

Public Comments

Serrano, Ana G

From: escovitz@mindspring.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 7:14 PM
To: Serrano, Ana G
Subject: Dev. Proposal 15 W. Del Norte St. 7/6/2020 Hist. Pre. Bd. meeting AR NV 20-00410-5 and

CAUTION! - External Email. Malware is most commonly spread through unknown email attachments and links. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email!

Ms. Serrano,

First and foremost, your notice to neighbors is critically inaccurate. The proposed plan is not for the 1291 S.F. house with covered deck the notice describes. (That sounds like a more appropriately sized structure for the lot size.) The plan is for a 2 and 1/2 story, 3032 SF house (no covered deck) on a 3750 SF lot. Why the discrepancies? Why the misleading notice? Doesn't this invalidate the "notice" and the prerequisites for the 7/6 hearing? Please bring this matter to the attention of the HPB and its legal counsel. I would appreciate knowing their responses.

Applicant's plan is for a nice, tall and large house on a very small, non-conforming lot. This plan requires large setback variances on all sides and a variance for 50% more lot coverage than permitted. It is incompatible with the other front setbacks on Del Norte between Wood and Cascade. There is a covered front door entry way, but no "porch" as that design element presents on all the other houses facing Del Norte between Wood and Cascade. Applicant's plan does not include a "porch" as described in North End Historic Preservation Overlay Design Standards, Sec.B,para.13.

Applicant submits that the house at 2120 North Cascade Ave is "similar" to the proposed plan; it is not. 2120 N. Cascade is a 1 and 1/2 story 1634 SF house on a 9500 SF lot. It maintains the low density, improvement to lot size ratio that characterizes and distinguishes the Old North End. 2120 N. Cascade has a real porch (as defined above) at the front of the house, as well as the covered front door entranceway. Its setback on Cascade is visually uniform with its neighbors'.

Applicant's lot size is unique among the properties in the North End Historic Preservation overlay area and the Wood-Cascade subarea. It results from a subdivision years ago that was intended to provide previous residents of 17 W. Del Norte with an unimproved recreation/yard area. Current owners of 17 W. Del Norte are non-resident owners who have turned their property into a multi-tenant rental and Air BnB. These current owners of 17 W. Del Norte purchased the subject vacant lot,15 W. Del Norte, for \$50k in 2019 and then sold it to Applicant a few months later for \$150k!?.

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If Applicant's current proposal for 15 W. Del Norte is approved, it will be precedent for other developers. Properties with large lots will be bought, subdivided and developed for maximum density and profit. North End Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Design Standards and the Ordinance become meaningless. So too zoning setback and density restrictions. The Old North End will lose its special historical characteristic and preservation protections.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sari Escovitz (Owner)
1705 Wood Ave (NE Corner of Wood and Del Norte)
C.S. CO 80907

667-0216

To: Gaby Serrano
City Planner

From:
Fawn Bell
1619 Wood Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

RE: File numbers: AR R 20-00408-HPB 1611 Wood Avenue
And AR NV 20-00410 15 West Del Norte Street

Dear Mrs. Serrano,

Thank you for speaking with me yesterday about the requested variances for the two properties above. I would like to submit a comment that I would prefer that projects requiring variances not be approved. My reasons are as follows:

1. The storm drainage along Wood Avenue in the Old North End is very poor. Already, our house basement has been flooded due to obstruction of the gutter flow by a parked container and we have had to use sand bags in high rainfall events. The surface storm system is old and was built to handle only a certain density of housing and runoff. East-west streets drain into Wood Avenue so the "watershed" is quite substantial. Additionally, some recent handicap ramps, while beneficial for walking, have allowed street water to flow up to the sidewalks and onto properties rather than remaining in the gutter. As potential new housing units produce more parked cars (all vehicles are not accommodated by the one car on-site parking requirement) more flow will be blocked and there will be more likelihood of flooding existing houses.

