project review justify such reduction.

Non-conforming uses: Non-conforming uses on lots which do not meet minimum lot size standards may remain and can be rebuilt within the footprint of the existing building if damaged.

Noise buffering: Residential development adjacent to I-680 shall be designed to buffer noise from the freeway.

Utility Undergrounding: All utilities in the area shall be undergrounded.

Retail Development Standards: Retail establishments provided as secondary uses in residential or office areas will be developed according to the P-R, Pedestrian Retail zoning district standards. Parking spaces provided for the retail uses can be shared by the residential uses subject to approval by the Planning Commission.

- C. **Open Space/Park/Recreation (Public or Private).** A two acre public park site will be reserved which is accessible to residents and to people living or working in the Core Area. To assure visibility of the park, a public plaza at the corner of Olympic Boulevard and California Boulevard will provide the major entry (see map, Figure 1). Pedestrian connections should be provided from all residential areas to the park as a part of the private open space requirement. Where possible, views into the park from Olympic Boulevard, California Boulevard, and Botelho Drive should be preserved.

Parkland dedication or in-lieu fees will be required of townhouse and condominium subdivisions as outlined in the Walnut Creek subdivision ordinance. Equivalent land dedication or in-lieu fees will be required of apartment projects constructed in the area as a condition of the P-D-C permit. The need to mitigate the loss of open space and provide for needed recreation facilities is important in this high density residential area regardless of the ownership pattern of the housing provided.

CIRCULATION

The street system within the Alma Avenue area should be designed to provide access to residential units for those for whom the area is the final destination and to minimize through traffic. Land areas required for streets and parking should be minimized. The intersection of Alpine Road and Olympic Boulevard should remain in its present configuration. At least one access point to the neighborhood should be provided on Botelho Drive. The number and exact location of access points along Botelho and the configuration of the local street system within the Alma Avenue area will be subject to final approval by the Planning Commission.

Local Streets: The existing right-of-way may be abandoned and internal local streets realigned to improve access and circulation within the site. The maximum grade of any new or re-aligned street shall be 15 percent.

Standards to be applied in the construction of local streets should require a total right-of-way of 40 feet to include two 10-foot travel lanes, an 8-foot parking shoulder on one side, and 6-foot sidewalks on both sides.

Arterials: Right-of-way dedication will be required along California and Olympic Boulevards to allow for the future construction of six travel lanes, left turn lanes, a landscaped median, and sidewalks on both sides.

Required Pedestrian Connection: A pedestrian street will link the plaza at the Olympic/California corner with the proposed park and an internal local street. It is proposed as part of the open space system to be dedicated and/or acquired with in-lieu fees collected as a condition of subdivision for multi-family residential development. This pedestrian street should be designed to provide emergency access to the residential area behind the Office Commercial area on Olympic Boulevard.

IMPLEMENTATION

Future City actions required to carry out the Specific Plan include:

- Implementing a program to minimize through traffic on Alma Avenue and Alpine Road;
- Establishing an acquisition program for the proposed parks and public open space; and
- Approving planned development permits for individual projects.

The City, through its Planning Commission, may choose to designate this area for a redevelopment project. This may be appropriate if private redevelopment does not proceed in a timely fashion consistent with Plan policies.

Through-Traffic Controls

The City should evaluate options for reducing through-traffic on local streets. These might include left-turn prohibitions from Botelho Drive through the Alma Avenue area.

Park and Open Space Acquisition

The City's Subdivision Ordinance requires dedication of open space or payment of in lieu fees for multi-family residential development. Equivalent land dedication or fees will be required of apartment developments not subject to the subdivision ordinance requirements. These provisions can be used to acquire public open space and parkland. However, the City may have to advance funds for parkland acquisition if dedication requirements for initial project(s) proposed in the area are not sufficient to obtain a two acre site - the minimum size for a park. In-lieu fees from subsequent development in the area then would be used to reimburse the City for these acquisition costs.

Potential for Redevelopment Assistance

The California Community Redevelopment Law allows an agency to use redevelopment powers if an area is blighted and constitutes a physical, economic, or social burden on the local community.

