



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: August 19, 2009
AGENDA DATE: August 26, 2009
PROJECT ADDRESS: 2628 Borton Drive (MST2009-00359)
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 6,300 square foot project site is currently developed with a single family residence and attached garage. The proposed project involves relocating the garage door to the side which faces the street. The discretionary application required for this project is a Modification to permit alterations to a structure located within the required 20' front setback (SBMC §28.15.060).

Date Application Accepted: August 3, 2009

Date Action Required: November 3, 2009

II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer approve the project, subject to a condition.

III. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

A. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:	Kurt Magness	Property Owner:	Same
Parcel Number:	041-260-022	Lot Area:	6,300 sf
General Plan:	5 Units Per Acre	Zoning:	E-3/SD-3
Existing Use:	One-Family residence	Topography:	Flat

Adjacent Land Uses:

North – One-Family Residence
 South – Borton Drive

East - One-Family Residence
 West – Douglas Family Preserve

B. PROJECT STATISTICS

	Existing	Proposed
Living Area	1,072 sf	1,072 sf
Garage	431 sf	431 sf

C. PROPOSED LOT AREA COVERAGE

Building: 1,585 sf 25% Hardscape: 2,477 sf 39% Landscape: 4,062 sf 36%

IV. DISCUSSION

This project site is currently developed with a single family residence and attached garage, built in 1960. The garage, which is located 16' back from the front lot line, is non-conforming to the current E-3 setback of 20'. The applicant is requesting to relocate the garage door, which is currently accessed on the side, to the front of the building, facing the street. The current configuration requires an awkward maneuver off a driveway easement in order to access the garage, and a privacy hedge along the easement provides a safety issue when backing out. A Modification is required to permit alterations to a non-conforming building. Staff believes the change allowed with the requested Modification will allow less paving, safer exiting, and more outdoor living space for the property.

V. 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. Relocating the garage door allows existing driveway area to be used for outdoor enjoyment and reduces the safety issues associated with the current configuration.

Said approval is subject to the condition that the portion of hedge located along the driveway within 20' of the front lot line be reduced and maintained at a maximum height of 3 ½' as required by the Ordinance, and that outstanding land use issues be resolved prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter dated August 3, 2009

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

KURT MAGNESS
ARCHITECT

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August 3, 2009

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

Re: Modification Request for 2628 Borton Drive, Santa Barbara, Ca
APN: 041-260-022; Land Use Zone E-3/SD-3

Dear Staff Hearing Officer:

There is an existing one story house with an attached garage located at 2628 Borton drive, Santa Barbara, California. The existing automobile access to the garage is from the side of the property off a private driveway to the east that also serves 2 houses to the rear of the subject property to the north. The property is located at the dead end of Borton Drive next to the Douglas Family Preserve (DFP). Automobile traffic comes from only one direction and is limited in volume to one neighbor across the street. Most traffic coming down Borton realize that they are at the end of the street and initiate their turnaround maneuver prior to reaching the property. The existing sidewalk in front of the property goes nowhere and dead ends into a bank with a 3-4 foot grade change and a fence. The only pedestrian traffic at this end of Borton Drive is going to the Douglas Family Preserve (DFP). The entrance to the DFP is located 15 feet to the south of the property towards the centerline of Borton Drive (see site plan). Pedestrian traffic going to the DFP entrance transitions away from the sidewalk and into the street prior to reaching the property.

I am requesting a modification of the 20 foot setback requirement to allow a 16'-0" setback from the sidewalk to the garage door face and to alter the existing non-conforming garage by installing the automobile garage door to the street side of the existing garage. This encroachment into the front yard setback and new garage door location will allow automobile access into and out of the garage directly to and from Borton Drive on the south side of the property.

Exhibit B

This is a necessary improvement to the property and meets the intent of the ordinance because it eliminates the existing dangerous situation when automobiles access the garage, removes a poorly designed non-complying vehicle access arrangement, secures more open yard space for the property, is a typical pattern of development to the neighborhood, will reduce the paving area of the driveway and improves the streetscape by allowing more of the property to be screened with landscaping.

The dangerous situation:

The access to the garage is now down a narrow private drive that accesses two additional homes to the rear of my property (see site plan). Those residences have to pass by my driveway, which enters from the side. Each of my neighbors have multiple vehicles that come down the driveway, very quickly, several times during the day and night. The narrowness of drive, lack of visibility of the oncoming traffic, the speed of oncoming traffic and the necessity of multiple maneuvers to accomplish exiting and entry into and out of my garage compromises my safety, my children's safety, and my neighbors safety in the present configuration. My children playing in the front area of my house are prone to be struck by my neighbor's car traveling along the driveway to their houses. There have been some close calls. My neighbors would prefer to not have to worry about hitting my children or me in my car as they exit or enter their driveway onto Borton Drive. They have told me that they would support this request.

The existing non-complying vehicle access arrangement:

The existing garage access requires two 90-degree turns from Borton Drive in quick succession into a narrow private driveway. The narrow width of the driveway requires multiple forward and reverse turning maneuvers to achieve access in and out of the garage. This is difficult at best with one vehicle let alone with 2 vehicles. The proposed direct access from Borton Drive would provide an easy and simple single turn into the garage. Exiting the garage would be in a typical fashion by backing directly out onto Borton and initiating one turn to go down the street. I have submitted this proposal to the Transportation Department and they have told me that they will support it.

Secures more open yard space:

If garage access is allowed directly from Borton Drive then the existing driveway location can be abandoned and turned into private open space. This would help the property comply more closely with the city's planning

department requirement of 1,250 sq ft of open space. The property is very small and a driveway that accesses the two homes to the rear of my property uses up a quarter of it on the easterly side. Private open space is very limited and any additional area would be highly desirable.

Typical pattern of development to the neighborhood:

20 existing homes along Borton Drive have the very same driveway configuration that we are requesting (see attached diagram). They all have a 15-16 ft setback to the sidewalk with their garage doors facing the street. This is how the subdivision was originally laid out when the homes were built in the 60's. Autos parked in front of garage door typically do not impede pedestrian travel along the sidewalk. The existing sidewalk is 5 feet wide with a 4 1/2 foot wide by 14 - 20 feet long apron located at each driveway. This configuration provides for 9 1/2 feet of concrete paving width at each driveway. In normal use, autos do not impede pedestrian travel along the sidewalk.

Paving area:

The paving area now is 336 square feet and the proposed area will be 225 square feet. The proposed configuration allows more water to be absorbed into the soil, recharging the ground water and reducing the demand on the existing city storm water system. Additionally, it is anticipated that the driveway paving material will be of a type that is permeable. Because the topography is so flat, rainwater collects in front of the driveway that accesses the properties to the rear. The proposed configuration would reduce the volume of water that collects and provide more permeable surface area to absorb excess rainwater.

Improves the streetscape:

The addition of a hedge in the front yard will improve the streetscape by softening the visual impact of the structure. The hedge material is in line with the garage, and as such it will not visually block the drivers' view of the sidewalk when automobiles are backing out of the garage. Because the property is located at the end of the street traffic is minimal.

In conclusion, I hope the reasons that I have listed above are compelling enough for you support my request. If you have any further questions please feel free to call or contact me.

Sincerely,



Kurt Magness, Architect

