



July 23, 2024

Reference: Minor Adjustment Narrative
150 Steamboat Boulevard
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487
SEAD Job Number 24032
Planning Application PSM ID: PS-24-0148 Steamboat Blvd.

Dear Planning Department,

The following narrative provides a summary of the requested minor adjustment for the duplex average plate height. The variance request is to increase the average plate height on the west façade only to 29' instead of the 28' standard pursuant to the Community Development Code, (CDC), Section 204.B for the RN-1 (Residential Neighborhood - One) zone district. A maximum of 1' (3.6%) variation is sought from the average plate standard due to the practical difficulty resulting from the steepness of the existing site topography. Please refer to the accompanying drawings of the proposed project. All other measures will be taken to ensure the proposed structure meets the standards CDC and Community Plan.

Below are responses to the Minor Adjustment Criteria for Approval from the CDC. CDC sections are italicized:

717.D General Criteria for Approval

- 1. The standard proposed to be varied has not already been varied or modified through an Adjustment, Variance, Planned Unit Development, or Alternative Compliance as indicated in Article 5, if applicable.*

The standard has not already been varied as this lot is vacant at this time.

- 2. The Minor Adjustment is the least modification possible to accomplish the purpose of the standard.*

The requested average plate height adjustment is the least modification possible of the standard that will afford relief to the applicant. The garage was lowered as much as possible while maintaining engineering design standards. This in turn helps to reduce the average plate height. Lowering the garage further becomes increasingly difficult to achieve the driveway and retaining wall standards due to the existing steepness of the lot and existing elevation of Sundance Court. The proposed placement allows for the driveway and retaining wall standards to be met, and we are proposing a 1' increase to the average plate height criteria. If the house is pushed back further west on the lot, the building must then be taller above existing ground since the existing slope continues to drop in elevation. Further, the requested variation is for the west façade only. All other facades conform to the specified average plate heights of the CDC.

- 3. The Minor Adjustment will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Minor Adjustment and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.*

The west property line is adjacent to Steamboat Boulevard. The north property line is adjacent to Sundance Court. The adjacent property to the east is higher in elevation than the subject lot and as

such, the proposed minor adjustment to the average plate height will not adversely impact the east property as the proposed structure will sit lower than the existing neighboring residence. Further, the proposed structure will not shade the existing residence on the east lot. Mature vegetation exists between the subject property and the adjoining property to the south. Most of the vegetation will remain; therefore, the proposed structure will not adversely affect the existing residence to the south as it will be mostly hidden from view by the existing, mature vegetation.

4. *The Minor Adjustment application meets either the following criteria for practical difficulty or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:*

a. Practical Difficulty

The Minor Adjustment is of a technical nature and is required to compensate for some practical difficulty or unusual feature of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general.

b. Acceptable Alternative

The proposed development provides at least one of the following acceptable alternatives to the standard:

- i. *The alternative achieves a result that is equal to or better than the code standard to which a variation is being sought; or*
- ii. *ii. The purpose and intent of the code standard will not be achieved by strict application of the standard in the particular circumstance; or*
- iii. *iii. The application of other code standards, purposes, or intents will be improved by varying the standard.*

The proposed increase to the average plate height is only on the west façade, facing Steamboat Boulevard. There is over 38-ft of elevation drop from the high point on the southeast lot line to the low point on the west lot line. The existing slope through the proposed location of the proposed residence drops over 19-feet vertically in 80-feet of horizontal run (approximately 24 percent slope). This significant slope is further complicated along Sundance Court where the existing grade at Sundance Court rises 12-feet vertically in 34-feet of horizontal run (approximately 35 percent slope). This creates a difficult access driveway; however, through strategic planning the city engineering driveway standards and CDC retaining wall standards were able to be adhered to.

5. *A Minor Adjustment application for building envelopes on existing platted one-family residential and two-family residential lots in the SO overlay zone meets the following additional criteria.*

This lot is not located in the Skyline Overlay (SO) Zone.

