



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: March 14, 2012
AGENDA DATE: March 21, 2012
PROJECT ADDRESS: 1711 & 1713 Loma (MST2011-00460)
TO: Bettie Weiss, City Planner, Staff Hearing Officer
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Renee Brooke, AICP, Senior Planner *RUB*
 Daniel Gullett, Associate Planner *DPG*

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes exterior alterations to the existing 1,427 square foot two-story duplex including: window replacement, removal and replacement of front fences, new metal railings, new trellises over the front windows, new privacy screen, steps, and trellis at the front of the building, expanded second story deck on the rear of the building, and expansion of driveway area at the rear of the property.

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

1. Modifications to allow a new screen and wall/guard rail to exceed 3.5 feet in height within ten feet of the front lot line and within ten feet of the driveway for a distance of 20 feet back from the front lot line (SBMC §28.87.170 & 28.92.110);
2. A Modification to allow alterations to the existing building, handrails, and new steps within the required 20-foot front setback along Loma Street (SBMC §28.18.060 & 28.92.110);
3. A Modification to allow new steps and handrail within the required six-foot interior setback (SBMC §28.18.060 & 28.92.110); and
4. A Modification of the required open yard area to provide additional area for vehicle maneuvering (SBMC §28.18.060 & 28.92.110).

Date Application Accepted: March 7, 2012

Date Action Required: June 5, 2012

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:	Deborah Sorensen	Property Owner:	William Haack
Parcel Number:	027-153-008	Lot Area:	5,142 sq. ft.
General Plan:	Medium Density Residential	Zoning:	R-2
Existing Use:	Duplex	Topography:	16% avg. slope

Adjacent Land Uses:

North – Single-family Residence (1-story)	East - Multi-family Residential (3-story)
South – Single-family Residence (1-story)	West - Duplex (2-story)

B. PROPOSED LOT AREA COVERAGE

Building: 1,497 sq. ft. 29% Hardscape: 2,220 sq. ft. 43% Landscape: 1,495 sq. ft. 28%

IV. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

Standard	Requirement/Allowance	Existing	Proposed
Setbacks			
- Front	20 ft.	6 ft.	No change
- Interior	6 ft.	0.5 ft.	No change
Building Height	30 ft.	23.5 ft.	No change
Parking	4 spaces	3 covered spaces	No change
Open Yard	1,250 sq. ft.	1,150 sq. ft.	1,050 sq. ft.

V. DISCUSSION

This project was reviewed by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) on January 23, 2011 (hearing minutes attached as Exhibit C). At that hearing, ABR stated that the modifications for railing height and the reduction in open yard pose no negative aesthetic impacts and provided feedback to improve the design. The applicant redesigned the front privacy screen in response to ABR's comments. ABR continued the project for the Staff Hearing Officer's consideration of the Modifications.

The proposed project involves reconfiguration of the driveway, site work, new stairs, handrails, and aesthetic changes to an existing modestly-sized 1,427 sq. ft. duplex. No new floor area is proposed. Modifications are required to allow a new screen and wall/guard rail to exceed 3.5 feet in height within ten feet of the front lot line and within ten feet of the driveway for a distance of 20 feet back from the front lot line; to allow alterations to the existing building, handrails, and new steps within the required 20-foot front setback along Loma Street; to allow new steps and handrail within the required six-foot interior setback; and to allow a reduction of the required open yard area to provide additional area for vehicle maneuvering.

The Open Yard Modification is required to reduce the non-conforming open yard area an additional 100 sq. ft. with the removal of a low curb and driveway expansion. The purpose of the wider driveway is to provide additional area for vehicular maneuvering into the existing garages. While the new driveway would not provide adequate area to maneuver into and out of existing garages in one motion due to the narrowness of the lot and orientation of the garages, the proposed driveway configuration would increase the garage back-up distance, improving automobile maneuvering over the existing situation. Currently, the main usable open yard area is located below a short stone retaining wall 18 feet from the rear property line and would not be reduced by the proposal. Staff supports this Modification as a reasonable tradeoff between the non-standard driveway and non-standard open yard area. On-street parking on Loma Street is currently heavily impacted by the neighborhood and the modest expansion of the driveway would increase the likelihood of the garages being used for parking. Additionally, the project would result in the same area of visual open space at the rear of the property with the driveway expansion, and the proposed changes to the balcony would provide additional outdoor space for the units.

The existing building is located six feet from the front property line where the R-2 Zone setback requires 20 feet. With the proposal, the existing six foot tall privacy fences between the building and Loma Street would be removed. Modifications to provide an overheight screen and trellis/arbor structure between the two building wings and trellises over the two front windows would provide modest aesthetic improvements and privacy for the residents with a minor additional front setback encroachment of the front trellises toward the street.

Handrails and guardrails are proposed next to existing raised walkways along the driveway and in the interior and front setbacks to provide safety consistent with the minimum height requirements of the Building Code. Staff believes these proposed modifications for Building Code compliance are appropriate.

