

TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 20, 1997

The San Anselmo Planning Commission was convened by Chair Wittenkeller at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioners Present: Harle, Dowd, Israel, Zwick, Wittenkeller  
Commissioners Absent: Cronk  
Staff Present: Planning Director Chaney, Senior Planner Wight,  
Associate Planner Griffin

**B. OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

No one spoke during this time.

**C. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. MINUTES: September 15, 1997 and October 6, 1997
2. V-9740 - Gary and Suzy DeBaker, 16 Monterey Avenue, A/P 6-013-10, After-The Fact Variance request to allow the following previously built structures: 1) an uncovered deck within 5' of the westerly side property line (6' required); and 2) an 8' high shed within 7' of the westerly side property line (8' required), on property located within the R-1 Zoning District.
3. V-9739 - Ian Flynn, 70 Forest Avenue, A/P 7-013-12, Variance request to build an enclosed, latticed deck (After-the-Fact) and install a hot tub within 14' of the front property line (20' required), on property located within the R-1 Zoning District.

M/s Harle/Israel, and unanimously approved (5-0), to approve the Consent Agenda. The audience was advised of the ten day appeal period.

**D. CONTINUED ITEMS**

1. U-9713 - San Francisco Theological Seminary, for Ann Walker Catering, 40 Kensington Road, A/P7-292-03, Use Permit to allow a food catering service to operate from the kitchen at Alexander Hall. This service will serve the Seminary's food service needs, groups using Seminary property, and clients off-site, on property located within the SPD (Special Planned Development) Zoning District. (Staff person: Chaney) CONTINUED TO NOVEMBER 3, 1997
2. V-9732 - Hank Hallowell and Jane Cunningham, 15 Medway, A/P 5-154-15, Variance to build a 180 square foot addition within 10' of the rear yard setback (20' required), on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. (Staff person: Griffin) CONTINUED TO NOVEMBER 17, 1997

**E. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. DR-9713 - Mr. And Mrs. Edward Heavey, 405 Sequoia Drive, A/P 6-117-08, Design Review of a new single family dwelling; setback variances: a) rear yard and north side yard variances to construct a parking deck for a third parking space within 6' of the rear property line and within 0' of the north side property line; b) rear yard, north side yard, and south side yard variances to construct a dwelling within 12' of the rear property line, within 5.5' of the north side property line, and within 10' of the south side property line (20' rear required; 12' street side required); and c) a north side yard variance to construct a covered porch within 3' of the north side property line on property located within the R-1 Zoning District (above 150' mean sea level) (Staff person: Wight)

Ms. Wight explained that this item is to be treated as a workshop to provide direction to the applicant.

The hearing was opened to public testimony.

The Architect from Robert Holmes Associates representing the applicant, stated that they have lowered and reduced the house by 300 square feet. The house has also been spread to the left and right and is proposed to be 2,253 square feet; the FAR was 34.95% and is now barely over 30% with the new design.

Vicky Barth, 543 Sequoia, stated that the house is much more appropriately scaled to the lot. She asked that the neighbors be noticed 48 hours in advance of any road closures, with a maximum closure of 2 hours and parking should be on the site if possible. She also requested a three year bond for future

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maintenance on the road. All residents have given \$1,350 for sealing and paving and this parcel did not contribute. She would also like to see the drainage plan on this parcel.

Linda Hoch, 250 Sequoia, would like to see story poles erected.

George Silvestri, attorney for Mr. Iwanaga, 409 Sequoia, stated that it appears the house is now closer to his client's property than before. He thought the deck had been moved back but the public notice indicates it is 3' closer. He wondered why it might be more appropriate to move the garage under the living room. The real concern is the close proximity of the parking deck. He is opposed to the parking deck and garage being so close to his clients. He wondered if the parking deck could be moved to the north side instead. He would also like to see story poles, including the placement of the windows on the poles. He requested that the site plan show the existing location of his client as well as the relocated garage. He does not recommend removal of the oak trees. He would like to see a landscape and irrigation plan, road bond participation, and any other items required at previous meetings. He would also like a survey for the proposed deck and stair location.

