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Summary of Survey Exercise Comments

Date: October 22, 2018
Re: Community Meeting 1 and Online Survey Comments

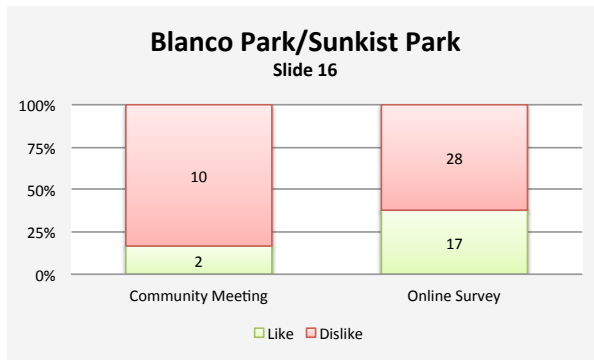
An online survey was posted on the Culver City Single Family Residential Design Guidelines website¹, starting June 11, 2018 and ending September 11, 2018, as a supplement to the seven (7) community meetings held from June 26, 2018 to August 28, 2018 for the following neighborhoods: Blair Hills/Hetzler Road, Blanco Park/Sunkist Park, Carlson Park, Culver West, McLaughlin, Park West, and Studio Village. The online survey was publicized on the public notices posted for each community meeting and also directly to residents during each meeting. Residents were encouraged to take the online survey if they were unable to attend the meeting or if they felt more comfortable sharing their comments online. The online survey simulated the Survey Exercise from the community meeting and consisted of twenty (20) site photographs specific to each neighborhood. Residents voted “like” or “dislike” with an option to write a comment for each photograph. A total of 293 responses were received, of which 54 responses were determined to be from out-of-neighborhood residents, totaling 239 in-neighborhood responses². By comparison, a total of 99 residents attended the community meetings.

Online Survey Findings

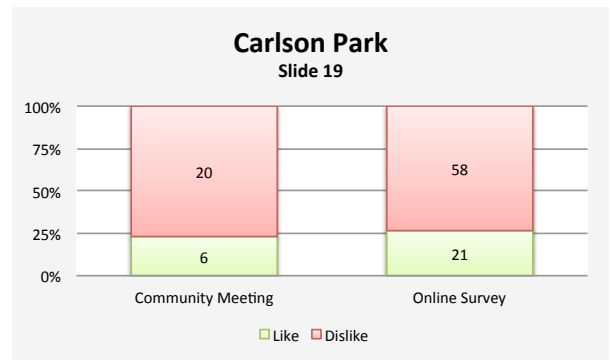
- 1. Houses that maximize the zoning envelope are consistently disliked across all neighborhoods.**
Residents from all neighborhoods surveyed consistently disliked houses that met minimum development standards and maximized the allowable zoning envelope (see [Figure 1](#)). The size, height, and massing of houses built to maximize the allowable zoning envelope were described as “too big” and “obtrusive to neighbors” for “looming” over adjacent properties and “taking away their neighbor’s privacy” and access to “light and air”. Residents also disliked the quality of houses that meet minimum development standards for being “boxy” with “poor details” and for looking more like apartment buildings than single-family residences.
- 2. Second-story additions set behind the ridgeline and that match the architectural style, materials, and roof forms of an original tract home are consistently preferred.**
Residents from all neighborhoods consistently preferred second-story additions that are set behind the ridgeline and that match the original tract home’s architectural style, materials, and roof forms (see [Figure 2](#)). One resident noted, “even though it’s a two-story, it stayed within the character of the neighborhood.” Additions set in front of the ridgeline were disliked for being too large and for “looming” over neighbors. Residents were split in their opinion of additions set behind the ridgeline with different roof forms. Many who liked those additions noted the size and massing “could have been worse”. Residents of Blair Hills favored houses that were responsive to and didn’t block neighbor’s views.

¹ The Culver City hosted project website (www.CulverCity.org/ResidentialDesign) is where residents found links to their neighborhood online survey. The online survey was hosted by a second-party website called Survey Monkey.

