



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: February 18, 2009
AGENDA DATE: February 25, 2009
PROJECT ADDRESS: 1727 Prospect Avenue (MST2008-00583)
TO: Susan Reardon, Senior Planner, Staff Hearing Officer
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Renee Brooke, AICP, Senior Planner *RLB*
 Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner *RM*

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 11,109 square foot project site is currently developed with a single family residence and a detached 2-car garage. The proposed project involves the demolition of the existing garage and lower level storage and replacement with a regulation sized 2-car garage with storage below. The discretionary application required for this project is a Modification to permit the new garage and lower level storage to be located within the required twenty-foot and fifteen-foot front setbacks respectively (SBMC §28.18.060 & 28.87.160).

Date Application Accepted: January 20, 2009 Date Action Required: April 20, 2009

II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer approve the project as submitted.

III. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

A. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:	Eric Swenumson	Property Owner:	Larson Family Trust
Parcel Number:	027-142-004	Lot Area:	11,109
General Plan:	12 Units Per Acre	Zoning:	R-2
Existing Use:	One-Family Residence	Topography:	17% Slope

Adjacent Land Uses:

North – One-Family Residence
 South - One-Family Residence

East - One-Family Residence
 West - One-Family Residence

IV. DISCUSSION

Because the residence on this site is worthy of Structure of Merit status, the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) reviewed the proposed changes to the existing garage. On January 7, 2009 the demolition and reconstruction of the garage was reviewed and forwarded on to the Staff Hearing Officer with the following comments: 1) The design of the structure is compatible with the neighborhood and it would be an enhancement over the present conditions, 2) Study the redistribution of materials in a more traditional manner, leading to a simplification of the use in materials, 3) Pay more attention to the type of window detail, proportion and pattern being used; although subsidiary, it should still be related to the main building.

This project site is currently undergoing a remodel. As a part of that remodel, The 1909 Craftsman residence will be restored, a second detached single family residence that has been demolished, will be replaced, and the original 2-car garage will be demolished and rebuilt. The existing 18' X 18' garage, located within the front and interior setbacks along the Northwest corner of the property, is substandard due to its age and for safety reasons needs to be replaced. The replacement garage will be expanded to a 22' X 20' structure. The wider width was recommended by Transportation Staff to provide for improved maneuvering space due to the narrowness of the street. Like the previous garage, the new garage will maintain the 2'6" front setback but will be relocated out of the required 3' interior setback. The existing 89 square foot unfinished storage area below the garage will be replaced with 139 square feet of secured storage. Staff understands that accessory space is discouraged within front yard locations due to aesthetic reasons. However, due to the slope of the lot, which results in the garage's finished floor being located at street level, the lower level storage room will not be visible from the right-of-way. It is Staff's position that the new garage will replace a substandard structure with a safe, well designed building that will provide regulation sized parking for the property and that the storage room utilizes the garage's understory for storage purposes.

IV. FINDINGS

The Staff Hearing Officer finds that the Modification is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and is necessary to secure an appropriate improvement on the lot. The front setback encroachment allows for the continued use of the general area which has been historically used for parking, but with an improved size and function. The storage room located beneath the garage provides a valuable use to an otherwise wasted understory that will provide a convenient location for the property's storage needs and will not be visible from the street.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter dated February 5, 2009

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

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5-Feb-09

TO: City of Santa Barbara
ATTN: Roxanne Milazzo
630 Garden Street.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

SUBJECT: 31727 Prospect Ave APN: 027-142-004

Attached please find a Site Plan, Floor Plan, Elevations and photographs for the above-mentioned address. As agent for the owners of the property I have prepared a modification request to ask for relief from the required twenty foot front setback on the North property line for a new garage with an understory storage room to replace the existing garage. The project consists of demolishing the existing undersized garage that sits on the Western property line and is approximately 2'-6" back from the north (front) property line. The site is zoned R-2 and is 11,109 square feet in size. The site currently has a 1,474 sf Residence, plans to replace a 953 sf 2nd residence and a 323 sf detached garage.

The City Zoning Ordinance requires a 20 foot front setback for garages in this zone. Given this requirement the site would have been non-conforming as to setback with a 2'-6" setback to the garage on the North and a 0 setback to the garage on the West side. This proposed new garage will encroach into the Northern front setback to a point 2'-6" from the front property line. The lower level storage room proposed below the new garage constitutes accessory in the front yard and requires a Modification pursuant to SBMC 28.87.160.B - Because the storage area is below the garage and not visible to the street, it does not violate the purpose or intent of the Ordinance. We propose to locate the garage 3 feet from the West (side) property line, complying with the current zoning ordinance. Granting this modification request will allow for the owners to enjoy the use of a 2 car garage thereby keeping cars off the street in this very narrow part of Prospect Avenue.

Conclusion

Based on positive feedback from the Transportation Department and the constraint involved with maintaining the 20 foot setback due to the very steep slope at the front of the lot, we are requesting that you approve this modification request. The granting of this modification will not adversely affect the character of the existing neighborhood in any way and will, in fact enhance the neighborhood. If you have any questions you may reach me at 967-5507. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Eric Swenumson

CC: Phil Larson

Exhibit B