

CITY OF SMYRNA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: License and Variance Board

From: Rusty Martin, AICP, Community Development Director
Caitlin Crowe, Planner I

Date: January 24, 2024

RE: VARIANCE CASE V24-001
3220 Ridgecrest Road – Allow new construction on lot of record below minimum requirements

VARIANCE CASE V24-002
3220 Ridgecrest Road – Reduce the southern side setback from 10 feet to 8.9 feet

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting approval for two variances to build a new single-family home at 3220 Ridgecrest Road on a substandard lot. Section 1208 requires a variance to build on a lot of record below minimum requirements whereas Section 801 requires a side setback of 10 feet in the R-15 zoning district.

ANALYSIS

The subject parcel is a 0.27-acre lot located on the west side of Ridgecrest Road, at the intersection of Ridgecrest Road and Ridgecrest Drive (see Figure 1). The subject parcel and all adjacent parcels are zoned R-15 and are all occupied by detached single-family homes, with the exception of the property to the west, which is occupied by a church. The subject parcel is located within the Smyrna Heights Subdivision, which was platted in 1951, prior to the current Zoning Ordinance, which was implemented in 1976.

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing 952 square foot home and build a new 2,935 square foot two-story single-family home which will consist of 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. The façade will be brick on the front and hardiplank on the sides and rear. Since the subject property is only 11,761 square feet while the R-15 Zoning District requires lots to be a minimum of 15,000 square feet, a variance must be acquired prior to construction. Since the subject property is an existing lot of record, originally filed for platting in 1951, the hardship is not self-created. Additionally, as noted above, the former one-story structure was 952 square feet while the minimum house size of R-15 is 2,000 square feet. Since the new home will be 2,935 square feet, the home will be brought into compliance with the R-15 floor area requirement.

The applicant is proposing to maintain the existing footprint of the home and driveway to minimize land disturbance to the property, which is almost directly in the middle of the narrow lot. As part of the new construction, the applicant is proposing to add a 12.9-foot wide one-car

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garage to the southern side of the home to provide some covered parking for the property, which currently does not have a garage or carport of any kind. The applicant reduced the width of the garage as much as possible to try to adhere to the 10-foot side setback while maintaining the required width for a single car. Even with the consideration for the setback, the garage is encroaching into the side setback by 1.1 feet. However, due to the existing driveway location, the most logical area to put the garage is within the side setback so the hardship is not self-created. A similar variance request was approved next door at 3212 Ridgecrest Road in 2021 (V21-039) and across the street at 985 Ridgecrest Drive in 2005 (V05-051).

The subject property is unique in that it has less square footage than what the R-15 zoning district requires; the hardship is not self-created as the property is an existing lot of record. The setback variance requested is the minimum variance needed to build a new single-family home on the subject property with minimal land disturbance. At the time of this report, Community Development has not received any calls in opposition to the request.

STAFF COMMENTS

The applicant is requesting to deviate from the City's minimum lot area and setback requirements established for the R-15 zoning district. According to Section 1403 of the Zoning Ordinance, variances must be reviewed under the following standards: (1) Whether there are unique and special or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property; (2) Whether any alleged hardship is self-created by any person having an interest in the property; (3) Whether strict application of the relevant provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property; and (4) Whether the variance proposed is the minimum variance needed. Community Development believes that the lot size and setback encroachment will not adversely affect surrounding residents; therefore, staff recommends **approval** of the requested variances with the following condition:

1. Approval of the requested variances shall be conditioned upon the development of the property in substantial compliance with the site plan and elevations submitted with the variance application.

