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- **“Initial Submissions”**: Compliant submissions received no later than by end of day Monday of the week prior to the meeting, which are not integrated by reference or exhibit in the Staff Report, will be appended at the end of the Staff Report. The Staff Report is linked to the case number on the specific meeting agenda.
- **“Secondary Submissions”**: Submissions received after the Initial Submission deadline up to 48-hours prior to the Commission meeting are contained in this file and bookmarked by the case number.
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If you have any questions, please contact the Commission Office at (213) 978-1300.

SECONDARY SUBMISSIONS



Planning APC East LA <apceastla@lacity.org>

Appeal to adjacent minimum roadway Sept. 13, 2023-3918 and 3924 Rome Court, Mt Washington ZA-2-22-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA/EVN-2022-632-CE2 messages

Jessica Huebner <themartinlady@earthlink.net>

Sun, Sep 10, 2023 at 4:02 PM

To: apceastla@lacity.org

Cc: Pat Winters <mwha.pat@gmail.com>

Jessica Huebner
715 Museum Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90065
themartinlady@earthlink.net (mailto:themartinlady@earthlink.net)

September 10, 2023

East Los Angeles Planning Commission
apceastla@lacity.org (mailto:apceastla@lacity.org)

RE: Appeal to adjacent minimum roadway September 13, 2023
3918 and 3924 Rome Court, Mt. Washington
ZA-2-22-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA/EVN-2022-632-CE

I am a long time resident of Mt. Washington, having grown up on the hill and in my current home since 1996.

As a reaction to the explosion of growth and witnessing the blatant disregard for safety by the builders (300 plus projects currently on Mt. Washington) and avoiding the infrastructure requirements over the last 5-10 years (by way of waivers) have prompted me to speak up against this practice, and this case is no exception.

I have witnessed numerous canyon fires over the years on Mt. Washington including a very bad one in Elyria Canyon that reached to Rome Drive and destroyed my parents home not too far from Rome Court, where this project is proposed.

The facts are that Mt. Washington is a HIGH FIRE RISK area and that cannot be ignored.

The facts are that too many waivers have been granted to builders to avoid improving the substandard roads that were designed and built 100 years ago on Mt. Washington and a large 3500 square foot house can't just plop down in the same spot as an 800 square foot cabin (from 100 years ago) and everyone call it the same thing. And, some locations to build are worse than others on Mt. Washington, this being one of them.

There MUST be an adequate turn around for not just a car, but for fire trucks and emergency vehicles. The proposed house will be in the way and block any ability to turnaround unless there is a designed turn-around in place.

The road needs to have its basic upgrades and improvements.

I completely object to the appeal and do not think this appeal is the least bit justified. I think compromises can exist- such as building a smaller house (if need be), a proper street turn-around, and road improvements. Those are not unreasonable concessions, especially here on Mt. Washington with all of the documented dangers and risks.

I can't imagine why anyone would want otherwise.

Sincerely yours,

Jessica Huebner



3918 Rome Court Appeal.pdf
55K

Planning APC East LA <apceastla@lacity.org>
To: Jessica Huebner <themartinlady@earthlink.net>
Cc: Pat Winters <mwha.pat@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 11, 2023 at 2:12 PM

Good afternoon Ms. Huebner,

Your secondary submission has been received and it will be distributed accordingly to the East Los Angeles Area Planning Commission at its meeting on September 13, 2023.

Regards,

[Quoted text hidden]

Jessica Huebner
715 Museum Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90065
themartinlady@earthlink.net

September 10, 2023

East Los Angeles Planning Commission
apceastla@lacity.org

RE: Appeal to adjacent minimum roadway September 13, 2023
3918 and 3924 Rome Court, Mt. Washington
ZA-2-22-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA/EVN-2022-632-CE

I am a long time resident of Mt. Washington, having grown up on the hill and in my current home since 1996. As a reaction to the explosion of growth and witnessing the blatant disregard for safety by the builders (300 plus projects currently on Mt. Washington) and avoiding the infrastructure requirements over the last 5 years (by way of waivers) have prompted me to speak up against this practice, and this case is no exception.

I have witnessed numerous canyon fires over the years on Mt. Washington including a very bad one on Rome Drive which destroyed my parents home, not too far from Rome Court, where this project is proposed.

The facts are that Mt. Washington is a HIGH FIRE RISK area and that cannot be ignored.

The facts are that too many waivers have been granted to builders to avoid improving the substandard roads that were designed and built 100 years ago on Mt. Washington and a large 3500 square foot house can't just plop down in the same spot as an 800 square foot cabin (from 100 years ago) and everyone call it the same thing. And, some locations to build are worse than others on Mt. Washington, this being one of them.

There MUST be an adequate turn around for not just a car, but for fire trucks and emergency vehicles. The proposed house will be in the way and block any ability to turnaround unless there is a designed turn-around in place.

The road needs to have its basic improvements.

I completely object to the appeal and do not think this appeal is the least bit justified. I think compromises can exist- such as building a smaller house (if need be), a proper street turn-around, and road improvements. Those are not unreasonable concessions, especially here on Mt. Washington with all of the documented dangers and risks.

I can't imagine why anyone would want otherwise.

Sincerely yours,

Jessica Huebner



Planning APC East LA <apceastla@lacity.org>

ELAAPC September 13 hearing 3918/24 Rome Ct ZA-2022-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA-1A2 messages

Juanita Martinez <jmerinya@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 6, 2023 at 10:33 AM

To: apceastla@lacity.org

Cc: Pat Winters <mwha.pat@gmail.com>, nashya.sadono-jensen@lacity.org

Good Morning,

I'm concerned about the Appellants appeal to the adjacent minimum roadway. Historically the previous owner of this tract was required to comply with the entire minimum roadway as well as build a fire safety turnaround. Two separate Zoning administrators have required compliance to both of these items.

