

TO: Santa Barbara City Council  
 FROM: Catherine "Lily" Bastug Vincenti

RECEIVED

2015 AUG 13 PM 4:38

August 13, 2015

RE: Appeal of 8/3/15 ABR approval for the accessory building project at 806 Alberta Avenue submitted by Architect Jyl Ratkevich  
 Application # MST2015-00093

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Dear Council Members

I am only one of a group of homeowners (from six separate households) who have committed time energy and in some cases significant amounts of cash to registering this appeal of the approval of the plans submitted to the ABR for the 2 story accessory dwelling with 2 attached garages at 806 Alberta Avenue on Santa Barbara's already densely populated Westside. I have encouraged members of the group to submit in their own words their reasons for appealing this decision. Those letters are attached at the end of the letter and documents I am submitting requesting the Appeal.

I am basing my request for an appeal on the set of general goals defining the major concerns and objectives of the ABR as listed Santa Barbara City Website, plus the various goals, duties and concerns the members have expressed during ABR public hearings. Those concepts, duties and concerns include but are not limited to the following:

**ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW written GOALS:**

- D.**to promote **high standards** in architectural and landscape design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures
- G.**to promote neighborhood compatibility;

And additional concepts further delineated on the City website:

Structure: elements should be consistent with the best elements that distinguish the particular area in which they are proposed. These elements include, but are not limited to volume size massing proportion scale bulk roof-lines colors textures materials. Consideration of the existing setback and patterns of development in the particular area can also be important.

**Massing and patterns of development**

Although the size of this project as designed is within the guidelines for the total square footage of the comparatively tiny 50 x101 ft lot, the architect, Jyl Ratkevich, made an arbitrary decision to condense all of the elements into the rear third (and extreme NE corner, of the lot) resulting in bulk and mass too overwhelming for the privacy of the homeowners living on the neighboring, and equally small, lots. (as illustrated in color coded illustration created from publicly available plan submitted to ABR).

The location of 2 story living quarters in that corner of the property should have elicited concerns about privacy, views and light entering into the yards of the neighboring properties from Ms. Ratkevich from the beginning but she failed to consider the need to consult with neighbors during initial planning stage, or later stages, about this predictable conflict, proceeding to design the plans in a vacuum. We only learned the details of Ms. Ratkevich's proposed design just prior to her presentation to the ABR on 6/22/15, at which time the neighbors rallied to attend the public hearing and voice their objections.

Although she has subsequently submitted changes that move the buildings slightly the concentrated mass of the project is still located to that rear NE corner.

I and the other neighbors oppose this project because of privacy issues based on mass and placement. The project as now proposed it is not compatible with the neighborhood in the blocks to the west of Chino St. where 2 story secondary living units built over garages are not the norm and placing secondary residences on the rear 3<sup>rd</sup> of the lot as close as legally permissible has been avoided. The area along the San Andres commercial corridor has a decidedly different character than the blocks to the west of Chino Street. We are already densely populated due to many illegal rentals (one of which has been This will negatively affect the character of our neighborhood and lower our property values by degrading the amount of winter sunlight and warmth coming into our gardens, onto our decks and into our windows allowing us to have passive solar heating instead of turning on gas and electric heaters.

### **Fairness**

There seems to be a fairness issue as far as ABR is concerned in directing the process in allowing only 2 minutes comment once a month for 3 months in a row to the adjacent neighbors who are all older and who can be assumed will be living with the negative effects of the project for the rest of their lives when ABR is aware the architect did not or elicit any feedback or even speak to the neighbors before designing a project that would obviously impact their sunlight and privacy. It would have been more even handed given the issues of privacy and mass which are under the purview of ABR if they had been more positive and proactive in getting a dialog going.

When asked by ABR on 8/3/15 about making any subsequent efforts to contact the concerned neighbors about their issues Ms. Ratkevich stated had been offended by the demeanor of some of the neighbors, as well as being called 'Honey' by one of them, so therefore felt justified to only listen to the comments voiced during the 2 minutes granted to each neighbor who happens to be available to attend one of the ABR Public Hearings.

