



Local News

Santa Barbara City Council Clears Deck Proposed for Mesa Ocean View Property

5-2 vote reverses design review board rejection of backyard deck overlooking neighboring front yard and within setback buffer



Among the upgrades proposed for a single-family house at 1199 Harbor Hills Drive in Santa Barbara are decks to take better advantage of the ocean views from the Mesa property. (Joshua Molina / Noozhawk photo)

By Joshua Molina, Noozhawk Staff Writer | @JECMolina | May 18, 2019 | 10:30 p.m.



In a rare reversal of a design review board decision, the **Santa Barbara City Council** has ruled that a Mesa property owner can **build a deck that overlooks a neighbor's front yard.**

The **Single-Family Design Review Board** originally denied the project at 1199 Harbor Hills Drive because **the deck was proposed within 15 feet** of the front yard setback.

The council voted 5-2 for the reversal, with **Mayor Cathy Murillo** and Council members **Eric Friedman, Oscar Gutierrez, Meagan Harmon** and **Randy Rowse** in support and Council members **Jason Dominguez** and **Kristen Sneddon** in dissent.

"We are reducing the size, bulk and scale of the house as it appears to the street," said **Paul Zink**, the architect representing the homeowner, Ben Howland. "The owner has expressed a desire to be outside, have orange juice, drink coffee, watch the morning sunrise, look at the water.

"That is what we are trying to create."

Zink emphasized that the proposed deck overlooks a neighboring front yard that already is visible from the street and in public view. The situation would be different, he said, if the property owner was building a deck that overlooked a private backyard.

MOST SHARED

LATEST POSTS

1. Santa Barbara School Board and City Council Talk Ways to Collaborate
2. Allan Hancock Celebrates Graduates at Santa Maria Campus
3. I Madonnari Street Painting Festival Chalks Up Funds for Local Schools
4. Bishop Diego's Gabe Arteaga, Hamilton Finefrock Make First Team All Tri-Valley League Baseball
5. James Robert Faulkner, of Santa Barbara, 1958-2019

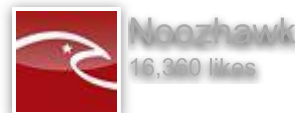
DAILY NOOZHAWK

Subscribe to our free P.M. Report to receive the day's headlines weekdays at 4:15 p.m.

SIGN UP NOW >

You might also like our free *A.M. Report.*

FACEBOOK



8 friends like this



The planned deck would provide a view of the ocean and harbor, and would be about eight feet from the front yard setback.

Zink said the impacts are minimal when the deck is overlooking the front yard. His design also reduces the overall mass of the house, which is off La Coronilla Drive above Cliff Drive.

“We have designed our main level deck to be our outdoor living space,” he said. “We are on a hillside lot, 45-degree angles, no one is playing on the steep hill. Large decks on this part of the town, in these neighborhoods exist.”

The proposed project includes the conversion of an existing crawlspace into a habitable basement level, and construction of decks at the eastern and southern elevations of the 2,591-square-foot residence. Plans also call for an interior remodel, a new covered entry porch, new concrete walkway, new retaining wall, and new stairs at the one-story, single-family home.

“We are adding a new front porch and a new front door to give the house a new pizzaz,” Zink said.

Next-door neighbor Jeanne West said the front yard deck would be an intrusion.

“The side and front does come very close to my property and it does concern me, not just now but for resale in the future,” she said.

Sneddon worried about setting a precedent of allowing a deck within a 15-foot front yard setback. She said there is a good reason for design review guidelines, and that sometimes people have dogs that bark on a deck that could impose on a neighbor’s yard.

“A 15-foot setback is the rule,” Sneddon said. “They are asking for an eight-foot setback. The deck brings your inner space out into your neighbor’s yard. Decks do bring your indoors outdoors and into other people’s space.”

Dominguez agreed. He said that even though “this is going to be an A-plus house in an A-plus neighborhood,” the city should honor the requests of neighbors.

Rowse said the house is going to look better after it is redesigned.

“This house is calling out to be redone,” he said. “It needs to be redone. By reducing the bulk of the house, by the mass of the house, they are actually doing, I am not the neighbor, but I find it more neighborly. I find it less imposing.”

— *Noozhawk* staff writer [Joshua Molina](mailto:jmolina@noozhawk.com) can be reached at jmolina@noozhawk.com. Follow *Noozhawk* on Twitter: [@noozhawk](https://twitter.com/noozhawk), [@NoozhawkNews](https://twitter.com/NoozhawkNews) and [@NoozhawkBiz](https://twitter.com/NoozhawkBiz). Connect with *Noozhawk* on Facebook.

Related Stories

- [Housing, Employment Trends Presented at Annual UCSB Economic Forecast Project Summit, May 16, 2019](#)
- [City of Santa Barbara, Housing Authority Propose Project at Commuter Lot Property, May 9, 2019](#)
- [Santa Barbara Holds AUD Workshop Focused on Downtown Housing, April 24, 2019](#)
- [To Meet State Mandates, Santa Barbara Must Build 3,083 New Housing Units by 2023, April 7, 2019](#)



Support Noozhawk Today!

Our professional journalists work tirelessly to report on local news so you can be more informed and engaged in your community. This quality, local reporting is free for you to read and share, but it's not free to produce.

You count on us to deliver timely, relevant local news, 24/7. Can we count on you to invest in our newsroom and help secure its future?

We provide special member benefits to show how much we appreciate your support.



7064 Marymount Way, Goleta CA 93117



3090 Hidden Valley Lane, Montecito 93108

[MORE HOMES >](#)

Email

I would like give...

Monthly
 Yearly
 Once

/month

[CHECK OUT >](#)



Ask



Vote



Investigate



Answer

Noozhawk Asks: What's Your Question?

Welcome to **Noozhawk Asks**, a new feature in which you ask the questions, you help decide what Noozhawk investigates, and you work with us to find the answers.

Here's how it works: You share your questions with us in the nearby box. In some cases, we may work with you to find the answers. In others, we may ask you to vote on your top choices to help us narrow the scope. And we'll be regularly asking you for your feedback on a specific issue or topic.

We also expect to work together with the reader who asked the winning questions to find the answer together. Noozhawk's objective is to come at questions from a place of curiosity and openness, and we believe a transparent collaboration is the key to achieve it.

The results of our investigation will be published here in this Noozhawk Asks section. Once or twice a month, we plan to do a review of what was asked and answered.

Thanks for asking!

[CLICK HERE TO GET STARTED >](#)

Reader Comments

Noozhawk is no longer accepting reader comments on our articles. [Click here for the announcement](#). Readers are instead invited to submit letters to the editor by emailing them to news@noozhawk.com. Please provide your full name and community, as well as contact information for verification purposes only.

<p>Home</p>	<p>About Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What We Do Meet the Team Contact Us Want to Work? Hawks Club Terms of Use Privacy Policy 	<p>Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise Subscribe Text Alerts Donate Make Noozhawk Your Home Page 	<p>Affiliates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LION Publishers Dos Pueblos High School Charger Account Laguna Blanca School Fourth Estate San Marcos High School King's Page 	<p>Contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit Your News Advertise Sponsorship Application Have a Question? 	<p>NOOZHAWK P.O. Box 101 Santa Barbara, CA 93102</p>
--------------------	---	---	---	--	---

© Malamute Ventures LLC 2007-2019 | ISSN No. 1947-6086

Noozhawk is a founding member of the Local Independent Online News (LION) Publishers.

Site design and development by Hop Studios