

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council

**Date Submitted:** 08/24/2026 11:02 PM

**Council File No:** 26-0975-S1

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am the authorized filer for CISs for Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council. I want to submit our CIS for this project but the system isn't working. Every time I log in with my credentials it says I have logged out. The other authorized CIS filer wasn't available to try to see if he could successfully file. I hope you will properly post this letter as a CIS. One of the main, still relevant part of our recommendation in terms of the CIS is: Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council recommends approval of the housing portion of the project and strongly encourages the applicant to design a residence/ADU combination that is smaller and more in line with the character, mass, and scale of the surrounding community.



# COASTAL SAN PEDRO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

**Doug Epperhart**  
President  
**Dean Pentcheff**  
Vice President  
**Sheryl Akerblom**  
Treasurer

1840 S Gaffey St., Box 34 • San Pedro, CA 90731 • [cspnclive@gmail.com](mailto:cspnclive@gmail.com)

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October 28, 2025

Monica Taimoori, Planning Assistant  
Office of City Planning  
[monica.taimoori@lacity.org](mailto:monica.taimoori@lacity.org)

Re: Recommending approval, with conditions, of permits for development at 700 Paseo del Mar, San Pedro, Walker's Café (HCM #1267), ZA-2023-7218-CDP-CU-CUB-MEL-HCA

Resolved, The Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council recommends approval of the Walker's Café portion of the application with the following conditions:

- 1) That the alcohol service area be confined to seats inside Walker's and in the area on the property behind Walker's. It's neither appropriate, nor compliant with LAMC ordinances, to have sidewalk alcohol service, also while taking over the public right of way, in a residential neighborhood across from a park frequented by families with children.
- 2) The proposed seating in back be reduced from 44 seats to 30 seats. The proposed refrigeration and dry goods pantry are small, and the current plans leave no room for expansion of these areas or the kitchen if needed. We want Walker's to succeed.

Further Resolved, Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council recommends approval of the housing portion of the project and strongly encourages the applicant to design a residence/ADU combination that is smaller and more in line with the character, mass, and scale of the surrounding community.

Please contact Robin Rudisill, Chair of the Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council Planning, Land Use & Transportation Committee, at 310-721-2343 should you have any questions related to this letter and motion.

Sincerely,

Doug Epperhart, President  
On behalf of the Coastal San Pedro Neighborhood Council Board

cc:  
Tim McOsker, Los Angeles City Councilmember, CD15  
[Councilmember.McOsker@lacity.org](mailto:Councilmember.McOsker@lacity.org)  
Pamela Thornton, Planning Director, CD-15

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## Communication from Public

**Name:** Expert Report for Appellants re alt design

**Date Submitted:** 08/24/2026 02:44 PM

**Council File No:** 26-0975-S1

**Comments for Public Posting:** The alternative plans included here show that the massing of the residential building can be significantly changed, without substantially altering the overall floor area. The dimension from the rear elevation of the cafe to the front facade of the Single Family Dwelling is increased from 13' 3" as shown in the proposed project drawings to 30', with only limited impact on the combined Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the residential units, 3,523 sq.ft, comprised of a Single Family Dwelling (SFD) of 2,453 sq.ft, and an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) of 1,070 sq. ft. In my professional opinion, it is possible to accomplish this goal with minimal changes in floor area — a SFD of 2,432 sq.ft, and an ADU of 855 sq.ft. (see attached plans). The alternative conceptual plan included in this report is not intended to constitute a complete project design. Rather, it demonstrates at a conceptual level that an alternative configuration is physically feasible, if compromises are offered in relation to setbacks, and this could accomplish the principal objectives of the proposed project while substantially reducing the impact of the proposed development on the immediate neighbors, and the scale and character of the neighborhood, a priority in the Coastal Zone. However, it is abundantly clear to me that a substantial residential development is possible with the the 30' separation between Walker's and the SFD, without the variances. This approach relies on two principal changes to the site plan: 1. Maximising the available site by reducing the rear yard set back from 15'0" to 4'0", gaining an additional 11'0". 2. Reducing the side yard setbacks, to 4'0 (West) & 5'0 (East), greater than 3'0" minimum, and using a fence or hedge as the boundary, where necessary, to soften the transition between 700 Paseo Del Mar and the neighbouring properties. These changes, that significantly increase the buildable site area will require exceptions, but it is my understanding that the neighbors / appellants are in favour of these provided they result in the following: A. Increasing the front yard set back to create a 30'0" clear dimension from the face of the proposed SFD to the rear of Walkers Cafe, as recommended by the appellants and the LA Conservancy, allowing space for table service and cafe functions to be adequately separated from the residential entrances and associated landscaped areas. B. Maintaining a datum of 12'0" above the level of Paseo Del Mar at the entrance