Ms. Ratkevich finally called me yesterday morning 8/12/15 only 29 hours before the deadline for the Appeal to discuss the project. I had just been preparing to email a letter (attached) I'd written to Ms. Ratkevich because Susan Gantz at Planning had indicated that she had suggested Ms. Ratkevich reach out to us but no one had heard from her. While she made promising comments about an alternative plan for the project because she did not have the time to get any even preliminary drawings or plans drawn to be approved by her client or shown to the appropriate City departments she had nothing to present to us.

Late yesterday afternoon she called and asked me to write a waiver into our Appeal stating that we would not object to any plan she submitted for 806 Alberta as long as it was 1 story. I naturally declined to include such an agreement into our Appeal since that would be a pig in a poke; and I certainly could not make a commitment for the other members of the group especially the neighbors adjacent to the project who have contributed the vast majority of the significant fee required to try to stop a project which threatens not only their privacy, sunlight, and property values but also will have great impact on the density of the entire neighborhood. We feel the density and character of the neighborhood to be especially under threat by this project because of the known propensity of the owner of 806 Alberta, Mary Martinez, to violate the City Zoning laws (and I'm told other California laws) by restoring and continuously renting out an illegal unit ordered removed as a condition of sale when Ms. Martinez bought the property in July of 2013.

## High standards to promote in architectural and landscape design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures

During the most recent public hearing on 8/3/15, upon viewing the current version of the plans Ms. Ratkevich presented to the ABR, at least two of the members commented that as a consequence of her efforts to address the concerns of the neighbors Ms. Ratkevich had now committed to design decisions that resulted in a “**bastardized**” overall design. Mr. Cung expressed disappointment indicating that he had hoped he would see a better result from the architect.

After listening to the members of the Board and hearing the word *Bastardized* repeated by more than one of the members (and opposed by none) it is hard for me to reconcile concept of *Architectural Integrity* when I hear at that same meeting the Board propose and vote for *Approval* of this project with only minor aesthetic tweaks. If the Santa Barbara ABR does not stand up for good standards of integrity in architectural design and instead allows Ms. Ratkevich to proceed with her *bastardized* project it:

1. sets a precedent for her future behavior;
2. leaves the neighbors of 806 Alberta with a *bastardized project*, which not only cuts the winter sunlight into their gardens; but also represents a potentially constant zoning violation,
3. reduces the values of the surrounding properties because of its substandard appearance
4. becomes an example of the lowered standards for our neighborhood, which will in turn be cited as a precedent for more poor design,
5. will reduce property values as similar poorly designed projects are approved by precedent

Instead of approving it would be better for the ABR to hold Ms. Ratkevich to standards and send the plans back directing her to eliminate the self imposed constraint of constructing every element at the rear third of the lot - suggesting she could locate the second living space over the main dwelling providing her and the client the possibility of improving the architectural merit of both. It would be helpful given the history of the client to ask that the project honor the zoning laws by specifying that a separate garage unit with no windows and plumbing be built as parking for the main dwelling at the rear of the property so it is not adjacent to any plumbed living spaces thus limiting further temptation of her client to continue violating zoning regulations by renting out illegally converted spaces. Specifying that the second required parking structure be a covered carport with permeable pavers alternated with gravel would discourage future illegal conversion to living space and mitigate current rain run-off tendencies.

## Patterns of development and setting precedents

The reason that this project is so important to us personally and our Westside neighborhood in general is that if allowed to go ahead as designed the project at 806 Alberta Ave. will be used by architects in the future to claim an established pattern of development in our neighborhood favoring the right of a single neighbor who cannot afford to build up over the original dwelling being allowed to condense the mass of construction into the rear 1/3 of the lot thus most impinging on the neighbors by building a 2<sup>nd</sup> story unit at the back portion of the property with attached garages which will be easily converted into illegal un-permitted bedrooms. The result of any such project is that it devalues the value of adjacent properties by diminishing the outdoor appeal of the residences by plunging their yards into shadow during the fall and winter. Allowing a known zoning violator to build easily converted garages adjacent to plumbed living units encourages further the density of the entire neighborhood exacerbating the very parking problems that the mandated garages (which at 90% of the residences are not used for cars) are ostensibly supposed to alleviate.

