



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 21-0507, Version: 1

REPORT TO THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT

Proposed Project:

USE PERMIT: For an Approximately 7-Foot 10-Inch Tall Fence in the Front Yard of a Single-Family Home (Eichler).

Location: 1158 Pome Av. (APN: 202-13-003)

File #: 2021-7093

Zoning: R-1/S - Low Density Residential / Residential Single-Story Combining District

Applicant / Owner: Krishna Sekhar Raju And Prameela Penmetcha (applicant and owner)

Environmental Review: Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions.

Project Planner: Mary Jeyaprakash, 408-730-7449, mjeyaprakash@sunnyvale.ca.gov

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposed Project

The applicant is proposing to remove the existing front yard fence in front of the courtyard and construct a new fence, which will have the same height as the existing fence. The proposed fence is 6 feet in height, measured from finished grade, and 7 feet 10 inches in height measured from top of the curb (TOC) on Pome Avenue, since the property slopes up, resulting in a 1-foot 10-inch grade difference between TOC and finished grade. The proposed fence has a setback of 15 feet from the front property line, which is intended to provide a larger private front yard space as desired by the applicant. The project also includes replacement of the existing 6-foot tall front fence (to the southwest corner of the property) setback approximately 20 feet from the front property line, in the same location.

See Attachment 1 for the Vicinity and Noticing map and Attachment 3 for the Site and Architectural Plans.

Previous Actions on the Site

There are no previous planning projects related to the subject application and no open Neighborhood Preservation complaints.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions. The Class 3 Categorical Exemption includes construction of new accessory structures including fences (CEQA Section 15303 (e)).

DISCUSSION

Background

Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 19.48 requires a Use Permit for front yard fences over 6 feet in height. Fence height in the front is measured from the top of the nearest curb. The SMC defines a front yard fence to include any fence located between the face of the building and the street. Any new fence construction is subject to current SMC permitting requirements.

The existing home is an Eichler style single-family home and has an existing 6-foot high front yard fence that is setback 20 feet from the front property line.

Proposed Fence

The applicant is proposing a 6-foot tall fence as measured from the finished grade. The finished grade is 1 foot 10 inches above the adjoining curb; therefore, the proposed fence height is 7 feet 10 inches from the top of the nearest curb. The proposed fence will be setback approximately 15 feet from the front property line. See Attachment 4 for the Site and Architectural Plans.

The proposed fence design is composed of horizontal Cumaru rainscreen siding, which will be painted grey to match the house. This new fence will replace the existing fence at the proposed location with 5 feet extensions on both sides to enclose a larger portion of the front yard. The project includes planting shrubs like manzanita and platinum beauty in the front yard against the proposed fence.

Fence Design

The property is located in the Fairbrae Eichler neighborhood. The Eichler Design Guidelines were adopted in 2009 to preserve the unique character of Eichler homes and assist property owners in designing home additions and improvements, including fences. The guidelines encourage fences to be integrated into the style of the house with a modern design and strong vertical or horizontal emphasis. The proposed fence has horizontal wooden panels. The project also replaces the existing fence (to the southwest corner of the property) to match the proposed fence style. The proposed fence is consistent with the guidelines and matches with the neighbor's fence to the south side of the subject property. The guidelines state that fences over 6 feet in height should be setback at least 15 feet from the front property line. The proposed fence is consistent with this requirement.

Staff is supportive of the proposed front yard fence, as it is compatible with the existing fences found elsewhere in the neighborhood and will improve the aesthetics of the existing streetscape. See Attachment 5 for the Use Permit Justification and Attachment 6 for the Site Photographs.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACTS/COMPATIBILITY:

Front yard fences in Eichler models are generally integrated into the building architecture with a private front yard. This character is found in Eichler homes in this neighborhood, including the subject home, which has a 6-foot tall fence in the front yard. The proposed fence is similar in height and location to other Eichler home fences in the neighborhood. See Attachment 7 for photos of other front fences in the neighborhood.

PUBLIC CONTACT

54 notices were sent to surrounding property owners and residents adjacent to the subject site in addition to standard noticing practices, including advertisement in the Sunnyvale Sun Newspaper and on-site posting. Staff has not received any letters or calls from the public.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Use Permit with recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.
2. Approve the Use Permit with modifications.
3. Deny the Use Permit.

RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1. Approve the Use Permit with recommended Conditions in Attachment 3.

Prepared by: Mary Jeyaprakash, Associate Planner

Approved by: Momoko Ishijima, Senior Planner

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Maps
2. Recommended Findings
3. Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Site and Architectural Plans
5. Use Permit Justification Form
6. Site Photographs
7. Neighborhood Front Fence Comparison