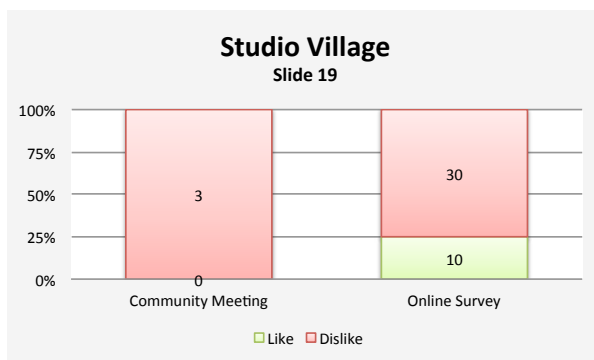
² Out-of-neighborhood responses were filtered per neighborhood and limited to a maximum 16% variance.



“looks like an apartment” “big and boxy”



“boxy with poor details” “too big” “out of place”

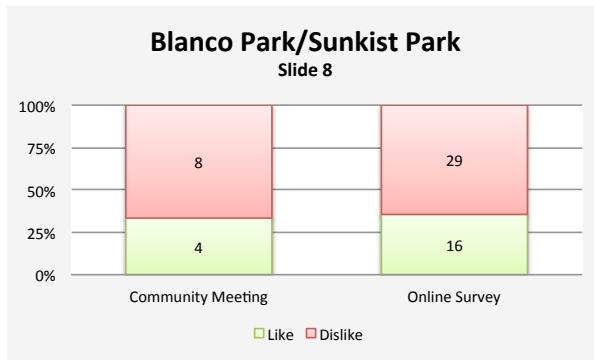


“looks like an apartment” “needs landscaping”

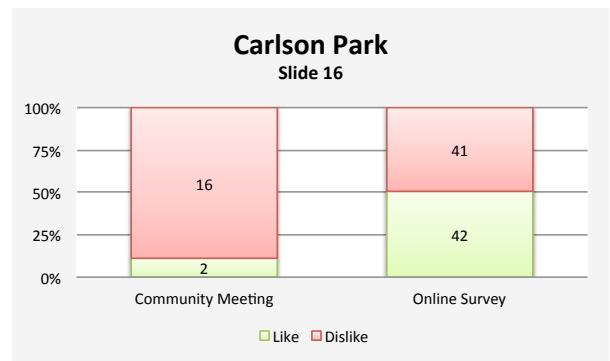


Figure 1

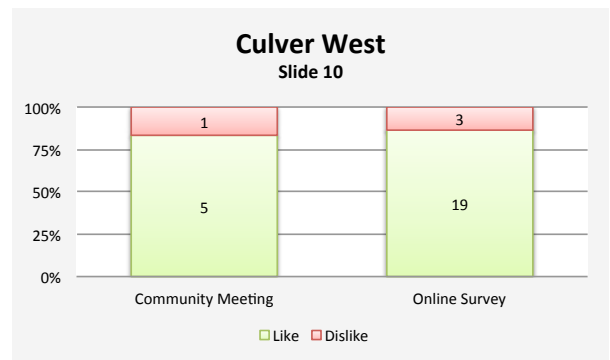
Photographs and voting results of homes that meet minimum development standards and maximize the allowable zoning envelope.



“too tall” “block in front”



“disjointed” “mismatched” “confused”



“tasteful” “not intrusive” “blends in”

Figure 2

Photographs and voting results of second-story additions. Residents consistently like second-story additions set behind the roof ridgeline and that match the existing architectural style, roof pitch, and materials such as cladding, color, and windows.

3. Existing side yard setbacks do not provide adequate sunlight, air, and privacy to neighboring properties.

The age of original tract developments of Culver City can be characterized by three typologies: rear yard garages (1917-1924), and front- or side-facing garages (1949-Present). A combination of each typology can be found in all neighborhoods. However, where there are lots with rear yard garages or older neighborhoods with predominant patterns of houses with rear yard garages (Carlson Park, Park West, Studio Village, Blanco Park, Culver West, and McLaughlin), residents disliked new construction that removed existing driveways (8-10 feet width) along side yards and built to the 5-foot side yard setback requirement with front-facing garages. Residents disliked the closer proximity between houses for depreciating the quality of lifestyle including a loss of privacy, sunlight, and air. Residents noted the change of neighborhood character and often described new construction patterns as more fitting of other cities including Manhattan Beach, Pacific Palisades, and Beverly Hills.