The City may consider designating the Alma Avenue Area a redevelopment area. At the time the decision to consider redevelopment is made, a complete legal analysis of the appropriateness of such action will be undertaken. Certain feasibility studies may be required to determine whether such assistance is essential and in the public interest.

Utilities

Existing utilities are shown in Figure 2. Some of these will have to be improved to accommodate more intensive development.

Water: New water mains and hydrants recently were installed in the area, so the water system should be able to serve new high density development.

Sewer: The existing six-inch sewer lines on Alma, Ivy Court, and Botelho will have to be upgraded to eight inch lines - the City's minimum standard for sewers for new development. However, the 12-inch line, which was installed to serve the new office development on Olympic Boulevard, has ample capacity to serve new development at the top of the slope which can drain to the north.

Storm Drainage: With redevelopment of the Alma Avenue Area and adjacent blocks, storm runoff will increase. To accommodate these flows, the carrying capacity of Las Trampas Creek needs to be increased. A plan for specific improvements has not been prepared, nor are these improvements included within current funding programs. Thus, they will have to be a developer's responsibility.

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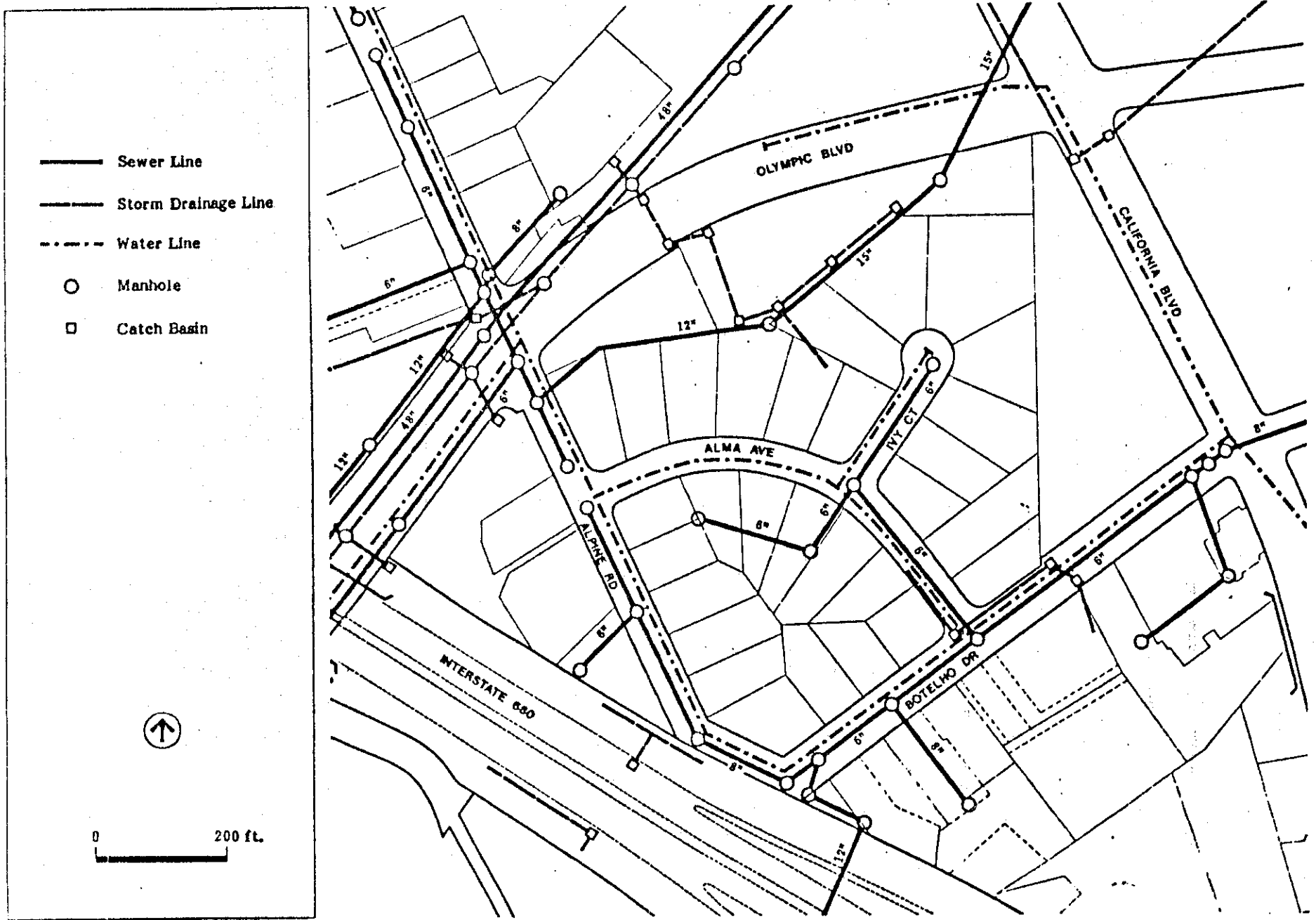


