



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

Community Development
Planning

633 E. Broadway, Suite 103
Glendale, CA 91206-4311
Tel. (818) 548-2140 Fax (818) 240-0392
glendaleca.gov

September 18, 2024

Rita Noravian
(Franco Noravian & Associates)
409 West Broadway
Glendale, CA 91204

**RE: 720 BOHLIG ROAD
STANDARDS VARIANCE CASE NO. PVAR-002404-2023**

Dear Applicant:

On August 28, 2024, 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 a Standards variance to allow the enclosure of a portion of an existing rooftop deck for purposes of creating a new 67 square-foot (SF) floor area addition to the existing 2,814 square-foot single-family house (built in 2006) located on a 7,780 square-foot lot with an average current slope of 41.07 percent for the entire site, located at **720 Bohlig Road**, in the "R1R-II" - (Restricted Residential, Floor Area Ratio II) zone, described as a portion of Lot 125, Lot 126, Bellhurst Hillslopes Tract / APN: 5649-019-035 in the City of Glendale, County of Los Angeles.

The variances are required because the new floor area expansion, (1) exceeds the maximum allowed two-stories, and (2) exceeds the maximum allowed floor area ratio of 0.30.

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:

CODE REQUIRES

- (1) A single-family house is limited to two stories on a portion of a lot with less than 40 percent average current slope (GMC 30.11.040 E) and (G.M.C. 30.11.030 Table 30.11-B).
- (2) The maximum allowed floor area ratio is 0.30 on lots with an average current slope of 40% or greater located in the R1R, Floor area ratio District II zone (GMC 30.11.030 Table 30.11 B).

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

- (1) Increase the building height to three-stories. Currently the house is two-stories with an open roof deck above the main entry and the garage area, and the average current slope at the building footprint location is 14.28 percent.
- (2) Exceed the maximum allowed floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.30. The project proposes an FAR of 0.37 FAR on a lot with an average current slope of 41.07 for the entire site.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The project is exempt from environmental review as a Class 1 "Existing Facility" pursuant to Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines because the proposed addition to the existing house will not result in an increase of more than 10,000 square feet and the project is in an area where all public services and facilities are available and is not located in an environmentally sensitive area.

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 result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.

The strict application of the provisions of the ordinance would not result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance. In their findings, the applicant indicated that the existing planter area on the roof deck located directly above the entry is leaking and has caused interior and exterior water damages. So, the applicant proposes to mitigate the issue by removing the existing planter and constructing a new 67 SF sunroom on the roof deck. However, the applicant's request to construct additional floor area in order to prevent water damages in the future is not the only option. Further, the applicant's proposal would result in the need for variances from the Zoning Code.

The variance requests are not justified on the basis that the strict application of the provisions of the ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance since there are other options that can be explored that would not warrant the need for variance requests. For example, the applicant could consider removing the existing planter without adding new floor area, such as by converting the water-damaged roof deck into a sloped roof or constructing a solid patio cover above. These options would not deviate from the zoning code and would not require variances. As proposed, adding any new floor area to the house would not comply with the Zoning Code. However, the applicant could remove the existing planter and, if necessary, incorporate and/or improve the existing drainage system in order to properly drain water from the roof deck.

As proposed, there is no justifiable reason why the additional 67 SF floor area addition is necessary to mitigate the water leaking on the roof caused by the planter. The existing house is a 2,814 SF two-story house consisting of three bedrooms, living and dining room and a large entertainment room on the lower level. It is a moderately sized hillside home with a functional floor plan. The request to introduce a new 67 SF addition (sunroom) is not necessary to prevent water leaks and improve the existing roof drainage system. Moreover, the request merely adds more square footage to the residence and changes aspects of the aesthetics at the front of the house facing the street. The variance requests are not justifiable on the basis that the addition at the front results in "functional space" being introduced, as stated by the applicant.

The additional floor area would result in adding a third level to the house and increasing the home's mass and scale at the front facing the street. The average current slope at the building footprint location is 14.28 percent. On lots with an average current slope less than 40% at the building footprint location, the Zoning Code limits the number of stories to two. Introducing the new sunroom addition above the front entry results in a third story, exacerbating the existing conditions. There are other viable options that the applicant can explore, which does not result in the need to create a third level above the entry. The existing staircase has a partial third level appearance as viewed from the rear of the house; however, the house was not considered a three-story home when it was constructed. Rather, the existing staircase was originally designed as an architectural tower element, enabling the necessary clearance for the interior staircase leading to the roof top deck. The staircase is approximately 80 SF, extending above a minor portion of the second level behind the front entry and roof deck. Introducing the new enclosed 67 SF sunroom on the existing roof deck for purposes adding new floor area to the existing house, would result in a third story, exacerbating the existing condition. Further, to create a new sunroom would result in the need for an additional (second) variance for exceeding the maximum permitted floor area.