4. Dislike of houses that extend past neighboring houses at the rear yard.

The average size of original tract homes of Culver City range between roughly 0.23-0.33 FAR (floor area ratio) and, depending on lot size, houses that range from 1,200 square feet to 1,800 square feet. These single-story houses have rear yards of roughly 30-feet depth, which is twice the depth of the current 15-foot rear yard setback requirement. Houses built before the 0.60 Maximum FAR was implemented in 2015 tend to extend up to the 15-foot rear yard setback as new construction favors two-story homes with front-facing garages (see Figure 3). New construction built after 2015 that meets the 0.60 Maximum FAR tend not to extend beyond neighboring properties at the rear yard. However, when additions maintain an existing rear yard garage and 10-foot driveway along the side yard, houses tend to extend to the rear yard setback. Residents in Studio Village noted this condition in their comments and disliked those houses for the contrast in scale and the loss of privacy for neighboring properties (see Figure 4).

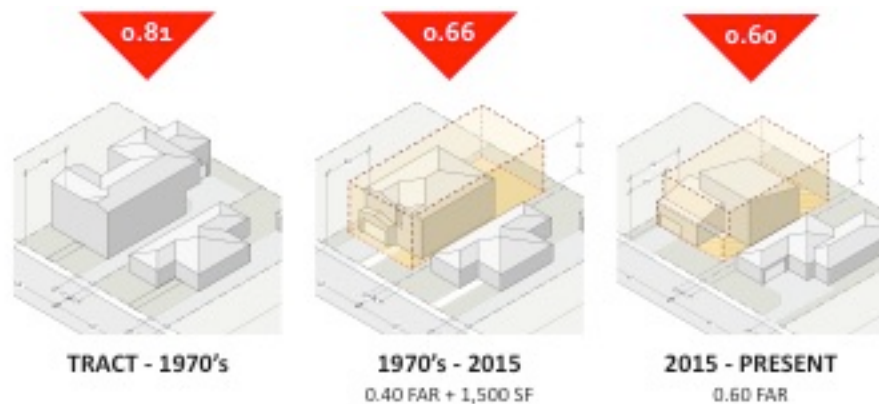


Figure 3

Evolution of development standards depicting building conditions found in Carlson Park. New construction that extends past neighboring properties at the rear yard is prevalent with older FAR standards set before the 2015 update.



Figure 4

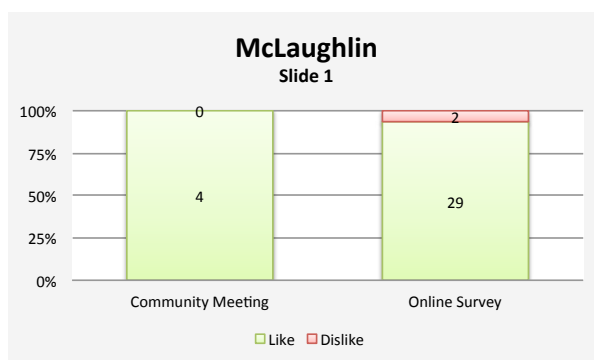
Comparison of new construction in Carlson Park and an addition in Studio Village utilizing current development standards. The addition in Studio Village preserves the rear yard garage and 10-foot driveway along the side yard but extends up to the maximum rear yard setback. Residents in Studio Village disliked this incongruity, “When you get a large house that takes up most of the lot, they’re looking into your master bedroom. That’s an issue for us. The houses are falling into our yards.”