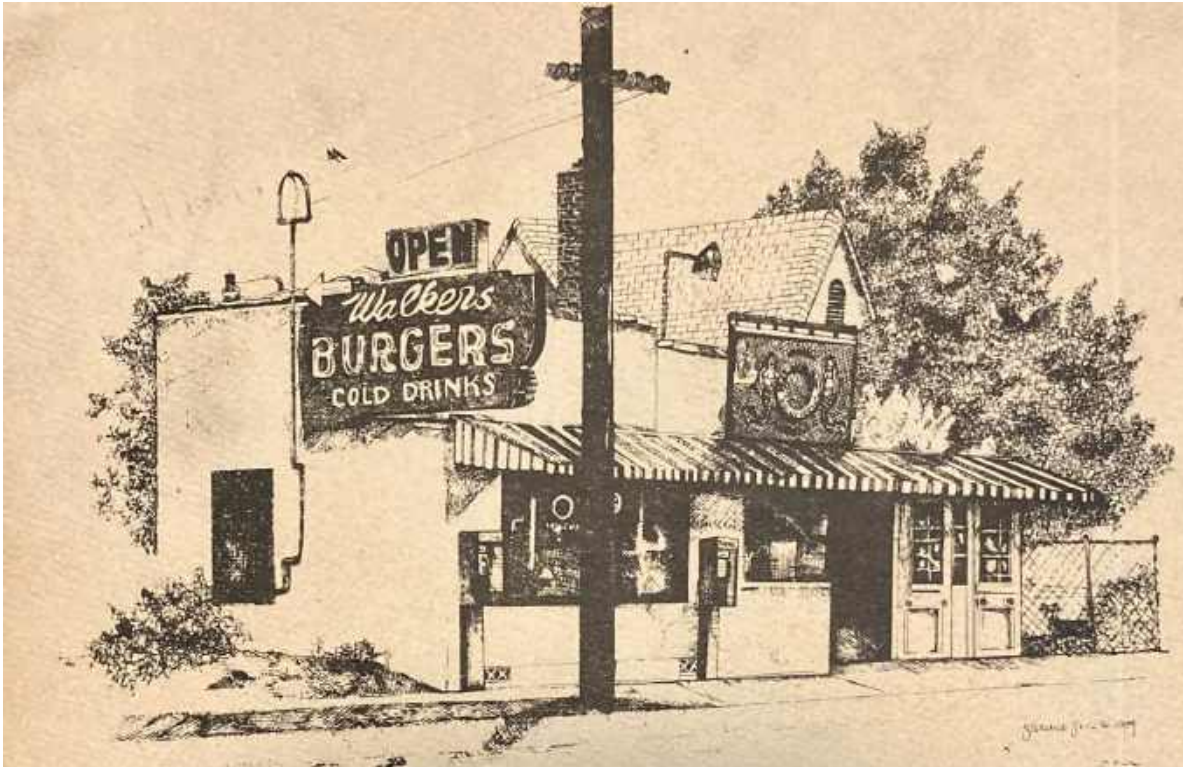
to the site, establishing the parapet height or eaves, of all structures facing the courtyard / court established by the new set back, matching the historic Cafe, and ensuring that the residential structures respect the scale and character of this historic setting. C. Confining all two story volumes to the perimeter of the site — with the upper floors including a roof terrace / belvedere as the uppermost level of the SFD, occupying the rear of the site, and a loft / second floor for the ADU, as a separate element, permitting a variety of views within, through and across the site for the residents and neighbors, ensuring a picturesque composition of architectural elements rather than a monolithic block.



**Walkers Cafe**, 700, Paseo Del Mar, San Pedro CA

**Alternative Conceptual Plan / Report** (Draft 08/20\_2026)

Prepared by David **Turnbull** FRSA



**Executive Summary:** this report has been prepared for Noel Gould, Emma Rault, June Smith and Robin Rudisill, appellants of the project proposed for 700, Paseo Del Mar, San Pedro. It is organised in three parts: **1** — an account of my professional and academic experience in the fields of architecture, urban design, planning and coastal development, followed by a declaration of purpose. **2** — a graphic overlay on proposal, prepared by Gibbs Architects, Long Beach, CA. **3** — an alternative way of thinking about the proposed residential development, and its relationship, spatially and programmatically with Walkers, a cafe/bar, that holds an irrefutably important place in the collective memory of residents, past and present, of San Pedro, Southern California, and internationally as the setting in which the private investigator, J.J. Jake Gittes, played by Jack Nicholson, lays a trap, one of many, in Roman Polanski's 'Chinatown' (1974).

The alternative plans included here show that the massing of the residential building can be significantly changed, without substantially altering the overall floor area — creating a sequence of garden courts and passages, limiting the extent of the dominant two-story structure to the rear of the site, and otherwise maintaining the scale and character of the restored historic structure. It shows where revisions to rear and side-yard set-backs would be advantageous, and it offers a selection of architectural precedents that could inform the design of a project that embraces the history of the site, the history of architecture in California, and reconciles the many points of view, literally and metaphorically, that may continue to shape the future of Walker's, and Point Fermin.