Wood Avenue has roughly a 1% fall from north to south so water does not flow away as quickly as on some streets. Increasing the paved surfaces and adding roofs for new structures in the neighborhood will increase the rate of runoff and remove more permeable surface area in which water could be absorbed. So, my principle concern is "Health, Safety and Welfare" – that the City is required to protect. I assume that most of the residents do not have flood insurance. We have already had remedial expenses from the time our house was flooded in a storm and also have done some modifications to our approach walks but on this flat terrain it is hard to make much difference. In the alley, where drainage also occurs we have had to raise our building and construct a new, perimeter foundation to repair damage from past flooding and mitigate future flooding. Without a drainage study and reengineering of Wood Avenue I believe it is a mistake to add drainage that exceeds the runoff capacity.

2. Code allowances are already based on reasonable land use. A variance should be for rare and valid exceptions. However, with each variance approved a new precedent is set or a previous one reinforced. The net effect is that it will become harder for the City to deny any variance. That will result in a density that is different from the R1-9000 and R1-

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6000 that owners should be assured of in the neighborhood. (Residents accept the balance of existing properties already zoned R1 and R4). Unfortunately, the owners of the site at 15 West Del Norte were likely either misinformed or misled and they purchased a too small property for \$100,000 without the assurance that they would have the ability to build on it. The uncertainty about variances leads people to expect variances and potentially make costly mistakes. I believe this is very unfortunate and partly a result of an unclear message about protecting zoning in the neighborhood.

3. Regarding ADUs in the neighborhood. If I understand you correctly, these units are not currently allowed for properties zoned R1-6000 and R1-9000. This is the zoning of 1611 Wood Avenue and therefore, should not be allowed. I attended a public hearing regarding proposed ADU construction in Colorado Springs. At the meeting it was explained that the primary justification for ADUs was to provide low income housing. However, that is not the reason given for the request.
4. In the larger context I would comment that the Old North End Historic District is under tremendous pressures from deleterious impacts in the last two decades. I served on the City Council-appointed I-25 Task Force in the late 1980's and tried very hard for two years with the committee to protect residents along the entire corridor from increased noise, increased pollution, increased commuter traffic diverted neighborhoods, increased speeds (the interstate, ironically was redesigned with CDOT and Federal monies because the curves were too tight for design speeds and then once it was rebuilt the speeds were again increased beyond the design speed!) and to convince CDOT to follow the City's Master Plan and create an interstate on the east side of Colorado Springs. Unfortunately, we were not able to make an impact on the design decisions. The current noise level is equivalent to that allowed only in industrial zones according in most typical city codes. The resulting increase far exceeds the permitted residential standards. The case in my home is typical for the neighborhood – no longer able to open our windows due to noise we had to replace our historic windows with new ones to mitigate the noise. Then, unable to open the windows we had to add air conditioning. This has resulted in about \$20,000 for mitigation of I-25 for our house. With the increased development in the downtown core traffic along the neighborhood streets has also greatly increased.

We know based on the State Climatologist's models that Colorado summers will become increasingly hot and dry. Increased built surfaces resulting from more housing units together with increased traffic generation will result in a hotter, more polluted neighborhood environment— again a negative trend in terms of “Health, Safety and Welfare.” These conditions have been scientifically proven to result in disease and poor health due to stress to the human body, poor performance by children in school and loss of habitat and health of the urban canopy of established trees. Already, science tells us that songbird populations have been reduced by 50% in the last twenty years. Our natural environment is critical to good health. Given the projected changes due to Climate Change it is all the more imperative to make planning choices that offset the

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projected increase in temperature. More density of development has a net, negative impact and we will be stuck with it for the future. I ask the City to protect what remains of the quality of life in the City's historic district, protect monetary investments and protect the health of its citizens and the enthusiasm that it takes to care for these old structures, parks and green spaces.

One final comment is that where profit incentives arise there is a greater likelihood that developers and investors will be attracted to purchase single family residences and convert them to multifamily, residential properties – especially if variances and ADU permits are freely granted by the City. The Historic District is threatened by all of these myriad pressures and the City should protect it in every way possible. Many of the residents have been staunch, community volunteers and leaders in our city and they deserve to have some protection from the City in return.

