



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 21, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Planning Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Appeal Of Single Family Design Board Approval Of A New Residence At 2405 State Street

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Deny the appeal of Jim and Debbie Arnesen of the Single Family Design Board's decision to grant Project Design Approval and Final Approval for the proposed new residence; and
- B. Direct staff to return to Council with Decision and Findings reflecting the outcome of the appeal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On February 23, 2015, the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) approved a new two-story, three bedroom residence on a vacant infill lot at 2405 State Street, owned by Dan Underwood. The adjacent neighbors and appellants (Jim and Debbie Arnesen) filed an appeal citing that "the proposed house is out of character with the neighborhood and incompatible with their house at 2401 State Street." The appellants also raise concerns regarding the design of the proposed residence not being in full compliance with the City's Single Family Residence Design Guidelines (see appellant's letter, Attachment 1). Planning staff believes the SFDB reviewed the project carefully, considered the appellant's concerns and successfully enacted design changes that lowered the residence and shifted building mass and increased the upper floor setback from the appellant's property.

The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines do not require strict adherence with all guidelines in every case. Frequently, the efforts necessary to achieve consistency with one guideline require a compromise on compliance with another guideline. Staff believes the SFDB used its discretion to make overall compatibility decisions and balance various guideline objectives to achieve an acceptable design for this particular site. The final second story design evolved and was improved as a result of the SFDB review; therefore, the project generally meets the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) and the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines. Planning Staff

recommends that Council deny the appeal, and uphold the SFDB's Project Design and Final Approvals.

DISCUSSION:

Project Description

The project involves a proposal to construct a 2,101 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage on an existing 7,500 square foot vacant lot. The project includes a new curb cut and driveway on State Street, walkways, patios, site walls and fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of front setback trees. The project includes 318 cubic yard of cut and fill grading with most of the grading to be exported from the site. (The approved plans indicated an incorrect, larger amount of grading). The property slopes away from State Street and is surrounded by two-story residences. The proposed total of 2,606 square feet of development is 85% of the required maximum allowed floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR) (Attachment 2 – Project Plans).

Single Family Design Board Review

The project was reviewed at four meetings by the SFDB (Attachment 3 – SFDB Minutes). At the first concept review hearing on September 22, 2014, the SFDB reviewed the proposal and indicated that the architecture was pleasing. The Board requested further information regarding the streetscape, adjacent homes in the neighborhood and for the placement of story poles at the vacant site.

The project returned for two additional concept reviews in October 2014. On October 6, 2014, the SFDB had the benefit of viewing the story poles and a streetscape perspective to evaluate possible design impacts. At that hearing, the appellant raised concerns with the placement of the garage and driveway, and potential loss of privacy. The SFDB asked the architect to study flipping the second story floor plan to move some of the mass to the north, study the roof design to possibly add dormer windows, and to reduce the second story plate height from 9 to 8 feet.

The project returned to SFDB on October 20, 2014 with some requested design changes incorporated which included dropping the proposed height of residence by two feet and shifting the massing of the second story. The appellant continued to suggest that the garage should be relocated to the rear of the property to be consistent with the existing homes in the neighborhood. The SFDB noted the efforts made to reduce the square footage of the second floor and the overall height of the building by lowering the finish floor by two feet. The SFDB indicated continued support for the style, size, and location of the revised design. The Board further indicated their preference to have the driveway entry remain in its proposed location to conform to neighboring properties. It was suggested that providing the driveway on the south side of the property was a better solution to lower the finish grade of the home and to protect the bunia-bunia trees.

The project returned for review on February 23, 2015 and again received positive comments from the SFDB. The SFDB ultimately voted 3/0/2 to grant Project Design and Final Approvals, with conditions, and indicated that the NPO compatibility analysis criteria had been met. The appellant was the only neighbor that spoke under public comment and consistently voiced opposition towards the design of the project at all four SFDB meetings.

APPEAL ISSUES

Neighborhood Compatibility and Size, Bulk and Scale

The Zoning Ordinance includes regulations limiting the FAR of single-family homes on lots less than 15,000 square feet. If the FAR of a residence exceeds 85% of the maximum allowed and the building height exceeds 25 feet a Modification request must be made and considered by the Planning Commission.

