

August 9, 2006

**Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Hermosa Beach Planning Commission**

**Regular Meeting of
August 15, 2006**

SUBJECT: APPEAL OF DIRECTOR'S DECISION TO BASE THE HEIGHT
MEASUREMENT ON A CONVEX SLOPING LOT

LOCATION: 1934 ARDMORE

APPLICANT: PAUL KRAUSE

Recommendation

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

1. Determine the property to be a uniformly sloping lot and interpolate the grade from the corner points only, pursuant to the approved plans for the property; or
2. Use alternate points along the apex of the convex slope to recalculate the maximum height of the building.

Background

The subject lot is located on the east side of Ardmore Avenue and is a through lot with frontage on Ava Avenue. The property is located within the R-1 zone with a height limit of 25-feet. The lot, like others along this block, slopes substantially up from Ardmore Avenue to Ava Avenue, and in this case the grade change is 10 feet.

The applicant is nearing completion of a new home on the subject property, for which the building height was determined based on a uniform slope calculation. When the building was surveyed after the roof framing was completed to verify compliance with the maximum height, the structure was found to be over height.

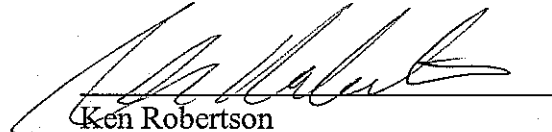
Analysis

Pursuant to the definition of building height and grade, 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, however, allows for consideration of other points along the property line for lots with "convex" contours. In these situations, the grade of a lot may be based on alternate points along the property line, and while the Commission has typically approved convex slopes where the condition is fairly obvious (i.e. where the convex slope is fairly significant, and visually noticeable) the ordinance does not preclude use of this section for a more subtle convex condition.

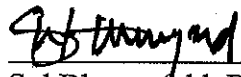
The applicant is requesting consideration of alternate points along the both the north and south property lines where the survey and topographic profile show a slight convex condition towards the westerly portion of the property. The actual property grade, compared with the uniform sloping grade, shows a differential of about nine inches where the convex condition exists.

The applicant's request appears to be reasonable since the topographic profile clearly shows a slight convex condition on both the southerly and northerly lines, on the westerly portion of the property near Ardmore Avenue. This same condition appears to exist on the neighboring property to the south, although it is less clear for the property to the north, which has been cut to allow for a driveway. Preliminary calculations of building height recalculated based on the convex slope, show the building will still probably be over height, but by a lesser degree. This will give the applicant more feasible and affordable options to correct the problem.

In summary, there is sufficient evidence for the Commission to consider this property convex, although it is not very pronounced. This will allow for a recalculation of the maximum building heights on the roof structure.


Ken Robertson
Senior Planner

CONCUR:


Sol Blumenfeld, Director
Community Development Department

Attachments

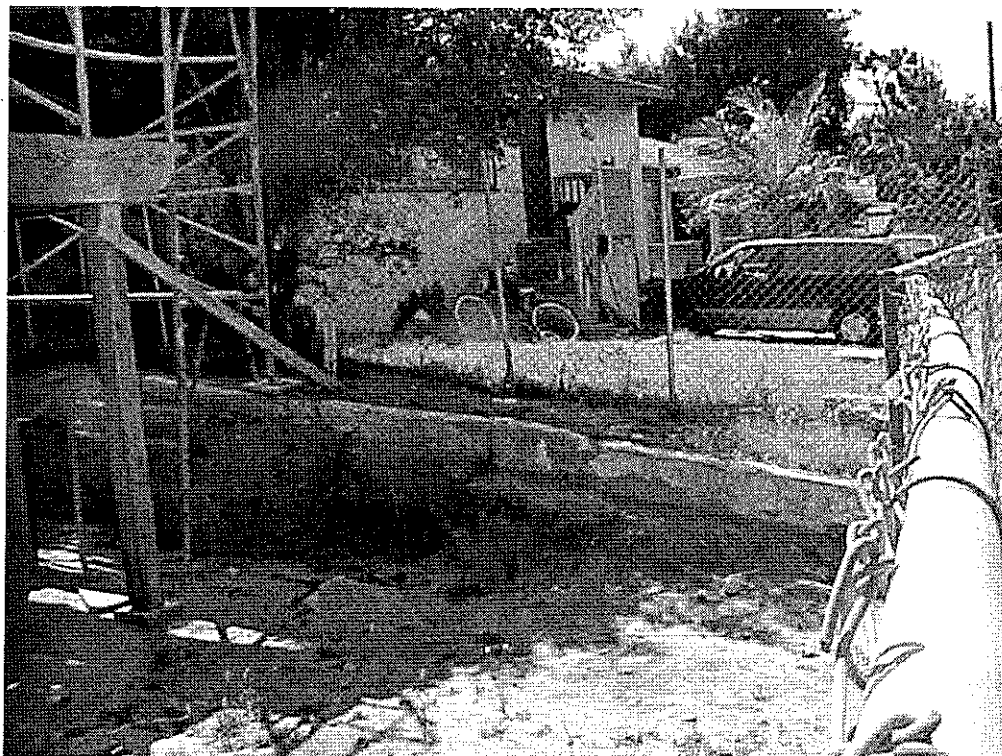
1. Property survey
2. Topographic profile
3. Photos

F:\B95\CD\PC\2006\08-15-06\Appeal-1934 Ardmore.doc

1934 Ardmore Avenue



North Property Line: Slight Convexity Visible



South Property Line: Slight Convexity Visible