



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



Richard J. Bruckner  
Director

January 26, 2016

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**PROJECT R2014-01923-(5)  
VARIANCE NO. 201400008  
APPLICANT: SC PLANNERS INC.  
LA CRESCENTA ZONED DISTRICT  
(FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3-VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

The proposed project would authorize the construction of a new single-family residence on a legal, undersized 4,670 square foot lot in the R-1-7500 (Single-family Residence – 7,500 square feet Minimum Required Area) Zone. The variance is required as a condition of Certificate of Compliance No. 201400060, approved July 2014, which states that all necessary zoning permits, such as a variance, shall be acquired prior to any construction or grading on the property. The project site is located on a vacant lot with no address approximately 225 feet north of the intersection of Canyonside Road and Manzanita Street (APN #5868-020-012) in the unincorporated community of La Crescenta. The project qualifies as a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County environmental guidelines.

The project was approved by the Regional Planning Commission (Commission) on September 30, 2015. The approval is being appealed by Mr. James A. Gorton.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING,**

1. Find that the project is categorically exempt pursuant to state and local CEQA guidelines.
2. Deny the appeal and instruct County Counsel to prepare the necessary findings to affirm the

Commission's approval of Variance No. 201400008.

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

The project is compatible with the surrounding area. The project is located on a vacant lot and is surrounded by single-family residences and open space to the north and east, single-family residences and an adjacent vacant lot to the south, and single-family residences to the west.

The variance is required as a condition of Certificate of Compliance No. 201400060, issued for the project site on July 2014, which states that all necessary zoning permits, such as a variance, shall be acquired prior to any construction or grading on the property. The Certificate of Compliance was issued on the subject property due to the fact that the subject property (consisting of 4,670 square feet) was not in compliance with the minimum 5,000 square feet lot area zoning requirement (R-1-5000) when the lot was lawfully created in 1963.

The project abides to the development standards for minimum yard setbacks and height requirements for single-family residences in the R-1 zone as prescribed under County Code. The project site is an irregularly shaped lot with an area of 4,670 square feet and contains two street frontages of approximate equal lengths along Canyonside Road and Maurice Avenue. The proposed residence contains 1,789.5 square feet of livable area and a 935.5 square foot roof deck. There will be minimal side yard setbacks of 5 feet on three sides of the proposed residence, a front yard setback of 23 feet, and a rear yard setback of 42 feet. A detached 2-car garage will be located approximately 42 feet from the property line along Canyonside Road and will be accessed by a new paved driveway off of Canyonside Road. The maximum height of the house will be 34 feet and 4 inches above natural grade.

The proposed variance to allow the construction of a single-family residence on the subject property is consistent with the goals and policies set forth in the Countywide General Plan and the site's current zoning designation as it promotes the development of a single-family residence in a residential neighborhood containing single-family residences.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The proposed project would help implement the County's Strategic Plan goals of strengthening existing neighborhoods and preserving the well-being of County residents.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

Implementation of the proposed variance should not result in any new significant costs to the County or to the Department of Regional Planning as the proposed project is a private development.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at its regularly scheduled meeting of September 30, 2015. The applicant's representative was present to offer testimony in favor of the project. Two speakers, including the appellant, testified in opposition. The opposition contended that the project did not conform to development standards as prescribed under County code, that the placement of the proposed garage is inappropriate, that there is an alleged common ownership of the subject lot and the lot immediately to the south of the subject lot, and that the proposed house size is not appropriate in relation to the size of the lot. The Commission subsequently voted 3-1 (1 vacant) to approve Variance No. 201400008.

Pursuant to subsection A of Section 22.60.230 of the County code, James A. Gorton appealed the Commission's approval to the Board of Supervisors on October 13, 2015. A public hearing is required pursuant to Section 22.60.240 of the County Code and Sections 65335 and 65856 of the Government Code. Notice of the hearing must be given pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 22.60.174 of the County code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Government Code Sections 6061, 65090, 65355, and 65856 relating to notice of public hearing.

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

The project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption (Class 3 Exemption – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) under CEQA and the County environmental guidelines. The granting of the variance to allow the construction of one single-family residence on a lot that is zoned for single-family residential use will not cause any significant environmental impacts.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

Action on the proposed variance is not anticipated to have a negative impact on current services.

For further information, please contact Steve Mar at (213) 974-6435 or smar@planning.lacounty.gov. Our office hours are Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



RICHARD J. BRUCKNER  
Director

RJB:SA:MM:SM:lm

- c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
- Assessor
- Chief Executive Office
- County Counsel
- Public Works