The area of Mt. Washington is in a high fire severity zone. Sunday, September 3, 2023 there was a fire nearby in the Frontenac/Avenue 44 area, July 5, 2023 another brush fire in the 3900 block of North West Point Place to name a few.

It is imperative to enforce the laws for road improvement not only for the safety of current residents, but to ensure access and the safety of future residents as this hillside community grows.

Please acknowledge the receipt of the attached letter.

Regards,

Juanita Martinez
Mt. Washington resident



JM_3918:24 Rome Court appeal rebuttal.docx
18K

Planning APC East LA <apceastla@lacity.org>

Mon, Sep 11, 2023 at 1:57 PM

To: Juanita Martinez <jmerinya@gmail.com>

Cc: Pat Winters <mwha.pat@gmail.com>, nashya.sadono-jensen@lacity.org

Good afternoon Ms. Martinez,

Your secondary submission has been received and it will be distributed accordingly to the East Los Angeles Area Planning Commission at its meeting on September 13, 2023.

Regards,

LOS ANGELES
CITY PLANNING**Neverly Ann Hill****Management Aide****Los Angeles City Planning**

200 N. Spring St., Room 272

Los Angeles, CA 90012

T: (818) 374-3384 | Planning4LA.org



[Quoted text hidden]

Juanita Martinez

Mt. Washington Resident

jmerinya@gmail.com

September 5, 2023

East Los Angeles Planning Commission

apceastla@lacity.org

RE: **Appeal to adjacent minimum roadway September 13, 2023**

3918 and 3924 Rome Court, Mt. Washington

ZA-2-22-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA | EVN-2022-632-CE

I have lived in Mt. Washington for over 40 years. Over the last 10 years I've seen waivers applied more frequently and not uniformly. Our infrastructure and emergency vehicle access has become severely compromised. I respectfully ask that the zoning and codes in place especially improvements of adjacent roadways be implemented and not waived.

Appeal Justification by applicant

- 1) Improvements proposed but not recognized by ZA . Owner representative argument
Concern/Rebuttal: **Waiver requested by the builder on street improvement**, which was denied to the previous builder. Rome Court is a substandard road with no safety turnaround for emergency vehicles. A prior determination required both the adjacent minimum road and a sufficient turnaround. The previous builder was denied this same waiver, I feel that should stand respecting the previous precedent (Road/street improvements and sufficient turnaround).
- 2) Impossible to provide full improvement of adjacent roadway. Owner/Representative argument is that the new roadways must be a maximum of 20% slope and that the hillside conditions require a 65% slope that is impossible.
Concern/Rebuttal: The property is in a high fire hazard area in a hillside with taxed infrastructure and narrow streets. It is not impossible to provide minimum adjacent roadway. Rather, construction of such roadway improvements is common in this hillside community. Please refer to details in the Opposition to Appeal submitted by Pat Winters on behalf of the Mt. Washington Alliance.
- 3) Fire department turnaround and safety improvements. The applicant states that the Fire department does not agree that *"Waiving the requirement to improve the Adjacent Roadway width makes it harder for emergency or safety vehicles to traverse through this area."*

Concern/Rebuttal: The Fire Department that serves the area has expressed concerns about accessing emergencies. On another occasion fire fighters had to

walk up a steep hill with their equipment because their vehicles couldn't access the road to fight the fire. The long-standing concern for fire safety was also illustrated by testimony at the hearing about fire trucks coming down Rome Court and asking neighbors "where is the road. A neighbor died in the house fire they were trying to reach. The proposed turnaround by the appellants consists solely of an easement which technically the appellants can never obstruct. The proposed units only have parking for three cars, ADU in the driveway and main residents in the garage. Honestly that is not feasible, especially with the proposed ADU unit, guests, residents would frankly be using that space to park blocking access.

In Mount Washington alone there are over 300 building sites on a fragile and high fire risk hillside. I have personally lived through various constructions next to me and ask that contractors/builders/owners respect codes which are in place for a reason. I feel that there is a high disregard for building responsibly and within reason. With building and new construction on the rise more cars fill the streets, not to mention construction vehicles.

I understand that there will be development, I simply ask that it be done in a responsible manor respecting codes, and safety of both existing Mt. Washington residents as well as future residents.

Regards,

Juanita Martinez
Mt. Washington resident



Appeal Response

3918-3924 Rome Ct – ZA-2022-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA-1A

The following are findings to support the application for the appeal for the Project located at 3918-3924 Rome Ct case file ZA-2022-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA

The appeal requests to overturn the decision of the Zoning Administrator pertaining to the denial of the request to waive LAMC Section 12.21-C, 10(i)(2) as it applies to Rome Court adjacent to the subject property in association with a proposed project to construct a single-family dwelling, ADU, and associated site improvements on a lot fronting a Substandard Hillside Limited Street that is improved with a roadway width of less than 20 feet.

Therefore, the findings for this appeal will focus solely on the request for partial relief of 12.21.C.10(i)(2).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located within the Northeast Los Angeles Community Plan Area and is designated on the plan as Low Residential Land Use and is zoned R1-1. The site is also located within the Mount Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan Area, a Hillside Area (subject to the Baseline Hillside Ordinance regulations when not specified by the Specific Plan), a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and a Special Grading Area. The subject property is situated approximately 40 feet from the existing terminus of Rome Ct with a flat pad near the northern end of the property that slopes south toward the southern edge of the lots.