Figure 2:
EXISTING UTILITIES

EXHIBIT A

Design Guidelines Alma Avenue Specific Plan

The following guidelines must be followed in the design of projects in the Alma Avenue Specific Plan Area. The Design Review Commission will entertain requests to adjust these requirements only if such adjustment does not affect the ability of the Commission to make the findings required in Section 10-4.301(b):

1. Twenty percent of the site area must be in open space; either private outdoor living space exclusive of decks or balconies or common area open space.
2. All utilities must be undergrounded.
3. Pedestrian connections should be provided from all residential areas to the park. The general locations of these connections are shown on the attached map. Where two or more projects abut these connections, they must remain public.
4. Front yard setbacks along Olympic Boulevard and California Boulevard should be at least 20 feet from the edge of the sidewalk.
5. Front yard setbacks along Botelho Drive, Alpine Road and Alma Avenue and any other future internal streets should be at least 10 feet from the edge of the sidewalk.
6. Side and rear yard setbacks should be at least 10 feet with an additional 6 inches of yard required for each one foot of building height over 25 feet where buildings are adjacent to other residential sites.
7. Twenty four inch box street trees should be provided along all public and private streets. The following trees are included in the City's street tree planting plan.

Alma Avenue - London Plane Tree

Alpine Avenue - Flowering Plum

Botelho Drive - Crepe Myrtle

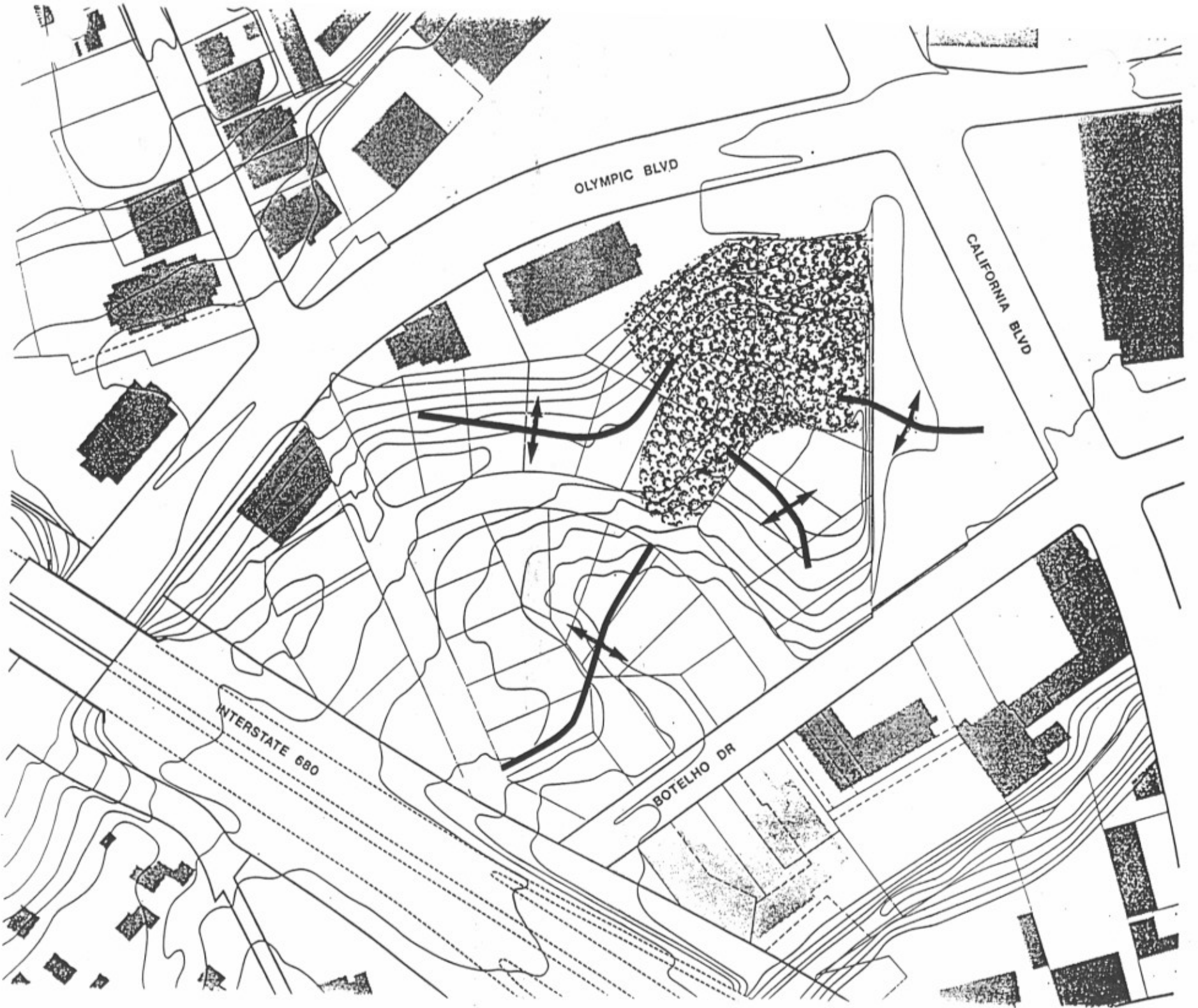
California (Botelho to Olympic) - Pin Oak

Olympic (California to Freeway) - Flowering Pear "Bradford"

8. Street trees should be planted in the area behind the sidewalk.
9. Underground parking structures should be set back at least 10 feet from the edge of the curb to allow for the planting of street trees.
10. Underground parking should cover no more than 90% of the site.
11. It is preferable that no part of the parking structure be above the finished grade of the site. Where this is not possible, above-grade parking structures should be designed as an integral part of the building and screened with landscaping.