5. Dislike of front-facing garages where there is a predominant pattern of rear yard garages.

Residents living in older neighborhoods with a predominant pattern of rear yard garages (Carlson Park, Park West, Studio Village, Blanco Park, Culver West, and McLaughlin) disliked new front-facing garages for the loss of open space associated with the demolition of existing 10-foot driveways, changes to the existing pedestrian character and associated safety concerns for children and seniors, and changes to building character where front-facing garages dominate the street-facing expression of homes.

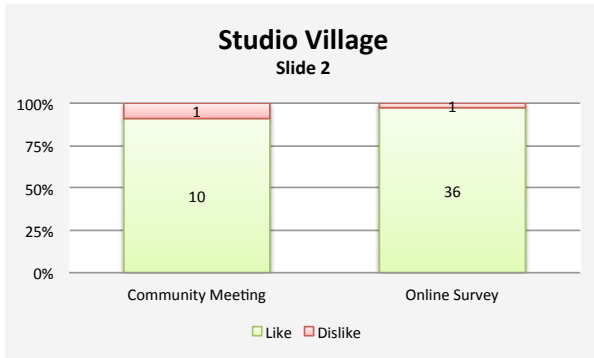
6. Residents like well-maintained houses in a comprehensive architectural style with complementary landscaping.

Residents consistently liked well-maintained single-story homes with a comprehensive architectural style and complementary landscaping with ground cover, shrubs, and trees (see Figure 5). Residents have a stronger preference for homes that “fit in” with existing neighborhood compatible styles including minimal traditional and minimal ranch. Residents of Carlson Park have seen the most new development in their neighborhood and had the most discerning comments related to architectural styles and design. Residents also noted when landscaping enhanced or detracted from a home and voted accordingly.

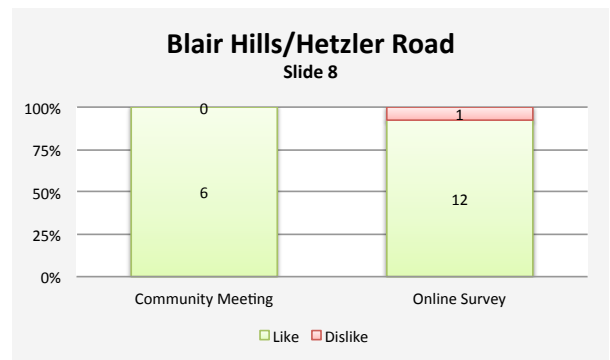


“pleasant” “nice landscaping” “driveway buffer”

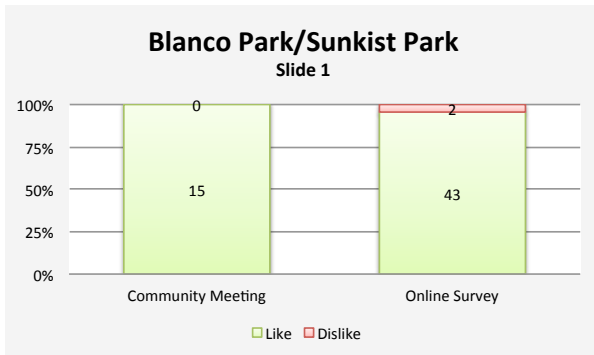




“front porch and bay window” “pretty landscaping”



“good balance of color, materials, and landscaping”



“clean and simple” “nice and tidy”