The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines encourage applicants to design homes under 85% of the maximum allowed FAR. The Guidelines recognize that houses over 85% of the maximum FAR are more likely to pose neighborhood compatibility issues and are generally discouraged. Additional information may be required for houses proposed to exceed 85% of the maximum area, including a study of the 20 closest home sizes and FARs, story poles, and streetscape perspective drawings. In this case, 85% of the maximum allowed FAR for the subject property is 2,614 square feet. Although the proposed 2,606 square foot house is just under the limit, the SFDB still requested the streetscape perspective, additional photographs of the neighborhood and story poles to be erected at the site.

The Guidelines state that an FAR should be reduced where development is closer to property boundaries or more visible to the public and to neighbors. The SFDB was successful in having the proposed upper floor redesigned and set back further away from the southerly property line. The majority of the second story is proposed to be located at least 10 to 14 feet away, with a portion up to 17 feet away from the appellant's property. The potential loss of privacy for the neighbor was lessened, but there are new windows proposed at the second story facing the adjoining properties, which is a normal design element that is largely unavoidable for quality of life purposes (See Attachment 4).

Consistency with Guidelines

The primary goals of the SFDB are to promote neighborhood compatibility and quality design. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines (Guidelines) are the primary guidelines used by the SFDB for project evaluation. The Guidelines help homeowners and architects design projects that are compatible in both size and design. The SFDB reviews projects for consistency with these guidelines to ensure changes to established neighborhoods are made with respect for design features and characteristics of surrounding properties.

The Guidelines include two-story design concepts that illustrate techniques to avoid crowding or overwhelming neighboring residences. Additions should fit into a neighborhood, when they have an appropriate volume, bulk, massing and scale and have a size appropriate for its lot size and not significantly larger than the immediate neighborhood. The Guidelines define these terms and provide examples of successful two-story residences. In this case the main structure has a generous front yard setback (approximately 35 feet) away from the front property line and most second story areas are setback away from interior property lines which is consistent with the direction provided in the Guidelines. Streetscape elevations and story poles were also provided and used by the SFDB to assist in the evaluation of neighborhood compatibility.

The two-car garage placement is proposed directly attached at the front of the residence facing the public street which is not the preferred screened location. There are several specific guidelines that the SFDB considers as they apply to neighborhood context and parking design aesthetics. The following Guideline excerpts state:

Homes should respect, complement or improve upon existing neighborhood patterns, such as:

- *Providing distance from the street (sometimes greater than present minimum zoning regulations)*
- *Existing parking arrangement patterns*
- *If possible, consider private use and view areas of immediate neighbors (See Good Neighbor Guidelines and Tips)*
- *Minimize parking aesthetic impacts along the street.*
- *The location and access to garages, carports or other parking areas can have a great effect on the appearance of a neighborhood.*
- *For new construction, garages should not be the predominant feature of the front elevation.*
- *Design solutions which locate the garage behind the main residence are preferred, where feasible.*

In this case, the applicant obtained SFDB support for the proposed garage location by showing a few examples in the neighborhood where this front facing garage design condition exists. The State Street residential area is considered an older established residential neighborhood which has a development pattern that typically has the garage to the rear of properties. Only one such example of a front facing garage exists for all the residences along the 2000 to-2400 blocks of State Street. However, as part of their review, the SFDB determined the front parking design was found elsewhere in the surrounding neighborhood and that the proposed garage location was acceptable for this site location. In past cases the SFDB has accepted front facing garages where property lot widths are narrow, excessive slopes exist, paving areas can be minimized or where parking at the front of properties allows for better use of the private backyards of properties.

Planning staff agrees that some design guidelines were not strictly followed regarding the proposed placement of the garage at the front of the home and the planned removal of several trees from the site. A full landscape plan was also approved by the SFDB that will replace some of the mature trees that are proposed for removal. It is staff's belief, however, that the SFDB has the discretion to make overall compatibility decisions and balance various guideline objectives to achieve an acceptable design for a particular site. The final second story design evolved and was improved as a result of the SFDB; therefore, the project generally meets the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and Guidelines. Additional setback distances were achieved as the massing of the proposed second story was shifted away from the appellant's property to reduce loss of privacy impacts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff recommends that Council deny the appeal and uphold the Single Family Board's decision to grant Project Design and Final Approval of the new residence and direct staff to return to Council with Decision and NPO Findings reflecting the outcome of the appeal.

