



# City of Santa Barbara California

## STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** October 4, 2007  
**AGENDA DATE:** October 10, 2007  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 816 West Micheltorena (MST2007-00363)  
**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 5,000 square foot project site is currently developed with a single-family residence, detached one-car garage, and a 100 square foot accessory building. The proposed project involves a 116 square foot first floor addition to the residence. The discretionary application required for this project are Modifications to permit the addition to be located within the required interior and open yard areas (SBMC§28.18.060).

Date Application Accepted: July 16, 2007      Date Action Required: October 16, 2007

### II. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

#### A. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:	Scott Branch	Property Owner:	Laura Shafer
Parcel Number:	043-242-013	Lot Area:	5,000 sf
General Plan:	12 Units Per Acre	Zoning:	R-2
Existing Use:	One-Family Residence	Topography:	Flat

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	1,247 sf	116 sf addition
Garage	225 sf	No Change
Accessory Space	104 sf	No Change

**III. LOT AREA COVERAGE**

Lot Area:	5,061 sf
Building:	1,805 sf; 36%
Hardscape:	1,241 sf; 24%
Landscape:	2,015 sf; 40%

**IV. DISCUSSION**

The project site is developed with a 1,247 square foot, 2-bedroom, 2-bath residence. Due to this family's needs, an additional bedroom is being proposed. The existing residence is non-conforming with an interior yard setback of 3'7" along the westerly lot line. The applicant is requesting a Modification to match the existing setback by building in line with the existing residence. Although minimal setback requests such as this are difficult to support, Staff recognizes that the expansion works well with the existing floor plan, maintains the single story architecture, and like the existing structure, will be abutting a driveway and therefore should not result in impacts to adjacent residential use. Furthermore, the addition has been designed without any openings for the portion that is proposed within the setback to again lessen or eliminate any impacts to the neighbor. The proposed addition will also require a Modification for reduction of both dimension and overall area of the open yard area. Staff's position is that the remaining 1,126 square foot area, which is improved with a deck and lawn area, still provides adequate space for outdoor enjoyment.

**V. RECOMMENDATION/FINDING**

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer approve the project, making the findings that the Modification is necessary to secure an appropriate improvement, provides uniformity of improvement, and that the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance is being met in that an adequate open yard area is still being maintained.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan
- B. Applicant's letter dated July 15, 2007

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



July 15, 2007

Staff Hearing Officer  
City of Santa Barbara  
630 Garden St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Modification request for 816 West Micheltorena St.; APN: 043-242-013; Zone R-2

Dear Staff Hearing Officer,

*Existing situation & proposed project:*

There is an existing single story, 1,247 square foot, 2-bedroom, 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  bath residence on a 5,061 square foot lot in the 800 block of West Micheltorena Street in downtown Santa Barbara. Also on the lot is an existing 225 square foot detached, single-car garage and a 104 square foot garden storage shed. There are currently no zoning violations on the property and everything is permitted. The existing residence is legal, non-conforming in that its continuous, west wall encroaches 2'-5" into the required 6' interior yard setback. The existing garage and garden shed also are legal, non-conforming with regard to their respective interior yard setbacks, but we're not proposing any work to those structures.

The existing closet on the northwest corner of the existing residence is over-sized and its layout is awkward with many corners. The proposal is to add 116 square feet to the rear of that closet area so that it can be 'squared off' and turned into a 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom.

*Modification Request #1:*

The first modification requested is to allow the bedroom addition to encroach 2'-5" into the required six-foot interior yard setback along the west side of the property. The encroachment would allow the new bedroom to keep in line with the existing house thereby simplifying the job structurally, and more significantly, allowing uniformity of the improvement so that the end result won't look like it was an addition, or 'afterthought'. The resulting encroachment would total 16 square feet with no windows along that part of the addition.

*Modification Request #2:*

The second modification request is to allow the open yard requirement of 1,250 square feet to be reduced to 1,126 square feet. The existing open yard space of 1,264 currently exceeds the required amount, but the addition would reduce the requirement by 124 square feet. If approved, the distance between the existing garden shed and the proposed bedroom addition would be reduced to 16'-3  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Although legal per SBMC 28.18.070 for this zone, it would be

slightly less than the required 20' minimum dimension for open yard space. However, the dimension is still adequate for use intended by the open yard requirement.

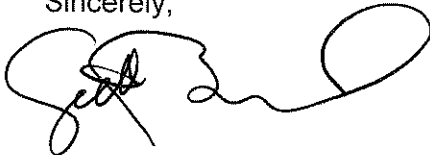
*Benefits of the project:*

This property has just been purchased by a single mother with 3 children. At 45, she's just been able to purchase her first home. To accomplish such a feat in Santa Barbara is no small task. She was not able to afford a 3-bedroom home, and so they will try to get by with two. Though the house is small, this modest addition would allow them a third bedroom without impacting the neighborhood.

The modifications requested would allow this project to become reality. The structural implications would be simplified, and the design would be correct for the proportion of the house as a whole with regard to size, bulk & scale and the lot upon which it resides. It also eliminates the need to consider a 2<sup>nd</sup> story which is always more expensive and intrusive than a single story solution. The house adjacent to the west side of the property is the one that would be most impacted by this modification. However, it is situated such that their driveway is next to the proposed addition, thereby negating any impact with regard to privacy.

I believe that modifications were intended for just this type of scenario. This family was able to achieve what most families here can only dream of...owning their own home. But they still need help. I'm providing my services pro bono and others are lined up as well if this moves forward. Please consider granting these modification requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Branch", written in a cursive style.

Scott Branch, AIA