



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE HEARING OFFICER

HEARING DATE: August 11, 2004 REPORT NO. HO 04-108

ATTENTION: Hearing Officer

SUBJECT: OLSEN RESIDENCE - PROJECT NUMBER: 6199

LOCATION: 348 Vista de La Playa

APPLICANT: William R. Olsen, Jr. and Wanda W. Tang, Husband and Wife,
Owner/Permittees.

SUMMARY

Requested Action - Should the Hearing Officer approve a Coastal Development Permit No. 10258 for the demolition of an existing single-family residence and construction of a new single-family residence with the relocation of an existing stormdrain pipe (currently under the footprint of the existing and proposed residence) to a re-alignment within the property?

Staff Recommendation -

1. CERTIFY Negative Declaration LDR No. 6199 and,
2. APPROVE Coastal Development Permit No. 10258

Community Planning Group Recommendation – On June 10, 2003, the Coastal Subcommittee of the La Jolla Community Planning Association (LJCPA) approved the project and on July 3, 2003, the LJCPA approved the project on a Consent Calendar. Due to internal LJCPA conflicts at this time, records of votes are not attainable and individual notes and recollections are also not available.

Environmental Review – A Negative Declaration, LDR No. 6199, has been prepared in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines.

BACKGROUND

The subject property addressed as 348 Vista de La Playa, is improved with an existing single-family residence built in a split-level design in 1948. An accessory structure is located in the northwest portion of the site. The property is a 7,148 square-foot, RS-1-7 zoned lot located in the Coastal Overlay Zone (Appealable), Coastal Height Limit, Beach Parking Impact area, and within the boundaries of the La Jolla Community Plan. The lot is shaped somewhat like the state of Utah but with a curved base which comprises the street frontage where a 10-foot front yard setback was established on the recorded subdivision map. Vista de la Playa is a dead end cul-de-sac to the west with the subject site about one block from the Pacific Ocean. The neighborhood is similarly zoned and developed with a variety of single-family housing styles. A stormdrain that originates with a curb inlet on Monte Vista Avenue to the east, traverses a number of private lots and within the subject property, passes below the existing residence before connecting to another curb inlet and crossing Vista de La Playa in a southerly direction. The application for the development of this site includes a proposed relocation/re-routing of the stormdrain pipe from its east side of the property drop inlet along the interior side property-line toward the street and across the front of the lot to the existing curb inlet. There are no public views identified in the Local Coastal Program or La Jolla Community Plan through or across this site.

DISCUSSION

The existing improvements on the property at 348 Vista de La Playa are proposed for demolition with the existing stormdrain pipeline traversing the site and below the foundation and floor of the existing and proposed new residence, to be abandoned. The proposed new single-family residence is three-stories in height when viewed from the lower elevation on the front/southerly elevation of the lot and two-stories in height when viewed from the rear/northerly elevation. Most of the lower floor level qualifies as a basement and the square-footage is not included in the calculation of Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

The lower level of the proposed structure includes a three-car garage, two bedrooms, a hobby room and appliance rooms. Of the 2,128 square-feet comprising the lower, only 308 square-feet are included as FAR. The second/main floor contains living, dining, kitchen, restrooms and guest room and comprises 2,028 square-feet of floor area. The upper floor is comprised of the master bedroom, study and decks with a floor area of 1,403 square-feet. The total floor area is 5,559 square feet with 3,379 square-feet counted towards FAR for a ratio of 0.52 where the zone and lot size of 7,148 would permit a maximum FAR of 0.57 or 4,074 square-feet of floor area.

The structural materials include clay tile roofing on a 3:12 roof pitch with a rounded tower element and a rectangular shaped skylite, the walls, fascia's, parapet and perimeter fencing walls are stuccoed, the windows are woodframed with wood doors and a wood trellis over deck areas with wrought-iron rails enclosing the decks. The maximum height of the new residence will not exceed 30-feet from finished grade which is slightly lower then pre-existing grade.

A full landscape plan has been submitted that includes the retention of existing trees with additional trees, shrubbery and ground cover plotted to compliment the hardscaped patios, walkways, planters and entryways on the site.

The City Engineer has evaluated the design of the realigned stormdrain contained within the project site and determined that the system will function minimally as well as the existing system. Due to concerns of the neighbors to the west, the City Engineers have visited the site and inspected the existing drainage system and pattern for this area and agree with the neighbors that the system has some unique and interesting features that incorporate drainage onto one private lot from another and holes for drainage within property-line walls. The applicants engineers have designed the rerouting of the stormdrain pipe on-site to preserve the acceptance of the water from the existing upstream pipe and the drainage from the adjoining properties. The City Engineer has reviewed these plans and has accepted that the system will work as well or better than the existing system

Initial review of the project by City staff explored the possibility of historical significance with the focus on the design of the existing structure by one of two possible architects which are Russell Forester and Sim Bruce Richards. Through studies, reports and additional research, staff found it inconclusive as to who the architect was and the item was submitted to the Historical Resources Board Subcommittee in January, 2004, and found that the house does not appear to be a representative example warranting the full consideration of the Board for designation. The neighbor alleges that the house was designed by Russell Forester but no study has officially been submitted to the City as an application to contradict the previous study and research submitted by the applicant and considered by the City.

During the processing of this application in April of this year, the applicants consultants processed a separate application for an engineering permit from the City to relocate the on-site stormdrain pipe. The neighbor brought this to the attention of City staff reviewing the overall Coastal Development Permit (CDP) project and after consultation with the City Attorney and City Engineer, determined that the engineering permit was considered by staff as an independent application without knowledge that the stormdrain pipe was associated with the CDP. The engineering permit was rescinded and work directed to be terminated but left in a safe condition until resolution and a decision on this application is finalized.

City staff is confident that all aspects of possible impact of the proposed demolition of existing improvements and construction of the proposed new single-family residence and re-location of the stormdrain, have been evaluated. A Negative Declaration has been completed as it has been determined that there are no impacts to the site or neighborhood requiring mitigation. The project is similar in scope and nature to a substantial number of other projects within the neighborhood and La Jolla Community.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve Coastal Development Permit No. 10258 with modifications; or
2. Deny Coastal Development Permit No. 10258 if the findings required to approve the project cannot be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Korch, Development Project Manager

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Project Location Map
3. Project Data Sheet
4. Project Plans (Hearing Officer Only)
5. Draft Coastal Development Permit
6. Draft Coastal Development Permit Resolution with Findings
7. Community Planning Group Recommendation
8. Ownership Disclosure Statement
9. Project Chronology