## About:

**David Turnbull** FRSA works internationally to address coastal development issues, with a specific focus on the long-term impacts of climate change, evolving patterns of development, and changes in land-use on coastal ecosystems. He is currently COO for GRoW Reefs and a Senior Consultant at Wet Matter, with offices on all three coastlines of the USA, in Charlottesville, Virginia, Venice, California and Gulfport, Mississippi. He has been a Visiting Expert at ARUP, with their Integrated City Planning Group, in London, and a Mentor at Dark Matter Laboratories, addressing fundamental questions related to urban systems, and their resilience. He is also a Senior Research Fellow of the Urban Futures Lab (UFL) in Las Vegas, at UNLV, and was an Advisory Board Member for the Italian Pavilion at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, 2021, working on the theme - 'resilient communities'.

His architectural projects have been recognised internationally. From 2003 - 2018, he was Design Director of ATOPIA Research Inc / PITCHAfrica, an award winning 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, with a specific focus on the development and construction of building types that address global ecological and social challenges. PITCHAfrica's first Waterbank School was named 'The Greenest School on Earth' by the USGBC in 2013. Waterbank Schools were selected by SUSTAINIA in Denmark as one of the top 100 sustainable solutions in the World and won the INTERFACE award in the 2013 Buckminster Fuller Challenge. PITCHAfrica's Waterbank Campus was selected for 'Designs of the Year 2015' by Design Museum, London.

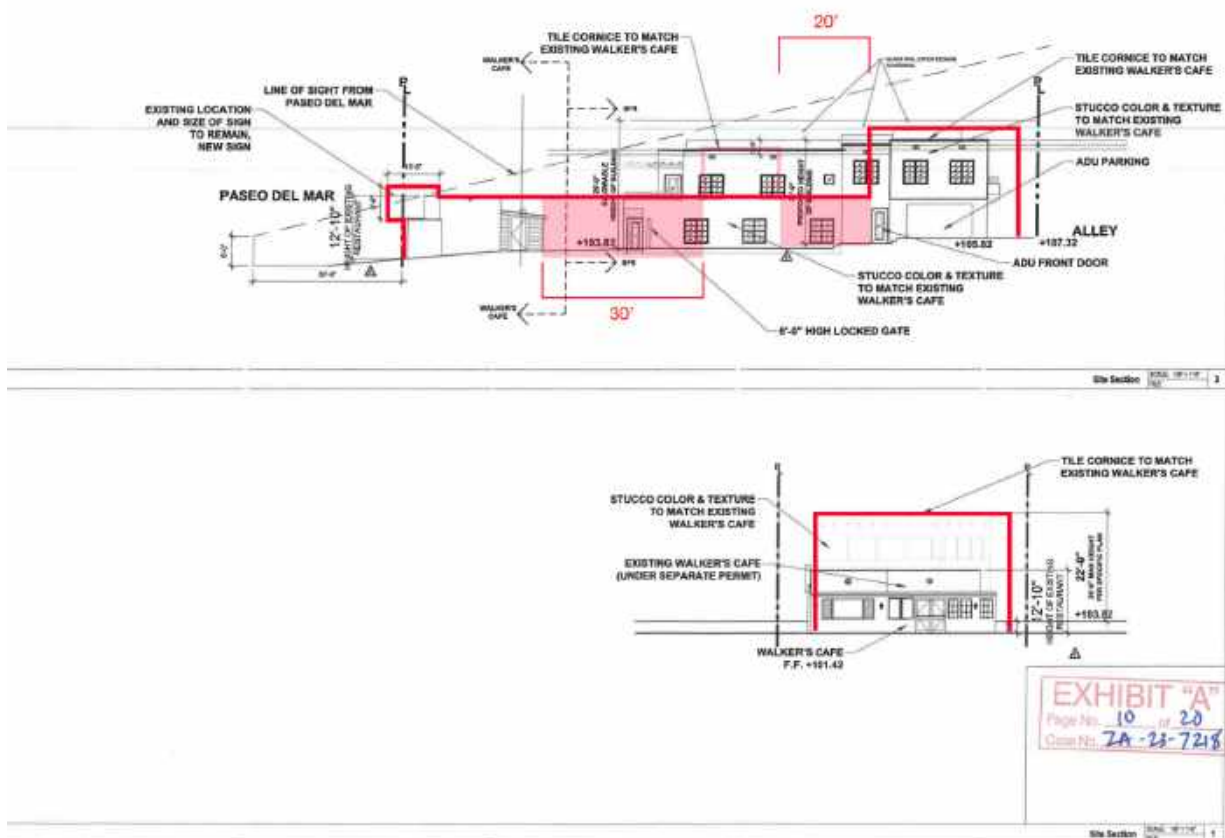
David's academic career started in 1989 at The Architectural Association in London while he was working in the office of James Stirling, Michael Wilford and Associates, leading major projects in Spain, Japan and Singapore. His academic appointments since 1990 include the Eero Saarinen Visiting Professorship in Architecture at Yale University, and Visiting Professorships at the University of Toronto, Canada, Columbia University's GSAPP in New York and Cornell University, Professor of Architecture at the University of Bath in the UK from 2000-2005, and from 2012 -13, Visiting Professor of Design & Innovation at the AUST, in Abuja, Nigeria. He was a Professor of Architecture at the Cooper Union in New York from 2006 to 2017, and has been a Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, RSA, since 2003.

