

October 07, 2008

ITEM NO. - C.B.C. 612 - NEW MATTERS

Applicant: Andy Hicks Architecture Studio
Andy Hicks, Owner
Susan Deselle, Agent (Realtor)

Address: 209 N. Pierce Street

Description: Lot 21, Block 2, Strong & Waters Addition to the City of Little Rock, Pulaski County, AR and west 7.5 feet of the closed alley formally abutting said Lot 21.

ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. A perimeter planting strip is required along any side of a vehicular use area that abuts adjoining property. This strip shall be at least nine (9) feet wide. This site is located within the designated mature area of the city; therefore, this area can be reduced to six foot nine inches (6'-9").
2. One tree shall be planted for every seven hundred and fifty (750) square feet of required landscape or buffer area with an average linear spacing of not less than thirty (30) feet. Three (3) shrubs or vines for every thirty (30) linear feet shall be planted in the perimeter planting strip.
3. Not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the perimeter planter area may be shifted from one area of the site to another area of the site.
4. A franchise agreement must be obtained for any/all landscaping or parking to be located within the public right-of-way.

VARIANCE REQUESTED:

1. The elimination of the required perimeter planting strip along the southern property line.
2. The reduction of the required perimeter planting strip along the northern property line to four (4) foot.
3. The elimination of the required perimeter trees and shrubs along the southern property line.
4. More than 25% of the required perimeter trees and shrubs to be shifted to another location on the site.

FINDINGS:

The site in question is located at 209 N. Pierce Street and consists of an existing structure which was originally constructed in 1982 as a single story 1,100 square foot single-family residence on

a residential lot measuring 50 feet by 162.5 feet containing 8,125 square feet of total land area. The property was subsequently rezoned to O-3, General Office District and the rear yard was paved to provide a parking lot for an office use. The applicant is proposing an addition to the existing home with a maximum area of 1,800 square feet. A portion of the 2nd floor will span over an open parking area for 3 automobiles, creating a “carport”. The new addition will be at the rear of the property and will observe the four-foot side yard setback and the 25-foot rear yard setback required adjacent to residential property per the Mid-town Overlay. The new development will provide one building with a maximum of 2,900 square feet. On September 18th, 2008 the Planning Commission approved the short-form POD to allow the rezoning of the property and to allow the mixed use of residential and office on the site. Upon review by the City Beautiful Commission this application will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final approval.

The applicant proposes the continued use of the driveway and rear parking lot. Some small portion of the paving will be removed or added as required to conform to the new addition. The developer is requesting the placement of a six-foot wood fence at the rear of the property along the original alley side and along the north and south sides to approximately 25 feet from the right of way. Portions of an existing chain link fence will be maintained for security at the rear. Two mature trees located at the rear of the property will be removed to make way for the addition. The remaining trees on site will be maintained.

The landscape ordinance requires a minimal six foot nine inch wide (6’-9”) perimeter landscape strip around the sites entirety. The driveway along the southern perimeter of the site is existing and located within this minimal perimeter landscaping strip. To remove any of the paved surface area will warrant the driveway unusable due to the width reduction. Proposed along this driveway is a six foot high opaque fence only. Thus, the southern property line is unable to meet the green space requirement nor the plant material requirement and is requesting the elimination of these requirements for this area. However, the applicant has shown additional plantings in other areas of the site to mitigate for the green space deficiencies and also agreed to plant additional street trees along N. Pierce Street. These trees proposed will be located within the public right-of-way and thus will require a franchise agreement with the City of Little Rock.

Along the northern property line, the existing building on the site has a setback of four foot and the applicant would like to keep this same building setback along the sites northern entirety. This equates to a two foot nine inch wide deficiency in meeting the perimeter landscape requirement along the northern property line. However, the applicant has shown sufficient plant material in this area to meet the landscape ordinance requirements.

The requirements of the Mid-town Overlay District are being met with this application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff feels the request for the elimination and reduction of the landscape perimeter requirements is warranted on this particular site. The existing driveway is eleven foot (11’) wide and reducing the width would warrant the driveway virtually unusable. Otherwise, the site is located within both the designated mature area of the city and within the Mid-town Overlay District area;

therefore, revitalization of this area is highly encouraged and we feel the applicant is rehabilitating a stressed property. Staff recommends approval of the request as submitted.