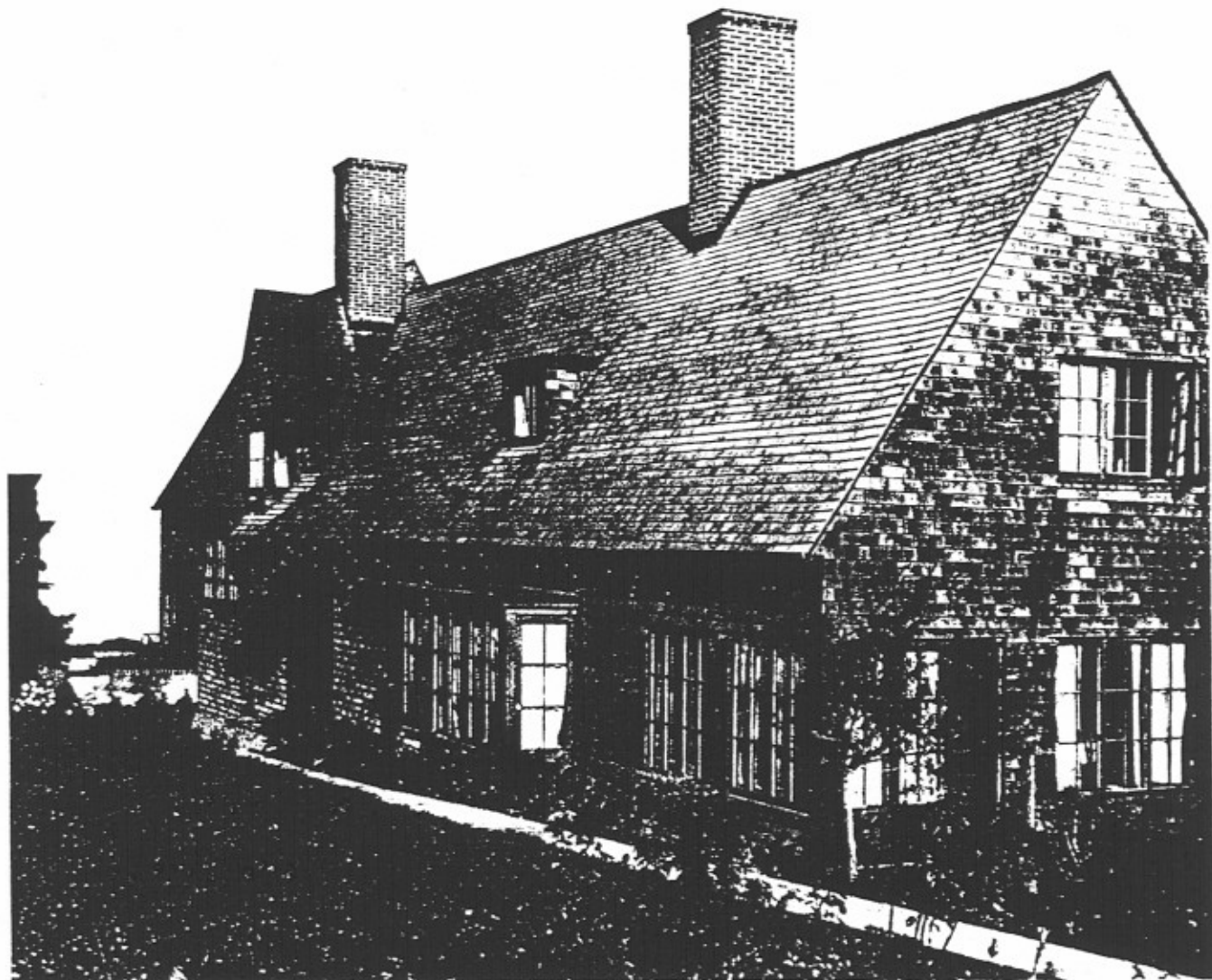
12. Front, side yards and rear yards should be generously landscaped and hardscape should provide usable spaces.
13. Street lights should be standardized throughout the neighborhood and the park. The style of light fixture will be selected by the City of Walnut Creek.
14. Truck loading and passenger pick-up areas should be incorporated into the design of street improvements for all projects with enough street frontage for this to be practicable.
15. Buildings should be rich in architectural detail on all four sides.
16. Residential units above the first floor should be provided with balconies and/or bay windows.
17. Gable and hip roofs should be provided on all residential buildings.
18. The surface materials, finishes and textures used on buildings throughout the area should complement each other.
19. Building design should complement the topography of the site, particularly those sites which are hilly.
20. The site plan should consider the shadow effects of a proposed building on other residential projects in the neighborhood.