**Declaration:** I have reviewed the proposed development at 700 Paseo Del Mar, San Pedro, including plans and supporting materials dated December 12, 2025. The Appellants asked me to determine whether the site could reasonably be developed in a manner that forms an enclave, including a non-conforming use, the historically significant Walker's Cafe (est. 1946), in a residential zone that maintains the scale and character of the neighborhood, facing Paseo Del Mar, and its landscape setting, with long views to Catalina Island, ensuring that any buildings that have a substantial presence, and approach the maximum buildable height of 26', are positioned as far away from Walker's as possible, and that the dimension from the rear elevation of the cafe to the front facade of the Single Family Dwelling is increased from 13' 3" as shown in the proposed project drawings to 30', with only limited impact on the combined Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the residential units, 3,523 sq.ft, comprised of a Single Family Dwelling (SFD) of 2,453 sq.ft, and an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) of 1,070 sq. ft.

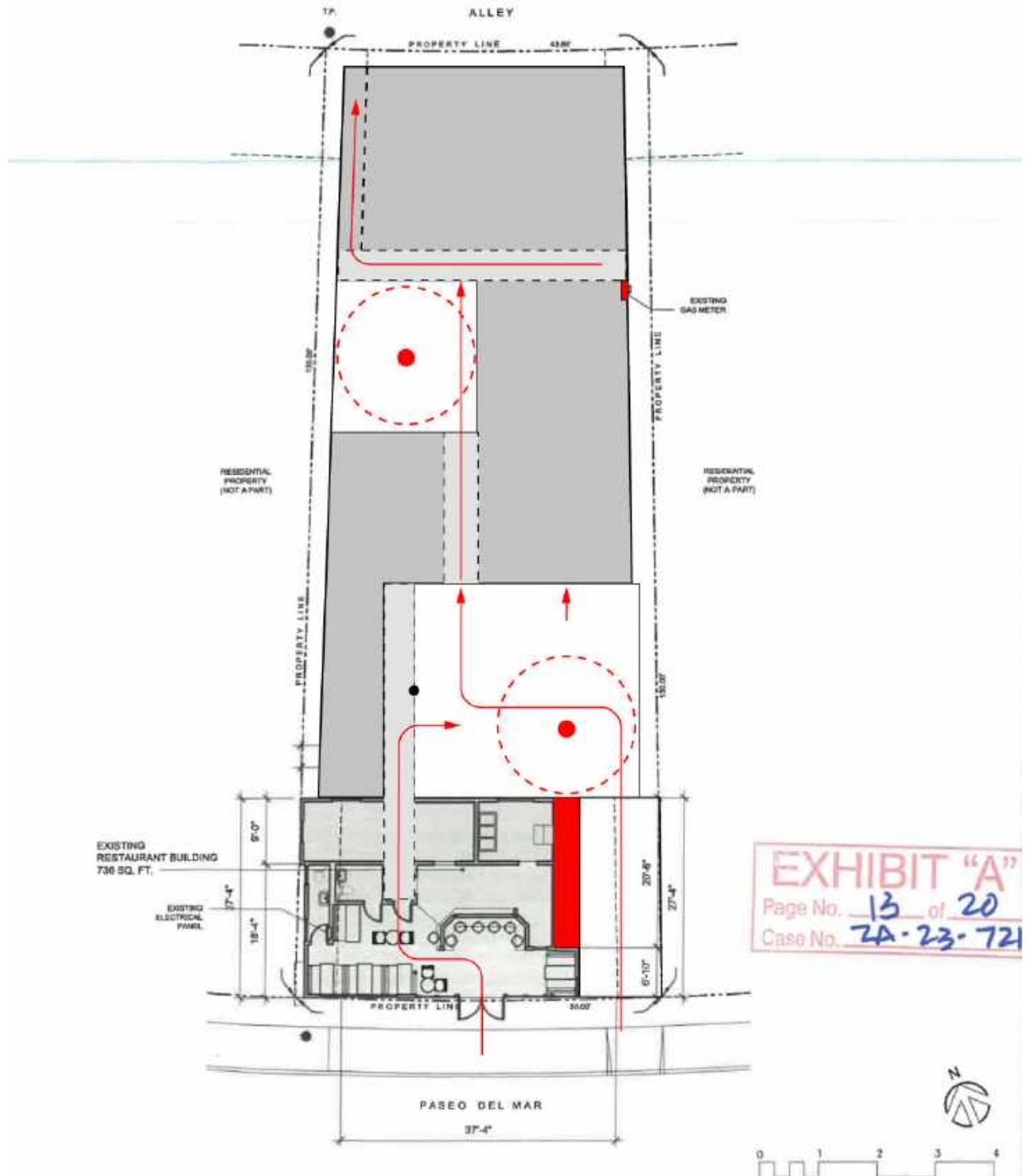
In my professional opinion, it is possible to accomplish this goal with minimal changes in floor area — a SFD of 2,432 sq.ft, and an ADU of 855 sq.ft. (see attached plans).

While there have been many, entirely credible, objections to the proposed density, I considered it important to demonstrate that an elevated density, using contemporary development formulae, working within existing regulatory constraints, learning from, not rejecting, the lessons of history, and the catalogue of extraordinary patterns of development that relate well to the Californian climate, can produce a high level of formal, material and spatial variety that can actively enhance the quality of the urban environment.

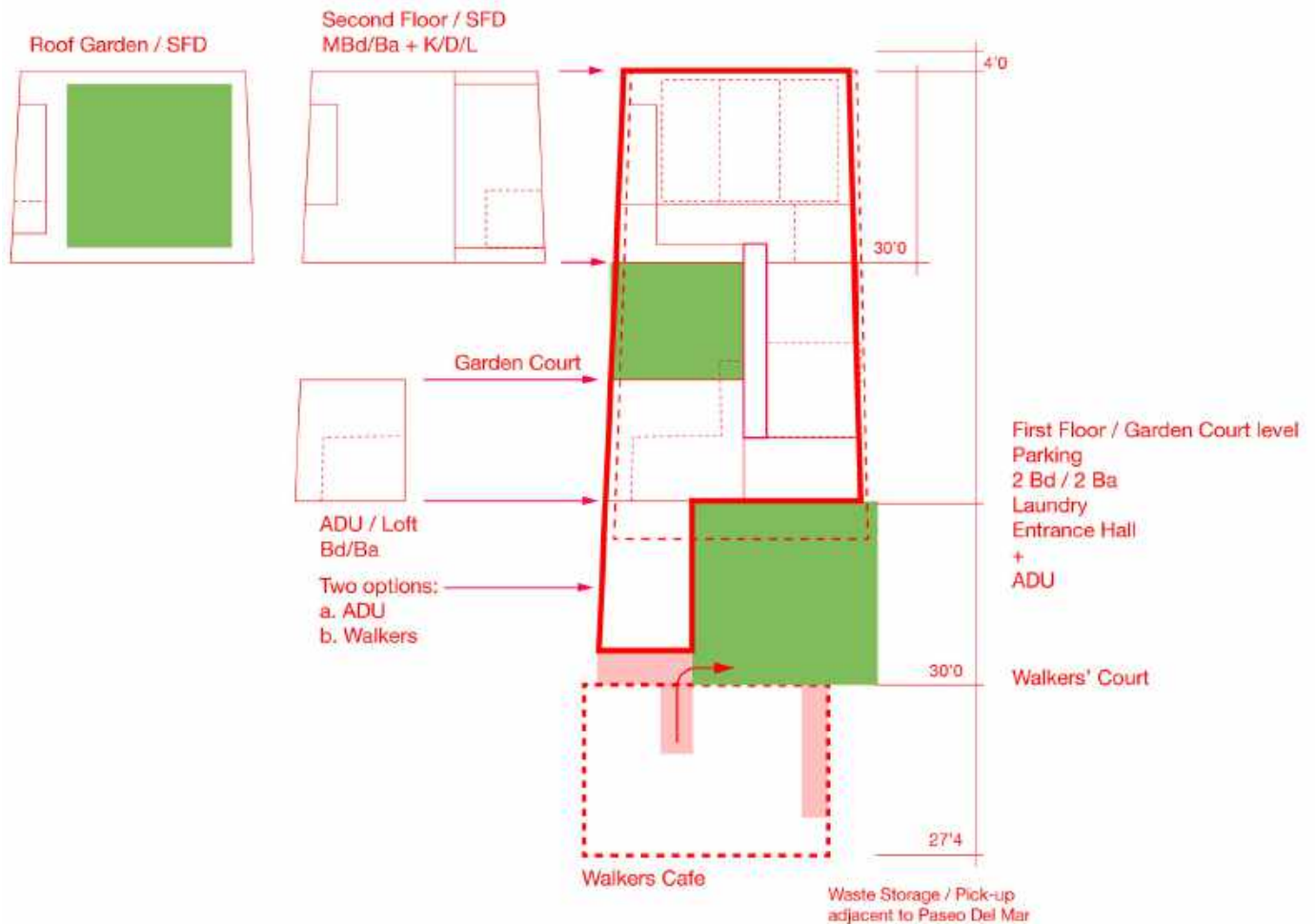
The alternative conceptual plan included in this report is not intended to constitute a complete project design. Rather, it demonstrates at a conceptual level that an alternative configuration is physically feasible, if compromises are offered in relation to setbacks, and this could accomplish the principal objectives of the proposed project while substantially reducing the impact of the proposed development on the immediate neighbors, and the scale and character of the neighborhood, a priority in the Coastal Zone. However, it is abundantly clear to me that a substantial residential development is possible with the the 30' separation between Walker's and the SFD, without the variances.



**Fundamentals 01:** A. establish a datum at +/- 12' above the level of Paseo Del Mar. B. set back primary facade of the SFD, 30' from rear elevation of Walker's displace SFD second story to rear 30 - 36' of the site.