The original proposed project is the construction of a two-story, 2,557 square-foot single-family dwelling with a 346 square-foot attached garage, and 445 square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) that will be 43'-5" in height. The project contains two vacant lots that contain roughly 11,377 sf of lot area.

The modified proposed project now includes an approved LAFD turnaround that has been determined and approved to be adequate for LAFDs operational needs. To accommodate the turnaround, the structure shifted location on the site slightly resulting in an increase in the height as the measurement relative to grade changed. The structure itself did not change, nor the size, however. The revised max height of 45'-0" also remains compliant with the MWGPSP. As a result, the revised project description is as follows.

The construction of a two-story, 2,557 square-foot single-family dwelling with a 346 square-foot attached garage, and 445 square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) that will be 45'-0" in height. The project contains two vacant lots that contain roughly 11,377 sf of lot area.

The site is located within a single-family residential neighborhood and is currently a vacant lot. Adjoining properties directly to the south are also vacant lots. Adjoining properties across and up the street are developed with single family homes.

The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, Grading Division approved a Geology and Soils Report Approval Letter (Log No. 99893-1) for the project on December 15, 2021 conditionally approving the project and confirming that the project can be safely constructed as conditioned considering the sites specific geotechnical characteristics.

Rome Ct is a Substandard Hillside Limited Street with a right-of-way width of approximately 30 feet and a roadway width of 0 feet (as it's currently unimproved adjacent to the site). The rest of Rome Ct appears to be close to 20 feet in paved roadway width with minor pinch points (reference BOE vault plans P-1743 and DL-752). A preliminary Referral Form from the Bureau of Engineering requires 3 feet dedication along the property's frontage, which the project is providing. Rome Ct is currently not improved along the property's frontage and currently terminates about 40 feet away from the subject site. As a part of the Project, approximately 40 feet of roadway improvement would need to be conducted to reach the project site and

another approximately 20 feet of roadway improvement (for a total of approximately 60 feet) would need to be completed to service the house and modified turnaround along the property's frontage.

PRECEDENT

The following case files, located near the project site and within other Hillside Areas of Los Angeles, provide additional context for why such a request at the Subject Property should be granted.

Although relief from 12.21.C.10(i)(2) is not always appropriate, /time and again the Office of Zoning Administration has granted waivers for relief from this section when such required roadway improvements would unduly burden the project and applicant.

Case No. ZA-2020-4067-ZAD-SPP-HCA - 4683 Glenalbyn Drive ; On August 20, 2021, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street without a paved roadway width of 20' adjacent to the subject property, approved the construction of a SFD fronting on a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a vehicular access route with a min 20' paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area, approved four retaining walls in lieu of a maximum of two otherwise permitted, and approved a SPP for compliance under the MWGP Specific Plan.

Case No. ZA-2020-4071-ZAD-SPP-HCA - 4691 Glenalbyn Drive ; On August 23, 2021, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street without a paved roadway width of 20' adjacent to the subject property, approved the construction of a SFD fronting on a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a vehicular access route with a min 20' paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area, and approved a SPP for compliance under the MWGP Specific Plan.

Case No. ZA-2015-3616-ZAD-SPP - 4701 Glenalbyn Drive ; On June 15, 2017, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street without a paved roadway width of 20' adjacent to the subject property, approved the construction of a SFD fronting on a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a vehicular access route with a min 20' paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area, approved five retaining walls, of which three are extensions of the building structure, and approved a SPP for compliance under the MWGP Specific Plan.

Case No. ZA-2018-6909-ZAD - 5443 Nordyke Street ; On December 10, 2019, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street without a paved roadway width of 20' adjacent to the subject property, approved the construction of a SFD fronting on a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a vehicular access route with a min 20' paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area, and approved a SPP for compliance under the MWGP Specific Plan.

Case No. ZA-2006-3616-ZAD-SPP - 714 Quail Drive ; On October 27, 2006, the ZA approved construction of a SFD on a Substandard Hillside Limited Street improved to a width of less than 20 feet adjacent to the property, and approved a Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance under the Mt. Washington/Glassell Park Specific Plan.

Other Precedent Outside the Mt Washington Glassell Park Area:

Case No. ZA-2017-3384-ZAD & ZA-2017-3384-ZAD-1A - 1900 Avenue 55 ; On June 1, 2022, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a minimum roadway width of 20-feet adjacent to the subject property, and that does not have a vehicular access route with a minimum 20-foot paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area. On June 24, 2020, the APC sustained the approval of the ZA

Case No. ZA-2022-1226-ZAD - 1001 Bel Air Rd ; On November 10, 2022, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street and Private Street which does not have a minimum roadway width of 20-feet adjacent to the subject property.

Case No. ZA-2021-6619-ZAD - 1903 Lake Shore Ave ; On June 1, 2022, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD and ADU fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a minimum roadway width of 20-feet adjacent to the subject property, and that does not have a vehicular access route with a minimum 20-foot paved roadway to the boundary of the Hillside Area.

Case No. ZA-2018-2666-ZAD - 7831 & 7875 Granito Dr ; On December 13, 2019, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a minimum roadway width of 20-feet adjacent to the subject property.

Case No. ZA-2018-2669-ZAD - 7927 & 7931 Granito Dr ; On December 13, 2019, the ZA approved the construction of a SFD fronting onto a Substandard Hillside Limited Street which does not have a minimum roadway width of 20-feet adjacent to the subject property.