Figure - 1



Figure - 2
Site Plan

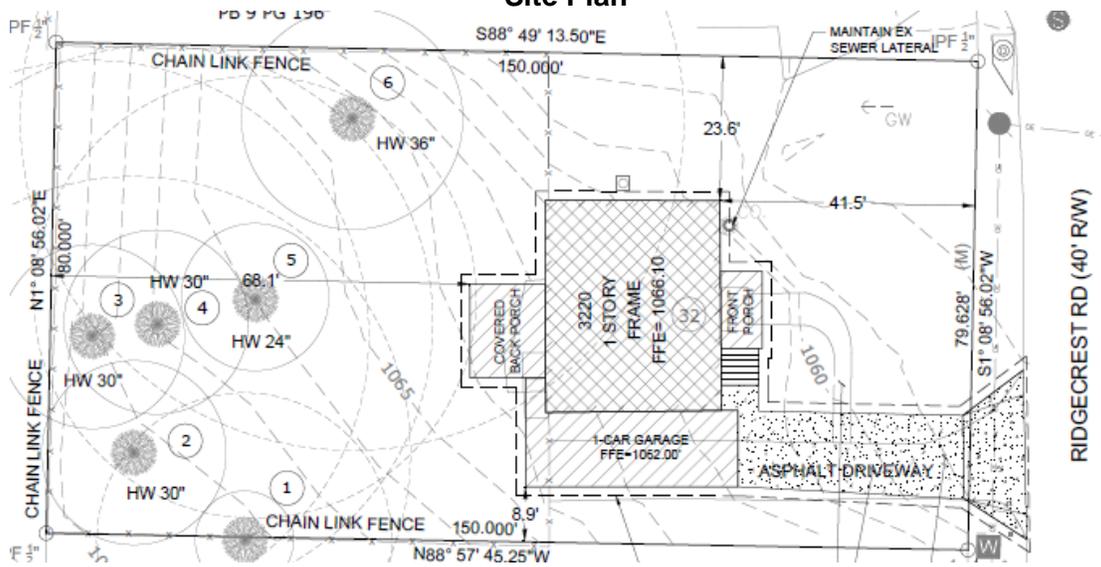


Figure – 3
Front & Rear Building Elevations

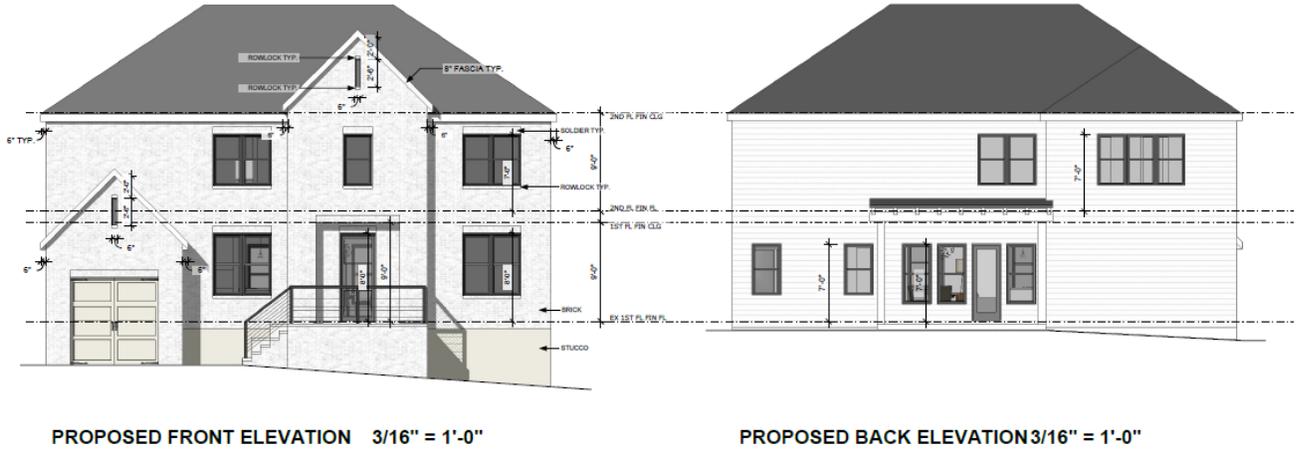


Figure – 4
Subject Property



Figure – 5
Adjacent Property to the South



Figure – 6
Adjacent Property to the North



Figure – 7
Adjacent Property across Ridgecrest Road