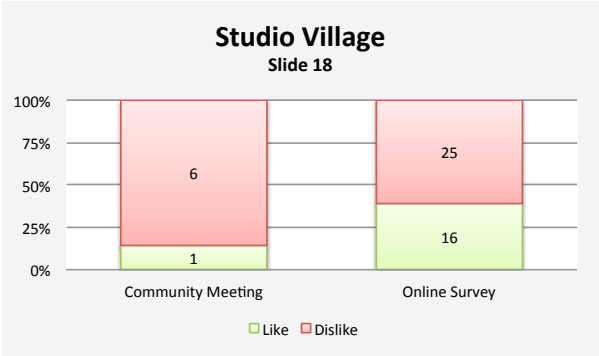


Figure 5

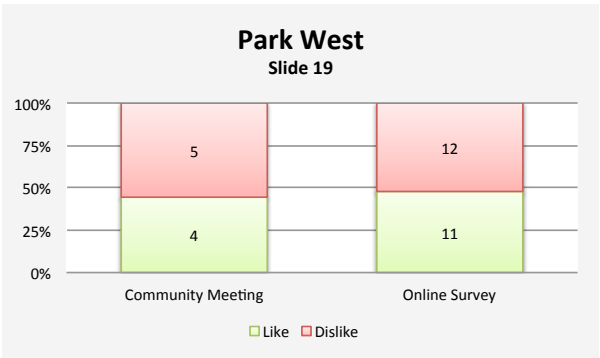
Photographs and voting results of the highest “liked” photos by neighborhood. Residents consistently liked houses with comprehensive architectural style and detailing and appreciated landscaping that complements the architectural style utilizing a mix of ground cover, shrubs, and trees.

7. Residents are split in their opinion of new modern style homes with flat rooflines.

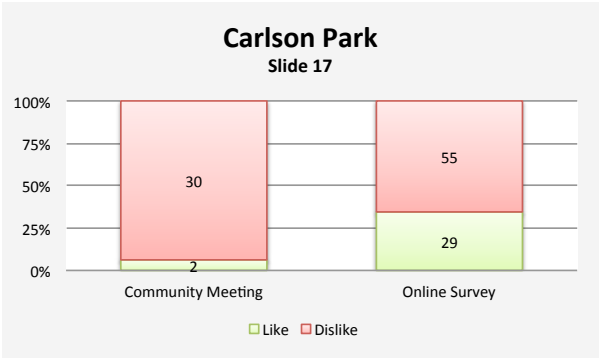
Residents were split in their opinion of modern homes but had differing reasons for their like and dislike of homes (see Figure 6). The majority of residents who voted “like” for modern homes like the style and the diversity they bring to neighborhoods. A smaller group of residents voted “like” for modern homes because they prefer not to regulate styles. A group of residents who dislike modern styles feel it is out of character for their neighborhood. A final group of residents like modern homes but dislike the size and massing of homes that maximize the zoning envelope. Residents from Studio Village voted slightly higher for a modern home for not fully maximizing the zoning envelope at the second story and for providing complementary landscaping (see Figure 7).



“too big and modern” “edge to edge”



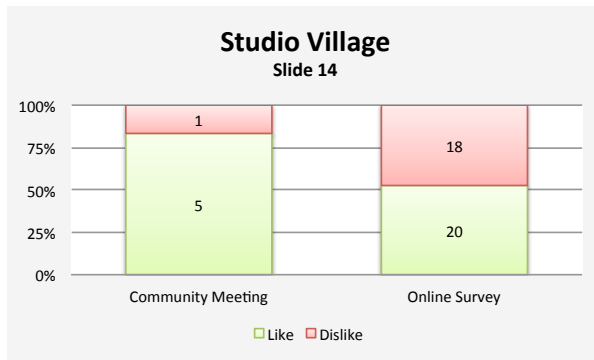
“would be fine on a larger lot”



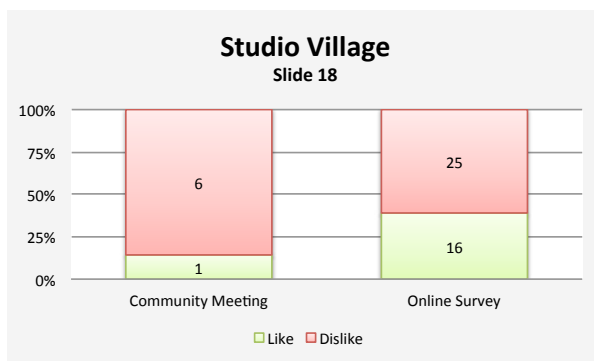
“innovative” “pretty” “fortress like”



Figure 6



“although large, blends with landscape” “fortress”



“too big and modern” “edge to edge”