2004 CASE FILE

The argument that granting relief from 12.21.C.10(i)(2) would limit the ability of property owners down the street to improve their property is inherently flawed. The proposed project, in fact, is currently improving a portion of Rome Ct beyond their frontage in order to gain access to the proposed site.

By waiving the requirement to improve the roadway for a portion of the subject property's frontage does not remove the ability for the sole owner further south along Rome Ct to extend the roadway from the Project's proposed terminus to their lot.

In fact, the owner of ALL the vacant lots to the south of Rome Ct is a singular owner (the Self Realization Fellowship) that has access to their lot at Rome Dr, San Rafael Ave, and Mt Washington Dr. Therefore, they are not "landlocked" as the case file seems to suggest. They have more than ample means of accessing their property from many locations.



How this should be framed is in the context of whether the Project can feasibly move forward and how that impacts the southerly property owner. As proposed, the Project will extend Rome Ct by approximately 60 feet from the existing terminus and provide a modified turnaround for emergency access vehicles. If the Project was made infeasible because of the required additional 100-foot extension, then this 60-foot improvement nor turnaround would be constructed, and the southerly property owner would have approximately 160 feet to improve to access their properties and the community would lose a proposed turnaround for emergency vehicles and other vehicles such as trash trucks, delivery vehicles, etc.

Simply put, the project is improving the situation for the southerly owner by providing some extension of the roadway and improving the overall area by providing a modified turnaround for emergency vehicles.

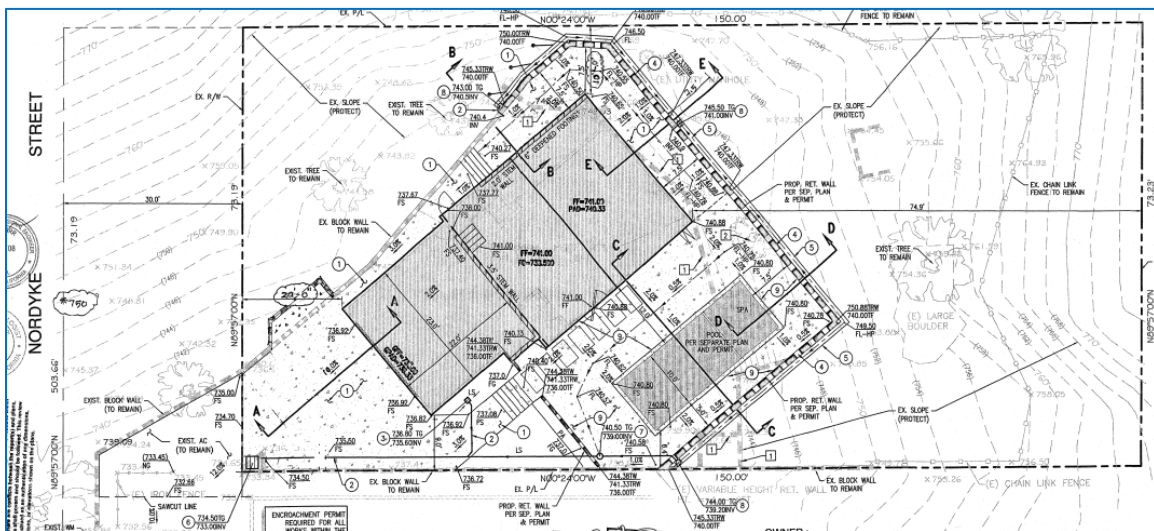
To require a full improvement of the roadway along the property's uncharacteristically long frontage would render the project economically infeasible and create a condition where the southerly lot and surrounding neighborhood is worse off. The project would lessen the burden of future improvements for the southerly property owner by reducing the current improvement requirement to approximately 100 linear feet of roadway in lieu of 160 feet that would otherwise be required today.

Furthermore, improvement of the roadway further south is superfluous considering the multiple frontages and access points that the property owner has. There is no logical nexus to require improvements for the subject property if the benefit is so incongruent with the cost/burden and when that benefit is unnecessary considering the multiple access points already provided to that property.

5443 E Nordyke (ZA-2018-6906-ZAD) is similar to the proposed project in that it provides enough of a roadway improvement to access the site, but does not improve the full extent of the roadway along their frontage. This project's ZAD request was appropriately reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator to allow for the construction of a reasonably sized single family dwelling on a lot that supports such development. As the ZA states in his determination:

Providing the required street improvements for the Hillside Area and complying with the Code would be impractical and would create an unnecessary hardship to improve the street. The constraints of the sloping topography would require excessive grading and retaining walls to be constructed to improve the frontage along Nordyke Street and to improve the street to the bottom of the existing driveway where the minimum 20-foot width exists. The site is located at the end of Nordyke Street and there is no anticipated development that would occur farther west.

The applicant for this project is simply seeking similar consideration when no anticipated development is to occur, in case, farther south.



5443 E Nordyke – Grading Site Plan (ZA-2018-6906-ZAD)

Furthermore, there are findings made by previous Zoning Administrators that highlight the proportional benefit of the improvements in relation to the size/scope of the proposed project.

For the new SFD and ADU at 1903 Lake Shore Ave (ZA-2021-6619-ZAD) the ZA makes note of the financial hardship that would be incommensurate with the scope of the project.