It would be much better to continue the precedents in the 800 block of Alberta Avenue (and any of the blocks on the west of Chino St.) to follow the pattern of only permitting 2 story secondary living areas on the block which are located in the middle (and not the rear third of the lot). Requiring balconies which are not oriented or accessed in a way that impinges on the visual privacy of neighbors (an issue addressed in detail in the attached letter emailed to Ms. Ratkevich by me at 11:41 on 8/12/15

Garages are more appropriate than carports on the ground floor of multiple story buildings as they provide a more visually substantial mass to support the visual mass of upper stories

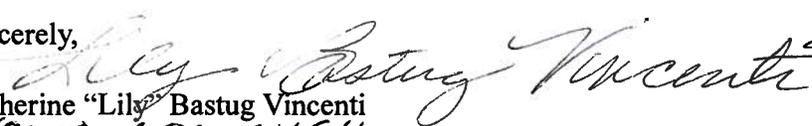
Although a model was submitted to ABR demonstrating the advantages of a permitted second parking spot under a covered carport that was not under the second story but was located nearest the lot line no consideration was given to the proposal whatsoever, even though it spoke to mitigating the mass of the project, the exclusion of light to neighboring lots and the possibility of the garages directly adjacent to the fully plumbed lower living unit being converted into illegal bedrooms by an owner known to create then rent out illegal un-permitted living spaces.

### Summation:

Since the architectural integrity was pronounced 'bastardized' by multiple members of the ABR after of concessions needed to protect neighbors privacy the plan for the project at 806 Alberta Ave. (approved on 8/3/15) I believe it does not **promote high aesthetic standards** which is one of the responsibilities of the ABR. How low a bar is acceptable for the Westside? Is there an ABR classification lower than 'bastardized'? The **massing** of the entire project in the rear 1/3 of the lot is not consistent with anything else on that block and sets a low standard and is an aberrant **pattern of development** for the neighborhood. That **pattern of development** will set a precedent for future inappropriate construction when homeowners lacking the funds to develop a secondary unit that respects the existing **pattern of development** and **placement of mass** on this block will cite and photograph 806 Alberta as a **precedent**. A project being defined by such a low bar as "bastardized" should not be allowed to become a precedent in this neighborhood as it masses the living quarters and the garages all in the back 1/3 of the lot. It is **unfair** to saddle adjacent neighbors and the neighborhood in general with construction that has a low standard of aesthetics because the owner does not have the funds to build a project that would meet a high aesthetic standard and improve the neighborhood instead of devaluing the surrounding area and I believe that fairness is one of the requirements of the ABR. **Not in the character with the neighborhood:** The neighborhood to the west of Chino has different character than blocks between San Andres and Chino units jammed into the rear of the lot impinging on neighbors is not a characteristic of the 800 block of Alberta or the 800 block of W. Arrellaga

Thank you for your consideration of these issues of importance to the individual adjacent neighbors and the quality of life and property values of the neighborhood in general.

