



City of Santa Barbara California

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: July 11, 2005
AGENDA DATE: July 14, 2005
PROJECT ADDRESS: 357 Canon Drive (MST2004-00870)

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
Jan Hubbell, AICP, Senior Planner
Trish Allen, Associate Planner

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of approximately 31 cubic yards of grading cut to extend a backyard patio 12 feet into the slope to the south of an existing single family residence. The project includes the following elements: a built in barbeque, fireplace, fountain, and construction of a retaining wall with a concrete v-ditch behind the wall to provide for drainage. The subject property was subdivided in 1981; one of the conditions of approval was to restrict earthwork to the south, beyond the 236' contour line on the sloped portion of the property. The condition was required due to geologic conditions (expansive soils and high erosion potential), protection of an existing oak tree, and the steepness of the slope.

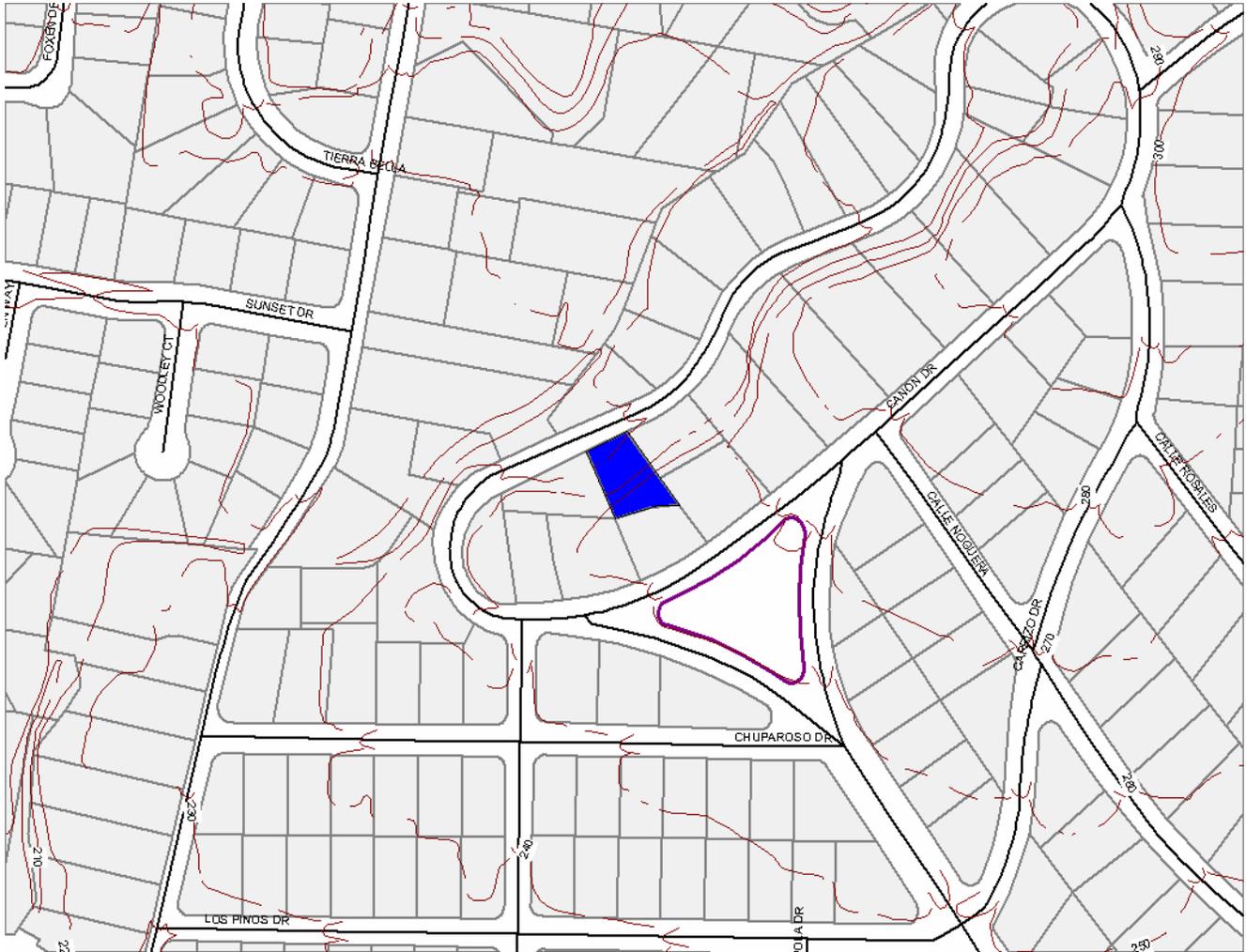
II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. Parcel Map Amendment to allow site work south of the 236' contour line per SBMC §27.09; and;
2. Amendment of the Planning Commission Resolution 041-81 to remove the conditions that prohibit earthwork south of the 236' contour line.

III. RECOMMENDATION

The proposed project conforms to the City's Zoning and Building Ordinances and policies of the General Plan. Site conditions have changed since the project was subdivided in 1981, and the project includes measures to ensure that the patio expansion would not be detrimental to the sloped property or inconsistent with applicable policies. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the project, making the findings outlined in Section VII of this report, and subject to the conditions of approval in Exhibit A.