Pedestrian Connections to Park



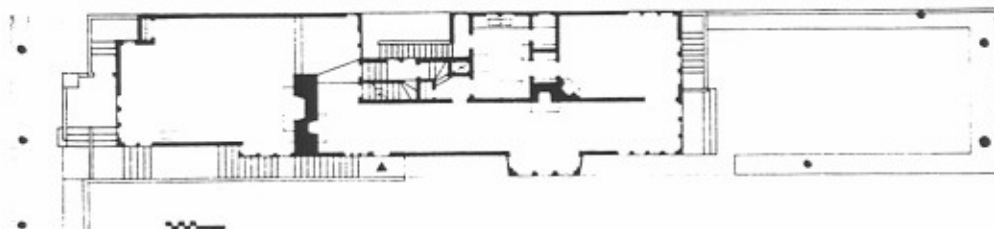


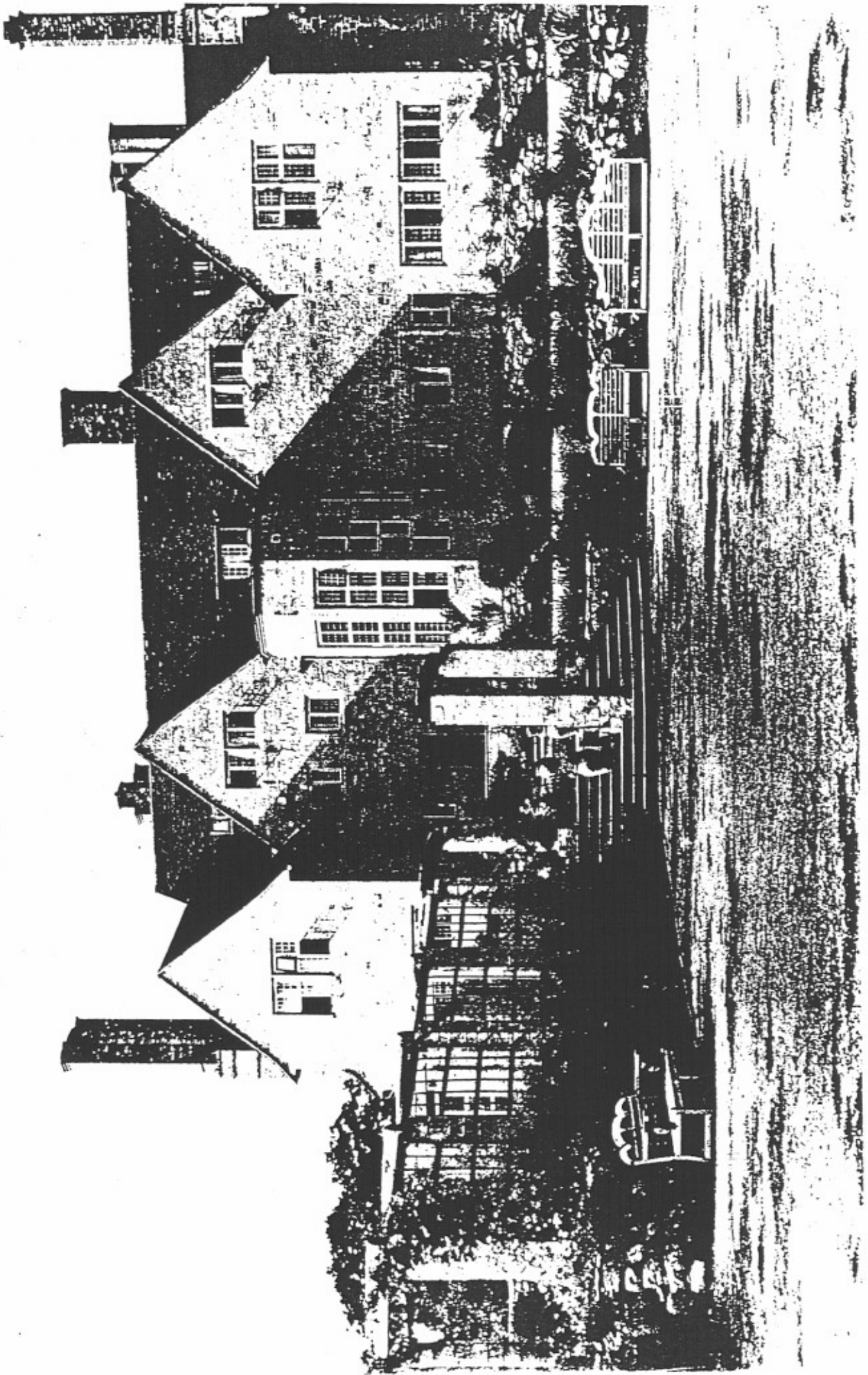
COXHEAD, *Coxhead house (early photo). San Francisco, 1895*

