



# City of Santa Barbara California

## CITY OF SANTA BARBARA PLANNING COMMISSION

### RESOLUTION NO. 004-07

#### LA VISTA DEL OCEANO DRIVE ROADWAY

#### NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE AND MODIFICATION

JANUARY 18, 2007

**APPLICATION OF JESSICA KINNAHAN, AGENT FOR THE APPLICANTS OF THE LA VISTA DEL OCEANO DRIVE ROADWAY PROJECT, 1568-1576 LA VISTA DEL OCEANO DRIVE, (035-180-085, -084, & -058 AND 035-170-023 & -022); E-1, ONE-FAMILY RESIDENCE ZONE; GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: RESIDENTIAL – 3 UNITS PER ACRE (MST1999-00714)**

The project consists of revisions to the approved roadway proposal. This includes changes to the retaining walls and additional grading. Some of the retaining walls along the roadway are proposed to be moved slightly from the public right-of-way onto private property at 1562 La Vista del Oceano Drive. Additionally, 105 cu. yds. of cut, 190 cu. yds. of fill, and 433 cu. yds. of benching are proposed at 1575 La Vista del Oceano Drive as a direct result of the roadway improvements. The grading is necessary to help stabilize the roadway improvements along the upper section.

This project was previously reviewed by the Planning Commission as part of five inter-related applications located at the end of the lower portion of La Vista del Oceano Drive which is currently unimproved and centrally located in that neighborhood. Some grading and improvements are also required on neighboring parcels (1562, 1564 & 1575 La Vista del Oceano Dr.) that are not directly related to this roadway project.

The following discretionary applications are required:

1. Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Compliance is required to allow grading in excess of 500 cubic yards (SBMC §22.68.070). The project site is located within the Hillside Design District.
2. A Modification to allow fences, walls, and hedges within the required front yard setback and on either side of a driveway to exceed 3-½' in height in the E-1 Zone (SBMC §28.87.170).

The Environmental Analyst has determined that an Addendum to the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration for 1568-1576 La Vista del Oceano Drive (adopted October 6, 2005, SCH#2005051106) adequately addresses the proposed revisions. The Addendum analysis concludes that no new significant impacts beyond those identified in the prior Final Mitigated Negative Declaration would result from the proposed project revisions.

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has held the required public hearing on the above application, and the Applicant was present.

**WHEREAS**, no one appeared to speak in favor of the application, and no one appeared to speak in opposition thereto, and the following exhibits were presented for the record:

1. Staff Report with Attachments, January 10, 2007
2. Site Plans

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Planning Commission:

I. Approved the subject application making the following findings and determinations:

**A. Environmental Findings:**

1. The Planning Commission has considered the Addendum, dated January 9, 2007, for proposed roadway revisions at La Vista del Oceano Drive (MST1999-00714), together with the adopted Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH#2005051106) for the original project, and public comments received.
2. The Addendum to Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH#2005051106) has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act requirements. The Addendum together with the adopted Final MND constitute adequate environmental analysis of the current proposed roadway project at La Vista del Oceano Drive.
3. Mitigation measures identified in the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration have been agreed-to by the applicant and incorporated into the current project as conditions of approval and would avoid or reduce all potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. In the Planning Commission's independent judgment and analysis based on the whole record, there is no substantial evidence that the proposed roadway project at La Vista del Oceano Drive will have a significant effect on the environment.
4. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of Public Resources Code § 21081.6, and is hereby adopted.
5. The location and custodian of documents associated with the environmental review process and decision for the roadway project at La Vista del Oceano Drive (MST1999-00714) is the City of Santa Barbara Community Development Department, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.
6. There is no evidence that the proposed roadway project at La Vista del Oceano Drive (MST1999-00714) would have any potential for adverse effect on wildlife resources.

**B. MODIFICATION (SBMC §28.92.026):**

**Fence, Screen, Wall and Hedge Modification (SBMC §28.87.170)**

The modifications are necessary to secure appropriate improvements on the lots and are consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance. This will allow for adequate access to be provided on the sites as required by Transportation Staff and the Fire Department for the proposed development. This will also allow for the completion of La

Vista del Oceano Drive, which will result in a higher level of response for emergencies in this area. The heights have been minimized to the greatest extent possible balancing all relevant factors on the sites.

C. **NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE (SBMC §22.68.070):**

1. **The public health, safety and welfare will be protected.**

The project site is subject to a number of geologic and environmental constraints. As discussed in the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration, potential impacts associated with these hazards would be adequately addressed by implementing the identified project design and specified mitigation measures such that construction of the proposed development would ensure seismic and geologic stability, and reduce or avoid potential environmental impacts associated with unstable geologic conditions.

The grading has been designed with appropriate drainage and erosion control measures. All drainage improvements would be subject to design in accordance with hydrology calculations, City Ordinance provisions, and review by the City Building and/or Public Works Engineering Divisions.

The proposed project's landscape plans would comply with City high fire hazard area requirements for access, construction (access), water availability, and vegetation brush management.

2. **The grading and development will be appropriate to the site, have been designed to avoid visible scarring, and will not significantly modify the natural topography of the site or the natural appearance of any ridgeline or hillside due to the minimized grading and site development;**

The entire project area is located on a south-facing slope with gradients which vary from approximately 29 to 50 percent. The grading design for the residences is similar to the surrounding neighborhood. The structures would be imbedded into the hillside and step down the slope of the property, with the downhill elevations at two or three stories. The total amount of grading for the project, which consists of the four new homes and connecting the upper and lower portions of La Vista del Oceano Drive, would be 4,970 cu. yds. of cut, 3,082 cu. yds. of fill, resulting in 1,890 cu. yds. of export. A significant portion of the cut obtained from the residential lots would be used to raise the road bed a maximum of eight feet in order for the upper lots to have adequate vehicular access to the sites, and also minimize the export of material.