Sincerely,

  
Catherine "Lily" Bastug Vincenti

(805) 680-3494

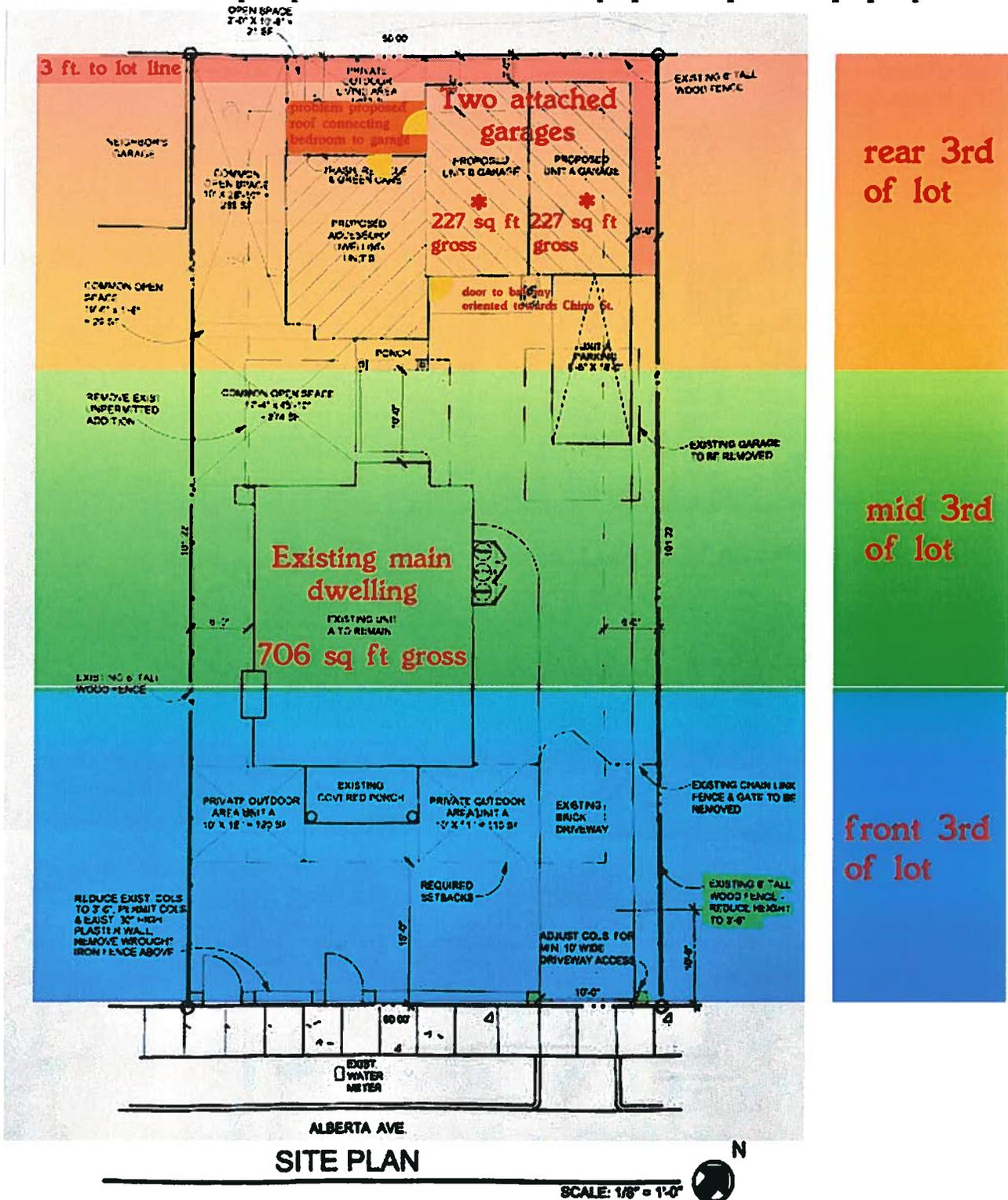
Encl. 8/12/15 Letter and color coded plan sent to architect Jyl Ratekevich regarding plan of project at 806 Alberta Ave as approved by ABR 8/3/15.

photos illustrating difference between west side of Chino Street and east side of Chino Street  
photos illustrating only 2 story building on the 800 Alberta /w.Arrellaga is centered on lot

**Proposed 806 Alberta Ave Project - Too Dense to fit Rear 1/3 of Small Lot**  
 Original plan unnecessarily diminished visual privacy and winter sunlight to neighbors.

ABR now proclaims concessions to neighbors have bastardized all design integrity. Solution: redesign to locate the living space over the main dwelling and place separate garage and covered carports at rear of lot to reduce mass, and bulk plus address merited illegal conversion concerns

Attached garages (which ABR now suggests have doors with windows) favor illegal conversion of ground floor into to a separate unpermitted 2 bedroom unit by connecting easily converted garage/bedrooms to the fully plumbed lower level living area via a newly proposed continuous roof extending across paved outdoor living area from garage backdoor to interior living area back door. Note: wner has record of 2 years continuous violations of zoning laws due to illegal rental studio ordered removed by City but reinstalled immediately upon her purchase property in 2013.