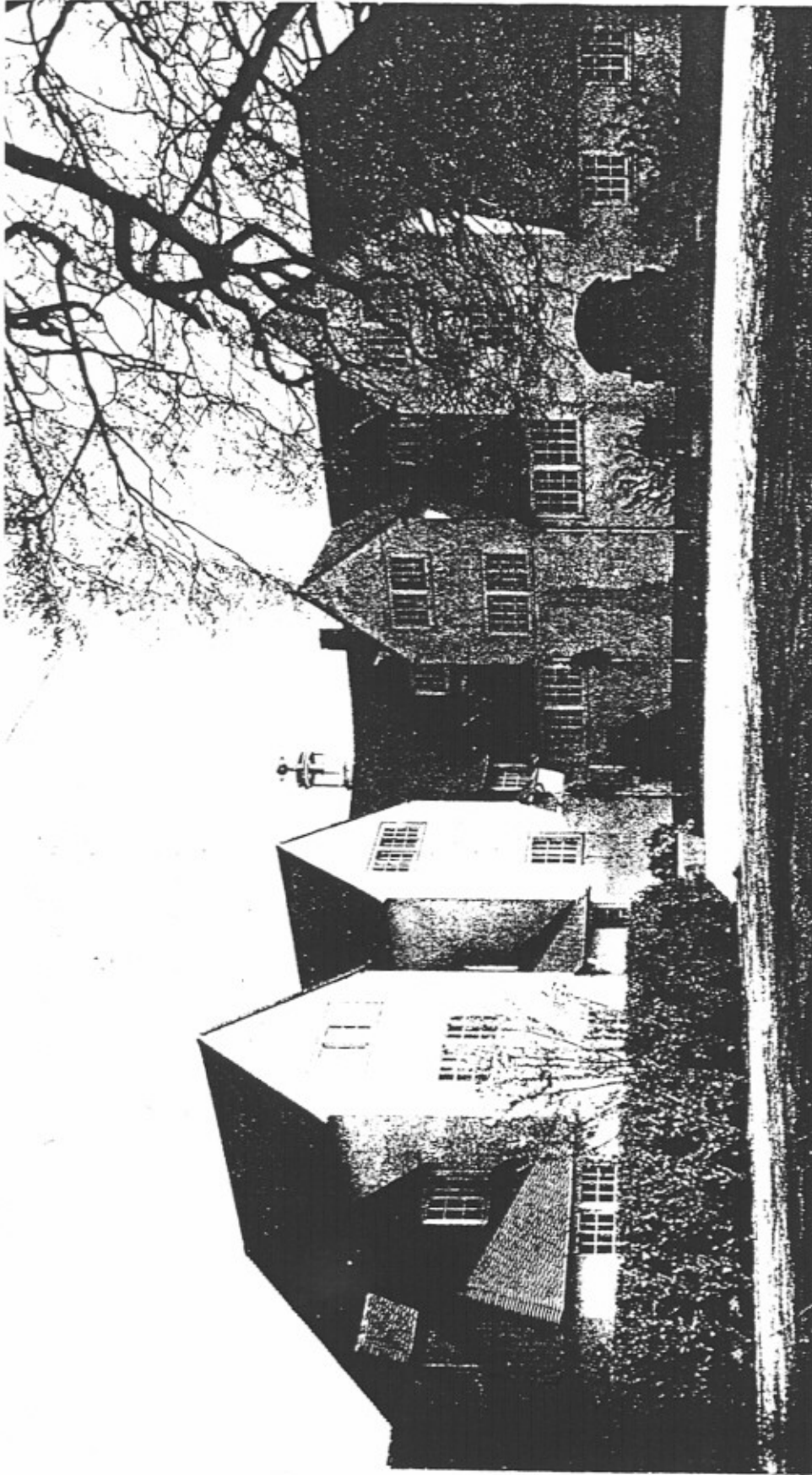


Coxhead house (early photo), San Francisco, side elevation

Coxhead house, San Francisco, plan

