



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 15-1020, Version: 1

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT

File #: 2015-7774

Location: 849 Peach Avenue (APN: 201-15-008)

Zoning: R0

Proposed Project: Appeal by the applicant of a Decision by the Director of Community Development to deny a Design Review for an entry feature.

Applicant / Owner: James Oh (applicant) / Jimmy Chang (owner)

Environmental Review: A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines.

Project Planner: Shétal Divatia, (408) 730-7637, sdivatia@sunnyvale.ca.gov

REPORT IN BRIEF

General Plan: Low Density Residential

Existing Site Conditions: Single Family home

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Single family Residential

South: Single family Residential

East: Single family Residential

West: Single family Residential

Issues: Proposed height (16'6") and scale of the front entry feature

Staff Recommendation: Deny the Appeal and approve the Design Review subject to recommended Conditions of Approval.

BACKGROUND

This item is being considered by the Planning Commission on appeal.

An addition and a remodel for this site was reviewed and approved by staff in May 2014 through MPP 2014-7323 (Attachment 7- Previously Approved Elevations). The project included 870 square feet of additional floor area for a total of 2,606 square feet of floor area resulting in 43% Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The entry feature approved was 14 feet 6 inches tall as measured from top of Curb.

The project is completely built. However, the project was built with an entry feature that is not in compliance with the approved plans and is 2 feet taller at 16 feet 6 inches high measured from top of Curb. Other modifications that occurred are addition of stone cladding along the frontage and the

front window with an arch. These modifications resulted in the built structure out of compliance with the approved plans (Attachment 7 - Previously Approved Elevations). Prior to getting a final approval for the applicant's building permits this issue was brought to their attention and they now propose to keep the structure as built with the modifications including the taller entry feature.

A second Design Review (2015-7774) was submitted to address these changes (Attachment 8 - Proposed Elevations). The modifications related to the front window and stone cladding are considered minor and acceptable to staff, but the higher entry feature does not meet the Single Family Design Techniques and staff denied the entry feature change and denied the Design Review. The applicant has appealed this staff decision to the Planning Commission. The project is pending final approval of the Building Permit that has been extended to address this appeal.

Description of Proposed Project

The project site is 6,062 square feet in area and contains a one-story, single family home. The home was recently remodeled along with front and rear yard additions..

The entire remodel project is completely built. Up for consideration at this time in the new flat roof entryway is 16'6" tall measured from top of curb; and is 4'6" taller than the adjacent eave on its left side and 5' taller than the adjacent eave on the other side above the garage

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area for notices, Attachment 2 for the Data Table of the project, and Attachment 8 for the Proposed Elevations.

APPEAL

The applicant has appealed staff's decision to deny the increased height of the entry feature. The application includes a letter of support of the taller entryway by some of their neighbors (Attachment 6 - Appeal Letter).

Staff Comment:

Sunnyvale's design guidelines for single family homes are addressed in the Single Family Home Design Techniques. It specially addresses entries in Guideline 3.3.D:

"Eave lines at entries should match or be within approximately twenty-four inches of the height of entry eaves in the neighborhood (i.e. close to the first floor eave height). In no case should front entry eaves be substantially higher than the first floor eaves"

This guideline notes that entries should be appropriate to the architectural style of the house as well as designed to blend into the surrounding neighborhood. Tall entry features can result in an architectural style that may not be compatible with ranch styled architecture and building scale. The proposed flat top design of the entry feature appears visually larger as compared to a gabled or hipped roof design that is common in ranch home neighborhoods. Staff continues to be concerned about the compatibility of this design feature within the predominantly ranch styled neighborhood. Additions and remodels of the original homes in the vicinity also include formal entries, but not at the scale of that proposed (Attachment 5 - Project & Neighborhood Pictures). This neighborhood, with predominantly one-story single family homes does not have tall entry features. Staff's review also took into consideration that this feature has already been built at the site but is unable to approve this modification. The height of this feature can be lowered by reducing the frieze (portion of structure between columns and roof) by 2 feet to bring the project into conformance with the approved plans.

(Condition of Approval PS-1).

EXISTING POLICY

Single Family Home Design Techniques: The City's Single Family Home Design Techniques (2003) provide guidelines for site planning, architecture, and other design elements related to neighborhood compatibility. These guidelines are referenced in the discussion in this staff report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines. This exemption applies to addition of up to 50 percent of floor area to an existing structure.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission deny the appeal and uphold the Design Review as noted in the recommended Findings (Attachment 3), and subject to recommended Conditions of Approval (Attachment 4).

Alternatively, the Planning Commission can approve the appeal if they can make the required Findings and modify the conditions of approval.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

PUBLIC CONTACT

As of the date of staff report preparation, staff has received one comment from the neighbor (Attachment 9) expressing support for the tall entry feature.

Notice of Public Hearing, Staff Report and Agenda

- 71 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site
- Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Web site
- Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board
- Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Web site

ALTERNATIVES

1. Deny the Appeal and uphold the Design Review subject to recommended Conditions of Approval.
2. Deny the Appeal and approve the Design Review subject to modified Conditions of Approval.
3. Approve the Appeal and approve the Design Review with modified Conditions of Approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend Alternative 1 to deny the Appeal and uphold the Design Review subject to recommended Conditions of Approval.

Prepared by: Shétal Divatia, Senior Planner

Approved by: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner

Attachments:

1. Vicinity and Notice Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Recommended Findings
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Project and Neighborhood Pictures
6. Appeal Letter
7. Previously Approved Elevations, 2014-7323
8. Proposed Elevations, 2015-7774
9. Public Comment Received