

November 13, 2002

Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Hermosa Beach Planning Commission

Regular Meeting of
November 19, 2002

SUBJECT: APPEAL OF DIRECTOR'S DECISION REGARDING THE GRADE USED
FOR THE HEIGHT MEASUREMENT ON A CONVEX SLOPING LOT.

LOCATION: 2008 LOMA DRIVE

APPLICANT: HUONG THUY TRAN
1820 OAK AVENUE
MANHATTAN BEACH, CA 90266

Recommendation

To direct staff as deemed appropriate by minute order, from the following alternatives:

1. Interpolate the grade from the corner points only.
2. Interpolate from intermediate points on the top of the slope, as proposed by the applicant.

Background

The subject lot is located on the east side of Loma Drive between 19th Street and 21st Street. The lot, like others along the east side of this block, slopes gradually down at the top half of the lot where it fronts on the street, but slopes down steeply for the rear half of the lot.

Analysis

Pursuant to the definition of building height, as set forth in Section 17.04.040 of the Zoning Ordinance, and the method of determining building height, as set forth in Section 17.46.015, the grade used for the height measurements is based on the surveyed elevations points at the property corners. The method for determining building height also allows consideration of other points for lots with "convex" contours. In these situations the grade of a lot may be based on a detailed survey, and points along the property line may be used for grade in addition to the corner points. In cases where the datum for height measurement is disputed, the final determination of the grade may be referred to the Planning Commission.

For the subject lot, the applicant is requesting consideration as a convex lot, and is proposing alternative points at the top of the bank as the basis for measuring height rather than the easterly corner points. This would allow the building to be two stories from the front of the lot to the top of the bank on existing grade noted on the survey as elevations 98.7 and 94.99 along the north and south property lines respectively. If a standard corner points interpolation is used instead, the potential for a second story would be eliminated on the front half of the lot, unless the first floor is lowered to a level substantially below existing grade.

The applicant's request may be reasonable given the existing condition of the slope, as the abrupt change from relatively flat to steeply sloping terrain appears to represent a convex slope condition following the natural topography in the area.

CONCUR:

Scott Lunceford
Planning Assistant

Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments

1. Exhibit showing alternative height measurement lines
2. Photos

Appeal2008



2008 LOMA DRIVE