



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: September 26, 2012
AGENDA DATE: October 3, 2012
PROJECT ADDRESS: 454 Las Alturas Rd (MST2012-00133)
TO: Susan Reardon, Senior Planner, Staff Hearing Officer
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Renee Brooke, AICP, Senior Planner *RLB*
 Suzanne Riegle, Assistant Planner *SR*

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 8,722 square-foot site is currently developed with a 1,528 square foot two-story single-family residence with an attached two-car garage. The proposed project involves a 689 square foot, two-story addition to the rear of the existing residence.

The discretionary application required for this project is a Modification to the open yard location and configuration requirements. (SBMC § 28.15.060 and SBMC § 28.92.110)

Date Application Accepted: 8/22/12

Date Action Required: 11/20/12

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:	Jason Grant, Architect	Property Owner:	Fred Wolf
Parcel Number:	019-282-012	Lot Area:	8,722 square feet
General Plan:	Low Density Residential	Zoning:	E-1
Existing Use:	Residential	Topography:	35% slope

Adjacent Land Uses:

North - Residential (two-story)
 South - Residential (two-story)

East - Residential (two-story)
 West - Residential (two-story)

B. PROJECT STATISTICS

	Existing	Proposed
Living Area	1,528 sq. ft.	+ 840 sq. ft.= 2,368 sq. ft.
Garage	420 sq. ft.	No change

C. FLOOR-AREA RATIO (FAR)

Max. Allowed FAR: 0.387 Proposed FAR: 0.30 = 79% of Max. Allowed FAR

IV. DISCUSSION

The proposed project involves a modification of the location and configuration requirements for the required open yard. The City requires 1,250 square feet of open yard area, which must be located in one contiguous area, must have a minimum dimension of twenty feet in each direction, and may not be located within a front yard.

The existing residence was constructed in 1978 and is legally non-conforming to the current open yard location and configuration requirements.

The original archive plans show the residence was located nine feet from the eastern interior property line, fifteen feet from the northern (rear) property line, and twenty-two feet from the western interior property line. The original plans did not delineate the location of the required open yard area. The ordinance requirements in place at the time of construction of the existing residence stated that "There shall be at least one open yard area which contains a minimum of 1,250 square feet of the lot area." No limits on location or configuration were required. The original development did satisfy the 1,250 square foot requirement.

Due to the steeply sloped lot, the required thirty-foot front setback requirement, and the parking and turn around requirements, the house was set back on the lot leaving less than a twenty foot width to the rear yard. A recent survey was prepared and determined that the house was built ten feet from the eastern interior property line, fifteen and one-half feet (15' 6") from the northern (rear) property line and 19-½ feet from the western interior property line. This means that the project site can not comply with the requirement to have twenty foot minimum dimensions in each direction for the open yard area.

Additionally, in 2008, the City's ordinance definition of front yard was revised and as a result, a portion of useable area that previously qualified as open yard no longer qualifies as such.

The applicant is proposing to provide the required open yard in either 1) the area labeled on the plans as "Potential Area #1," which is partially located in the front yard, or 2) the area labeled on the plans as "Potential Area #2," and provide less than the required 1,250 square feet.

Currently, the property owners use the 700 square foot area labeled on the plans as "Potential Area #1" and the approximately 500 square foot patio area to the east and rear of the residence (area of proposed addition) as their open yard. This open yard area has been in use since the patio was constructed in 1978 and provides the most useable outdoor area for the residents. Due to the topography of the site, the area to the rear of the residence is steeply sloped and, while it provides visual open space, it is not a useable outdoor area.

The location of the proposed addition was determined by the constraints of the existing topography, minimizing the grading, and observing the required setbacks. A similar addition was reviewed and approved in 1989 but was not completed. The current project was reviewed by the Single Family Design Board on July 16, 2012, and the Board appreciated the survey information that was submitted at the meeting and stated that the requested modification to the location and configuration of the open yard is aesthetically appropriate and did not pose consistency issues with the Single Family Residential Design Guidelines.

The 837 square foot area labeled on the plans as "Potential Area #2" is heavily vegetated, steeply sloped, and difficult to access. Therefore staff does not find that use of this area as the site's open yard area is adequate to meet the intent of the ordinance.

Based on the approved development, the large front setback, the steeply sloped lot and the usability of the open yard; staff believes that Potential Area #1 better meets the purpose and intent of the ordinance for providing appropriate open yard area. However, staff has also added a condition that the required open yard shall include Potential Area #1 and be expanded to include areas with a dimension of no less than ten feet in width to the rear property line for a total of 1,250 square feet.

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. The proposed open yard is appropriate because it will provide a useable open yard at the side of the residence as well as additional visual open space.

Said approval is subject to a condition that the required open yard shall be located in the area label as Potential Area #1 on the plan and expanded to include contiguous areas to the north with a dimension of no less than ten feet in width to the rear property line for a total of 1,250 square feet.

