



# City of Santa Barbara California

## STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** April 4, 2007  
**AGENDA DATE:** April 11, 2007  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 2220 Las Rosas Lane (MST200)  
**TO:** Staff Hearing Officer  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
 Danny Kato, Zoning & Enforcement Supervisor *DK*  
 Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner *RM*

### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 6,000 square foot project site is currently developed with a single family residence with garage below, and a detached accessory building. The proposed project involves excavation of a portion of the rear yard to match the grade adjacent to the residence. A six-foot (6') high fence, atop a four-foot (4') retaining wall, will be constructed along the boundary of the new yard. The application also includes 721 square feet of main floor additions to the residence and expansion of the existing garage to meet minimum required dimensions. The discretionary application required for the project is a Modification to permit the fence and wall to exceed the maximum allowable height of eight-feet (8') and to provide less than the required 1,250 square feet of open yard area (SBMC §29.87.170 & 28.15.060).

Date Application Accepted: March 26, 2007      Date Action Required: June 26, 2007

### II. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

#### A. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:	Ron Sorgman	Property Owner:	Katherine Ortega Trust
Parcel Number:	025-191-014	Lot Area:	5,960 sf
General Plan:	12 Units Per Acre	Zoning:	E-3
Existing Use:	One-Family Residence	Topography:	15% slope
Adjacent Land Uses:			
	North – One-Family Residence		East – One-Family Residence
	South – One-Family Residence		West – One-Family Residence

**B. PROJECT STATISTICS**

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Living Area	1,296 sf*	721 sf addition
Garage	306 sf	Will be enlarged to 400 sf
Accessory Space	336 sf *(included)	Will become part of residence

**III. LOT AREA COVERAGE**

Lot Area:	5,960 sf
Building:	2,017 sf; 34%
Hardscape:	400 sf; 7%
Landscape:	3,543 sf; 59%

**IV. DISCUSSION**

The existing site has a rear yard that is divided by a retaining wall which splits the useable yard area into two (2) separate areas on (2) levels. The proposed project will remove the existing retaining wall, excavate the yard and construct a new retaining wall within the rear yard setback. The project will create a much larger and more useable rear private yard area. Because the four-foot (4') high retaining wall will create a drop off from the adjacent property's grade, a guard rail will be required to be placed on top of the retaining wall. The applicant is proposing to maintain the existing six-foot (6') high wall which will result in a combined fence/wall height of ten-feet (10'). Current Zoning regulations limit the combined height to eight feet (8'). Staff supports this request for the purpose of maintaining a privacy screen between the two (2) neighbors. The excavation on the subject site results in a large usable flat area, at the level of the residence, for the intended outdoor enjoyment purposes.

The applicants have since returned to Staff with a modified proposal that adds 721 square feet of additional floor area to the main floor of the residence and incorporates the existing 324 square foot accessory building as well. Staff's concern is that the addition will reduce the newly proposed open yard area to under 700 square feet and below the minimum required dimension of twenty-feet (20'). The one benefit to this proposed expansion plan is that it will require expansion of the exiting undersized (16' X 18') garage to a conforming two-car garage.

**V. RECOMMENDATION/FINDING**

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer deny the proposed project on the basis that the proposed expansion does not result in an improvement over the existing yard situation. However, Staff would recommend approval of an alternate plan, where the open yard's width was maintained at twenty feet. For this alternate project, Staff would recommend approval, making the findings that the Modifications are necessary to secure an appropriate improvement, and is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, in that the height of the combined retaining wall and fence is necessary to create a useable open space with privacy from the uphill neighbors, and that the resulting open yard is adequate for outdoor living purposes.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan
- B. Applicant's letter dated March 26, 2007

Contact/Case Planner: Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner  
([rmilazzo@SantaBarbaraCA.gov](mailto:rmilazzo@SantaBarbaraCA.gov))  
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Phone: (805)564-5470

**Ronald A. Sorgman Architect**

125 East Victoria Street Suite B Santa Barbara, CA 93101 Tel. (805) No. 965-2962

March 26, 2007

**City of Santa Barbara,  
630 Garden St.  
Santa Barbara, Ca 93101  
Planning Department**

**Project Address:**

Bill and Lisa Henricks  
2220 Las Rosas Lane  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Roxanne,

The existing site has a rear yard that is divided by a retaining wall which splits the useable yard area into two separate areas. This project will remove the existing retaining wall, excavate the yard and construct a new retaining wall within the rear yard setback.. This project will create a much larger and more useable rear private yard. As a part of this project, we will be increasing the existing garage to the standard size of 20' x 20' which will improve parking on this narrow street.

Modification No. 1

We are requesting a modification to allow a 4 four foot tall retaining wall within a rear yard setback. A 6' fence located on top of the wall essentially creates a 10' high structure and provides a privacy screen for this property that can only be viewed from this yard and has virtually no visual impact on adjacent neighbors.

The other part of this project involves an addition to the house which will connect the accessory structure to the main house, relocate the kitchen, add a bedroom and one and a half baths, expand an existing bedroom and bathroom and create a laundry room. This expansion would reduce one dimension of the rear yard to 16'- 8", while the remainder will be 23' wide and the modification as described above will dramatically increase the useable open yard to 1350 sf.

Modification No. 2

We are requesting a modification to allow a reduction to a portion of the 20' width dimension for the open yard and create a larger more useable open space.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthwhile property improvement.

Thank You

  
Ron Sorgman

**EXHIBIT B**