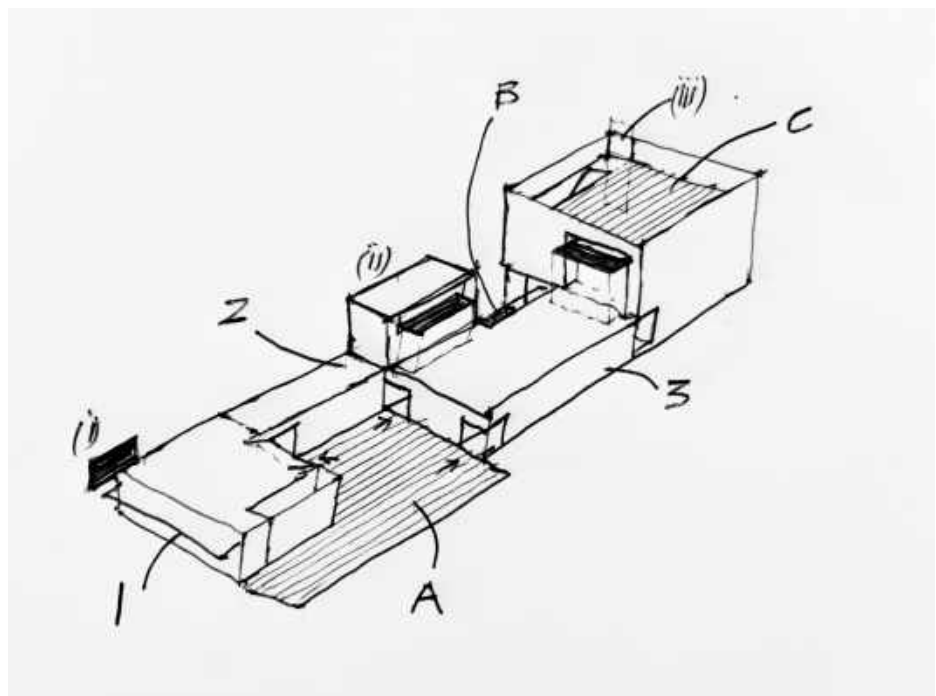


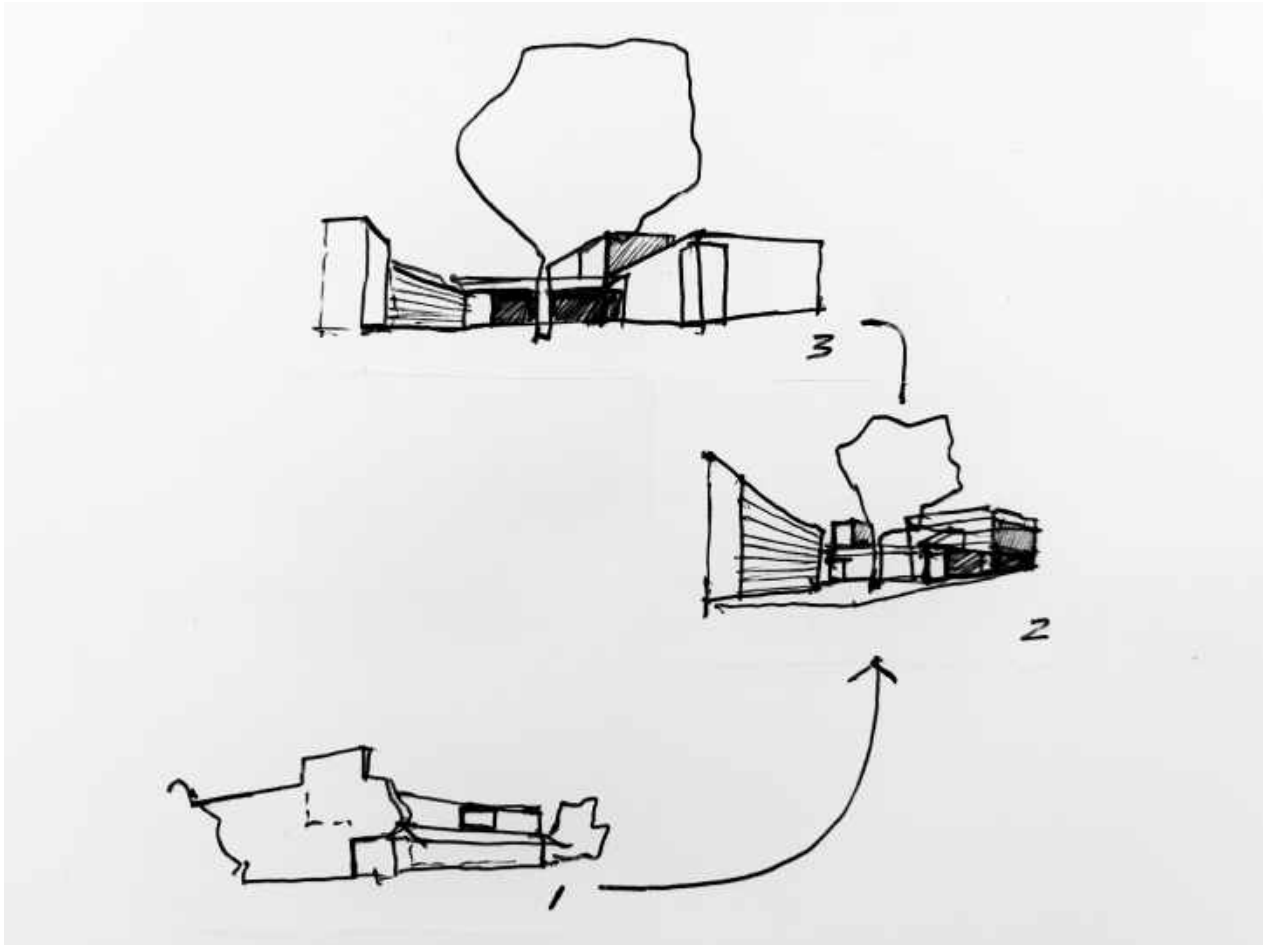
**Fundamentals 02:** rearrange the residential and accessory structures to create a 30 x 30' court (Walkers Court), divide the residential elements so that they are both entered from the new court. Modify rear yard and side yard setbacks to maximise the ground floor footprint, removing a 20 x 20' courtyard to maintain cross-ventilation and reduce mass. above: alternative distribution of residential and ancillary program