“Further, due to sloping lots and the grade differential along the course of the improvement, the required off-site improvements, **particularly the street widening, would require installation of retaining walls and other similar infrastructure** on properties not under the ownership or control of the applicant, **resulting in significant financial hardship incommensurate with the scope of the project.** All of these factors are out of proportion with the proposed project and the impacts it may generate. **The intent of the Hillside regulations is to provide for safe vehicular access for public traffic, and for basic access to any property by emergency vehicles in case of fire or any other emergency.** In conclusion, the findings can be made that strict adherence to LAMC make it impractical or infeasible to provide an Adjacent Minimum Roadway and a Continuous Paved Roadway to the boundaries of the Hillside Area.”

For the new SFD at 1900 Avenue 55, the ZA makes note that cost of the improvements exceeds the benefit of those improvements.

As noted by the applicant, when the land subdivision was originally created, topography was not taken into consideration. **The segment of Avenue 55 between Nordyke Street to the terminus north of Raber Street was never improved, which is demonstrative of the impracticality to originally do so.** Further, Avenue 55 is a dead-end street. **The cost of the roadway improvements exceeds the benefit of those improvements.** In this case, strict adherence to LAMC Section 12.21.C.10(i) is **financially impractical** and physically infeasible.”

FINDINGS/APEAL RESPONSES

The following are the responses to the specific findings made by the Zoning Administrator and why we believe the decision should be overturned for this specific request.

1. The project will enhance the built environment in the surrounding neighborhood or how it will perform a function or provide a service that is essential or beneficial to the community, city or region.

As the ZA states in his findings, “The intent of the Hillside regulations is to provide for safe vehicular access for public traffic, and for basic access to any property by emergency vehicles in case of fire or any other emergency.”

The Project has received their Hydrants and Access approval from the Los Angeles Fire Department for the revised design of the project and the associated roadway improvements thereby affirming that basic access to the property for emergency vehicles has been satisfied. In fact, this latest design creates a clear benefit as the modified turnaround allows for improved circulation for emergency vehicles.

To evaluate how the project will enhance the built environment, we need to evaluate the current condition of the roadway. As seen here, the current roadway dead ends with no improved ability for emergency vehicles to turnaround

Requiring the full improvement of the roadway down to the southerly frontage of the lot would not materially benefit the community as has been affirmed by LAFD Inspectors. It would not improve emergency vehicle access as the road would serve no existing additional properties and would provide no additional turnaround. It would be a road to nowhere.

provides “basic [and improved] access to [the] property by emergency vehicles in case of fire or any other emergency” In fact, LAFD has confirmed that it would provide no additional benefit.

2. The projects location size, height, operations and other significant features will be compatible with and will not adversely affect or further degrade adjacent properties, the surrounding neighborhood, or the public health, welfare, and safety.

The design of the dwelling meets all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan which was adopted to ensure that development is compatible with the character of the area and with the desired type of scale and architectural treatment fostered for this area. The project will be required to comply with all applicable Municipal Code regulations as well except as those sections for which relief has been requested. The project was sufficiently conditioned to ensure that the features and construction associated with the project would not adversely affect the neighborhood or adjacent properties. There is an existing fire hydrant located at 3946 Rome Ct, about 180 feet from the property and well within the 300 foot requirement. The determination letter has conditioned that the project provide neighbors with access to a contractor or other contact person during construction activities in the event there is a concern or complaint. Other construction information is also conditioned to be provided in advance to immediate neighbors. Furthermore, the Applicant has agreed to maintain an existing walking path on the property for the benefit of the neighborhood. As such, the proposed project and its features would not adversely affect adjacent properties or the public health, welfare, and safety.

Furthermore, the Applicant is pursuing to incorporate extensive sustainable design features as apart of the development of the home including but not limited to, comprehensive greywater system (using local company Greywater Corps), near zero carbon home (retained an Indoor Climate Designer and Carbon Reduction Specialist), no natural gas hookups, utilization of eco-friendly materials such as cork and bamboo, and incorporation of zeroscaping in the landscape design in an effort to seek Wildlife Habitat Certification. These project features go above and beyond to enhance the public health, welfare and safety.

Considering LAFD has approved the project to provide sufficient emergency access to the site, any additional roadway construction would impact adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood. Such improvements would require additional impacts to vegetation including (6) protected tree/shrub removals (2 more than the proposed project without the full extension) which will degrade the surrounding neighborhood. The improvements will require more construction trucks, delivery trucks, equipment, and grading to construct the retaining walls and roadway that would be required while providing no additional access to any other developed site.

3. The project substantially conforms with the purpose, intent and provisions of the General Plan, the applicable community plan, and any applicable specific plan

The ZA affirmed that the project adheres to the intent and provisions of the specific plan. Additional findings for this are unnecessary.

4. The proposed use is in conformity with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice.

The ZA affirmed that the project’s proposed use is in conformity with the public necessity, convenience, general welfare and good zoning practice. Additional findings for this are unnecessary.

Additional Findings Pursuant to 12.24.X,28(b)(7)

(i) The vehicular traffic associated with the Building or Structure will not create an adverse impact on Street access or circulation in the surrounding neighborhood

The ZA notes “the failure to enhance traffic circulation by widening the adjacent roadway will result in adverse impacts to traffic circulation in the neighborhood and thus it cannot be supported.”

It appears that these findings are not appropriate for this specific project as there is no existing roadway to “widen” and thereby improve or enhance traffic circulation. There currently is no traffic going to these lots, there is no road to widen. The finding suggests that there is an existing roadway that currently provides traffic circulation that simply should be “widened” to improve traffic flow.

