



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: August 15, 2013
AGENDA DATE: August 21, 2013
PROJECT ADDRESS: 75 Conejo Road (MST2013-00238)
TO: Susan Reardon, Senior Planner, Staff Hearing Officer
FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
 Danny Kato, Senior Planner *WJ 10/24/13*
 Suzanne Riegle, Assistant Planner *SR*

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 1.98 acre site is currently developed with a 1,810 square foot, three-story residence with a detached 477 square foot garage. The proposed project involves the construction of seven-square-foot entry area addition, installation of a new door, and the reconstruction of an existing porch and stair. The discretionary application required for this project is a Front Setback Modification to allow alterations to the existing residence and the construction of a new stair within the required 35-foot front setback.

Date Application Accepted: 6/6/13

Date Action Required: 9/4/2013

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:	Peter R. Preiswerk	Property Owner:	Preiswerk Family Trust
Parcel Number:	019-043-002	Lot Area:	1.98 acres
General Plan:	Low Density Residential 1 du/acre	Zoning:	A-1
Existing Use:	Residential	Topography:	37% avg. slope

B. PROJECT STATISTICS

	Existing	Proposed
Living Area	1,810 sq. ft.	+7 = 1,817 sq. ft.
Garage	477 sq. ft.	No Change.

C. PROPOSED LOT AREA COVERAGE

Building: 1,434 sf 1.7% Hardscape: 4,050 sf 4.7% Landscape: 80,765 sf 93.6%

D. FLOOR-AREA RATIO (FAR) GUIDELINE

Max. Allowed FAR: 0.064 Proposed FAR: 0.027 = 42% of Max. Allowed FAR

IV. DISCUSSION

The proposed project involves the construction of seven-square-foot entry area addition, installation of a new door, and the reconstruction of an existing porch and stair. The existing residence is located 30 feet from the front property line (35 foot front setback is required). The property is located in the Hillside Design and High Fire Districts. Due to the steep topography of the lot, the first and second floors of the residence are constructed below street grade and the third floor of the residence was constructed at roughly the same grade as Conejo Road. The original covered off-street parking was located in a carport on the third floor of the residence that was accessed by a vehicular access bridge. In 1977, a portion of the carport was enclosed to create a family room and half bathroom, and a detached two-car garage was constructed to replace the required off-street parking. The vehicular access bridge remained in place and provided pedestrian access to the existing front entry to residence.

The requested Front Setback Modification is to allow the seven square foot, entry addition and the access stair to be located within the required 35-foot front setback. The new entry addition is located below the existing vehicular bridge, approximately 28 feet from the front property line, and would not be visible from the street. The main living areas of the existing residence are located on the second floor; however, the proposed new entry area is located off the master bedroom, and will have direct access to the street by the proposed exterior stair. Staff recommends approval of the new entry door, the addition, and the access stair because they are appropriate improvements to a single-family residence. Due to the configuration of the floor plan for the residence, Staff has recommended that a Zoning Compliance Declaration be recorded against the property, title stating that the property may only be used as a single-family residence. Staff could not locate evidence that a Modification had been granted to allow the parking area in front of the former vehicular access bridge as labeled on the site plan. Staff recommends that a condition be added requiring that the former vehicular bridge and area in front of the bridge be labeled a “no parking” areas, as they are in the front setback.

The project as proposed including the addition, alterations, and exterior stair was granted Single Family Design Board Administrative approval on June 6, 2013. The proposed improvements are not publicly visible and provide access down the steep hillside to the new front entry.

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 addition and alterations are appropriate improvements to a single-family residence that are obscured from public view and provide a secondary exit from the residence to the street. The improvements are not anticipated to adversely impact the adjacent neighbors or the public street frontage.

Said approval is subject to a condition the following conditions:

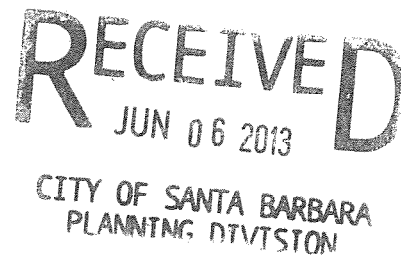
1. A note shall be added to the site plan that the former vehicular bridge and area in front of the bridge may not be used for parking.
2. The Owner shall file a Zoning Compliance Declaration to ensure that the residence shall remain a single-family residence.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter, dated June 6, 2013

Contact/Case Planner: Suzanne Riegle, Assistant Planner
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Phone: (805) 564-5470 x **2687**

Peter R. Preiswerk
75 Conejo Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93103-1635
Phone: (805) 962 0756



June 6, 2013

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

Re: Modification Request for 75 Conejo Road, APN 019-043-02-00, Zone A-1

Dear Staff Hearing Officer:

The residential home on 75 Conejo Road was built in 1975 and acquired two years later by my wife Johanna and myself, Peter Preiswerk. The house is three stories tall and is located north of the roadway of Conejo Road on a fairly steep slope (30 to 40% inclination) approximately 30 feet from the pavement; thus, part of the building lies within the setback zone.

Access to the house is by bridge from the street level to the third level of the building. This level contained originally only an open carport, an entry pad and a loft. The main living areas (living/dining room, kitchen, master bedroom with bath, totalling 814 sqft) are located on the second level of the house, accessible only by internal stairs. The first level, reached also by internal stair, is only half built out (500 sqft), i.e. the other half is unexcavated space. It contains two bedrooms, a full bath, and a small room for the furnace; washer and dryer are accommodated in a niche off the hallway.

Both, first and second level feature a wrap-around balcony on the north and west side; the western part of the first-floor balcony reaches ground level and can be used to exit into the landscaped area to the west of the house.

After the Sycamore fire in 1977 we had the carport enclosed (family room and quarter bathroom, 496 sqft) and, in order to gain some better egress from the first level, we broke a door out on the eastern wall. This allowed us to place a separate garage to the east of the house with driveway access from the corner of Conejo Road and Camino Alto.

As we get older and are losing some of our agility, two problems concern us:

- a. in case of a fire in the stairwell, there is no exit from the master bedroom except by jumping out of the window.
- b. if one of us would become incapable of climbing stairs, only the family room and loft in the third level would be accessible.

For these reasons, we propose to break out a door in the southern wall of the master bedroom which will allow level access to the area under the bridge, and put in a flat walkway to the western side of the house. Since there is not enough space for a wheelchair conforming ramp, we propose to erect a structurally sturdy stair which, when required, can be equipped with an electric chair lift.

And because the small porch and stair on the east side of the house on the first level has deteriorated over the years, we propose to replace its structure at the same time.

EXHIBIT B

The modification requested is for the new door in the south wall of the master bedroom, a small anteroom for insulation purposes (7sqft), and a wooden outside stair from the second to the third level. These modifications fall into the setback zone. And although they require construction above ground, none of the structures exceed the existing profile set by the bridge and the main building.

The replacement of the porch and stair on the eastern side of the house does not affect the setback, thus, no modification request should be necessary. The reconstruction will merely upgrade the design by the use of heavier lumber.

The proposed project will make the house safer and potentially more livable in case of age-related infirmities; and we hope they will allow us to spend a few more years in our private home at this unique location.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter R. Preiswerk".

Peter R. Preiswerk