



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: April 15, 2009
AGENDA DATE: April 22, 2009
PROJECT ADDRESS: 365 Loma Media Road (MST2008-00567)
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 13,050 square foot project site is a through-lot with frontage on Loma Media to the north and south. Current development on site consists of a single-family residence, attached garage, and a series of "as-built" retaining walls leading from the rear of the residence down to Loma Media Road. The proposed project is a request to legalize the walls in their existing location and height. The discretionary application required for this project is a Modification to permit the cumulative height of the walls to exceed a height of 3 ½' within 10' of the front lot line (SBMC §28.87.170).

Date Application Accepted: March 23, 2009

Date Action Required: June 23, 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:	Joe Woodruff	Property Owner:	Winand & Erika Jeschke
Parcel Number:	019-261-005	Lot Area:	13,415 sf
General Plan:	3 Units Per Acre	Zoning:	E-1
Existing Use:	One-Family Residence	Topography:	36% Slope

Adjacent Land Uses:

North – Loma Media Road
South – Loma Media Road

East - One-Family Residence
West – One Family Residence

IV. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

The Zoning Ordinance restricts wall heights within the first 10' of a front lot line to a maximum height of 3 ½'. After the first 10', a wall may be constructed up to a maximum height of 8'. Once out of the setback, there is no height limitation. When multiple walls are constructed behind one another, a horizontal separation of at least 5' is required. When the 5' separation is not provided, the cumulative height is measured from the lowest point of one wall to the highest point of the other. The series of "as-built" walls on the subject site have been constructed to exceed the 3 ½' maximum within the first 10' of the site. In order to grant a Modification approval, findings must be made that the Modification is necessary to secure an appropriate improvement and is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Ordinance.

V. DISCUSSION

This project is subject to review and approval by the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) due to the property's location within the Hillside Design District and overall slope in excess of 20%. On January 12, 2009 the "as-built" walls were reviewed by the SFDB and received the following comments: Final Approval as noted with the finding that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance criteria have been met as stated in Subsection 22.69.050 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code, with the following conditions: 1) show Convolvulus sabatius (aka Ground Morning Glory) for ground cover; 2) option "B" was revised to place trees in middle row.

The existing situation involves a series of seven terraced retaining walls leading from the street up to the back of the residence from the secondary front yard. The first wall, situated along the front lot line, was constructed at a height of 4'. This height exceeds the maximum allowable height of 3 ½'. Four and one-half feet behind the first wall, a second wall was constructed at a height of 40". Because the required 5' separation was not provided, the individual wall heights are combined. The third wall back was also separated by less than 5', which results in a cumulative wall height of 10 ½' for the three walls located within the first 10' of the front lot line. Although it is Staff's practice to discourage use of the Modification process for "as-built" construction, it is Staff's position that the retaining walls provide a well designed safety solution for the steeply sloped lot.

VI. FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS

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 proposed retaining system, with the added landscaping as required by the SFDB, will be an esthetic improvement for this secondary frontage and the neighborhood, and will provide stabilization for the site.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter dated February 27, 2009

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Joe R. Woodruff
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805-965-6867

February 27, 2009

City of Santa Barbara
Community Development Department
Roxanne Milazzo
805-564-5470

Project # 100208
Mr. & Mrs. Winand Jeschke
365 Loma Media Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805-967-8958

Letter of intent of Modification:

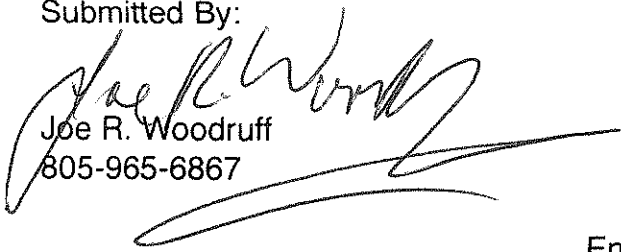
A modification of the distance of the walls (wall to wall) for the first 10 feet at above site is 4 feet rather than 5 feet per city of Santa Barbara requirements.

The client for the above site has proposed a seven-wall system for the existing site. The requirements by the City of the distance of the walls are a minimum of 5 feet separation for the first walls or 10 feet. The purpose walls are 4 feet separation for the first 10 feet. This was done to achieve the stability of the hillside and cost factor of the walls. By staying within the City guidelines the hillside would have to be dug back 18 feet for each wall system for the first 4 walls. This would have a huge and extensive hillside stability and cost impact. The engineer and manufacture of the wall system determined this.

The height of the first wall or existing wall is 48 inches. The next two walls are 3.4 each foot high. (Sheet S101).

The request of a modification would allow the existing hillside to have fewer disturbances, maintain the integrity of the hillside and would be a huge saving to the project.

Submitted By:


Joe R. Woodruff
805-965-6867

End

EXHIBIT B