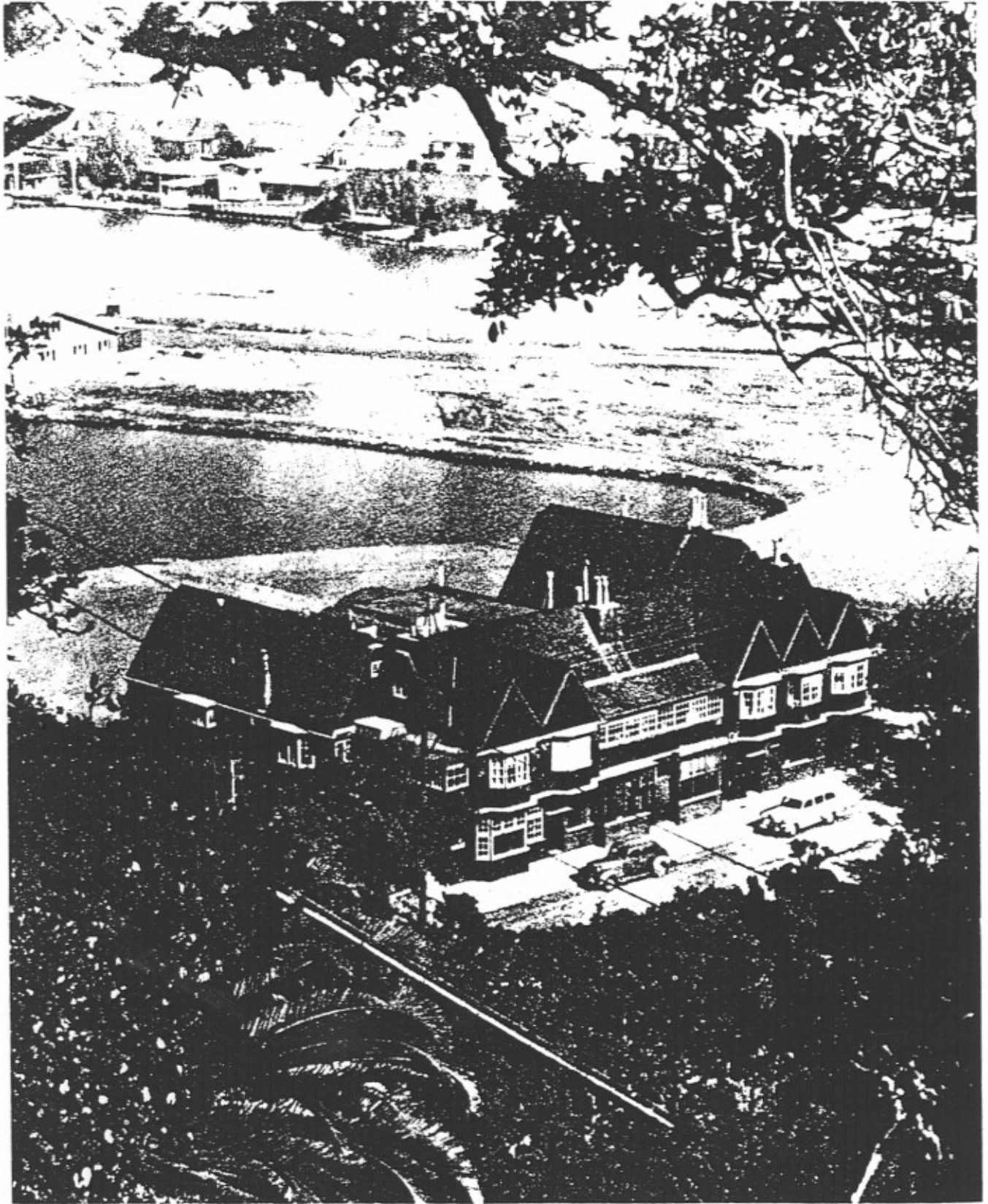






222. HALNAKER: THE NORTH-WEST ENTRANCE COURT





FARR, Belvedere Land Company building (early photo), 1901 (Belvedere Land Co.)

