

Gale, Mia

From: Donna K. Tope <dktope@umich.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 1:06 PM
To: Gale, Mia
Cc: Kowalski, Matthew; Barrett, Jon
Subject: Re: Submission of 601 East Hoover for March meeting

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RE: 601 East Hoover

To: ZBA Staff and members

Pre-submittal meeting with staff: I consider the meeting that I had with Matt and Jon after the last ZBA hearing on my petition, in which we discussed exactly what the parameters of a new submission that left the rear yard setback unchanged from the existing, to meet the pre-submission meeting requirement.

Petition submitted: What I submitted today, and gave authorization for payment from my cc for the petition filing fee, exactly met the parameters we discussed. I just got the drawings from my architect today, and they did not see anywhere that 11:30 am today was the deadline.

The notable points in this submission:

1. The proposed addition meets the current nonconforming existing rear yard setback. That is the only nonconformance existing on the site.
2. My strong desire to provide a second floor emergency exit is met. We moved the circular stair from within the addition to an exterior fire escape from an emergency egress door which is wider than code and includes two areas where tenants can sit outside, replacing the now lost rear porch. As an aside, my architects researched the issue of the circular stair I had proposed meeting emergency exit requirements, and it does as a second emergency egress.
3. There are two new emergency egress windows, one on the north wall of the second floor and one on the east wall.
4. The second floor bathroom is enlarged, allowing for a second wash basin, more counter and cabinet space and an over-sized tub/shower. There are two entries to the bathroom. In an emergency, there are two ways to get from the front of the second floor to the rear emergency exit door.
5. The first floor allows for two stacking washer/dryer units, a large shower in the full bathroom, a second larger refrigerator and additional counter/cabinet/work space.
6. There is no impact on any surrounding properties, the existing off-street parking spaces are preserved, and the house retains the existing open space, which is more than any of its neighbors.
7. I still am puzzled by the antipathy several members express when they comment that with this addition I am seeking financial gain, which apparently is a 'No-No' for considering a petition. Yes, investment of \$70,000 will make my house more valuable when I go to sell it...but, in the meantime I have spent \$70,000 and will not recover that investment EVER, whether I borrow it or put the capital cash into it out of my pocket. In my first

petition, I showed that the cost of adding a bedroom rented at FMV does not amortize/pay for itself until 30 years if you borrow the money at conventional commercial rates. Rental properties are valued for FMV for sale by the RENTAL income, not the capital invested. My house is currently approved for 6 occupants, and my addition does not change that. It's FMV is still based on rental to 6 occupants. But the tax assessor doesn't value the FMV, thus the assessed value, on number of occupants or collectible rent. My investment will not increase my collection of rent per occupant but it will, I assure you, result in a major property tax increase. So, contrary to the expressed opinions of several ZBA members, my addition will result in a net loss. My petition clearly states that financial gain is NOT a benefit from ZBA approval of my petition. If I went the 'no ZBA approval necessary' alternative, 1. below, which is cheaper by half, I definitely would recoup my investment in a decade or so.

Alternatives:

1. As I have mentioned in my previous submissions, I could accomplish a bedroom/bathroom/laundry within the existing structure, which would not require ANY ZBA approval. I could enclose the existing front porch and build additional space over it on the second floor. This would cost about half what the very minimal addition I have proposed, including this version. However, while this approach is financially much more responsible and eliminating ZBA involvement would be a major plus, I do not want to do that. Importantly, that easier, less expensive route does not give me any increased safety for my tenants. It does not provide a second emergency egress.

2. In addition, I consider my front porch as a nice amenity for my tenants. The house is charming in a modest way because of the open covered front porch without an awkward bump out over it. I keep it in great condition, it is an asset to the neighborhood. I remember quite clearly when Mr. DeVarti petitioned ZBA for an extended front porch on his home across from Burns Park. He made a pitch for how front porches invited neighbor involvement, using front porches made the neighborhood safer, 'more eyes on the street' is what I remember his phrase was. In any event, I feel that porches, especially in the student area are most desirable and I want to keep mine for my tenants. My tenants feel quite at home at 601, and enjoy having an inviting front porch to welcome them home and to gather with friends in nice weather.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna K. Tope

owner/manager/landlord for 601 East Hoover

On Wed, Feb 22, 2017 at 10:37 AM, Gale, Mia <RGale@a2gov.org> wrote:

Donna,

The deadline for submittal is today at noon (in less than 1 ½ hr) and all applicants must hold a pre-submittal meeting with Jon, prior to submittal. I do know that Jon has several meetings on his schedule today, and this upcoming ZBA agenda is looking quite full. Matt is no longer the liaison for the ZBA. Thanks for your understanding.

Mia Gale

Administrative Assistant V