



# City of Santa Barbara California

## STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** July 31, 2014  
**AGENDA DATE:** August 6, 2014  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 633 & 635 Bath Street (MST2014-00267)  
 Bath Street Pocket Park  
**TO:** Susan Reardon, Senior Planner, Staff Hearing Officer  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
 Danny Kato, Senior Planner *DJK*  
 Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner

### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 2,562 square-foot site is comprised of two parcels (APNs 037-113-009 and 037-113-010) that are currently vacant. The proposed project involves installation of playground equipment, ornamental fencing, a pole light, and park benches. The proposal also includes installation of native landscaping with drip irrigation and mulch that complies with the City's Landscape Design Standards for Water Conservation, and is compatible with the riparian bank vegetation. The project also includes improvements within the public right-of-way including a tile mosaic to be inlaid in the public sidewalk and new lighting fixtures.

The discretionary application required for this project is a Front Setback Modification to allow park improvements, including lighting, park benches, and trash and recycling receptacles, to encroach into the required 10' front setback (SBMC § 28.37.040 & SBMC § 28.21.060).

Date Application Accepted: 7/9/14

Date Action Required: 10/7/14

### II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer approve the project as submitted.

### III. SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS

#### A. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:	Jill Zachary	Property Owner:	City of Santa Barbara, Parks & Recreation Department
Parcel Number:	037-113-009 & -010	Lot Area:	2,562 square feet
General Plan:	Park	Zoning:	P-R
Existing Use:	Vacant	Topography:	0-1% Flat

**B. PROPOSED LOT AREA COVERAGE**

Building: 100 sf 4% Hardscape: 709 sf 28% Landscape: 1,853 sf 68%

**IV. BACKGROUND**

The project site was purchased as a part of the Lower Mission Creek Flood Control Project. A portion of the parcel was used to widen Mission Creek and support new bridge construction. At the time of the purchase, each parcel was developed with a 650 square foot residence, and was zoned R-4 Multi-Family Residences Zone. The houses were demolished to make way for Mission Creek improvements, the parcels were rezoned to P-R on June 13, 2014, and a pocket park is being created on the remaining land. Due to the location of project site adjacent to Mission Creek, the applicant submitted background information and a proposal for a park project at the subject location to the Chief Building Official, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Architectural Board of Review as required per the Zoning Ordinance.

The project was found to be consistent with the requirements outlined in Section 28.87.250 of the Zoning Ordinance, *Development Along Creeks*, which was established for the purpose of controlling development adjacent to Mission Creek. The intent of the development limitation is to prevent undue damage or destruction of developments by flood waters; prevent development of one parcel from causing undue detrimental impact on adjacent or downstream properties in the event of flood waters; and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The Chief Building Official determined that the development meets the criteria outlined in SBMC§28.87.250, because the documentation provided demonstrates that the proposed development would not create a flood issue, and thereby would not impact downstream properties. The current project is designed to eliminate all above ground structures within the 25 foot development limitation area with the exception of the perimeter fencing playground surface, which has been designed to meet the Tier 2 Storm Water Management Program requirements. Staff supports the project and finds that it is consistent with city policies for development along creeks and with the General Plan policies.

**V. DISCUSSION**

The proposed pocket park project includes a play structure, benches, lighting, and trash and recycling receptacles. Due to the park's location adjacent to Mission Creek, the park equipment has been shifted forward towards the street, limiting the development envelope for the park improvements. The play structure has been sited at a distance of twenty-five feet from the top of creeks bank. As a result, the applicant is requesting a Front Setback Modification to allow the benches, light pole, trash cans and recycling receptacles to be located within the required ten-foot front setback off of Ortega Street. The project includes water-wise plantings that are compatible with the riparian environment. The project includes improvements within the public right-of-way including a tile mosaic to be inlaid in the public sidewalk and new lighting fixtures. Staff supports the requested Modification, as the improvements are necessary for a viable park, and do not cause any negative visual effects