NOTE: The project file and plans were delivered separately to City Council for review and are available for public review at the City Clerk's office.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Appellant letter, dated March 4, 2015
2. Reduced site plans, floor plan and photographs
3. SFDB Minutes
4. Reduced building elevations

PREPARED BY: Jaime Limón, Senior Planner II

SUBMITTED BY: George Buell, Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

RECEIVED

2015 MAR -4 AM 11: 07

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

March 4, 2015

Santa Barbara City Council
City of Santa Barbara
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Mayor Schneider and Council Members,

We are submitting this appeal letter to you regarding a decision made by the Single Family Design Board on Monday, February 23, 2015.

At their February 23, 2015 meeting, the Board voted to give 'Project Design Approval and Final Approval' to a proposed new home at 2405 State St.

The project includes a proposed 2,101 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage. The project includes a new driveway, walkways, curb cut, patios, site walls, fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of front setback trees. It also includes 2,825 cubic yard of cut and fill grading, of which 235 cubic yards will be exported. The proposed total of 2,606 square feet on a vacant lot is 85% of the required maximum floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR).

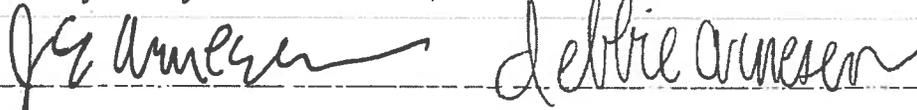
We are appealing this decision because we believe the project has several significant elements that we feel are not in alignment with the City's Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.

The proposed house is out of character with the neighborhood, incompatible with the neighboring property at 2401 State (which was built in 1948), and runs counter to what is suggested in the guidelines including the items listed below:

- For new construction, garages should not be the pre-dominant feature of the front elevation.
- Minimize grading both underneath the main building footprint and on the entire site. Only rarely do projects need to approach 500 cubic yards of grading, not including grading under the building footprint, to achieve reasonable development of a property.
- Avoid crowding or overwhelming neighboring residences.
- Avoid a "vertical canyon effect" between homes. The space between a proposed two-story home adjacent to one-story homes is important. Space between homes should increase as wall height increases. Consider set-backs greater than those required by the Municipal Code to avoid bulky structures.
- Set back taller portions of structures from the lot lines to reduce the appearance of height.

- Structures are sited such that they do not block light and views for other existing homes.
- Locate areas that require more privacy away from your neighbors. Avoid placing windows into locations that would look into adjacent windows.

Thank you for your consideration,

Handwritten signatures of Jim and Debbie Arnesen in black ink, positioned above a horizontal dashed line.

