



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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File #: 17-0105, Version: 1

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### REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

#### **SUBJECT**

**File #:** 2016-7737

**Location:** 441 East Washington Avenue (APN: 209-04-031)

**Zoning:** R-2/ PD

**Proposed Project: Special Development Permit** for 636 square feet first-floor addition and 690 square feet second-floor addition to an existing two-story residence resulting in a total floor area of 2,563 square feet (2,126 square feet living area and 437 square feet detached garage) with 47.2 % Floor Area Ratio (FAR). 434 square feet of the existing floor area will be demolished as part of the permit.

**Applicant/Owner:** Chapman Design Associates (applicant) / Mitchell L Diamond and Virginia M Gelczis (owner)

**Environmental Review:** Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions that include minor additions to an existing single-family residence (CEQA Section 15301).

**Project Planner:** Aastha Vashist, (408) 730-7458, avashist@sunnyvale.ca.gov

#### **REPORT IN BRIEF**

**General Plan:** Residential Low Medium Density

**Existing Site Conditions:** Two-Story Single-Family Residence

#### **Surrounding Land Uses**

**North:** Three-story multi-family homes (condominiums)

**South:** Single Family residences across East Washington Avenue

**East:** Vacant lot

**West:** Two-story single-family residence

**Issues:** Neighborhood Compatibility

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval with conditions

#### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Description of Proposed Project**

The applicant proposes a first story addition of 636 square feet and second floor addition of 690 square feet to an existing 1,779 square foot, two-story single-family home, resulting in a total of 2,563 square feet and 47.2% Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The subject property is located on a 5,430 square foot interior lot. A Special Development Permit is required for the construction of an addition to

evaluate compliance with development standards and with the Single-Family Home Design Techniques. Planning Commission review is required for homes exceeding 45 percent Floor Area Ratio.

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

### **Previous Actions on the Site**

A Special Development Permit (2004-0681) for a 400-square foot detached garage in the rear yard was conditionally approved through an administrative hearing on 20 August, 2004. Although the garage met the required minimum area and interior dimension for a two-car garage per SMC 19.46.040, the garage was considered as one-car as the existing turning radius from the driveway to the garage is inadequate for a standard car to gain access to the space furthest from the property line. The previous SDP was approved on the condition that should the applicant propose to add on to the house (to bring the total bedrooms to four or more or add square footage resulting in 1800 square feet floor area, excluding the garage), the existing house would need to be altered so the driveway turning radius allows the garage to be used for parking two cars inside and two cars uncovered outside. As part of the current application, the applicant proposes to meet this condition of approval by demolishing portions of the existing first floor area and providing a 10-foot-wide driveway.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act provisions. Class 1 Categorical Exemptions include minor additions to an existing single-family residence.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Architecture and Site Design**

The East Washington Ave neighborhood, just east of downtown, was developed in the 1920s and is comprised of a combination of one and two story single-family homes, duplexes, and multi-story triplexes, fourplexes, and apartments. The existing house is two-story with a dormer window extending at the front and wood siding on the sides. The detached garage in the rear yard also has a dormer window and wood siding, and matches the architectural style and color of the main residence.

The project consists of a 636-square foot addition to the rear of the home, which would include a new family room and master bedroom, and increase the size of the existing kitchen. The second story addition is 690 square feet and would include two bedrooms, storage and a bathroom. The first and second story additions would match the colors and materials of the existing house with the horizontal siding and composition shingle roof material and maintaining the same roof pitch. No tree removals are proposed. The architectural style and exterior finishes of the house with the proposed addition are compatible with that of the existing house and the neighborhood.

#### **Parking and Circulation**

The existing single family residence has two bedrooms and a 266 square feet one-car garage. The addition of the proposed 1,341 square feet living area (excluding garage) with two new bedrooms will result in total living area of 2,164 square feet with four bedrooms. Pursuant to SMC Section

19.46.050, two covered parking spaces shall be provided if an alteration or addition to the dwelling results in four or more bedrooms, or a gross floor area of 1,800 square feet or more, excluding garages and carports. Since the proposed addition will result in gross floor area of over 1,800 square feet (excluding the garage) and four bedrooms, two covered parking spaces must be provided on the property. This parking is required to meet setback requirements and minimum dimensions.