**VI. FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS**

The Staff Hearing Officer finds that the Front Setback Modification to allow the park improvements is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and the modification is necessary to secure an appropriate improvement on the lot. The proposed pocket park is appropriate because it will provide a community gathering place and recreation opportunity for the surrounding residential neighborhood, and the improvements requested in the setbacks are not anticipated to adversely impact neighbors or the visual openness of the public street frontage.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan (under separate cover)
- B. Applicant's letter, dated July 8, 2014
- C. ABR Minutes

Contact/Case Planner: Suzanne Riegle, Associate Planner  
(SRiegle@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)  
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# City of Santa Barbara

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July 8, 2014

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

RECEIVED  
JUL 09 2014

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
PLANNING DIVISION

*Re: Modification Request for Bath St. Pocket Park, 633 & 635 Bath Street, Santa Barbara, CA. APN: 037-113-009 & 037-113-010, P-R ZONE, MST2014-00267*

Dear Staff Hearing Officer:

## Background

The Parks and Recreation Department would like to construct a small pocket park located at the corner of Bath and Ortega Streets in the West Downtown neighborhood. The project site was purchased as part of the Lower Mission Creek Flood Control Project. A portion of each parcel was used to widen Mission Creek and support the new bridge construction. At the time of purchase, each parcel had a 650 square foot single family home, and was zoned R4. The two houses were removed for the bridge construction, and the parcels were rezoned P-R. Currently, the two parcels, which total 2,562 square feet, are fenced and vacant.

## Project Description

In February, 2014, the Parks and Recreation Department held a neighborhood meeting to review three different concept plans for the proposed park. The 23 meeting attendees selected a park concept that included a small playground due to the number of younger children in the neighborhood. On March 26, 2014, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended staff proceed with a park design that included a playground for 2 to 5 year old children.

The park design includes the following park elements and amenities;

### Park Elements

- A playground for 2 to 5 year old children
- Ornamental iron fencing to replace the existing chain link fence.
  - 42" high along Bath Street and Ortega Street
  - 72" high along both the parcel's interior
  - Self closing entry gate on Ortega Street
- One pole light with a meter pedestal using city standards

- Native landscaping consistent with the City's Landscape Design Standards for Water Conservation, and compatible with the riparian creek bank vegetation.
- Drip irrigation and mulch

#### Park Amenities

- An entry path
- Two stone benches
- Trash and recycle cans
- Park signage

The Department is also proposing the installation of a tile mosaic within the existing public sidewalk at the park entrance on Ortega Street, and within the park at the corner of Bath and Ortega St. The tile mosaic will follow a similar style to existing mosaics at Bohnett Park, Parque de los Niños, and the West Cabrillo Blvd. sidewalks.

#### **Discretionary Review**

The project was presented to ABR for concept review on the June 23, 2014, and received favorable reviews. The design was revised to address the comments received from the board. The project will be returning for further review on July 21, 2014.

#### **Storm Water Management Program Tier II Requirements**

##### Playground Play Surface

The 100 square foot (s.f.) playground structure will be surrounded by 610 s.f. of fall surfacing that includes 528 s.f. of pour-in-place rubber, and 82 s.f. of engineered wood fiber. The surface will be bordered by a 94 lineal foot perimeter retaining curb (45 square feet). The new fall surfacing is designed to meet Tier II requirements as outlined in the Storm Water Management Program guide for storm-water runoff. The play surface will direct runoff to an integral retention pit that will contain surface runoff from a 24-hour rain event equal to one inch.

##### Entry Path

The 154 s.f. entry path will be paved with permeable pavers with a crushed rock sub surface designed to meet Tier II requirements as outlined in the Storm Water Management Program guide for storm-water runoff, and will contain surface runoff from a 24-hour rain event equal to one inch.