August 12, 2015

TO: Jyl Ratkevich

FROM: Catherine "Lily" Bastug Vincenti

RE: SB Planning Division Susan Gantz' suggestion of communication re: 806 Alberta Ave project.

Dear Ms. Ratkevich,

I spoke with Susan Gantz yesterday morning at Planning seeking guidance about the details of the Appeal of the ABR approval of the project at 806 Alberta Ave which we intend to file. As part of our conversation she told me that she had encouraged you to reach out to the concerned neighbors. To facilitate this I gave her my cell number and email address to pass along to you, but so far to my knowledge you have not tried to contact me or the other neighbors. Therefore I'm hoping to initiate communication with you through this email, which I will also request Ms. Gantz to forward to you.

I am sorry that you feel you have been treated poorly. I do not believe that you and I have spoken, or that I have been rude to you, but if I have I do apologize. Please understand that we as neighbors will be living for the rest of our lives with the consequences of the design decisions made for the project. Sadly we feel that you have not treated us with respect from the very inception of your design process for Ms. Martinez' secondary unit. It is truly regrettable that you did not perceive from the beginning that the surrounding neighbors who have well manicured-front yards (many with high hedges) might be fiercely proud of the gardens they have nurtured and worked so hard to create and over many years, and therefore understand how they would likely be very attached to both their privacy and the sunlight that renders their yards, decks and interiors light-filled pleasant retreats (despite being located in Santa Barbara's the most densely populated district, District 3, the Westside,).

As a consequence of your having resisted reaching out to us both before and after presenting your plans to ABR the neighbors were kept in the dark and had no direct input regarding changes in the plans you presented in response to ABR feedback. Your statement recorded on the video of the 8/3/15 meeting (02:12:53) reveals you as feeling justified to limiting your understanding of the individual neighbor's concerns to whatever you could glean from their "2 minutes each" of allowed public comment at whichever of the 3 ABR meetings those individual neighbors were able to attend on that specific day at that specific time. We are all owner residents, from 6 separate households, with serious concerns about how the project will affect us and our entire neighborhood from here on out. Unfortunately limiting any two way communication with the neighbors in this way has contributed to your misconstruing various neighbor's concerns. The result is that you have come up with solutions which really do not mitigate the or respect our issues. For instance:

1. We do not seriously believe that the exterior storage closets in the proposal represented much potential for conversion into un-permitted bedrooms. Therefore your suggestion that the relocation of those outside storage closets was not a credible manner in which to mitigate our justifiable concerns that the owner, Ms. Martinez will convert the attached garages into bedrooms. She has a continuing known pattern of violating the Santa Barbara City zoning laws (and I am told State laws) from first day she acquired the property in July of 2013 by reinstalling plumbing and kitchen facilities then renting out the un-permitted unit at 806 Alberta which was ordered removed by City Zoning as a condition of sale.
2. The neighbors are concerned about the proximity of the attached garages to the fully plumbed lower level of the unit and the manner in which their placement favors conversion into adjoining bedrooms which will allow the upper and lower floors to be rented as independent

- units. The 8/3/15 recommendation of multiple ABR members that the garage doors have windows to render the look more “cottagey” increases our concern since those windows will make garage conversion into bedrooms even more tempting (a fact briefly noted by Mr. Cung)
3. Even more worrisome is the change to the original plan of a new continuous roof for the ground floor on the NW face of the unit extending over the “people door” at the back of garage as well as the “people door” at the rear of the fully-plumbed lower level habitable space. This particular inclusion has set off a giant red flag for us since the new roof section is shown above a paved area 'Outdoor *Living Space*' making it readily apparent how someone already inclined to create illegal rental units would glass in the area under the roof to create an illegal enclosed hallway leading from an illegal un-permitted garage/bedroom into the permitted fully plumbed 1st floor.
  4. Regarding the balcony, my apologies that my previous document was unclear about the problem. Access to the balcony from a hinged door facing NE towards Chino St directs traffic (and therefore line-of-sight) towards the neighboring yards, decks and window of the houses located on Chino. Enclosing the bottom of the balcony does not remedy that\*. A traditional entrance to the balcony from the Living Room through sliding doors facing Alberta Ave. orients the traffic and gaze out towards Alberta into the unit's own yard, instead of towards neighbors who wish to avoid the necessity of planting trees which then cut out more light to their yards and houses. A 4' wide open sliding door on the SE wall also provides better cross ventilation.