The property has an average current slope for the entire site of 41.07 percent. According to the Zoning Code, Section 30.11.030, the maximum allowed floor area ratio is 0.30 in the R1R zone, Floor Area Ratio District II on lots with an average current slope of 40 percent or greater. To allow the new 67 SF floor area addition to the house for purposes of creating a new (enclosed) sunroom would result in the residence exceeding the maximum allowed floor area ratio of 0.30. Based on the lot size of 7,780 SF, the maximum allowed floor area is 2,334 SF (0.30 FAR). Currently, the total floor area of the house is 2,814 SF (0.36 FAR), exceeding the maximum FAR allowed per Code by 480 SF. With the new 67 SF addition to the existing house, the project would increase the total floor area from 2,814 SF square feet (0.36 FAR) to 2,881 SF (0.37 FAR). With the additional 67 SF floor area (sunroom), the house will exceed the maximum allowed floor area ratio by 547 SF over the maximum allowed 2,334 SF. As a result, the proposed additional 67 SF to the house would exacerbate an already nonconforming situation inconsistent with the intent of the Zoning Code to eliminate nonconforming aspects of older residential buildings.

The enactment of the floor area ratio requirement took place in the early 1990's. This regulation was established in order to avoid building excessively large homes, especially on small lots. The proposed addition, exceeding the maximum allowed 0.30 FAR, is contrary to the objectives of the zoning standard and will create unnecessary building mass at the front of the house facing the street, contrary to the hillside guidelines. Both variance requests exacerbate the existing conditions on the site in terms of number of stories and size.

B. There are 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 applicable to the property involved or to the intended use or development of the property related to specific variances request that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone or neighborhood since there are other irregularly-shaped hillside parcels in the neighborhood developed with two-story single-family homes similar to the subject site. The proposed total floor area of 2,881 SF and 0.37 FAR is higher compared to the most homes in the neighborhood on the immediate street block. The objective of the floor area ratio standard is to limit the overall bulk of the house and keep it in proportion to the given lot size. Therefore, 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.

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.

The granting of the variance would 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 in that adjacent properties would not be protected by the high standards of the Code with regard to residential development. The proposed 0.37 FAR would not be in character with the majority of development in the area. In addition, to grant additional variances, including introducing a third level to the house facing the street and to exceed the maximum allowed floor area ratio could potentially lead to further variance requests of a similar nature.

D. The granting of the variance will not be contrary to the objectives of the ordinance.

The granting of the variances requested would be contrary to the objectives of the ordinance in that the house would exceed the maximum allowed number of stories. In this case, the maximum allowed number of stories is two because the house is situated on a portion of the lot with less than 40 percent average current slope. The objective of limiting height and number of stories is to mitigate design including mass and scale. Also, the additional floor area would exceed the existing nonconformity and it would create more mass (at the front), contrary to the City's Design Guidelines. The objective of the floor area ratio standard is to limit the overall bulk of the house, keep it in proportion to a given lot

size, and to not allow a house to be out of character with other homes in the immediate area. As proposed, the project does not comply with objectives of the ordinance as described above.

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, on **OCTOBER 3, 2024.**

All appeals must be filed using the City's online permit portal: 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 OCTOBER 3, 2024. 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, Milca Toledo at mitoledo@glendaleca.gov or 818-937-8181.

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, Milca Toledo, during normal business hours at (818) 937-8181 or via e-mail at mitoledo@glendaleca.gov.

Sincerely,
Bradley Calvert
Director of Community Development



Dennis Joe
Senior Planner
DJ:MT:sm

CC: City Clerk (K.Cruz); Police Dept. (J.Newton/Z.Avila); City Attorney's Dept. (G. van Muyden/Y.Neukian); Fire Prevention Engineering Section (S.Partamian); Public Works (S.Hernandez); Traffic & Transportation Section (P.Casanova/Mark Bueno);

General Manager for Glendale Water and Power (M.Young); Glendale Water & Power--Water Section (G. Tom/S.Boghosian/R.Takidin/ C.Babakhanlou/D.Scorza); Glendale Water & Power--Electric Section (B. B.Ortiz/E.Olsen/ M.Navareete/M.Kouassi); Parks, Recreation and Community Services Dept. (T. Aleksanian/A.Limayo); Neighborhood Services Division; Integrated Waste Management Admin; Maintenance Services Section Admin.; Street and Field Services Admin.; Engineering and Environmental Management; E.Van Orden – neighbor; T.Takeda - neighbor; and case planner- Milca Toledo.