**above:** diagrammatic plans of alternative project.

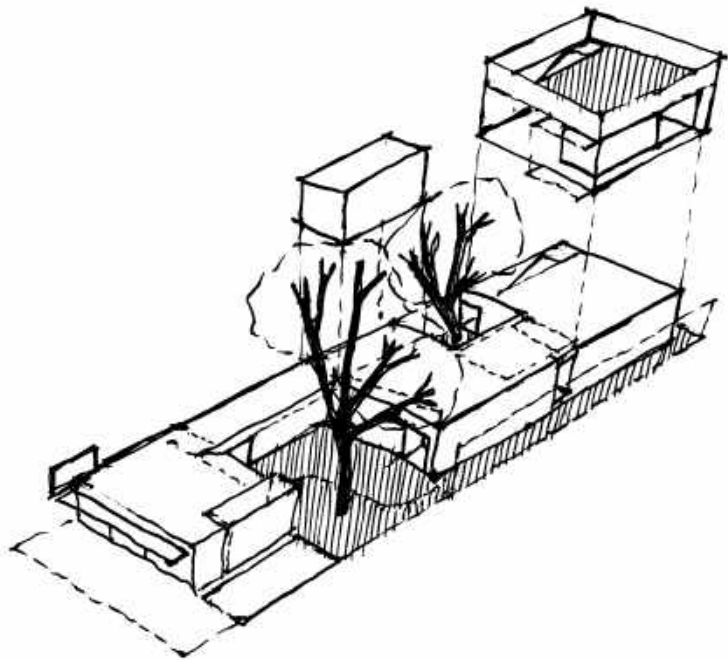
**right:** axonometric sketch showing alternative massing with consistent 12' datum (first floor) established by Walkers (1) and distributed second floor structures - the ADU + ancillary accommodation for Walker's (2), with garden courts (A & B), and the SFD (3) with a roof terrace (C). A hypothetical distribution of metal elements that echo the materiality of the historic sign is suggested.