Since the reactions of the neighbors to the significant negative changes a two story unit condensed into the rear 1/3 of the lot came as a surprise to you I imagine it is possible your previous projects didn't involve owner/resident neighbors who had invested so many years in creating peaceful garden retreats as extensions of tiny homes. Privacy is the reason that many of us maintain 7-8ft. high hedges which work well to shelter us from the view of neighbors living in adjacent single story houses while allowing a maximum of winter light to enter into our gardens, onto our decks and into our windows. Hedges do not work to screen 2 story dwellings especially those with balconies because the maximum height for a hedge at the interior of a lot is 12 ft.. That only reaches to the height of the railing of a balcony leaving people standing on the balcony visible from the waist up with their sight-line unimpeded into our gardens and widows. Trees are not a good solution because our lots are very small, so if trees to are planted visually screen that additional 3 feet above the balcony rail we immediately start losing sunlight into our yards due to the spread of the tree and the angle of the winter sun – net result loss of light and warmth into yard and home. There are no trees which politely remain at the ideal 15 or 16 foot height so we then are faced with constantly trimming trees that just want to grow taller and taller. To observe the invasion of privacy caused by the 2<sup>nd</sup> story balcony visit 815 Alberta, see how the balcony at 811 invades privacy from various points in yard and inside the home. \*Talk to the residents of both and learn how screening balconies from the railing down does not address the problem. Check the backyard at 811 to observe how screening trees now diminish light into that and neighboring lots.

Yesterday Ms. Gantz mentioned that she felt a single story project was possible by getting a variance. As long as the garages are un-attached and distant from the plumbed areas that would be a preferable alternative for the neighbors and neighborhood. Another variation acceptable to neighbors would be to build the living quarters over the main dwelling which would allow you to design a project that could improve the aesthetic appeal of the current structure as well and thereby entire look of 806 Alberta. Un-attached covered parking is key - in reality only 1 in 10 (or less) of the residents park a car in the garages on the Westside, so considering a covered carport as the second required covered parking spot could eliminate 1 bedroom conversion temptation, augment the open feeling and decrease rain run-off.

Thank you for taking these concerns seriously and considering possible solutions,  
Sincerely, Catherine “Lily” Bastug Vincenti

**Noth East side of Chino toward San Andres and the Riviera**



**Chino Street side of San Andres commercial corridor block composed of single houses mixed w apartment buildings**

**South West side of Chino toward Gillespie and the Mesa**



**Gillespie/Harding Elementary School single story Cottage Neighborhood block except for 1 two story located in center of lot on Arrellaga**

**The only two story house on the same block as 806 Alberta is one at 827 W. Arrellaga where they have successfully built in the center of the lot, avoided building any tall buildings on the rear 1/3 of the lot, and have a balcony that does not direct the gaze towards the neighbors.**





David Hale <k2tibter@gmail.com>

2015 AUG 13 PM 4:38

**806 Alberta Ave MST2015-012**

David Hale <k2tibter@gmail.com>  
Draft

Thu, Aug 13, 2015 at 10:28 AM

David Hale  
1531 chino st  
Santa Barbara 93101  
805 403 4502  
K2tibter@gmail.com

Dear ABR appeals process personnel.

I would like to express my desire for an appeal of the ABR's decision to approve the development at 806 Alberta Ave. The property owner and the Architect made no effort to confer with the neighbors that would be affected by this proposed development prior to the ABR meeting where our concerns were limited to 2 minutes each in a very uncomfortable setting.

This design fails to meet the following guidelines of the ABR.

D. to promote high standards of architectural design and construction of aesthetically pleasing structures.

this design has been called a Bastardization by members of the board and will be an eyesore in the neighborhood.