6. *A Minor Adjustment application to permit construction of an accessory building prior to a principal building has demonstrated the ability for compliance with dimensional and development standards at the time of principal building construction*

This criterion is not applicable.

The following sections are in response to the CDC Duplex Design Standards found in section 436 of the CDC. Please note that the guidelines have not been included in our responses.

436.C Building Placement and Orientation

1. *Standards Not applicable.*

436.D Access

1. *Standards*

a. In areas where serviceable alley access is available, driveways and garages shall be accessed from the alley.

There is not an alley on this lot, so this criterion is not applicable.

b. Duplexes on corner lots shall have one garage facing each street, unless accessed off the alley or otherwise directed by City access review.

The proposed driveway comes off Sundance Boulevard on the north side of the property. The driveway then turns approximately 90-degrees west prior to entering the garages. As such, the garage doors face east and do not face a street.

c. Each side of a duplex shall include a porch or covered entry.

The proposed plans have a covered entry on the east elevation, and each unit has a porch and deck on the west elevation. The covered entry on the east elevation with the proposed walkway to the driveway creates a clearly defined primary entry.

d. A walkway shall connect each entrance to a public sidewalk or driveway. A door that leads into a garage does not qualify as a front entrance.

The proposed plans have a walkway connecting the covered entry on the east elevation to the driveway.

436.E Building Massing

1. *Standard Duplexes shall be designed to appear as a single-family dwelling, and the individual dwelling units shall not be designed to mirror each other.*

The proposed duplex has been designed to appear as a single-family dwelling. Both the north and south facades allow for only one unit to be visible. The east elevation is primarily the garage façade. The garages are different sizes and have different roof heights to create a visual contrast. The west façade has the most similarities; however, the north unit is proposed to be 56' long while the south unit is proposed to be 44' long. The north unit also has a jog in the walls creating an inset deck/porch while the south unit has a deck/porch that protrudes away from the building. Various siding materials and window placements have also been implemented to create visual contrast. Please refer to the responses below to section 436.H for more specific information.

436.F Roof Forms

1. *Standards Not applicable*

436.G Parking

1. Standards

a. Driveway and garage access shall be taken from an alley or the street with the least potential for conflicts with pedestrian activity.

The proposed driveway comes off Sundance Boulevard on the north side of the property. Multiple driveway scenarios were analyzed, including access from Steamboat Boulevard. Ultimately it was determined that Steamboat Boulevard is a more active road, thus Sundance Court was selected.

b. Garage doors on all street-facing garages shall be recessed in accordance with the following:

The proposed driveway comes off Sundance Boulevard on the north side of the property. The driveway then turns approximately 90-degrees west prior to entering the garages. As such, the garage doors face east and do not face a street.

436.H Building Scale, Variation, and Fenestration

1. Standards

a. Each half of the duplex shall be architecturally distinct and shall differ on all facades in at least two of the following design elements:

- i. Silhouette of rooflines; or*
- ii. Massing or building projections; or*
- iii. Entry configuration, including orientation, placement, architectural delineation, porches, or other features; or*
- iv. Size and placement of windows; or*
- v. Front setback; or*
- vi. Difference in unit size of at least 20 percent.*

The proposed duplex design addresses four of the above criteria, thus satisfying the criteria.

ii. The garages are different sizes and have different roof heights to create a visual contrast. The north unit also has a jog in the walls creating an inset deck/porch while the south unit has a deck/porch that protrudes away from the building.

iv. Various siding materials and window placements have also been implemented to create visual contrast.

vi. The north unit is proposed to be 56' long while the south unit is proposed to be 44' long. The north unit is approximately 27.5 percent larger than the south unit.

b. Side-loaded garages shall provide windows or other architectural details that mimic the features of the living portion of the dwelling on the facade of the garage facing the street.

The proposed garage design incorporates decorative timber corbels to mimic the timber framing elements of the dwelling units. The garage also has windows and siding materials that tie in with the dwelling unit. Further, a covered entry is in the foreground of each façade when looking at the respective elevations.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Steamboat Engineering And Design, Inc.

Jacob Mielke, PE, President

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