Jim & Debbie Arnesen
2401 State St.
Santa Barbara, CA
805-729-0432

jimmyarnesen@gmail.com

dza@silcom.com



PACIFIC ARCHITECTS

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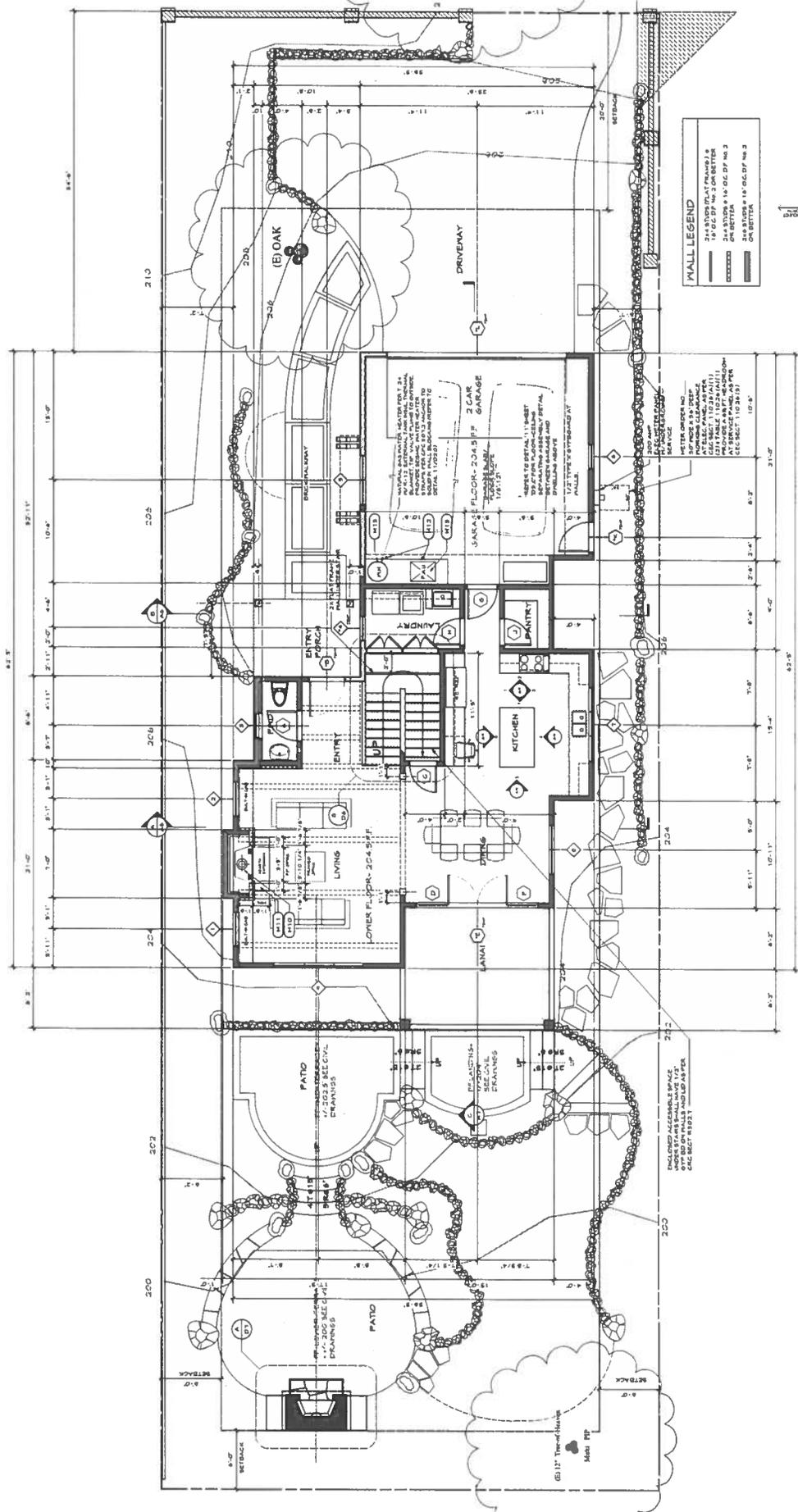
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
 2409 STATE STREET
 SANTA BARBARA, CA

ATTACHMENT 2

Date: 08.18.18

A2.0

Sheet #



LOWER FLOOR PLAN

- REFER TO COVER SHEET AND FOR KEY NOTES
- DOOR SWING CALLOUT SYMBOLS ABOVE THAT ARE ENCLOSED WITH A "1" INDICATE EMERGENCY EXIT PER CALIF. REFER TO PLAN FOR SWING THROUGH OPENING

**SFDB MINUTES
September 22, 2014**

CONCEPT REVIEW - NEW ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING

8. 2405 STATE ST E-3 Zone

(7:30) Assessor's Parcel Number: 025-071-012
Application Number: MST2014-00418
Owner: Dan Underwood
Architect: Bill Wolf

(Proposal to construct a 2,108 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage. The project includes a new driveway, walkways, curb cut, patios, site walls and fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of a front setback tree. The proposed total of 2,613 square feet on a vacant lot is 85% of the required maximum floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR).)

(Comments only; project requires environmental assessment.)

Actual time: 8:07 p.m.

Present: Bill Wolf, Architect; and Dan Underwood, Owner.

Public comment opened at 8:18 p.m.

- 1) Jim Arnesen, adjacent neighbor at 2401 State St., expressed surprise regarding the parcel being a buildable lot and neighborhood compatibility of the proposed house.

Public comment closed at 8:21 p.m.

Motion: Continued two weeks to Full Board with comments:

- 1) Provide level C story poles.
- 2) The Board finds the architecture to be pleasing.
- 3) Provide a streetscape plan of the property and adjacent homes.
- 4) Provide details, materials and color board, and a landscape plan.

Action: James/Bernstein, 4/0/1. Motion carried. (Sweeney stepped down, Woolery/Zimmerman absent).

**SFDB MINUTES
October 16, 2014**

SFDB-CONCEPT REVIEW (CONT.)

3. 2405 STATE ST E-3 Zone

(4:05) Assessor's Parcel Number: 025-071-012
Application Number: MST2014-00418
Owner: Dan Underwood
Architect: Bill Wolf

(Proposal to construct a 2,108 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage. The project includes a new driveway, walkways, curb cut, patios, site walls and fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of a front setback tree. The proposed total of 2,613 square feet on a vacant lot is 85% of the required maximum floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR).)