G. To promote neighborhood compatibility.

This design does not fit into this immediate neighborhood at all. Most of the existing houses have no structures in the back yard at all and none in the immediate area are 2 stories set all the way back on the lot.

I. To promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of public scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation of open space and variation of styles of architecture.

This design blocks the view from several areas and creates no open space at all.

This development also fails to meet the ABR guidelines section 4. Multi-family Accessory Buildings, Garages and carports.

#### 1.4.1. Garage doors facing the street.

1.4.2 Accessory building should not be large or located in visually prominent areas.

This design puts the 2nd story where all of the immediate neighbors will see it from their decks kitchens yards and bedrooms.

This neighborhood is 85 years old and many of the immediate neighbors have owned their homes, that they live in, for decades and to have this development design forced on them by an absentee landlord with a history of violations is completely unacceptable. This development will result in a loss of value of the affected properties and the ability of the homeowners to enjoy their homes and backyards.

If there must be a 2 story development it should be located at the front of the lot.

There is room for a single story development on the lot that would be much more acceptable.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

David L.Hale

JAMES & KAREN HURST

809 W. ARRELAGA ST.

805-252-1192

SANTA BARBARA, CA.

WE HAVE LIVED HERE FOR 55 YEARS AS OWNER OCCUPANTS. WE OPPOSE THIS PROJECT IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND THE TWO STORY DESIGN IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE QUANT ONE STORY SPANISH STYLE NEIGHBOR HOOD AND ARCHITECTURE. ALL NEIGHBORS WE HAVE SPOKEN WITH OPPOSE THIS PROJECT, AND IS BECOMING A HIGH DENSITY AREA WITH LARGE FAMILIES DOUBLING UP ON THE PROPERTIES, OVER WHELMING AMOUNT OF VEHICLES PARKING ON THE STREETS AT CAPACITY & VERY LITTLE ON SITE PARKING IS FUNCTIONALLY INEFFICIENT, THE PROJECT WOULD DESTROY OUR VIEW OF THE MOUNTAIN TO THE SOUTH, AS WELL AS LOSING OUR REAR YARD PRIVACY. IF THIS PROJECT IS APPROVED, I CAN GUARANTEE IT WILL BE RENTED UP WITH NUMEROUS TENANTS, THE GARAGES AS DESIGNED WOULD BECOME LIVING SPACES AS WHAT IS HAPPENING ALL OVER SANTA BARBARA. THERE IS ENOUGH SQUARE FOOTAGE ON THE PROPERTY TO DESIGN A ONE STORY PROJECT AND HAVE THE PROPER REAR & SIDE YARD SETBACK AS PER CODE. PLEASE PRESERVE THIS NEIGHBOR HOOD.

RESPECTFULLY

James & Karen Hurst

Roberta M. VanRossen  
1515 Chino Street (corner of Alberta & Chino)  
Santa Barbara CA 93101  
805 687-5639  
[rbishopd@aol.com](mailto:rbishopd@aol.com)

In regards to : 806 Alberta Ave  
Application #: MST2015-00093  
APN: 043-241-012

As a homeowner on the west side I agree with Catherine Bastug and the other surrounding neighbors that the remodel submitted for 806 Alberta Ave does not agree with the goals that the ABR has assigned. Nor will bring any added value to our west side neighborhood.

Following the goals that the ABR has created:

D.to promote high standards in architectural and landscape design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures; ***As noted in one of the ABR meetings just because this style had been approved on other properties doesn't mean it looks appealing and therefore doesn't mean its okay to be duplicated.***

G.to promote neighborhood compatibility; ***As a homeowner that has a similar structure next door to me, the high structure blocks my views to the hill side as well as I always have a neighbor's balcony and or window looking not only into my yard but my kitchen and bedroom.***

H.to encourage the preservation of pre1925 and Hispanic styles of architecture; ***I do not see in the plans submitted conforming to the preservation of our surrounding architectures.***

I.to promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of public scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation of open space, and variation of styles of architecture; ***The plans proposed block my neighbor's views of the hillside and they will now be looking at a second story as I unfortunately have to.***