But this is not the case. In fact, the proposed Building or Structure will improve vehicular traffic and circulation for the Street by providing a modified turnaround for not just emergency vehicles, but other vehicles such as trash trucks and delivery vehicles as well as extending the current terminus of the roadway by approximately 60 feet. Extending the road 100 feet further to the south would provide negligible benefits to traffic as the roadway will continue to dead end and provides no additional or improved access to any other resident. LAFD has affirmed that the additional extension would provide no benefit to emergency vehicles as well making it clear that this further extension would not improve access nor circulation. In fact, it could create a condition where emergency vehicles miss the turnaround and get stuck at the dead end, thereby needing to reverse.

This is not a mere widening of an existing roadway that is less than 20’ to meet the required minimums prescribed in the code. Even then, ZA’s have granted relief for such projects where said improvements would overly burden the project or create practical difficulties as in the case of the project at 1900 Avenue 55, the projects on Glenalbyn, at 1903 Lake Shore and at 1001 Bel Air Rd.

In this case, however, the project is improving a substantial portion of the roadway to provide basic access to their site and improve emergency vehicle access. Therefore, it is clear that such a project, even with a partial improvement along the entirety of the frontage, would not adversely impact Street access or circulation to the surrounding neighborhood.

(ii) The Building or Structure will not be materially detrimental or injurious to the adjacent property or improvements and will not have a materially adverse safety impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

The ZA affirmed that the project’s proposed single family dwelling will not be materially detrimental or injurious to the adjacent property or improvements and will not have a materially adverse safety impact on the surrounding neighborhood. Additional findings in response to this are unnecessary.

As stated, the proposed home is well under the max allowable for the site and adheres to all regulations outlined in the Mount Washington-Glassell Park Specific Plan and the Baseline Hillside Ordinance except those for which relief is requested.

The revised project is also providing a LAFD approve modified turnaround which will greatly improve the safety of the surrounding neighborhood by providing a means for fire trucks, paramedics, trash trucks, delivery vehicles, etc. to be able to turn around at the end of the street when they would currently have to reverse or make many awkward turns to navigate out.

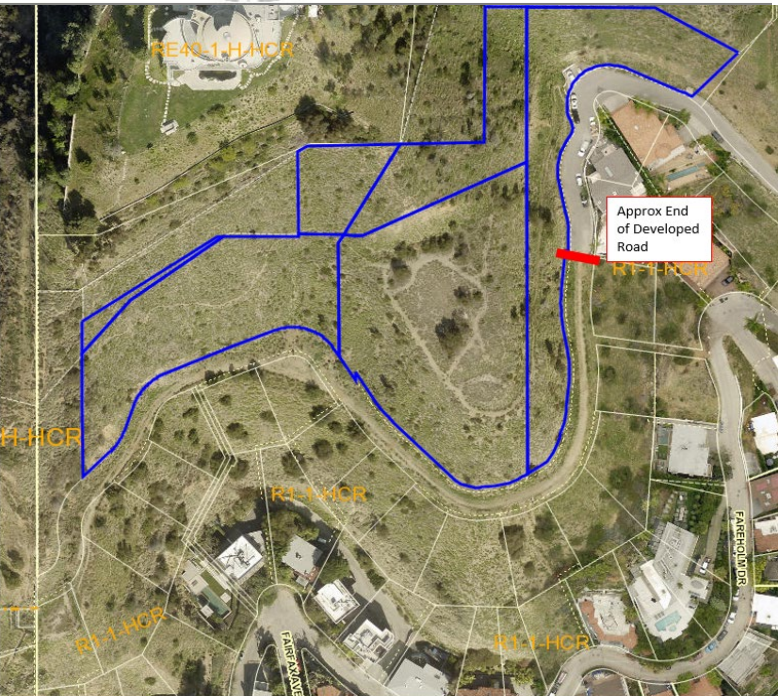
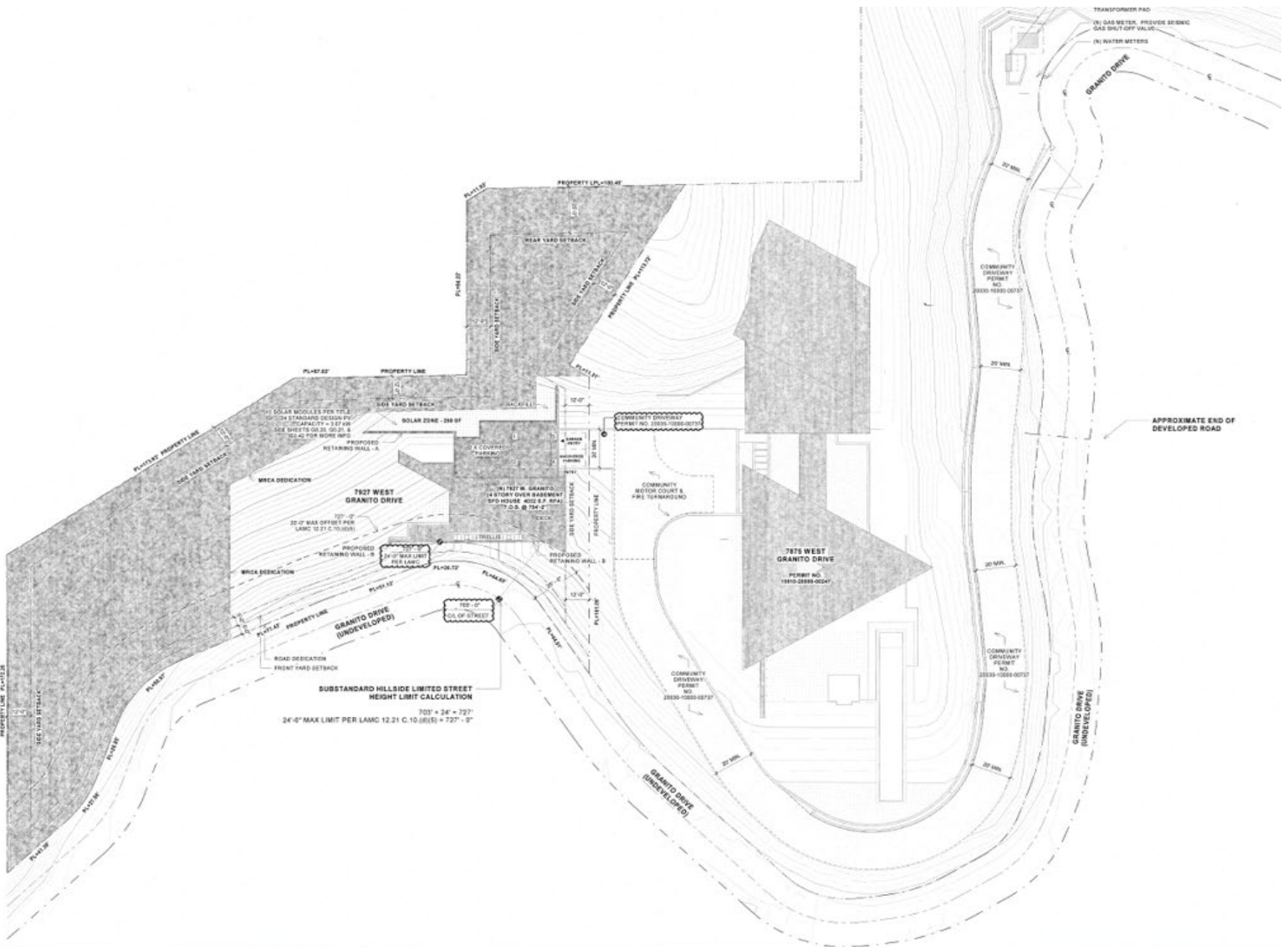
(iii) The site and/or existing improvements make strict adherence to Paragraph (i) of Subdivision 10. of Subsection C. of Section 12.21 of this Code impractical or infeasible.