(Second Concept Review. Comments only; project requires environmental assessment. Project was last reviewed on September 22, 2014.)

Actual time: 4:00 p.m.

Present: Bill Wolf, Architect; Rob Fowler, Landscape Architect; and Dan Underwood, Owner.

Chair Sweeney announced that a licensed architect must be part of the quorum in order for the Board to review this project. As the sole licensed architect Board member present, he asked the owner and applicant if they were comfortable with him reviewing the proposal despite living in close proximity to the project. The owner and applicant welcomed Chair Sweeney's participation in the review of the project.

Public comment opened at 4:17 p.m.

- 1) Jim Arnesen, adjacent neighbor at 2401 State St., expressed concern regarding obstruction of sunlight, the mass of the second story, the location of the driveway and garage, and privacy issues. He implored the Board to review what grading and tree removals have been done on the property in the past two years.

Public comment closed at 4:21 p.m.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to Full Board with comments:

- 1) Study flipping the second story plan after consulting with staff regarding solar access requirements.
- 2) Study the roof, possibly adding dormer windows to create undulation on the south elevation.
- 3) Study reduction of the second story plate height from 9 feet to 8 feet.
- 4) Provide a landscape plan with plant selections that comply with requirements for low water usage.
- 5) Study an alternative to the clumping bamboo.
- 6) Investigate the supportability of the setback tree removals from the Parks Department.
- 7) Leave the installed story poles in place for an additional two days.

Action: Peirce/Woolery, 5/0/0. Motion carried. (James/Zimmerman absent).

SFDB MINUTES October 20, 2014

SFDB-CONCEPT REVIEW (CONT.)

6. 2405 STATE ST E-3 Zone

(5:25) Assessor's Parcel Number: 025-071-012
Application Number: MST2014-00418
Owner: Dan Underwood
Architect: Bill Wolf

(Proposal to construct a 2,101 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage. The project includes a new driveway, walkways, curb cut, patios, site walls, and fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of front setback trees. The proposed total of 2,606 square feet on a vacant lot is 85% of the required maximum floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR).)

(Third Concept Review. Comments only; project requires Environmental Assessment. Project was last reviewed on October 6, 2014.)

Actual time: 5:37 p.m.

Present: Bill Wolf, Architect; and Dan Underwood, Owner.

Public comment opened at 5:45 p.m.

- 1) Jim Arnesen, adjacent neighbor, spoke in opposition to the project, stating that the garage should be relocated to the rear of the property to be consistent with the existing homes in the neighborhood.

Public comment closed at 5:46 p.m.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to Full Board with comments:

- 1) The Board appreciates the efforts the architect has taken to reduce the square footage and the overall height of the building.
- 2) The Board appreciates pulling back the elevation on the south side.
- 3) The Board can support the style, size, and location of the property.
- 4) The Board looks forward to seeing the details and further resolution regarding the two bunia-bunia trees.
- 5) The Board prefers that the driveway remain in its current location to conform to neighboring properties.
- 6) The Board suggests that the driveway entry to the south side is a better solution to lower the finished grade of the home to protect the bunia-bunia trees.

Action: Miller/Bernstein, 5/0/0. Motion carried. (Woolery/Zimmerman absent).

SFDB MINUTES February 23, 2015

PROJECT DESIGN REVIEW

3. 2405 STATE ST E-3 Zone

(4:25) Assessor's Parcel Number: 025-071-012
Application Number: MST2014-00418
Owner: Dan Underwood
Architect: Bill Wolf

(Proposal to construct a 2,101 square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 505 square foot, two-car garage. The project includes a new driveway, walkways, curb cut, patios, site walls, fencing, an outdoor fireplace, and the removal of front setback trees. It also includes 2,825 cubic yard of cut and fill grading, of which 235 cubic yards will be exported. The proposed total of 2,606 square feet on a vacant lot is 85% of the required maximum floor-to-lot area ratio (FAR).)

(Project Design Approval and Final Approval are requested. Project was last reviewed on October 20, 2014.)

Actual time: 4:15 p.m.

Present: Bill Wolf, Architect; and Dan Underwood, Owner.

Public comment opened at 4:30 p.m.