K. to encourage landscape design that utilizes water-wise plants and the most efficient irrigation technology available for the protection and conservation of our water resources; ***The concerns of drainage addressed in the first meeting have not been brought up since. Currently the drainage all goes into the back neighbor's lot, needs to be rectified to avoid flooding.***

L.to ensure that the review process is fair and consistent both in policy and implementation to allow all who are involved to benefit from the process; ***We appreciate the opportunity to voice our concerns and our intentions are not to prevent Ms. Martinez from improving her property just not at the detriment of the surrounding neighbors. Again as a neighbor living directly next door to this style of plan, it's intrusive, lowers my property value and steals my views which is part of the reason we live in such a beautiful place.***

Thank you

  
Roberta M. VanRossen

8/13/15

Director of Sales, Sherwin Williams

City of Santa Barbara  
630 Garden St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Attn: Architectural Board of Review/Planning Division

August 13, 2015

Re: 806 Alberta; MST2015-00093

Dear ABR Members,

I am writing in reference to the proposed improvements to the property at 806 Alberta Avenue, in the Westside neighborhood of Santa Barbara. The project is not appropriate for this neighborhood.

This area of the Westside is very densely populated and this additional unit will just add to the problem. Parking is nearly impossible. Once again I counted how many cars were parked on this one block long street last night and the number was 28. There is literally nowhere to park on this street in the evening hours. The unfortunate fact is only a very few residents use their garages or driveways to park in so the required stipulation of providing off street parking in effect does not help the neighborhood what so ever.

The other issue I have with this property is "building up". So called vertical improvements takes away from other neighbor's privacy. I personally have experienced losing ALL of my privacy due to an "improvement" at 811 Alberta Ave. I welcome anyone from the ABR to come to my residence so I may show you. I can only speak officially for myself, but the impression I get from speaking with my neighbors is if an addition is to be approved we would rather see the homeowner build out and ask for variances than build up. The other concern I have is once construction is complete and the building inspector has signed off on the project is that it will quickly be converted into more than one dwelling, the design configuration lends to this possibility. It is a fact in Santa Barbara that there are thousands of unpermitted dwellings.

Also I would like to bring to your attention that the home owner Ms. Martinez has made no effort, to my knowledge, to speak with any of the neighbors to confer with them about the proposed "improvements". It has been brought to my attention that the architect Ms. Jyl Ratkevitch has only spoke with Catherine "Lily" Bastug about the project and that effort was only made within the last 30 hours prior to this appeal, so a very last minute effort to converse with the neighborhood with anyone in the neighborhood.

Please think out the lasting effect this will have on our neighborhood.

Thank you,

  
Susan Lafond

**815 Alberta Avenue**

**Santa Barbara, CA 93101**

Brian King  
1525 Chino Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
tel 805 452 0471  
[briansking@aol.com](mailto:briansking@aol.com)

Reviewing the goals of the Architectural Board of Review, it is difficult to comprehend how this project ever survived the planning process.

- Have the historic and architectural qualities of Santa Barbara really been protected by the approval of this building?
- Do we have, in this building the high standards of architectural design that the City is keen to promote?
- Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but by any stretch of the imagination, can this proposed building really be an aesthetically pleasing structure?
- Does this addition improve the general quality of the environment?
- And how does the approval of this eyesore promote compatibility within the neighbourhood?

All the main residences surrounding the proposed development, are of a similar size, yet none of the owners has sought to turn their residence into a source of income or construct an additional building as "a residence for a declining relative" .

None has the desire to construct as many buildings as are permitted into the grounds of their principal private residence. Indeed neighbourhood goodwill is very prevalent and reflected in the usual mundane ways, such as

- the shared fencing costs of neighbouring properties
- the pruning of overhanging or light obstructing foliage

The owner of 806 Alberta Avenue purchased the property just two years ago. Since that time the property has been rented out almost the whole time. There is an illegal extension at the rear, which is to be demolished.

This proposed structure fulfils the pecuniary interest of one individual at the expense of many neighbours and the enhancement of the historic Westside.