The finding that needs to be made here is to determine whether the improvements would be impractical OR infeasible. Although there is a possible pathway to improve the roadway for the additional approximately 100 feet, it would be impractical to do so for a single family home of 2,557 sf in size and towards lots that already have access from multiple streets as they are owned by the multi-acre Church referenced above. The required site improvements would create an undue burden and result in a financial hardship for the project. These were reasons for making the finding of impracticality for the projects at 5443 Nordyke, 1903 Lake Shore, and 1900 Avenue 55.

The Determination for 1900 Avenue 55 explicitly states that “the cost of the roadway improvements exceed the benefit of those improvements.” Unfortunately, the cost of the additional extension of the roadway over the steep topography would require extensive grading, retaining walls, piles, utility upgrades, and other devices that would render the project economically unviable. And for what benefit? The roadway extension would provide an additional approximately 100’ strip of hardscape over a steep, untouched, vegetated slope and would provide no additional access to any other property. It would not provide any additional turning ability and could even create a condition where vehicles drive past the turnaround and have to reverse from the terminus of the roadway.

The argument that this precludes the other lots access to their sites or creates a “gap” is lacking merit and was addressed earlier. It fails to note that if this project was made infeasible as a result of these required improvements, that the lots to the south would still have a “gap” to access their sites. Our project is similarly having to improve a 40’ “gap” that is outside the extents of the subject site’s frontage in order to gain access to the site. Furthermore, these lots have a means of access to their land from multiple other points within their property. It would be illogical to suggest that the Church would developed their property outside of the confines of the Church grounds. Additionally, the project at 7831/7875 Granito Dr and the project at 7927/7931 Granito Dr requested similar relief from widening that would have provided access to over 17 vacant lots (with multiple different owners). Even for a development that proposed a 17,198 square foot single family home and a 4,107 square foot home (almost 9 times the size of the subject property’s home and ADU) it was impractical to improve the full extent of the adjacent roadway due to topography, additional construction, retaining walls and grading even though it precluded improving the roadway in front of those 17 other lots. The subject property too intends to provide a LAFD approved modified turnaround to serve the site as well as the surrounding area and therefore serves the basic function and intent of the Baseline Hillside Ordinance. The current project will also be extending 60’ from the existing terminus, whereas the Granito projects provided no additional extension of the existing roadway that it fronted.

Requiring site improvements that would result in additional construction, extensive grading, retaining walls, piles, utility upgrades, along with the removal of six protected trees/shrubs and other vegetation would be impractical for the negligible benefit it would provide. It would also impose a severe financial hardship on the 2500 sf SFD development that would be incongruent with this negligible benefit. When no other homes would be serviced by the extension and no lots further down the street would be precluded from gaining access to their sites in the future, the additional extension is clearly impractical.



7875 & 7927 Granito Site Plan and Aerial Photography

DAY OF HEARING SUBMISSIONS



Planning APC East LA <apceastla@lacity.org>

Proposed 3918-3924 ROME COURT Construction

Amy Vanharry <loglodite@gmail.com>
To: apceastla@lacity.org

Tue, Sep 12, 2023 at 5:38 PM

Hello,

I would like to address a safety and hazard issue for the potential 3918-3924 Rome Court Construction. I reside at 3931 Rome Ct- a neighbor to the south-west of their property. The street is in a state of chaos, and I understand that they are exempt from having to repair the street, yet all the water for the street collects in front of my gate/property and I have to manually sweep it into the open land, where their construction will be. If they build without any road repair or address this issue there will be a massive drainage problem that will potentially cause property damage to my property, as well as theirs.

