



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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File #: 17-0591, Version: 1

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### REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

#### SUBJECT

**File #:** 2017-7300

**Location:** 373 Pescadero Terrace (APN: 165-46-085)

**Zoning:** R-1.7/PD (Low Medium Density Residential / Planned Development) Zoning District

**Proposed Project:**

**SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT:** for an addition of 180 sq. ft. (40 sq. ft. on the first floor in the rear and 140 sq. ft. on the second floor within the existing building envelope) to an existing two-story, single-family residence resulting in a total floor area of 1,884 sq. ft. including a 418-sq. ft. garage, and 59.3% floor area ratio (FAR).

**Applicant / Owner:** Design Build & More Inc. (applicant) / Danny Leung Et Al (owner)

**Environmental Review:** Categorical Exempt Class 1

**Project Planner:** Momoko Ishijima, (408) 730-7532, [mishijima@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:mishijima@sunnyvale.ca.gov)

#### REPORT IN BRIEF

**General Plan:** Residential Low Medium Density (7-14 du/ac)

**Existing Site Conditions:** Single Family Residence

**Surrounding Land Uses**

**North:** Single Family Residence

**South:** Single Family Residence

**East:** Single Family Residence

**West:** Single Family Residence

**Issues:** Neighborhood compatibility and Floor Area Ratio

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve the Special Development Permit with recommended conditions

#### BACKGROUND

The existing two-story, single-family residence was constructed in 1993 as part of the former Benner School site development by SummerHill Homes. The existing residence is approximately 1,808 square feet with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 56.9%. There are no previous planning applications related to the subject site.

The Benner School site development is zoned R-1.7/PD. The R-1.7/PD zoning district was created to allow smaller lots (2,600 to 4,000 square feet) with smaller homes (40% lot coverage and 50% FAR) to offer a more affordable single-family detached home option. The PD combining district is always included with the R-1.7 zoning district to allow site design flexibility.

This Special Development Permit application requires Planning Commission review due to a requested FAR exceeding 50% allowed in the R-1.7/PD zoning district. The Planning Commission may consider the proposed architecture, existing neighborhood, and adopted Single Family Home

Design Techniques as part of the consideration for the request. The Planned Development combining district allows approval of specified deviations to the zoning code including FAR. See Attachment 2 for the Data Table of the project.

### **Description of Proposed Project**

The project proposes two additions totaling 180 square feet to the existing two-story residence resulting in a building size of 1,884 square feet (which includes the 418-square foot garage) and a FAR of 56.9%:

- A 40-square foot addition at the rear of the home to create a larger kitchen; and,
- A 140-square feet open area within the building envelope (a portion of the vaulted ceiling area) above the living room would become a third bedroom on the second floor.

The subject property is located mid-block on the west side of Pescadero Terrace. There are similar single-family homes surrounding the project site. See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area for notices.

### **DISCUSSION**

**Architecture:** The existing architecture of the home is similar to the other homes in the development with stucco exterior and composition shingle roofing material. As proposed, the rear addition would match the existing materials and architectural character of the house and the surrounding neighborhood. No modifications are proposed to the second floor except to replace a fixed window with a sliding window for accessibility requirements for the new bedroom.

**Applicable Design Guidelines and Policy Documents:** The proposed addition is consistent with the adopted Single Family Home Design Techniques as it generally maintains the existing shape and form of homes in the neighborhood and fits into the established streetscape. In addition, the privacy impacts are minimal as no changes such as new windows are proposed to the second floor. Recommended Findings related to the Single Family Home Design Techniques are located in Attachment 3.

**Development Standards:** The proposed project complies with all applicable development standards including setbacks and parking (except FAR as discussed below), as set forth in the Sunnyvale Municipal Code.

**Floor Area Ratio:** Since the Benner School site was developed in 1994, several homes have increased the FAR beyond the 50% limitation by creating a bedroom within the vaulted ceiling area over the living room (>15-foot ceiling height). In those cases, there were minimal visible changes to the exterior of the house and no increase in the foot print. In other cases, additions to the ground floor have resulted in FAR increases beyond 60%.

It should be noted that when this neighborhood was originally developed, the City did not count vaulted ceiling areas above 15 feet in height as gross floor area or include it in the FAR calculation. In 2009, the Zoning Code definition of "Gross Floor Area" for single-family homes was amended to include areas within a 15-foot ceiling height or greater to be counted twice. The current zoning code requires that those open ceiling areas above 15 feet now be calculated as if they were floor area. With this change in the definition, all of the homes in the development with a vaulted ceiling area in the living room greater than 15 feet would now be calculated with an increased FAR over 50%.

The following table shows the differences in FAR for the original (1994) and the current (2009) definition for floor area.

	1994 original	2009 current
Existing House	51.2%	56.9%
Proposed House	56.9%	59.3%

When compared to FAR of the surrounding neighborhood and other approvals for additions demonstrated in the table in Attachment 7, the FAR would be comparable to the prevailing patterns.

Rear Yard Encroachment: The approved rear yard setback for the project site is 15 feet four inches. With the 40-square foot addition to the kitchen, the rear yard setback would be reduced to 11 feet four inches. The zoning code allows rear yard encroachment up to 10 feet from the rear property line if the encroachment does not exceed 25% of the required rear yard. The proposed encroachment into the rear yard is 13.5%. If only the addition on the first floor was considered with this project, the proposed FAR would be 58.1%

Lot Coverage: The applicant proposes 34.9% lot coverage which is below the 40% maximum allowed in the zoning district.

### **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 no comments from the neighbors.

### **Notice of Public Hearing, Staff Report and Agenda:**

- Published in the *Sun* newspaper
- Posted on the site
- 66 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site
- Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library
- Agenda posted on the City's official notice bulletin board

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

A Categorical Exemption Class 1 (minor alterations to existing structure) relieves this project from CEQA provisions.

### **CONCLUSION**

Findings and General Plan Goals: Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Design Review and Special Development Permit and Recommended Conditions of Approval (Attachment 4). Recommended Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment 3.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Approve the Special Development Permit with the conditions 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.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Alternative 1 in accordance with the Findings in Attachment 3 and Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.

Prepared by: Momoko Ishijima, Associate 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. Letter from Applicant
6. Special Development Permit Justification form
7. Letter from Somerset of Sunnyvale
8. FAR Comparison
9. Site and Architectural Plans