New stairs are proposed exceeding 10 inches in height above existing grade within the front and interior setbacks. One set of stairs replaces a ramp that accesses the entry for 1711 Loma St. and the other set of stairs and new landing provide access from 1713 Loma St. to the side yard, garage and open yard area. Staff also believes these changes are appropriate and minor in nature.

VI. FINDINGS AND CONDITION

The Staff Hearing Officer finds that the Modifications are consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and are necessary to secure an appropriate improvement on the lot. The proposed handrails and guardrails are appropriate because they are required for safety by the Building Code. The project is consistent with the R-2 Zone's intent to provide a suitable environment for family life and preserve the residential environment. The proposed screen and trellises are appropriate because they provide privacy and aesthetically enhance the building with minor additional front setback encroachments. The proposed stairs are appropriate because they provide better pedestrian access to and from the units. The expanded driveway is appropriate because the small increase in driveway area provides additional vehicular maneuvering area, increasing the likelihood of the garages being used for parking while retaining the existing usable open yard and the visual open space above the driveway and rear yard area.

The approval is subject to the condition that the hedges and walls shall be reduced in height to meet the requirements of SBMC Section 28.87.170.

Exhibits:

- A. Project Plans (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter, dated March 7, 2012
- C. ABR Minutes of January 23, 2012

Contact/Case Planner: Daniel Gullett, Associate Planner
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Debra Sorensen, Designer/Renovator
850 Highlands Dr, #7
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

March 7, 2012

Staff Hearing Officer
City of Santa Barbara
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

RE: Modification Request for 1711/1713 Loma St, Santa Barbara, CA 93103
APN: 027-153-008
Land Use Zone: R-2

Modification #1

The existing duplex (1,427 sq ft) with 3 side-by-side attached ground level garages (696 sq ft) has an existing non-conforming yard of 1,150 sq ft, 100 sq ft less than the current 1,250 sq ft requirement. The 50 x 100 sq ft lot has an existing stone retaining wall located 18 ft from the back (south) property line. An existing curb located 24 ft from the back (south) property line (5 feet north of the stone wall) has 45 degree angles on both the east and west side of the property. The proposal is to keep the existing stone wall, remove the curb with 45 degree angles, and add a new block retaining wall twenty one feet north of the back property line (3 feet north of the existing stone retaining wall). The current curb location and configuration with 45 degree angles prevents access to the garages. The new total open yard will be 1,050 sq ft.

The modification being requested is to allow improved maneuvering of vehicles down the driveway which will provide owner and tenant access to attached garages. The proposed open yard will be 1,050 sq ft vs. the 1,250 sq ft requirement. The proposed distance between the three 8.5 foot garage openings and the new retaining wall is 28 feet, which is SB Transportation Dept's minimum vehicle maneuvering requirement; existing is 26 ft. The proposed change will allow two to three cars access to the garages and therefore improve the extremely impacted parking situation on Loma St.

The major benefit of removing the curb with 45 degree angles and locating a new retaining wall twenty eight feet from garages is to allow improved vehicle maneuvering. This will provide proper access to existing garages for owner and tenant vehicles thereby removing cars from Loma Street's highly impacted roadside.

Architectural Board of Review Minutes

January 23, 2012

1711 & 1713 LOMA STREET

Assessor's Parcel Number: 027-153-008
Application Number: MST2011-00460
Owner: William C. Haack
Designer: Debra Sorensen
Engineer: Kevin Vandervort

(Proposal for alterations to the existing two-story duplex including window replacement, minor roof alterations, change siding to stucco, remove front fences, new metal railings, new privacy screen at the front of the building, replace east side fence, expansion of driveway at rear and repaving with pavers, new retaining wall at rear, and expand second-story decks at rear. Staff Hearing Officer review is requested for zoning modifications for alterations to the building within the front setback, the new railing to exceed 3.5 feet within ten feet of the front lot line and along the garage, and for a reduction of required open yard area.)

(Comments only; project requires environmental assessment and Staff Hearing Officer review of modifications.)

Present: Debra Sorensen, Designer.

Public comment was opened at 4:33 p.m. As no one wished to speak, public comment was closed.

Chair Sherry requested staff to confirm whether the grasscrete is considered open yard space.

Motion: Continued to the Staff Hearing Officer and return to the Full Board with the following comments:

- 1) Study preserving the Dutch gables at the front.
- 2) Verify the required window proportions before returning.
- 3) The modification for a railing height greater than 42" is technical in nature and poses no negative aesthetic impacts.
- 4) The modification for an open yard reduction poses no negative aesthetic impacts and enhances the usability of the existing garage parking spaces.
- 5) Study the amount of plaster being proposed; applicant is encouraged to retain some horizontal siding or other siding options.
- 6) Some board members would prefer that the proposed cantilevered deck be reduced in size.
- 7) Verify the egress of the front bedroom windows.
- 8) Remove or redesign the front yard privacy screen.
- 9) Return with a landscape plan and clarification of all proposed hardscape and fencing.

Action: Zink/Gradin, 7/0/0. Motion carried.