In this case, grading outside the structure footprints would follow the natural landform as much as is feasible, with the exception of localized fill necessary for the shared driveway on the upper lots and for raising the roadway. The roads and driveways have been aligned to minimize grading while meeting the required design standards for width, gradient and cross fall. The proposed

residences have been designed to blend into the hillside and surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, the grading has been reviewed closely by the Architectural Board of Review in order to minimize the amount of grading and reduce the height and amount of retaining walls necessary for the development. The proposed grading design implements the City's Hillside Housing Techniques and the grading plans for the project would be compatible with the site's natural contours as much as possible given the need to raise the road bed and create a shared driveway in order to provide adequate access to the upper lots.

The project site would also introduce the use of native or naturalized and fire retardant vegetation, especially on the downward or southern facing slopes that would hide or break up any large surface area views of the structures facing down slope. Because very little vegetation exists on the project site currently, the addition of substantial additional vegetation would be an enhancement of the hillside.

3. **The project will, to the maximum extent feasible, preserve and protect any native or mature trees with a minimum trunk diameter of four inches (4") measured four feet (4') from the base of the trunk.**

The project site does not contain any native or mature trees.

4. **The development will be consistent with the scenic character of the City and will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.**

The proposed development will be consistent with the scenic character of the City and will enhance the appearance of the neighborhood. The proposals have been reviewed extensively by the Architectural Board of Review to minimize mass, bulk, and scale, grading and height of retaining walls. The ABR found the homes to be acceptable and compatible as proposed in terms of mass, bulk and scale. The Architectural Board of Review understands that the details will be high quality, particularly the proposed retaining walls.

The applicants have worked with Fire Department Staff in incorporating native or naturalized and fire-retardant vegetation in the landscape plans for each lot. Additionally, the Architectural Board of Review has worked with the applicants to break up the mass of structures and retaining walls with use of landscaping. The landscaping currently on these sites is primarily limited to grasslands and weeds. The incorporation of more substantial shrubbery and trees would help to mitigate the massing and frame the views.

The project would introduce the use of native or naturalized and fire retardant vegetation, especially on the downward or southern facing slopes that would help to hide or break up any large surface area views of the structures facing down slope. Because very little vegetation exists on the project site currently, the addition of substantial additional vegetation would be an enhancement of the hillside.

5. **The development will be compatible with the neighborhood, and its size, bulk, and scale will be appropriate to the site and neighborhood.**

The proposed development would be compatible with the neighborhood, and its size, bulk, and scale will be appropriate to the site and neighborhood. The proposals have been revised to minimize the height of the buildings and the retaining walls for the sites. The Board looked at ways to minimize the amount of grading as much as feasibly possible without compromising other aspects of the project. The ABR found the homes to be acceptable and compatible as proposed in terms of mass, bulk and scale. The Architectural Board of Review understands that the details will be of a high quality, particularly the proposed retaining walls.

A survey of surrounding lots of comparable slope and size found that the floor area ratios were within the parameters of surrounding development. The majority of the southern facing or visually prominent slopes would have development that is similar in scale and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. This proposal involves some of the last remaining undeveloped lots in this neighborhood. The majority of the surrounding existing developments were reviewed and approved by the Architectural Board of Review, and the project would also be subject to ABR approval.

6. **The development will preserve significant public scenic views of and from the hillside.**

The proposed project would not obstruct any public scenic view corridors to the ocean or lower elevations of the City nor would it obstruct any upper foothill or mountain views from the beach or lower elevations of the City. The project, which is limited in size and scope, would be located on a hillside and would be intermittently visible from various public and private viewpoints within the Coastal Zone. The development would not block scenic public views of the mountains, foothills, or coastline. The existing public views across the site provide openness between built areas, but do not have substantial scenic quality nor include views of important visual features such as mountains, lush natural vegetation, unique geologic features or water features.

Although some undeveloped lots may serve as a scenic open space for a neighborhood, these lots do not provide that function for this area. They visually appear to be vacant lots in a residential neighborhood instead of a designated open space. While the vacant lots may provide some visual relief, residential development compatible with the surrounding neighborhood would also be appropriate. This development would essentially in-fill a portion of the remaining hillside with residential development, comparable with its surroundings.

The visual change from the existing undeveloped project site areas to the proposed project would be nominal from public view vantage points. There are

areas along Cliff and Shoreline Drives where the project site is visible; however, public views towards the project site are considered somewhat degraded due to the surrounding residential development in an urban setting. The proposed residences have been designed to blend into the hillside and surrounding neighborhood. They would include landscaping and architecture that would be designed to be consistent with design guidelines and standards of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) that take into consideration scenic view compatibility.

II. Said approval is subject to the following conditions:

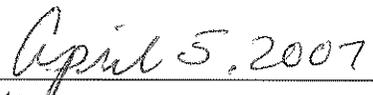
The project will remain subject to the conditions outlined in Planning Commission Resolution No. 063-05 as approved on October 6, 2005.

This motion was passed and adopted on the 18th day of January, 2007 by the Planning Commission of the City of Santa Barbara, by the following vote:

AYES: 7 NOES: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 ABSENT: 0

I hereby certify that this Resolution correctly reflects the action taken by the City of Santa Barbara Planning Commission at its meeting of the above date.

  
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Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

THIS ACTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION CAN BE APPEALED TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITHIN TEN (10) DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE ACTION WAS TAKEN BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION.