



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS  
ZONING HEARING EXAMINER  
NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

Karen Montano requests a variance of 3ft to the 10ft side step-back to allow an existing addition over 15ft high for Lot 2, Block 18, Albright Moore Addn, located at 1519 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW, zoned R-1A [Section 14-16-3-4(L)(5)(b)(1)]

Special Exception No: **VA-2018-00159**  
Project No: **Project# 2018-001709**  
Hearing Date: 11-20-18  
Closing of Public Record: 11-20-18  
Date of Decision: 12-05-18

On the 20th day of November, 2018, property owner Karen Montano (“Applicant”) appeared before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (“ZHE”) requesting a variance of 3ft to the 10ft side step-back to allow an existing addition over 15ft high (“Application”) upon the real property located at 1519 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW (“Subject Property”). Below are the ZHE’s findings of fact and decision:

FINDINGS:

1. Applicant is requesting a variance of 3ft to the 10ft side step-back to allow an existing addition over 15ft high.
2. The City of Albuquerque Integrated Development Ordinance, Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a) (Variance-Review and Decision Criteria) reads: “... an application for a Variance-ZHE shall be approved if it meets all of the following criteria:
  - (1) *There are special circumstances applicable to the subject property that are not self-imposed and that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity such as size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, or physical characteristics created by natural forces or government action for which no compensation was paid. Such special circumstances of the property either create an extraordinary hardship in the form of a substantial and unjustified limitation on the reasonable use or return on the property, or practical difficulties result from strict compliance with the minimum standards.*
  - (2) *The Variance will not be materially contrary to the public safety, health, or welfare.*
  - (3) *The Variance does not cause significant material adverse impacts on surrounding properties or infrastructure improvements in the vicinity.*
  - (4) *The Variance will not materially undermine the intent and purpose of the IDO or the applicable zone district.*
  - (5) *The Variance approved is the minimum necessary to avoid extraordinary hardship or practical difficulties.”*
3. The Applicant bears the burden of ensuring there is evidence in the record supporting a finding that the above criteria are met under Section 14-16-6-4(F)(2).
4. Karen Montano, owner appeared and gave evidence in support of the application.
5. All property owners within 100 feet of the subject property and the affected neighborhood association were notified.

6. Wells Park Neighborhood Association and Sawmill Community Land Trust are the affected neighborhood associations.
7. The subject property is currently zoned R-1A.
8. The subject property is controlled by Character Protection Overlay Zone, Section 14-16-3-4(L), Sawmill/Wells Park-CPO-11.
9. The subject property is an irregularly shaped piece that results in a narrow rectangular shaped property.
10. The shape of the lot severely limits the owner's ability to build and develop the property.
11. The application is to complete additional living area for family residential use only.
12. The exterior treatment of the proposed project conforms to the architectural character of the existing building and the surrounding community.
13. The proposed project will improve the home and increase the value of the property.
14. The amount of variance requested is small, due to the fact that the previous building permit issued by the City, allowed the step-back of 7 feet, instead of the now required 10 feet step-back.
15. The previously permitted addition did have a step-back incorporated into its design.
16. Relying upon that building permit, applicant has expended \$50,000 to complete the proposed project, and would suffer extraordinary hardship if the requested variance is denied.
17. There are several other homes in the surrounding neighborhood, which are over 15 feet tall, but have lesser step-backs than the required 10 feet.
18. Photographs were submitted to support this statement.
19. Damian Lara and Iris Calderon, 925 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW, submitted a letter dated November 12, 2018 in support of the application.
20. Damian Lara, appeared and spoke in support of the application.
21. Veronica Torres, 503 Bellamah NW, submitted a letter dated November 13, 2018 in support of the application.
22. Aaron Pacheco, 1523 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW, submitted a letter dated November 15, 2018, in opposition to the application.
23. Aaron Pacheco appeared and altered his original letter submitted, and stated he originally opposed based upon his misunderstanding of the impact on his adjacent property (neighbor to the north of applicant), however he now more clearly understands the application and is now in support of the application.
24. Shelia Shepard, 602 McKnight, appeared in support of the application.
25. Catherine Mexal, submitted a letter dated November 16, 2018 in opposition to the application.
26. Catherine Mexal, Los Tomasas NW, appeared and spoke in opposition to the application.
27. There are special circumstances applicable to the Subject Property that are not self-imposed and that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity such as size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, or physical characteristics created by natural forces or government action for which no compensation was paid, as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(1).
28. The variance will not be contrary to the public safety, health and welfare of the community as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(2).
29. The variance will not cause significant adverse material impacts on surrounding properties or infrastructure improvements in the vicinity as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(3).

30. The variance will not materially undermine the intent and purpose of the IDO or applicable zone district as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(4).
31. The variance approved is the minimum necessary to avoid extraordinary hardship or practical difficulties as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(5).
32. The proper "Notice of Hearing" signage was posted for the required time period as required by Section 14-16-6-4(K)(3).
33. The Applicant has authority to pursue this Application.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of a variance of 3ft to the 10ft side step-back to allow an existing addition over 15ft high.

CONDITIONS: Applicant shall comply with all applicable Use-Specific Standard Sections.

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by December 20, 2018 in the manner described below. A non-refundable filing fee will be calculated at the Planning Department's Land Development Coordination counter and is required at the time the Appeal is filed.

Appeal must be filed with the Planning Department within 15 days after the decision. The appeal shall specifically state the section of the Integrated Development Ordinance, City regulation, or condition attached to a decision that has not been interpreted correctly, as required by Section 14-16-6-4(U)(3)(a)(3) of the Integrated Development Ordinance. Appeals are taken at 600 2nd Street, Plaza Del Sol Building, Ground Level, Planning Application Counter located on the west side of the lobby. **Please present this letter of notification when filing an appeal.** When an application is withdrawn, the fee shall not be refunded.

Once an appeal is accepted by the Planning Department, it shall prepare and transmit a record of the appeal together with all appeal material received from the appellant to impacted parties and to the Land Use Hearing Officer (LUHO) through the Clerk of the City Council.

The LUHO shall then schedule a hearing on the matter within 30 consecutive days of receipt and notify the parties, pursuant to Section 14-16-6-4(U)(3)(d).

The Planning Department shall give written notice of an appeal, together with a notice of the date, time and place of the hearing to the applicant, a representative of the opponents, if any are known, and the appellant.

Please note that pursuant to Section 14-16-6-4(U), of the Integrated Development Ordinance, you must demonstrate that you have legal standing to file an appeal as defined.

You will receive notice if any other person files an appeal. If there is no appeal, you can receive building permits any time after the appeal deadline quoted above; provided all conditions imposed at the time of approval have been met. However, the Zoning Hearing

Examiner may allow issuance of building permits if the public hearing produces no objection of any kind to the approval of an application. To receive this approval, the applicant agrees in writing to return the building permit or occupation tax number.

Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City must be complied with, even after approval of a special exception is secured. This decision does not constitute approval of plans for a building permit. If your application is approved, bring this decision with you when you apply for any related building permit or occupation tax number. Approval of a conditional use or a variance application is **void after one year** from date of approval if the rights and privileges are granted, thereby have not been executed or utilized.



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Stan Harada, Esq.  
Zoning Hearing Examiner

cc: Zoning Enforcement  
ZHE File  
Karen Montano, 1519 5<sup>th</sup> ST NW, 87102  
Gary Eyster, 316 Amherst DR NE, 87106  
Catherine Mexal, 1404 Los Tomases NW, 87102  
Aaron Pacheco, 1523 5<sup>th</sup> ST, 87102  
Shyla Sheppard, 602 McKnight Ave NW, 87102