Richard Lucas, 506 Sequoia, wanted to make sure the oak trees are protected during construction and wants the applicant to participate in his share of the road bond for the paving that was done by the residents.

Mr. Heavey's architect stated that they intend to put up story poles and will follow the arborist's report regarding tree protection and will provide a section for the living room for the next meeting. Regarding the house being closer to Mr. Iwanaga it has been moved back 12' from the property line.

Carol Holderness, 5 Alto, was very involved in getting the funding for the paving of Sequoia Road. The neighbors are afraid the excavation and construction vehicles could endanger the road and create slides. The thought that a home will be so close to the area where a major slide recently took place is astonishing.

Rich Barth 543 Sequoia, wanted to know if the owner would contribute to the road.

Mr. Silvestri reiterated his earlier statement about moving the parking deck and garage. The 1993 survey indicates the entrance to the property could be damaged and wondered who owned the road and wondered what design constraints there would be.

Gilbert Iwanaga, 409 Sequoia Drive, questioned the wording on the agenda regarding a third parking space within 3' of the rear property line. He wondered if the 2,253 square feet is an increase from the previous design.

Mr. Heavey stated that he thought this was just a design review workshop and at subsequent meeting he will discuss drainage and other items. The garage is the only thing that is in the same location and he has stepped it down the hill and spread out and reduced the square footage. He is trying to make it blend into the hill.

George Hall, 150 Sequoia, is concerned about the environmental impacts.

Barbara Melton, 540 Sequoia, was concerned about drainage.

The hearing was closed to public testimony.

Commissioner Israel stated the house is dramatically different and the design is sympathetic to the slope. This site is obviously appropriate for variances because of the severe topography. He is however, a little less comfortable granting variances with the house just under 300 square feet of the maximum allowable size. He sees opportunities within the current configuration to make a slight reduction and be more appropriate in scale and size. He was uncomfortable with the 3' setback, noting that 5' is typically the minimum they would use, especially for a parking deck.

Commissioner Zwick stated that this has very difficult terrain and would not like to see the square footage maxed out. He would like to have the stairs be more articulated and the powder room is in the way of the views. The technical aspects of bonds and drainage will be discussed at a future meeting.

Commissioner Harle was impressed about the amount of effort and expense that was spent on the design. He stated that the property line should be

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addressed as to the impact on Mr. Iwanaga.

Commissioner Dowd stated that he wondered why it had to be pulled within 12' and would rather see 15' setback and move the parking deck away from the neighbor.

Chair Wittenkeller stated that this proposal is a great improvement. He would be more concerned about detailing and textures of the design rather than reducing the floor plan. The bulk has been greatly reduced and is much better. The 3' setback for the parking deck however is not appropriate.

2. V-9741/DR-9730 – Peter Serchia, 50 Park Drive, A/P 6-043-36, Design Review of a 450 square foot first story living room and entry addition to be within 5' of the northwest and southeast side property lines; design review of a 220 square foot garage and a 375 square foot second story master bedroom suite addition within 5' of the northwest side property line; and a parking variance for the second required parking space to be relocated to within 10' of the front property line (20' required) (these are changes to the plans approved by the Planning Commission in January, 1997) on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. (Staff person: Wight)

Ms. Wight presented the staff report.

Chuck Weesner Architect representing the applicant, presented a scaled model and stated that they are only asking for the one variance. They want to make the living room larger than what was previously approved.

Peter Serchia, applicant, stated that they are asking for a slight variance. He has spoken to the neighbors about the project and they are in support of the project.

Commissioner Zwick stated he would be willing to support the previous approval. If it is really important to have a larger living room the kitchen should be remodeled to the rear. He does not want to see the addition being pushed to the front of the property.

Commissioner Harle stated that the addition is blocking the usable front parking and he cannot make the findings to move the addition farther to the front. If it is necessary to have the space, it should go in the back.

Commissioner Dowd stated that he liked the design and the relocation of the parking space is not that big of a deal even though it is on a curve.

Chairman Wittenkeller stated that he supported the staff report.

Commissioner Israel stated that the plan is better in the current scheme but there is a similar project that was approved on Broadmoor Avenue and the cars tend to park out on the street, which exacerbates the parking situation. He therefore supported the staff report.