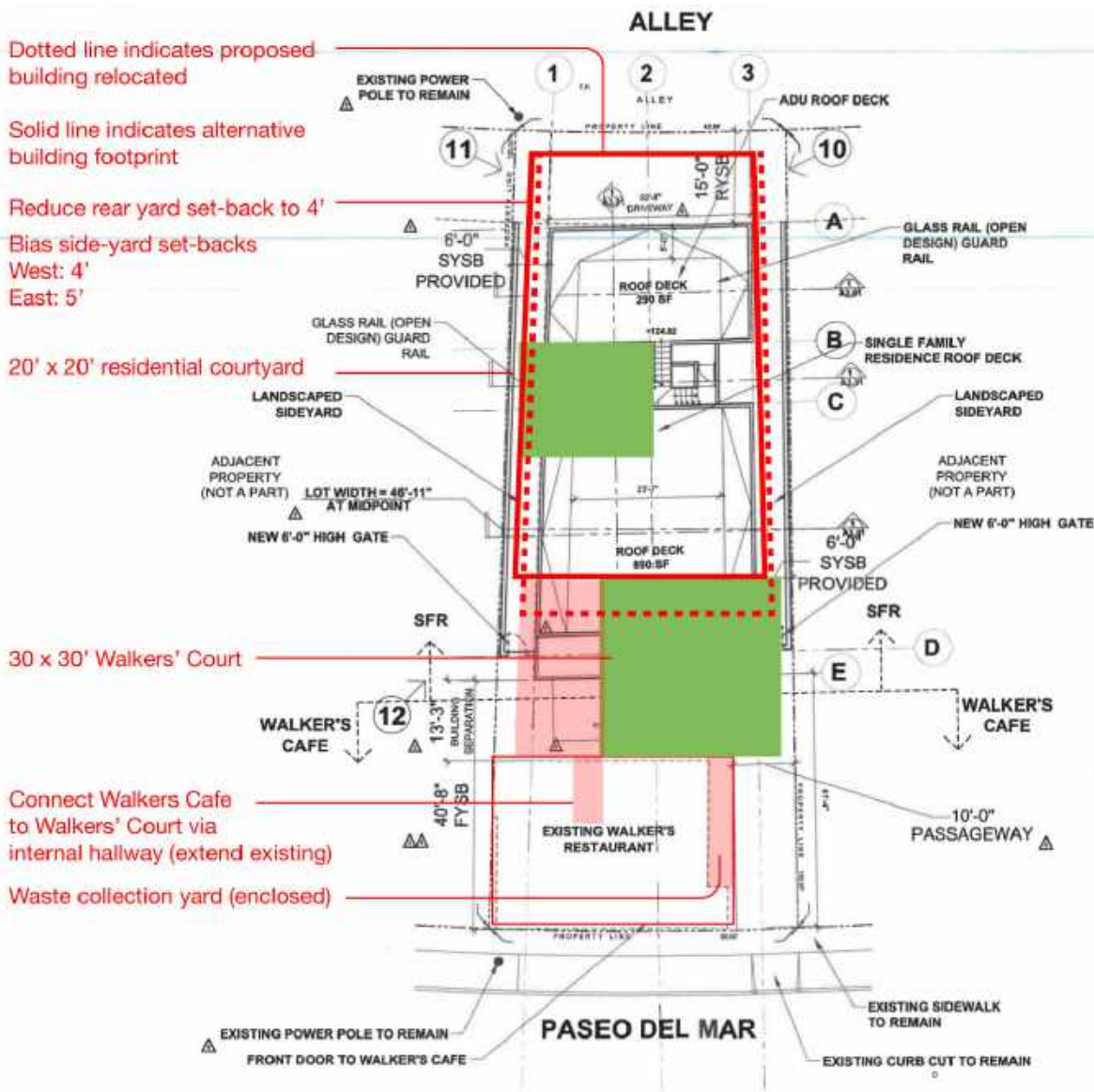




**above:** walking around Walker's 1, to the access path 10' wide, with the screened waste disposal and collection areas to the left 2, to Walker's Court, the proposed 30 x 30' courtyard with room for cafe activities, and generous access areas for both residential components - the SFD (r) and the ADU (l).

**right:** axonometric sketch showing the proposed massing and native tree planting in the courtyards established by maximising the first floor footprint, setting the entire building 4' back from the rear property line, and decreasing the side-yards to the minimum.





**above:** summary diagram showing proposed modifications to the first floor footprint and suggested exceptions — reduced rear yard and side yard set backs, increased front yard set back to set the face of the SFD 30' from the rear elevation of Walker's.

This approach relies on two principal changes to the site plan:

1. Maximising the available site by reducing the rear yard set back from 15'0" to 4'0", gaining an additional 11'0".
2. Reducing the side yard setbacks, to 4'0 (West) & 5'0 (East), greater than 3'0" minimum, and using a fence or hedge as the boundary, where necessary, to soften the transition between 700 Paseo Del Mar and the neighbouring properties.

These changes, that significantly increase the buildable site area will require exceptions, but it is my understanding that the neighbors / appellants are in favour of these provided they result in the following:

- A. Increasing the front yard set back to create a 30'0" clear dimension from the face of the proposed SFD to the rear of Walkers Cafe, as recommended by the appellants and the LA Conservancy, allowing space for table service and cafe functions to be adequately separated from the residential entrances and associated landscaped areas.
- B. Maintaining a datum of 12'0" above the level of Paseo Del Mar at the entrance to the site, establishing the parapet height or eaves, of all structures facing the courtyard / court established by the new set back, matching the historic Cafe, and ensuring that the residential structures respect the scale and character of this historic setting.
- C. Confining all two story volumes to the perimeter of the site — with the upper floors including a roof terrace / belvedere as the uppermost level of the SFD, occupying the rear of the site, and a loft / second floor for the ADU, as a separate element, permitting a variety of views within, through and across the site for the residents and neighbors, ensuring a picturesque composition of architectural elements rather than a monolithic block.

Economies in relation to space planning can be achieved by reducing the complexity of the vertical circulation, and disentangling the ADU from the SFD. Ideally the site planning is reconfigured as indicated in the diagrams and three-dimensional, axonometric sketches, included here to include a secondary courtyard that allows the bedrooms and associated hallway or verandah direct access to a garden, and cross-ventilation. This courtyard also creates a focus for the ground / first floor that is introspective, in contrast to the 30 x 36' roof terrace at second floor level (within the maximum building height) that is self-evidently extroverted and commands exceptional views toward Catalina Island and the surrounding territory. Ideally, both courtyards - Walker's Court, the primary shared open space, and the smaller residential courtyard, would be planted with native species, including a significant shade-producing tree in each.

David **Turnbull**

08/24\_2026

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