As previously noted, the existing 437 square-foot detached garage provides one covered parking space as the existing turning radius from the driveway to the garage is inadequate for a standard car to gain access to the space furthest from the property line. However, the applicant proposes to comply with the minimum parking requirement by allowing the use of the existing garage for two-covered parking spaces. This will be achieved by demolishing portions of the existing first floor area and widening the existing 8'-6" wide driveway to 10 feet.

### **Floor Area Ratio**

The proposed 47.2 percent Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requires Planning Commission review since it is more than the 45 percent FAR threshold. The proposed addition exceeds the 45 percent FAR threshold by 2.2 percent. The 2.2 percent FAR translates to 120 square feet of floor area above the 2,443 square feet at 45 percent FAR.

The surrounding neighborhood is a mix of single-family and multi-family. The existing floor area ratio of the single-family homes in the neighborhood ranges from 15% to 63% with an average of 36%. The applicant's request for 47.2% FAR is less than three other existing single-family homes in the neighborhood. The proposed floor area and FAR is also less than the two-story single-family home with 2,763 square feet floor area and 53% FAR at the neighboring property towards the west (433 E Washington Avenue), which was approved by the Planning Commission in year 2015 (project number 2015-7296). See Attachment 6 for a gross floor area comparison.

Since this neighborhood consist of several two-story homes and is not predominately one-story, the 35 percent second floor to first floor ratio design guideline is not applicable.

### **Neighborhood Compatibility and Impacts**

The proposed addition is similar in scale and height to the new two-story home located at the adjacent property (433 E. Washington Avenue). The location of the proposed second floor addition at 36 feet setback from the front property line helps in avoiding bulk near the front of the home. The eight-foot plate height and roof segment between the first and second floor walls further helps in mitigating the height of the second-floor wall area. In addition, the first-floor addition is proposed to be located at the rear of the existing home and not expected to have detrimental visual or privacy impacts to the surrounding properties.

Staff has included conditions of approval (Condition PS-1) to require any non-egress, second-story windows facing the side yard to have sills at least five feet above finished floor or vision obscured glass. As conditioned, the project addresses neighbor privacy.

### **Development Standards**

The proposed project complies with the applicable development standards as set forth in the Sunnyvale Municipal Code, such as lot coverage, parking, height, and setbacks. The Project Data Table is in the Attachment 2.

### **Solar Access**

SMC 19.56.020 states that no permit may be issued for any construction which would interfere with solar access by shading more than 10 percent of the roof of any structure on a nearby property. The project plans demonstrate that the shading would comply with this requirement (shades 9% of the roof area of the adjacent property two-story home on the west side).

### **Applicable Design Guidelines**

The proposed home is consistent with the adopted Single-Family Design Techniques since the proposed design maintains the existing form and materials of the house. Staff has included findings for the Single-Family Design Techniques in Attachment 3.

### **Conclusion**

The staff has provided draft Findings in support of the project in addition to providing Findings for the Design Review (Attachment 3) Recommended Conditions of Approval are also attached (Attachment 4).

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **PUBLIC CONTACT**

#### **Notice of Public Hearing**

- Published in the *Sun* newspaper
- Posted on the site
- 39 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site

#### **Staff Report**

- Posted on the City's website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City's Public Library

#### **Agenda**

- Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board
- Posted on the City's website

**Public Contact:** Staff has not received any correspondence or phone calls from neighbors at the time of writing of this report.

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Approve the Special Development Permit with the Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.
2. Approve the Special Development Permit with modified conditions.
3. Deny the Special Development Permit and provide direction to staff and the applicant where changes should be made.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend Alternative 1 to approve the Special Development Permit based on the Findings in Attachment 3 and with the recommended Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.

Prepared by: Aastha Vashist, Assistant Planner

Approved by: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity and Noticing Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Recommended Findings
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Architectural and Site drawings
6. Neighborhood Square Footage Comparison
7. Special Development Permit Justification form by the applicant