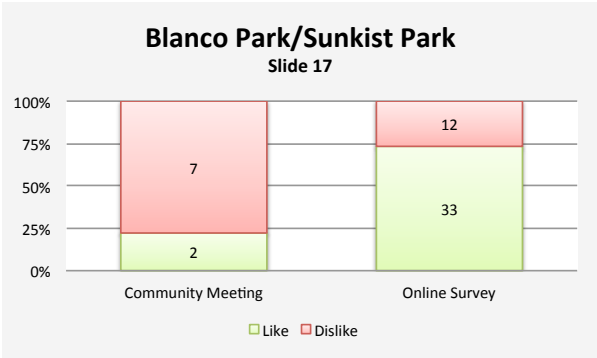


Figure 7

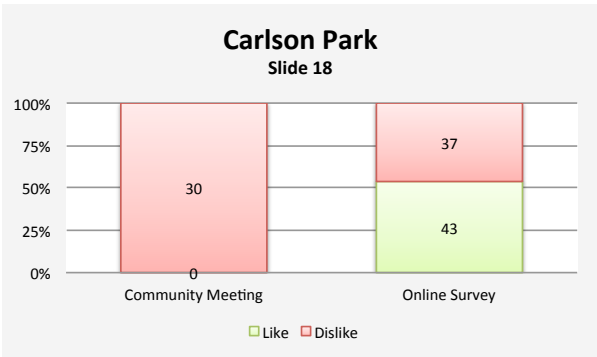
Two modern style homes from the same neighborhood, built in 2015, and exceeding 3,000 square feet. Residents voted with a higher number of likes for the home in Slide 14. Although modulated, the home in Slide 18 fills the zoning envelope to a greater extent than the home in Slide 14 and had higher “dislike” votes.

8. Voting results for Modern Farmhouses differed between community meeting attendees and online survey responses.

Voting results for Modern Farmhouse homes differed between residents who attended community meetings and online survey responses (see Figure 8). Residents who attended community meetings strongly disliked Modern Farmhouses for being over scaled, developer-driven, and a recurrent “cookie cutter” typology. Online survey responses noted the Modern Farmhouses as being large but slightly favored them for “trying to fit the neighborhood” and having a “normal home silhouette”.



“too large for the lot” “normal home silhouette”



“too big and cookie cutter” “hate less than others”



Figure 8
Photographs and voting results of Modern Farmhouse style houses.

9. Lifestyle needs of residents are affected by house size.

The majority of neighborhoods annexed to Culver City occurred in two phases³: 1917-1924 and 1949-1965. The original tract developments constructed houses typical of American homes of their time and ranged in size from 1,200-1,800 square feet. The national median size of new homes is 2,426 square feet⁴, which is an increase of 600-1,200 square feet from the tract developments of Culver City. Long-time residents expressed their preference for the lifestyle associated with smaller tract homes that allow ample space surrounding homes for privacy, sunlight, and air (see Figure 9). Residents who preferred larger houses closer to the national median size cited the need for additional space due to changing lifestyle needs, young families, or to maintain consistency with current development trends.