EXHIBITS:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter, dated August 8, 2012
- C. SFDB Minutes

Contact/Case Planner: Suzanne Riegle, Assistant Planner
(SRiegle@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Phone: (805) 564-5470 x 2687

J. GRANT DESIGN STUDIO

DESIGN LAND PLANNING RENDERING

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Santa Barbara, Ca 93105

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Date 8-08-12

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

Re: Modification Request for 454 Las Alturas Road; 019-282-012; Zone E-1

Dear Staff Hearing Officer:

There is an existing two story house (1,528 s.f.), with a attached two-car garage (420 s.f.). The lot size is 8,722 s.f. and the existing buildings meet all required setbacks and have building permits according to City building files. The proposal is to build a two story addition, a master suite and bath on the lower floor (394 s.f.) with art studio and powder room on second floor (295 s.f.). This proposed addition sits behind existing house and is located near the Northeast portion on the property.

The modification being requested is to allow a reduction in required open yard area. The existing house location does not allow the site to meet required dimensions of 20' in any direction. The lot has ample open yard space, but this open space does not qualify due to the fact it is mostly in existing front yard area. Furthermore the area of proposed addition does not qualify as open yard area therefore there is no reduction in existing open yard area.

The proposed addition meets all required setbacks and the architecture received favorable comments from the Single Family Design Board. This addition has no adverse impacts on privacy and will provide better use of the residence by the property owners.

Sincerely,
Jason Grant

J. Grant Design Studio, 3040 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

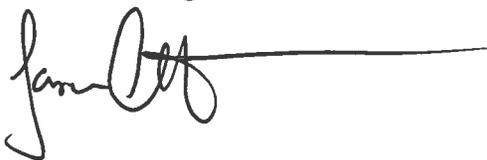


EXHIBIT B



DESIGN REVIEW ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

454 LAS ALTURAS RD (MST2012-00133)

ADDITION

The proposal has been revised to result in a 151 square foot reduction to the original proposed additions. Proposal for a 394 square foot one-story and 295 square foot two-story addition to an existing 1,528 square foot two-story, single-family residence and 420 square foot attached two-car garage. The proposed total of 2,637 square feet, located on an 8,722 square foot lot in the Hillside Design District, is 79% of the maximum required floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR). The project includes Staff Hearing Officer review for a requested zoning modification.

Status: Pending

DISP

Date 3

SFDB-Concept Review (New) - PH

CONT

04/23/12

(Comments only; project requires Environmental Assessment and Staff Hearing Officer review for a requested zoning modification.)

(4:23)

Present: Jason Grant, Architect; and Maija Wolf, Owner/Trustee.

Public comment opened at 4:33 p.m.

Claribel Koch (submitted letter), opposition; expressed privacy issues regarding the proximity of the two-story addition to her residence, and patio drainage and natural light access concerns.

A letter with expressed concerns from Paula Westbury was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 4:39 p.m.

Motion: Continued two weeks to the Full Board with comments:

- 1) The Board finds the proposed open yard modification is aesthetically appropriate and does not pose consistency issues with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.
- 2) The Board finds the design style of the second-floor is acceptable and compatible with the existing residence.
- 3) Study pulling back the second-floor addition, slightly further away from the adjacent neighbor.
- 4) Study possible roof solutions; suggestions include to consider the possibility of a hip roof to eliminate some shadow.
- 5) Provide horizontal and longitudinal site sections of plans so the Board can understand the relationship to the adjacent house and elevation levels.
- 6) Provide a colors and materials board.

Action: Zimmerman/Woolery, 6/0/0. Motion carried.

SFDB-Concept Review (Cont.)

POST

05/07/12

(Second concept review. The project was last reviewed on April 23, 2012. Comments only; project requires Environmental Assessment and Staff Hearing Officer review for a requested zoning modification.)

Postponed indefinitely at the applicant's request.

SFDB-Concept Review (Cont.)

CONT

07/16/12

(Second Concept Review. The project was last reviewed on April 23, 2012. Comments only; project requires Environmental Assessment and Staff Hearing Officer review for a requested zoning modification.)

(4:30)

EXHIBIT C

Present: Jason Grant, Designer.

Public comment opened at 4:35 p.m.

1) Laurie Thrower, opposition; requested the applicant correct the proposed setback measurements, and stated that the wall always served as the property line and was never surveyed.

A letter expressing concerns from Paula Westbury was acknowledged.

Public comment closed at 4:38 p.m.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to Staff Hearing Officer to return to Consent with comments:

- 1) The Board appreciates the modest changes to the proposed project, and the introduction of a professional prepared survey to delineate the accurate property lines; the project appears to be developing in a positive direction.
- 2) The Board finds that the proposed modification is aesthetically appropriate and does not pose consistency issues with the Single Family Residential Design Guidelines.
- 3) The Board appreciated the owner's neighborhood input.
- 4) Provide the survey drawing to be included with the plans.

Action: Bernstein/Sweeney, 7/0/0. Motion carried.