



**CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA**

Community Development  
Planning

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November 21, 2023

Nareg Ghazarian  
17810 Merridy Street, No. 210  
Northridge, CA 91325  
&  
Ara Malakian  
1541 Ard Eevin Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91202

**RE: 1541 ARD EEVIN AVENUE**  
VARIANCE CASE NO. PVAR-001449-2023

Dear Applicants:

On October 25, 2023, the Planning Hearing Officer conducted and closed a public hearing, pursuant to the provisions of the Glendale Municipal Code (GMC), Title 30, Section 30.43, requesting the approval of a Standards Variance application to allow the construction of a new 100 square-foot addition to an existing 3,231 square-foot single-family dwelling, where the floor area ratio would exceed the maximum allowable, on a 10,890 square-foot lot zoned "R1 I HD" (Low Density Residential, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) District I, South Cumberland Heights Historic District), located at **1541 Ard Eevin Avenue**, described as a Portion of Lot 6, Tract No. 1576 (APN: 5629-015-018), in the City of Glendale, County of Los Angeles.

**CODE REQUIRES**

- 1) The maximum permitted FAR for District I is 0.30 for the first 10,000 square-feet of lot area, and 0.10 for the portion of lot area thereafter (Table 30.11-B, GMC Section 30.11.030).

**APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

- 1) To exceed the maximum allowable floor area by 242 square-feet, or by 0.05, for a total floor area of 3,331 square-feet where 3,089 square-feet is the maximum allowed in this district.

**REQUIRED/MANDATED FINDINGS**

After considering the evidence presented with respect to this application, the plans submitted therewith, the Community Development Department has **DENIED** the variance request, based on the following:

**A. The strict application of the provisions of any such ordinance would not result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.**

There are no practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships that would result from the strict application of the floor area ratio standard that would be inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance. The subject property and surrounding neighborhood are located within the R1 zone in FAR District I, which allows a maximum floor area of 0.30 for the first 10,000 square-feet of lot area and 0.10 for the portion of lot thereafter. Since the site is 10,890 square-feet, the maximum allowable floor area would be 3,089 square-feet. The subject property was originally built in 1930 with various additions permitted over time, including the last addition that was completed in 1980 when floor area ratio districts had not yet been established. Currently, the existing two-story residence is 3,231 square-feet, which exceeds the maximum allowable floor area by 142 square-feet. The applicant's request to allow a 100 square-foot addition to add two additional bathrooms would bring the total size of the house to 3,331 square-feet and exacerbate this existing non-conforming condition.

In 1991, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 4947 which established FAR Districts for properties in single-family zones. The intent of required maximum FAR standards in single-family residential zones is to prevent the over development of properties and provide some consistency in how large houses can be in relation to the size of the lot; to avoid creating structures that overwhelm the lot; and to regulate bulk and mass. The FAR Districts established in 1991 were based on specific characteristics of each area, and the maximum 0.30 for the first 10,000 square-feet and 0.10 for the portion of lot thereafter has been determined to be a reasonable and appropriate limit for the particular area. Additionally, the intent of the Zoning Code is to eliminate nonconforming aspects of properties, not expand them, and allowing the 100 square foot addition would only further expand the nonconformity. The house has existed in its current iteration for more than 40 years, and the applicant argues that the existing layout of the second floor does not meet the current needs of the residents, and absent an increase in square footage, a redesign within the existing space would result in a drastic change and create further burdens on the owner, but sufficient evidence has not been provided by the applicant to demonstrate these burdens in relation to zoning requirements. Independent of the proposed addition, significant changes to the second-floor plan are already proposed as part of the overall project, with the remainder of the proposed floor plan featuring redesigned bedrooms, a much larger primary bathroom and a new laundry room. Therefore, it would be possible to redesign the second floor to accommodate additional bathrooms while minimally impacting the size of existing bedrooms, and without expanding the second floor beyond the existing nonconforming floor area.

**B. There are no exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved or to the intended use or development of the property that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone or neighborhood.**

There are no exceptional circumstances or conditions that apply to the property involved that do not apply generally to other properties in the neighborhood. There is nothing unusual

about the subject property; the lot is similar in size and shape to other lots in the surrounding neighborhood and they are all located in the same R1 FAR District I zone. The burden of proof for a variance request is on the applicant, and they have not provided sufficient evidence that there are exceptional circumstances applicable to the subject property. The applicant included a FAR study that included 72 properties within a 500-foot radius of the project site, with only nine of those properties identified as currently exceeding the maximum FAR allowed. Staff reviewed the available records for these nine properties and verified the information provided and based on those records, these properties were developed prior to the establishment of FAR standards in 1991. The basis for the applicant's argument in favor of the variance relies on the comparison of this site to neighboring houses that exceed FAR, however, this fact indicates that the subject property is similar to the houses in the surrounding area and does not establish an exceptional circumstance. The lot size for these nine properties ranges from 6,650 to 12,049 square-feet and the average lot size is 9,480 square-feet. At 10,890 square-feet the subject property is one of the larger lots in the provided survey and is 1,410 square-feet larger than the average lot size. The larger lot size affords them the ability to have a bigger house than the majority of the properties in the 500-foot radius. Additionally, while outside of the immediate 500-foot radius, there are two similar variance requests for properties one block north of the subject site that were denied in the past. In 1992, Variance Case No 8915-S for a reduced interior setback, maintaining non-conforming parking, and providing a 0.41 floor area ratio was denied for the property at 1640 Ben Lomond Drive. In 2012, Variance Case No. PVAR 1219971 to construct an addition that would exceed the maximum FAR was denied for the property at 1675 Ard Eevin Avenue. For this request, the subject property already exceeded the maximum FAR, and similar to this subject case, was requesting to expand this nonconformity. Finally, at the hearing the applicant indicated that an interior remodel to accommodate the additional bathrooms was evaluated with the project engineer and concluded it would not be feasible to remodel within the existing footprint. The applicant was afforded the opportunity to submit documentation to support this statement after the hearing, consequently, the documentation provided illustrates an alternative showing it is possible for the interior remodel to accommodate additional bathrooms. No other alternatives were provided, nor does the documentation indicate it would not be possible (whether for structural reasons or other feasibility) to accommodate the additional bathrooms within the existing square footage of the residence. Therefore, there are no conditions or exceptional circumstances that apply to this property that do not generally apply to other properties in the vicinity.

