



# City of Santa Barbara California

## STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** April 29, 2009  
**AGENDA DATE:** May 6, 2009  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 1964 Las Canoas Road (MST2009-00073)  
**TO:** Susan Reardon, Senior Planner, Staff Hearing Officer  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
 Renee Brooke, AICP, Senior Planner *RB*  
 Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner *RM*

### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 35+ acre site was previously developed with St. Mary's Seminary which was destroyed in the Tea Fire. This application is a request to construct a 186 square foot water pump system enclosure. The discretionary application required for this project is a Modification to permit the enclosure to be located within the required 70 foot front setback (SBMC §28.15.085 & 28.15.060).

Date Application Accepted: April 7, 2009

Date Action Required: July 7, 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:	Tom Moore	Property Owner:	St Mary's Seminary
Parcel Number:	021-010-028	Lot Area:	35+ acres
General Plan:	Major Public/Institutional	Zoning:	A-1
Existing Use:	Seminary Property	Topography:	33%

#### Adjacent Land Uses:

North - Residential	East - Residential
South - Residential	West - Residential

**IV. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY**

The proposed project is a request to construct a new 186 square foot enclosure at St. Mary's Seminary, a hilltop complex of 51,000 square feet of classrooms, dormitories, offices, and auxiliary buildings. Because the seminary is considered a non-residential use in a residential zone, double setbacks are required pursuant to SBMC §28.15.085. Therefore, instead of the 35' front setback required for A-1 properties, the required front setback is doubled to 70'.

**V. DISCUSSION**

This project was reviewed by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) on March 2, 2009 and continued indefinitely to the Staff Hearing Officer. Once the Modification is approved the project will return to the Consent Calendar for final approval.

Water is supplied to the project site by a pump station which was disabled during the recent Tea Fire due to its wood enclosure. The proposed project is a request to build a larger, fully enclosed masonry pump house in the same location. The new structure will provide fire protected housing for the pumps, control system, and a future emergency generator. Instead of providing the required 70' front setback, the applicant is requesting to reuse the previous pad for the new installation, which is located approximately 12' off the front lot line. It is Staff's position the Modification will allow the continued use the existing valves associated with the existing water supply system in an improved visual enclosure that will be fire safe, and secure from vandalism. Both the existing masonry wall and the anticipated re-growth of the previous vegetation will further screen the new structure from public view.

**VI. 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 proposed Modification will allow for the construction of a new, fire resistant enclosure of the water supply system for the Seminary users in its previous location.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter dated March 24, 2009
- C. ABR Minutes

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24 March 2009

St. Mary's Seminary  
Los Canoas Road  
Santa Barbara, CA

RE: MODIFICATION REQUEST FOR PUMP HOUSE IN FRONT YARD SETBACK

To whom it may concern,

St Mary's Seminary and Retreat occupies the site. It is a hilltop complex of 51,000 +/- square feet of classrooms, dormitories, offices, and chapel ((6) one and two story buildings, with additional auxiliary buildings). Water is supplied to the site by a pump station at the driveway entrance to Los Canoas Road where City water is tapped and pumped to a large cistern near the top of the hill. This cistern, in turn, supplies all the water needs of the property, including fire hydrants. In the Tea Fire of 2008, the lower pump station, which consisted of a fenced area, was disabled, and water supply to the cistern was temporarily lost.

We are asking for a modification for a fully enclosed pump house at the same location of the present pump station just off Los Canoas Road and within the required front yard setback of ~~35'~~ 70'. The new structure would be located on an existing pad immediately adjacent to the existing water supply and valves, with its front edge 12' +/- from the street easement. This structure would be fire resistant and would encapsulate and protect the pumps, the control system, and a future emergency generator.

Protection of the water supply system to the complex is the primary justification for the proposed structure. These pumps are

needed to continuously keep the upper cistern filled. When disabled, as in the recent Tea Fire, fire fighting efforts to protect the complex above were endangered. Additional benefits, however, include getting the control system (which include large circuits to run the pumps) secure from vandalism or accident. Liability and safety concerns require a better installation than existed before. Having the equipment consolidated and enclosed within a structure will allow better access for staff, and will allow for a lot of the present exposed piping and equipment to be removed and the site cleaned-up.

The new 186 square foot structure will back up to an existing cement block retaining wall (4'-6'in height) and will present a low profile against the hillside. The material will be unit masonry to match the existing wall at Los Canoas and be maintenance free. The roof will be metal, a flat neutral grey. The structure is designed to be non-combustible.

It is a benefit to the area to have water supplies secured in the event of a future fire. And from a visual standpoint, the new structure, small and tucked into the hillside, will replace a lot the unsightly equipment now exposed to view. For these reason, we hope you will approve this modification request. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Thomas Moore AIA

## 1964 LAS CANOAS ROAD – ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW MINUTES

**March 2, 2009**

A letter in opposition from Paula Westbury was acknowledged.

Continued indefinitely to the Staff Hearing Officer and to return to the Consent Calendar with conditions:

- 1) There are no negative aesthetics issues.
- 2) The metal roof is acceptable.
- 3) Extend the gable for balance.
- 4) Provide landscape plan with screening of structure from the road.