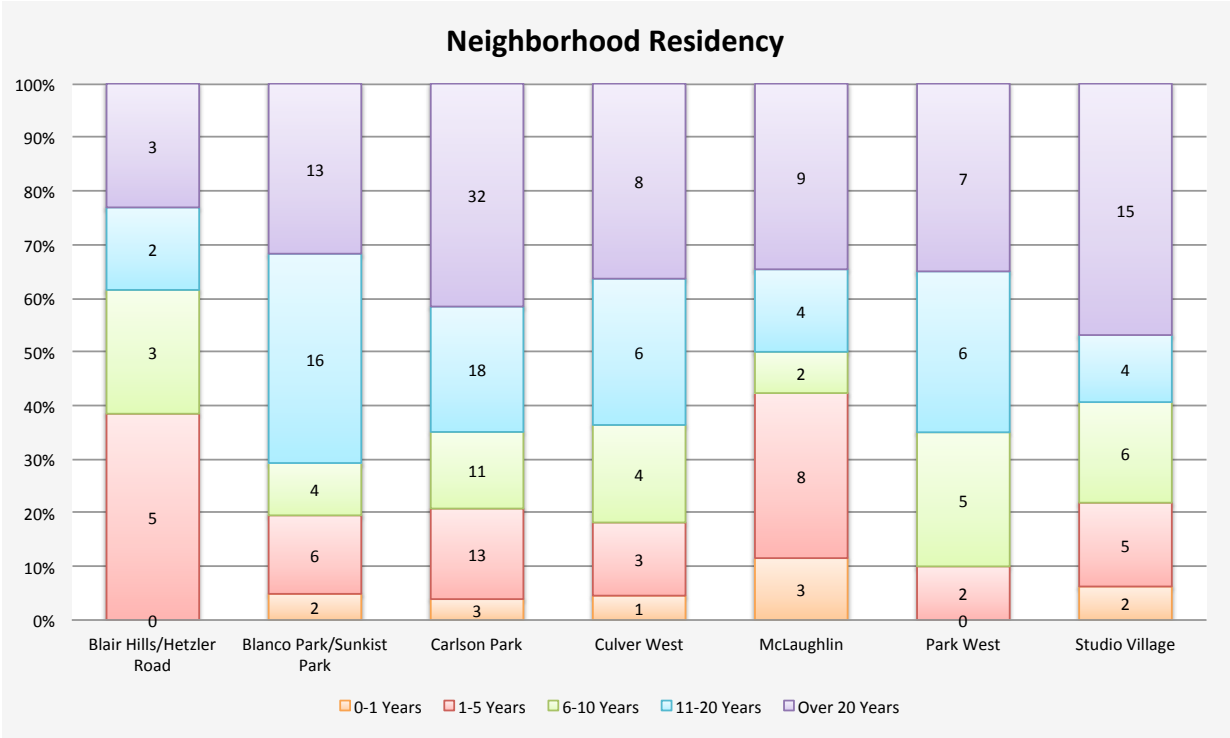
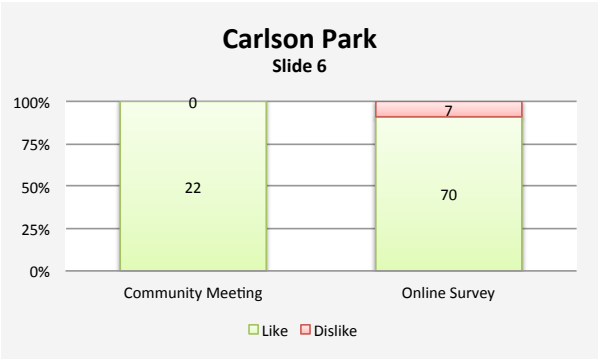


Figure 9
Residents who completed the Online Survey were asked about how long they have lived in their neighborhood. The majority of neighborhoods are comprised of residents who have lived there for over 11 years, except Blair Hills/Hetzler Road and McLaughlin.

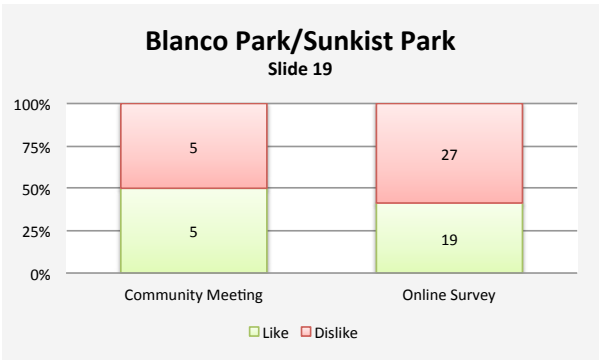
³ Hetzler Road neighborhood was annexed to Culver City in 1982 and 2000.
⁴ United States Census Bureau. (2018) *Annual 2017 Characteristics of New Housing*.

