In May, 2014, Councilman Koretz moved (Council file 14-0656) that revisions be made to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO). See attached. He indicated that while the BMO went a long way toward limiting oversized home, it fell “far short of its mandate to create regulations that allow for sustainable neighborhoods and that protect the interest of all homeowners”. His proposed revisions included elimination of the three bonuses which permitted a 20% increase in the allowable floor area of homes. The “Green Bonus provision” has been superseded by the City’s recent Green Building Program (Ordinance No. 181480), which is “a mandatory requirement for all new construction”, resulting in an automatic 20% allowable increase in house size over the basic BMO standard. The two design bonuses “each appear to produce the large, boxy, suburban-style houses that the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance intended to prevent”. In addition, he notes that “exemptions for attached garages, attached porches/patios/breezeways, and double height entryways appear to result in out of scale and out of character development. They should, therefore, be removed from the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance”

As a result of his motion, the City Planning Department, in conjunction with the City Attorney’s office, initiated action to prepare the revisions to the BMO. However, the timeline for adoption of the revisions has stretched to the point where it is currently estimated that it will be the summer of 2016 before the revisions are codified.

In the meanwhile, since the economy has improved and the supply of homes is at a low point, developers are rushing to obtain permits before the revisions become part of the code. In recognition of this, Sherman Oaks and Encino have each recently applied for and been granted an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) to essentially implement the revisions as have many other neighborhoods in the Los Angeles basin. Studio City has had an ICO for some time. That leaves Tarzana without the protection of the revisions and thus a target for oversized housing development.