- 1) Jim Arnesen expressed concerns regarding the amount of cut and fill grading, the overwhelming height of the structure in the view corridor, the location of the garage fronting State Street, and

the removal of the *araucaria araucana* (monkey puzzle tree).

Public comment closed at 4:35 p.m.

Motion: **Project Design Approval and Final Approval with the finding that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance criteria have been met as stated in Subsection 22.69.050 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code with comments:**

- 1) The Board appreciates the applicant efforts.
- 2) The Board had positive comments regarding the project's consistency and appearance, neighborhood compatibility, and quality of architecture and materials.
- 3) Include in the landscape plan a grouping of three *hymenosporum flavum*, comprising two 15 gallon and one 24 inch boxes.
- 4) The chimney should be clad with stucco or stone.

Action: Bernstein/Pierce, 3/0/2. Motion carried. (Zink/Woolery abstained, Sweeney stepped down).

The ten-day appeal period was announced.



PACIFIC
ARCHITECTS

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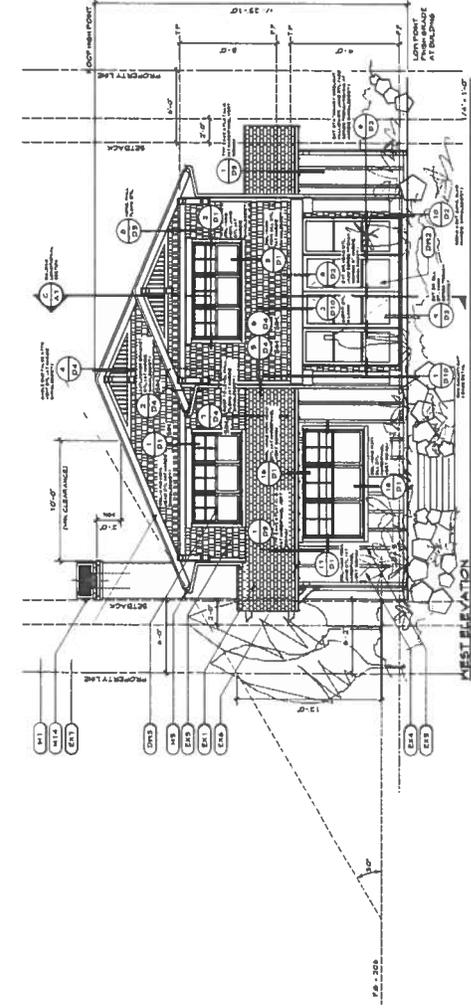
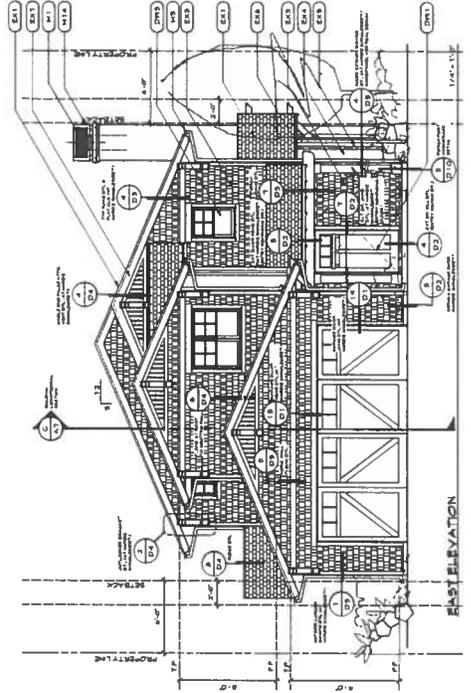
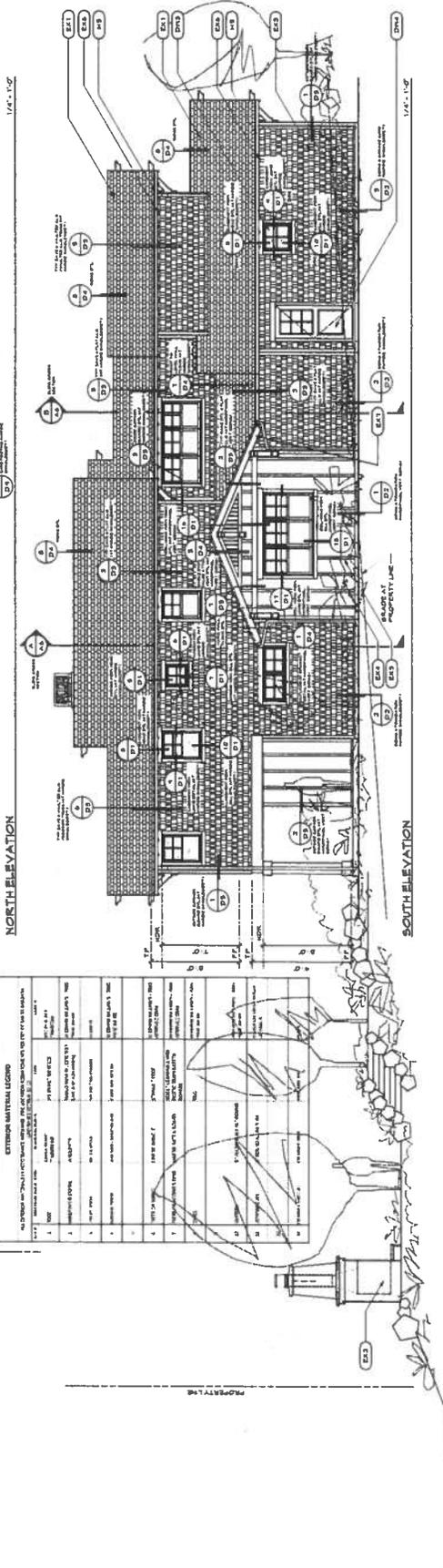
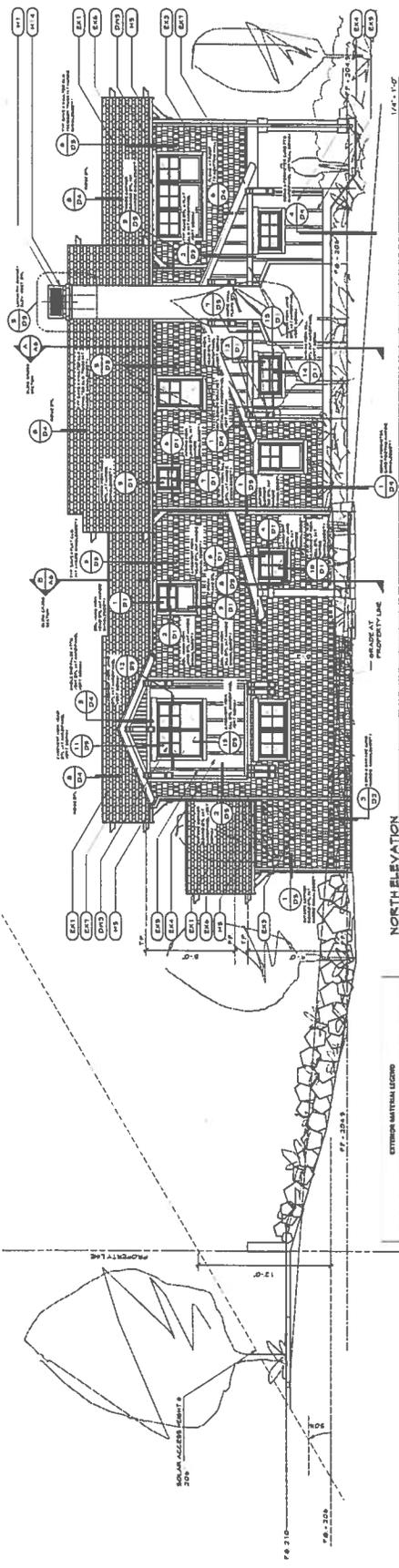
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
2405 STATE STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CA

ATTACHMENT 4

Sheet No.	A5.0
Project No.	1117G
Revision	
Date	8.18.18

A5.0

Sheet 4



EXTERIOR MATERIAL LEGEND

ALL MATERIALS TO BE USED IN THIS PROJECT SHALL BE OF THE QUALITY AND TYPE SPECIFIED IN THIS LEGEND. ALL MATERIALS SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE ARCHITECT PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MANUFACTURER / TYPE
1	BRICK	1.5" x 7.5" x 3.5" Common Brick
2	CEMENT SIDING	1/2" x 8" x 24" Random Pattern
3	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
4	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
5	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
6	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
7	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
8	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
9	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
10	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
11	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
12	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
13	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
14	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
15	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
16	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
17	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
18	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding
19	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 6" x 12" Vertical Siding
20	WOOD Siding	1/2" x 4" x 8" Horizontal Siding