

**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting March 4, 2013

Agenda Item D-2

Project Address:

122 Sycamore Avenue
San Anselmo, CA 94960
APN: 006-083-16

Case No.

DR-1302

Property Owner

Red Sycamore Homes
c/o Trenor Askew
360 Grand Avenue #347
Oakland, CA 94610

Request

Design review to construct a new 3,246 square foot, two story residence with a 503 square foot attached garage and a 587 square foot rear deck at 122 Sycamore Avenue. The project site is located in the R-2 zoning district. **This application is continued from the February 4, 2013 Planning Commission hearing.**

Recommendation

Conditional approval

I. PROJECT ANALYSIS

At the February 4, 2013 Planning Commission hearing, the Commission considered a request for design review to construct a new 3,246 square foot, two story residence with a 503 square foot attached garage and a 587 square foot rear deck. After receiving public comment, the Commission discussed the matter and directed the applicant to modify the side elevations to provide additional articulation. Please refer to the attached staff report and minutes from the February 4, 2013 meeting.

In response to the Commission's direction, the applicant has added a dormer to the left side elevation, continued the first floor roof further toward the back of the house and added a "belly band" along the lower floor. These changes provide additional

articulation and reduce the apparent massing of the elevation. On the right side elevation, a dormer has also been added to the second story, the first floor roof has been extended and a “belly band” has been added to the first and second levels. Additional stone veneer has been added which wraps around to the right side elevation. Staff believes that the revisions respond to the Commissions direction and recommends approval of the revised plans with the conditions listed below.

II. REQUIRED FINDINGS

Design Review for New Residence

1. *The project will not unreasonably impair access to light and air of structures on neighboring properties.*

As described in the February 4, 2013 staff report (Attachment 1), the new residence will not unreasonably impair access to light on neighboring properties, nor will it impair access to air. Story poles were installed to allow the neighbors, the public and the Commissioners to visualize the new house. Because of the orientation of the lot (almost due south), the proposed home will cast almost no shadows onto neighboring properties. The upper level of the proposed home has been significantly stepped in on the front and rear in an effort to minimize the impact to adjacent properties. The addition of the two small dormers and roof changes to the side elevations will not significantly impact access to light and air of neighboring properties.

2. *The project will not unreasonably affect the privacy of neighboring properties including not unreasonably affecting such privacy by the placement of windows, skylights and decks.*

The second story windows on the west elevation of the new home will be approximately 17 feet from the nearest neighbor to the west (126 Sycamore Avenue). There are three 2.5' by 2.5' bathroom windows and one 5' by 4' bedroom window on the upper level of the west elevation. The upper level of the proposed home has been significantly stepped in on the front and rear in an effort to minimize the size and impact of the upper level. Windows at the upper side elevations have been minimized to the fullest extent in an effort to preserve privacy for the neighboring properties. The west side bathroom windows shall have obscured glazing for privacy.

3. *The project will be of a bulk, mass and design that complements the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood.*

The project's bulk, mass and design are typical of newer homes in San Anselmo though not necessarily typical of all the homes in this particular older neighborhood. The neighborhood is comprised of small and large, one and two

story homes on varying sized lots as well as multifamily structures. The existing neighborhood consists of various styles of architecture. The proposed new home is a two story Craftsman style home that complements the vernacular of the neighborhood. The upper level has been stepped in at the front and rear in an effort to reduce the mass and minimize the upper footprint. The added dormers and roof extensions provide additional articulation and breakup the massing of the side elevations. Staff is able to make the finding that the project is of a bulk, mass and design that complements the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood.

4. *The project will not materially affect adversely the health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the property of the applicant and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in such neighborhood.*

Construction will be required to be in compliance with all adopted building codes, thereby ensuring the health and safety of persons in or near the property. The new home is replacing a dilapidated structure that existed on the property; thus the project should improve the health and safety of the neighborhood.

III. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Planning Commission approval is based on the plans and materials titled Askew Residence 122 Sycamore Ave, prepared by Stewart K. Summers date stamped received by the San Anselmo Planning Department on February 12, 2013.
2. All conditions of approval shall be printed at the top of sheet 1 of the building permit drawings.
3. Plans submitted for building permit shall show the west side bathroom windows with obscured glazing for privacy.
4. An approved tree permit shall be obtained from the Town prior to issuance of a building permit for the new residence.
5. A building permit must be obtained prior to the start of any construction work that requires a permit per the Town of San Anselmo regulations. Please contact the San Anselmo Building Department at 415-258-4616 or townofsananselmo.org/building for requirements and further information.
6. If construction has not commenced within one year from the date of final action, the planning action becomes null and void. However, this discretionary action may be renewed by the Planning Director for a maximum period of one (1) year provided the applicant places such a request in writing to the Planning Director showing good cause prior to the expiration of the discretionary action.

7. The property owner shall indemnify and hold harmless the Town of San Anselmo and its officers and/or employees in the event of any legal action related to or arising from the granting of this approval and shall cooperate with the Town in the defense of any such action, and shall indemnify the Town for any award of damages and/or attorneys' fees and associated costs that may result.

Prepared By:

Phil Boyle
Senior Planner

Attachments:

1. February 4, 2013 Staff Report
2. Excerpt of February 4, 2013 Planning Commission Minutes
3. Plans

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