M/s Israel/ Zwick, and passed (4-1 Dowd: no), to deny V-9741/DR-9730 – Peter Serchia, 50 Park Drive, A/P 6-043-36, Design Review of a 450 square foot first story living room and entry addition to be within 5' of the northwest and southeast side property lines; design review of a 220 square foot garage and a 375 square foot second story master bedroom suite addition within 5' of the northwest side property line; and a parking variance for the second required parking space to be relocated to within 10' of the front property line (20' required) (these are changes to the plans approved by the Planning Commission in January, 1997) on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. The application is denied based on the findings set forth in the staff report.

3. V-9737 – David and Suzanne Friend, 151 Morningside Drive, A/P 5-144-12, 1) Variance to construct a front porch within 15'6" from the front property line (20' required); 2) Variance to allow 36% lot coverage (35% allowed); 3) Parking Variance to reduce the required length of a parking stall from 19' to 17' on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. (Staff person: Chaney)

Ms. Chaney presented the staff report.

Commissioner Israel asked for a clarification on why the need for adequate parking because this house did not look like it was pushing the lot coverage and the trellis was so visually open and does not seem like it should be

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counted in coverage.

Ms. Chaney explained that because of the addition, the second parking is required.

David Friend, applicant, stated that the porch is consistent with the 1920's design when the house was built. He understands the need for setbacks but felt the special circumstances are the when the house was originally built the structure was placed too close to the street setbacks. Also, the proposed addition of a gabled porch only extends the house 1.5' closer to the setback; this is consistent with other surrounding properties. He asked the Marin County Realtors Association about what constitutes a bedroom and they said a room should have a closet or permanent armoire. They are proposing a family room, not a bedroom. He thought the trellis was not included in lot coverage. If the Commission could not grant the lot coverage the most logical thing would be to take down the trellis and lose the wisteria. However, his first choice would be to leave the trellis the way it is. Another alternative would be to convert the trellis into a play structure. He has spoken with most of his neighbors and they have signed a letter of support for his project.

Resident, 155 Morningside Drive, is in support of the project, noting that this is a nice addition to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Harle stated that the trellis is open and the main feature of the trellis is the wisteria vine. The trellis would probably not be there if the wisteria was not there. He considered it similar to a support structure for the tree. He would therefore consider it diminutive in terms of lot coverage. The house is in a neighborhood with about 14' front yard setbacks and therefore a house with a porch would have been perfect when the house was built. It is not living area and does continue the line of the garage and is quite open and can not justify a reason to deny the application.

Commissioner Dowd stated that he lives right across the street and does not view the family room as a potential bedroom and therefore is not opposed to the parking variance. He is also in support of the porch.

Commissioner Israel stated that this addition would be an improvement to the neighborhood. The addition seems diminutive and he could support it. He agrees that there is a 14'-15' front yard setbacks in the neighborhood and notes that it is a very special neighborhood. He could support the porch but only with a deed restriction that the porch would not be enclosed. He wondered if it should be a front porch with a gable or if the roof should be continued straight down, which would dramatically reduce the mass.

Commissioner Zwick said the addition of the porch would be a good addition to the neighborhood and the wisteria and trellis should remain. He would also like to see the roofline of the porch as suggested by Commissioner Israel. Also, he would like the applicants to look at removing the shutters at the windows above the garage.

Chair Wittenkeller said that the existing housing stock should be upgraded for the families and he supports this project. The proposed porch with the gabled roof is just fine. He would like to approve without the lot coverage by removing the trellis, but could approve with it. There are other porches in the neighborhood and therefore could support the project.

Commissioner Harle stated that the porch is an amenity enjoyed by others in the neighborhood and there is no other location for a front porch. The trellis is not considered a structure because it probably would not be there if it weren't there to hold up the wisteria tree.

Added condition is to record a deed restriction prohibiting the enclosure of the porch.

Staff noted that play structures do count in lot coverage.