Vicinity Map for 357 Canon Drive

APPLICATION DEEMED COMPLETE: May 26, 2005
DATE ACTION REQUIRED PER MAP ACT: August 24, 2005

IV. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

SITE INFORMATION

Applicant: Isaac Romero, SEPPS	Property Owners: William Coulter & Dorothy Mathison
Parcel Number: 053-152-011	Lot Area: 10,849 sq. ft.
General Plan: Residential/5 units/acre	Zoning: E-2/SD-1/SD-2, Single-Family Residential and Special Districts Zones
Existing Use: Single-Family Residential	Topography: average slope, 18.2%, property slopes up toward the south
Adjacent Land Uses: North - Single-Family Residential East - Single-Family Residential South - Single-Family Residential West - Single-Family Residential	

PROJECT STATISTICS

	Existing	Proposed
Living Area	2,605 sq. ft.	No change proposed
Garage	473 sq. ft.	No change proposed
Accessory Space	none	none

V. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

Standard	Requirement/ Allowance	Existing	Proposed
Setbacks			
-Front	25 feet	25 feet	No changes proposed
-Interior	8 feet	8 feet	
-Rear	8 feet	8 feet	
Building Height	30 feet	30 feet	No change proposed
Parking	2 covered	2 covered	No change proposed
Lot Area Required for Each Unit w/ Slope Density	15,000 sq. ft.	10,849 sq. ft.	No change proposed
Open Yard	1,250 sq. ft.	8,000 + sq. ft.	No change proposed
Lot Coverage			
-Building	N/A	1,844 sq ft 17%	1,844 sq ft 17%
-Paving/Driveway	N/A	1,152 sq. ft 11%	1,527 sq ft 14%
-Landscaping	N/A	7,836 sq ft 72%	7,461 sq ft 69%

The proposed project would meet the requirements of the E-2, Single-Family Zone.

VI. ISSUES

A. CONDITION AMENDMENT

In 1981, a two lot subdivision was reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission to create the subject parcel and second parcel to the south, also fronting on Canon Drive (see map). A Negative Declaration was prepared to evaluate potential environmental effects that included conditions to limit grading or construction of foundation southerly of the 236 foot contour line. The condition was imposed on the map due to the existing mature Coast Live Oak tree at this location, potential erosive soil conditions, and the slope of the hill (Exhibit D, Planning Commission Staff report, June 18, 1981).

The project applicant provided a letter from a certified Arborist confirming that the oak tree received annual deep root fertilization and spray treatments to maintain health. The Arborist recommended that the tree be removed as the tree posed a risk of failure resulting in injury or property damage following the removal of several medium to large tree limbs by an adjacent property owner (Exhibit E, letter from Bartlett Tree Experts, dated August 25, 2004)

During the project review process, staff indicated support of the parcel map amendment, taking into consideration the loss of the oak tree and submittal of an engineering geologic report that addresses erosion potential of the hill with installation of jute matting and appropriate landscaping. In addition, the project includes drainage improvements, and an engineered retaining wall to ensure that the grading and improvements would be carried out in a safe manner.

B. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan Land Use Element discourages development in the hillside areas of the City where slopes exceed 30% and, as a result, the Zoning Ordinance incorporates the provision of slope density as a protection measure for properties with significant slope. The subject property is not located in the Hillside Design District or in the High Fire Hazard area of the City. The condition that was imposed on the property as a result of the previous subdivision related specifically to the oak tree, erosion conditions, and the building pad for the future residential development. Approval of the condition and map amendment would allow an expansion of the backyard patio, providing additional useable open space for the property owner.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Negative Declaration (ND) adopted by the Environmental Review Committee on May 11, 1981 assessed the environmental impacts of a proposed subdivision that created the subject parcel (Exhibit F, Negative Declaration). An addendum to the ND has been prepared to evaluate the current project proposal to grade approximately 31 cubic yards of soil, extending a patio, southerly of the 236 foot contour line (Exhibit G ND Addendum).

Staff required an engineering geologic report to address erosion potential of the hill, proper drainage improvements, and an engineered retaining wall to ensure that the grading and

improvements would be carried out in a safe manner. The geologist made recommendations for the type of wall to be constructed as well as erosion control measures that have been incorporated into the plans and into the conditions of approval (Exhibit H, Geologic Investigation).

The previously prepared Final Mitigated Negative Declaration and its conclusions are still relevant to the proposed project. No new impacts would occur as a result of the project revisions.

VII. FINDINGS

The Planning Commission finds the following:

A. ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

1. The Planning Commission has considered the Addendum, dated July 5, 2005, for the grading and patio extension proposed at 357 Canon Drive (MST2004-00870), together with the Mitigated Negative Declaration (SB-43-81) for the original project, and public comments received.
2. The Addendum to Negative Declaration for MST2004-00870 has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act requirements and is hereby adopted. The Addendum together with the adopted MND constitutes adequate environmental analysis of the current proposed project at 357 Canon Drive.
3. Mitigation measures identified in the Negative Declaration and Addendum 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 project at 357 Canon Drive will have a significant effect on the environment.
4. The location and custodian of documents associated with the environmental review process and decision for the project at 357 Canon Drive (MST2004-00870) is the City of Santa Barbara Community Development Department, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.

B. THE PARCEL MAP AMENDMENT (SBMC §27.07)

The Parcel Map Amendment is consistent with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Santa Barbara. Based on recommendations from the consulting geologist, the site is physically suitable for the grading and patio expansion and will be carried out in a manner to minimize erosion potential with onsite drainage improvements. The proposed use is consistent with the vision for this neighborhood of the General Plan.

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Exhibits:

- A. Conditions of Approval
- B. Site Plan
- C. Applicant's letter, dated December 20, 2004
- D. Planning Commission Staff Report, dated June 18, 1981
- E. Bartlett Tree Experts letter, dated August 25, 2004
- F. Negative Declaration, SB-43-81
- G. ND Addendum, July 5, 2005
- H. Geologic Investigation, prepared by Adam Simmons, dated April 15, 2005