10. Carports located along side yards are preferred in neighborhoods with a predominant pattern of rear yard garages.

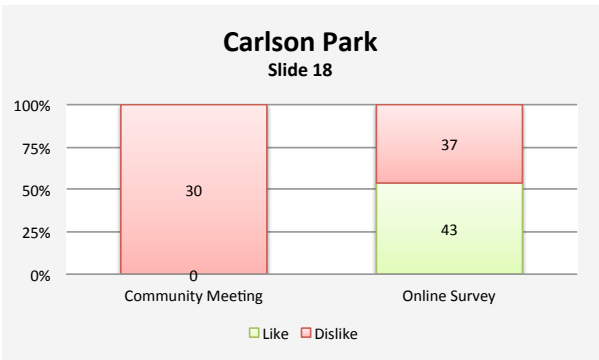
The use of carports in older neighborhoods with a predominant pattern of rear yard garages was favored if the carport was architecturally and stylistically integrated with the house and was located along a side yard (see Figure 10). “Likes” for a new Modern Farmhouse increased amongst online survey voters for maintaining the driveway despite being larger than neighboring homes (see Figure 10, Carlson Park Slide 18). Residents slightly favored “dislikes” for carports covering a driveway in the front yard (see Figure 10, Blanco Park/Sunkist Park Slide 19).



“charming”



“carport is too ‘in your face’”



“driveway does not overwhelm neighbors”



Figure 10

11. Subterranean garages are out of character for residential neighborhoods.

A home shown to residents of Studio Village with a subterranean front-facing two-car garage was disliked (see Figure 11). The subterranean garage breaks conformity with at-grade garages across all neighborhoods. Combined with its height and minimal façade expression, residents were not comfortable with the subterranean garage and noted that it felt out of place for the neighborhood, was out of place for a residential zone, and maximized usable building space to create a home that is over scaled for the neighborhood.

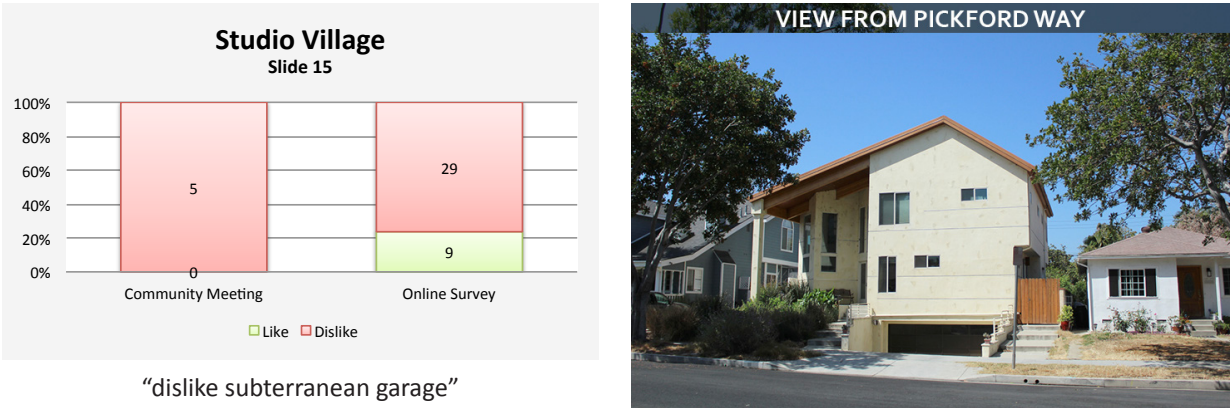


Figure 11
Photograph and voting results for a subterranean garage.

12. Residents want to find a process that strikes a balance between community interests and individual rights.

Long-time residents of Culver City remember “neighborly” approaches to building when neighbors would ask neighbors for permission to build. Residents of Blair Hills noted this approach as an ongoing courtesy and attributed some of that approach to their Association Handbook, a non-legally binding document produced by and distributed by residents.

13. Some residents want no change to existing development standards.

A small group of residents across all neighborhoods noted that although they voted “dislike” for houses, they would not want to regulate or prohibit individual property owners from building freely. Other residents had concerns regarding new construction changing the existing character of neighborhoods and “taking away” “privacy, sunlight, and air” but who had no interest in regulating styles or materials.