**C. The granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in such zone or neighborhood in which the property is located.**

Granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in such zone or neighborhood. The first-floor setback would be maintained, and the proposed addition would follow the existing setback. The location and scale of the addition would not impact the surrounding neighborhood due to its proposed location, situated towards the rear of the house over existing massing, and the modest size of 100 square feet. However, in order to grant a variance request, all four of the required findings must be met.



**D. The granting of the variance will be contrary to the objectives of the ordinance.**

Granting of the variance would not be in keeping with the objectives of the ordinance. Approval of a FAR variance on the subject site would further intensify an existing non-conformity. The intent of the Zoning Code is to eliminate nonconforming aspects of properties. Additionally, the intent of the required maximum FAR standards in single-family residential zones is to prevent the over development of properties and provide some consistency for how large houses can fit in relation to the size of the lot; to avoid creating structures that overwhelm the lot; and to regulate bulk and mass. Allowing the nonconforming size of the house to be expanded would be contradictory to the intent of FAR standards and the zoning code.

**APPEAL PERIOD**

Under the provisions of the Glendale Municipal Code, Title 30, Chapter 30.62, any person affected by the above decision has the right to appeal said decision to the Planning Commission if it is believed that the decision is in error or that procedural errors have occurred, or if there is substantial new evidence which could not have been reasonably presented. It is strongly advised that appeals be filed early during the appeal period so that imperfections/incompleteness may be corrected before the appeal period expires.

***All appeals must be filed using the City's online permit portal: [www.glendaleca.gov/Permits](http://www.glendaleca.gov/Permits). Create an account, click "Apply," type "appeal" in the search bar, and apply for "Appeal of Planning Decision." Any appeal must be filed within fifteen (15) days following the actual date of the decision with the prescribed fee prior to the expiration of the 15-day appeal period, on or before **DECEMBER 6, 2023**. Information regarding appeals and appeals and fees may be obtained by calling the Community Development Department staff at 818-548-2140, or contacting the case planner, Sadie Gropen at [sgropen@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sgropen@glendaleca.gov) or 818-937-8178.***

**NOTICE – subsequent contacts with this office**

The Applicant is further advised that all subsequent contacts with this office regarding this determination must be with the Case Planner first and then, the Hearing Officer who acted on this case. This would include clarification, verification of condition compliance and plans or building permit applications, etc., and shall be accomplished By Appointment Only, in order to assure that you receive service with a minimum amount of waiting. You should advise any consultant representing you of this requirement as well.

You may contact the case planner, Sadie Gropen, during normal business hours at (818) 937-8178 or via e-mail at [sgropen@glendaleca.gov](mailto:sgropen@glendaleca.gov).

Sincerely,  
Bradley Calvert  
Director of Community Development



Vista Ezzati  
Senior Planner  
VE:SG:sm

cc: City Clerk (K.Cortes); Building and Safety (M.Lhotsky); Neighborhood Services Division (J.Sada); Design Review & Historic (J.Platt); Economic De. (M.Berry); Housing (P.Zovak/M. Fortney/A.Brownell); Urban Design and Mobility F.Zohrevand); Parks, Recreation and Community Services and Park (T. Aleksanian/ A.Limayo); Information Services (G.Arnold);\_City Attorney's Dept. (G. Y.Neukian/M.Yun); Fire Engineering Section-(J.Diaz/S.Partamian/D.Stimson); Traffic & Transportation Section (P.Casanova/S.Roudsari); General Manager for Glendale Water and Power (M.Young); Glendale Water & Power--Water Section (S.Boghosian/E.Hakoupiani/K.runzer); Glendale Water & Power--Electric Section (C.Babakhanlou/ S.Boghosian/E.Hakoupiani/ H.Barkhordian/ D.Scorza ); Police Dept. (Lt.A.Krikorian/Lt.S.Riley/Z.Avila); Dir. Of Public Works (Y.Emrani); Engineering and Land Development (A.Avazian/ S.Oganesyan / M.Oillataguerre/ R. Villaluna); Integrated Waste Management Admin. (D. Hardgrove); Maintenance Services/Street and Field / Urban Forester (L.Klick / C.Linares / O. Urquidez); Facilities (K.Todd) and case planner-Sadie Gropen.