Thank you for considering these comments carefully. I am sorry if some would-be residents' plans will not be realized if requested variances are not granted, but the ultimate, "built out" scenario for the neighborhood should drive the decisions rather than these incremental requests.

Sincerely,

Ms. Fawn Bell

Serrano, Ana G

From: Susie Schorsch <suzanne.schorsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2020 4:21 PM
To: Serrano, Ana G
Subject: 15 W Del Norte Street Project

CAUTION! - External Email. Malware is most commonly spread through unknown email attachments and links. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email!

City Planning,

This e-mail is in response to the development proposal in consideration at 15 West Del Norte and concerns that I have as a homeowner in the same block.

The Planning & Community Development Notice we received (green paper) as homeowners on Del Norte has plans for a 1291 square foot home, yet when you get the additional information it states that the home will be over 3000 square feet. Why is there a discrepancy? It is hard to make judgement when there are conflicting descriptions. 1291 sounds somewhat reasonable for the lot size but over 3000 square feet will take the whole lot and take away from the historic feel of the neighborhood.

I also am concerned for the look of the property as the front door will be almost to the sidewalk, not matching the look of the neighborhood where we saved for many years to be able to live, a historic district. One thing that makes this neighborhood so desirable is the homes set back with grass fronts and front porches. What is the responsibility of the Historic Preservation Board in matters such as these? The harmony of this block will be lost with such a large structure.

I also worry about the safety issue as so many school children use Del Norte as a way to school and the park. Is it really wise to have a door so close to where children journey?

If you could answer these questions, I would be truly appreciative. I have tried to be on these conferencing meetings during Covid, and find that they are not a really good way to communicate, so hopefully this letter will let you know our concerns as homeowners.j

The Schorsch Family
22 West Del Norte
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Serrano, Ana G

From: escovitz@mindspring.com
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2020 12:53 AM
To: Serrano, Ana G
Subject: Fw: Dev. Proposal 15 W. Del Norte St. 7/6/2020 Hist. Pre. Bd. meeting AR NV 20-00410-5 and

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Dear Ms. Serrano,

I agree with Sari Escovitz's letter below, and other neighbors are in agreement.

The requested variances are not in keeping with historic preservation standards and makes them meaningless.

William Escovitz
1705 Wood Ave.

From: escovitz@mindspring.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 7:13 PM
To: Ana.Serrano@coloradosprings.gov
Subject: Dev. Proposal 15 W. Del Norte St. 7/6/2020 Hist. Pre. Bd. meeting AR NV 20-00410-5 and

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Sari Escovitz (Owner)
1705 Wood Ave (NE Corner of Wood and Del Norte)
C.S. CO 80907

667-0216

Public Comments

Serrano, Ana G

From: Dan Schrag <danpschrag@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 6:01 PM
To: Serrano, Ana G
Subject: Re: Plans for 15 W Del Norte

CAUTION! - External Email. Malware is most commonly spread through unknown email attachments and links. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email!

Thanks for your help getting the info on plans for 15 Del Norte. I have two comments, both positive. First, I am very glad to see a one car garage in the plan with an additional uncovered parking space on the lot. Parking has been a bit of an issue on the street for some time so this will not exacerbate it. Second, the design of the house looks very compatible with the North End neighborhood and is single family only which is good. Certainly looks like an enhancement to the existing vacant lot.

Dan Schrag
23 West Del Norte

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 1:47 PM Serrano, Ana G <Ana.Serrano@coloradosprings.gov> wrote:

From: Serrano, Ana G
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:25 PM
To: 'danpschrag@gmail.com' <danpschrag@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Plans for 15 W Del Norte

Hello Dan,

Please find attached the plans for 15 W Del Norte.

Thanks,

Gaby Serrano

Planner II

Land Use Review Division