In regards to developing the side road with a retaining wall, I am finishing up a retaining wall that lines the other side of the paper street that their wall might follow and it was definitely an attainable task. I would argue that my recent wall construction makes it more possible and perhaps even cheaper for them. Their appeals to fixing an already unsafe road and the code for fire safety is alarming to me as a neighbor, and questionable of why they are not held to the established zoning standard.

Thank you for reading,
Amy v Harrington
3931 Rome Ct. (Neighbor)

Self-Realization Fellowship
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

September 11, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Tony Russo
Director, Discretionary Entitlements
Crest Real Estate
11150 W Olympic Blvd, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90064

Re: 3918-3924 Rome Court; Case Number ZA 2022-957-ZAD-SPP-HCA

Dear Tony:

Thanks for your recent email recapping our phone conversation of September 8. I wanted to follow up with you to clarify a few points and correct a few misconceptions.

First, Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) has been a member of the Mt. Washington community for 98 years, and has always tried to be a good neighbor. In that spirit, it has *already* met with your clients personally and through representatives — as well as with neighbors and groups that oppose the project on various grounds. As a result it is familiar with the project and the variances being requested and, for that reason, sees no need to meet further at this point.

Second, contrary to your statement on the phone, the lots owned by SRF on Rome Court are not “tied” to other property owned by SRF. For administrative convenience, the lots have been **temporarily combined for assessment purposes only** with other contiguous parcels. Combinations of this sort may be (and have been) rescinded by SRF from time to time, and do not constitute lot mergers for purposes of sale, lease, finance, development or otherwise.

Third, and connected with the above, although its lots on Rome Court are contiguous to other SRF property, that does not mean SRF can access those lots *through* that property for development purposes. On the contrary, in order to develop its lots, SRF would need to meet the same road improvement requirements that apply to your clients. It would need to improve Rome Court along the full length of its own lots — as well as any unimproved upstream portions of the road (including any unpaved portions adjacent to your clients’ lots). For this reason, the financial impact of a waiver of the road improvement requirement to benefit your clients would inevitably shift the economic burden of that improvement to SRF. In fact, it could effectively “land lock” SRF’s lots altogether

Tony Russo
Director, Discretionary Entitlements
Crest Real Estate
September 11, 2023

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because the road improvements required adjacent to your clients' lots would likely necessitate grading activities on those lots, which SRF has no legal right to do.

Tony, in closing, I would ask that you explain to your clients that SRF's position on this is not intended to reflect in any way on their project or on them. Regardless of the developer or the project, the response would necessarily be the same. The fact is, that while SRF has no current plan to develop its Rome Court properties, as a nonprofit tax exempt organization, it cannot encumber its right to develop them in order to benefit a private third party. This is something a nonprofit organization simply cannot do.

Thanks again for your call.

Sincerely,



Henry W. Shaeffer, Esq.

for Planning & Building Department
SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

cc Bro. Kartikananda

Founded in 1920 by Paramahansa Yogananda

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RESPONSE TO THE APPEAL ON:
3918 & 3924 West Rome Court
CASE# ZA-2022-957-SPP-HCA

FROM: Lisa Lorentson
3932 Rome Court
323.360.2409

- I am writing a letter in opposition to the appeal presented by Mr. Storey on ZA-2022-957-SPP-HCA. The appeal is asking for a waiver on completing the street along the frontage of the property. This has been asked of the past owners of this property and should continue to be mandated to build on this parcel. There is no reason for prior owners to be required to do this, and the new owners be granted a waiver which puts the community in a Severe High Fire Zone at risk.

Several comments on his appeal points:

- In #1 of his opposition, Mr. Storey states “Furthermore we propose to improve the continuous improved roadway despite a waver granted by the decision letter and will be making this improvement for safety. See Exhibit B (attached)”

The wavier which they received was a waiver on completing the road up to Rome Drive. This is also on page 16 of the findings, stating: “Requiring widening and improvement for Continuous Paved Roadway at the frontage of the Project site and to the boundary of the Hillside Area in compliance with Section 12.21 C.1 OU)(3), along Rome Court and other hillside streets, would require the applicant to acquire private lands from several property owners and make improvements. The applicant does not have access to property rights at these locations, making such improvements infeasible and without rational nexus”

Since they are not completing the street up to Rome Drive, his statement seems erroneous. They are only paving a portion from the “basketball court” poured onto the dirt road by a neighbor, to their parcel. They are not completing the portion that they received a waiver on.

- In #2 of Mr. Storey’s Appeal Justification, he shows Exhibit A. A “grading elevation” without any numbers to back up the findings. In any grading document, there should be a vertical distance (or rise) as well a horizontal distance (or ‘run’). These numbers are necessary to show the grad and angle of elevation.

I have attached a rendering that was part of the original drawing of the home. This Exhibit C shows clearly that they planned to build a home with a road stating a 20 percent grading. Now they show a car at a ledge with no numbers backing up their grade.

Exhibit C



- Last, I am attaching a photo a retaining wall was recently built by the neighbor who will boarder this new street on the opposite side. The 80' long retaining wall, was built with a curve in the middle of the wall to follow the road that would eventually be built, per the B.O.E. If Mr. Storey's road follows the curve, he will have his 20% grade. As depicted in his Exhibit C.