#### **Site Constraints**

The site is very small and constrained by Mission Creek and front yard setback requirements. The 100 square foot playground structure is designed within the 405 square foot buildable area, and out of the 25 foot top of bank setback from Mission Creek. This forces the required play surfacing and retaining curb to encroach into the

*Modification Request for Bath St. Pocket Park, 633 & 635 Bath Street  
APN: 037-113-009 & 037-113-010, P-R ZONE  
July 8, 2014  
Page 3*

### **Modification Request**

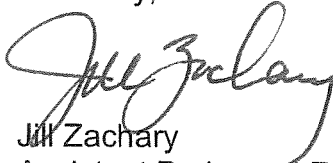
The modification request includes the encroachment of 149 square feet play surfacing and curb into the Mission Creek setback.

The encroachment request is necessitated by the need to build outside the Mission Creek top of bank setback. The department selected a playground design with the smallest footprint that provides enough play value. The size and design placed the play structure outside of the front yard and creek setbacks. However, due to site constraints the required play surfacing will need to be within the creek setbacks.

### **Project Benefits**

The project would benefit the residential neighborhood of West Downtown. There is need for additional park space in the high-density neighborhood. The Parks and Recreation Department intends that the park design will both enhance the neighborhood and provide safe recreation opportunities.

Sincerely,



Jill Zachary  
Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

cc:  
Nancy Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director  
Santos Escobar, Parks Manager  
Keven Strasburg, Park Project Technician



## DESIGN REVIEW ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

**635 BATH (MST2014-00267)**

**PR- NEW PARK**

*Proposal for a new public pocket park on two combined vacant lots totaling 2,562 square feet located at the corner of Bath and E. Ortega Streets. The project comprises a new landscape plan with a children's playground structure, lighting, benches, and a 154 square foot permeable paved surface. There will be two ornamental iron fences: one at 115 lineal feet and 3'-0" tall, the other at 100 lineal feet and 6'-0" tall. Grading excavation of 25 cubic yards will be balanced on site. Staff Hearing Officer review of a zoning modification is requested.*

**Status: Pending**

**DISP**

**Date 3**

**ABR-Concept Review (New) - PH**

**CONT**

**06/23/14**

(Comments only; project requires Environmental Assessment and Staff Hearing Officer review.)

Actual time: 3:11 p.m.

Present: Jill Zachary, Asst Parks & Recreation Dir; and Kevin Strasburg, Park Project Technician.

Public comment opened at 3:19 p.m. As no one wished to speak, public comment was closed.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to Staff Hearing Officer for return to Full Board with comments:

- 1) The Compatibility Analysis was made as follows:
    - a. The proposed project complies with the Design Guidelines and is consistent with the City Charter and applicable Municipal Code requirements.
    - b. The project's design is compatible with the City and the architectural character of the neighborhood.
    - c. The project's mass, size, bulk, height, and scale are appropriate for the neighborhood.
    - d. The project's design is appropriately sensitive to adjacent City Landmarks and adjacent historic resources, City structures of merit, sites, or natural features.
    - e. The project's design accommodates the established public views of mountains or ocean.
    - f. The project's design provides an acceptable amount of open space and landscaping.
  - 2) Restudy the elevation change on the north east side of the lot where there is a 21-inch drop in elevation.
  - 3) Consider changing the design of the transition between the play surface and the engineered wood fiber to be more curvilinear.
  - 4) The benches are acceptable within the setback as shown.
  - 5) Consider a different tree species other than the proposed *Prunus ilicifolia* (Holly-Leaf Cherry) tree.
  - 6) Consider adding more benches and boulders to the landscape design.
  - 7) Study reconfiguring the signage to be at a 45 degree angle to the intersection.
  - 8) Consider adding tiles to the top of the curb spaced 4-feet on center.
  - 9) The pavers to match the poured concrete curbs shall be an earth-tone color, possibly matching the sandstone benches.
  - 10) Provide retaining wall curb elevations on the plans for the curb transition details.
- Action: Miller/Poole, 4/0/0. Motion carried. (Zink/Hopkins/Cung absent).

## EXHIBIT C