M/s Zwick/Harle, and unanimously passed (5-0), to approve V-9737 – David and Suzanne Friend, 151 Morningside Drive, A/P 5-144-12, 1) Variance to construct a front porch within 15'6" from the front property line (20' required); 2) Variance to allow 36% lot coverage (35% allowed); 3) Parking Variance to reduce the required length of a parking stall from 19' to 17' on property located within the R-1 Zoning District. The findings are as follows:

**Parking Variance:** The approval is based on the staff report findings for the parking variance

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**Front Yard Variance:** The front porch is an amenity that serves many but can only be placed in one location. The character of the neighborhood was established by 14' setback and this setback is consistent with other houses up and down the block.

**Lot Coverage:** The front porch is an amenity that serves many but can only be placed in one location and the porch is open. The character of the neighborhood was established by 14' setbacks and this setback is consistent with other houses up and down the block. The trellis is a light and airy structure that supports the wisteria.

John Sylvain, designer, stated that they considered both designs for the porch roof and like what they have proposed.

**F. WORKSHOP**

1. Conceptual design review workshop to evaluate possible design scenarios for a Jiffy Lube facility at 631 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (former HUB Unocal Station), A/P 6-101-05. No application for a use entitlement has been filed. Purpose of review is to provide comments to potential land purchaser. Property is in the C-3 (General Commercial) Zoning District. (Staff person: Chaney)

Ms. Chaney provided an overview, stating that any proposal on this site would require a public hearing because of the design review, even if the use is permitted.

Randy Stephens, representing Jiffy Lube, stated that the building will only be located with an end wall on the east side of the property, which will allow parking to flow and pick up some green area. The existing curb break closest to the HUB would be eliminated and they would use the other one. They would berm it and provide landscaping and greenery. They considered placing a sign that says SAN ANSELMO, and then an end wall that defines the architectural feature of San Anselmo. They do not want to design a stock building for San Anselmo and are asking for input from the Commission.

John Fap, representing Jiffy Lube, stated that they are a neighborhood serving stores and the traffic is minimal. As a result, they are not as intense of a use like a gas station. Because of the traffic flow, they see the site as right in and right out onto Sir Francis Drake. There will be generally 4 cars a day during peak traffic.

Commissioner Zwick asked if there has been a traffic study from the previous use. Mr. Fap responded that they have only done a very informal one. This use will service 30-40 customers a day. The last traffic study indicated the intersection had a D level, and they could not increase traffic any more.

Chair Wittenkeller stated that he is not convinced that the use would not be detrimental to the neighborhood, especially based on the fact that it is such a prominent location. He is ambivalent about giving suggestions because he is not sure the use is a good one.

Mr. Stephens stated that the signage would be effective on the Sir Francis Drake frontage closest to Andronicos and on Center Boulevard.

Commissioner Dowd liked scheme "A" and wondered why access could not be off of Center. Mr. Stephens responded that it is a 6' drop and would also take quite a bit of the lot, which is already very small. There is also the issue of PG&E and he is not sure they would provide an easement.

Commissioner Dowd stated he would like to see dual access, he liked the idea of lighting and wants Town signage, with some sort of public use in the front. He would want a lot of landscaping and perhaps tie the design in with the Pavilion Antique across the street.

Commissioner Israel liked the idea of closing the second driveway; scheme "A" is the right direction. The height of the wall should be looked at, and may require some visualization tools. It is also important to see what is happening behind the walls and wants the bays to be as diminished as possible. He likes the circulation to the side, not the front; wants the trash moved, even if a parking space is lost. He wanted the building moved back 6' to 8' from the HUB. He was not sure the trellis is the right element and would like to enhance the landscaping on SFD behind the wall, to create screening. There are two approaches to style on this site. He would like them to

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consider a different approach on the bays; an example is the Ferrari dealer in Mill Valley that looks like an Italian Villa does not have roll up doors. The front area could be a quality monument sign, with perhaps a clock and sign to be separate elements on it. His comments are based on the design but he is still ambivalent on the use.

Commissioner Zwick stated that he cannot get past the use of Jiffy Lube on the site.

Harle: stated that he has no comments on design or the use of the site.

Chair Wittenkeller said he could see the building moving back, removing the trash container and having the space behind the building and the corner being open space.

Commissioner Israel thought a very convincing visual analyses is very important for this site. It is the most visible site in San Anselmo.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m. to the next meeting on November 3, 1997

**BARBARA CHAMBERS**