



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

Sandia Foundation (Agent, TLC Elite YMS LLC/Tom Cordova) requests a variance of 5 feet to the required 3 foot wall height in the front setback for Lot JJ, Southwestern Construction Company, located at 1200 Lomas BLVD, zoned MX-H [Section 14-16-5-7-D]

Special Exception No:..... **VA-2020-00463**  
Project No: ..... **Project#2020-003336**  
Hearing Date: ..... 01-19-21  
Closing of Public Record: ..... 01-19-21  
Date of Decision: ..... 02-02-21

On the 19th day of January, 2021, TLC Elite YMS LLC/Tom Cordova, agent for property owner Sandia Foundation (“Applicant”) appeared before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (“ZHE”) requesting a variance of 5 feet to the required 3-foot wall height in the front setback (“Application”) upon the real property located at 1200 Lomas BLVD (“Subject Property”). Below are the ZHE’s finding of fact and decision:

FINDINGS:

1. Applicant is requesting a variance of 5 feet to the required 3-foot wall height in the front setback.
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(N)(1).

4. Applicant 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. The subject property is currently zoned MX-H.
7. Based on evidence submitted by or on behalf of Applicant, it appears that 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). Specifically, applicant testified that the size, shape, surroundings and location characteristics of the site are unique and merit the increased security that a higher wall would provide.
8. Based on evidence submitted by or on behalf of Applicant, 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). Specifically, evidence was submitted supporting that the Applicant intends to use the property in a manner that is consistent with the IDO and the Development Process Manual (DPM).
9. Based on evidence submitted by or on behalf of Applicant, 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). Specifically, the proposed wall is designed to be in harmony and consistency with what currently exists in the neighborhood, which was supported by written submittals and oral testimony.
10. Based on evidence submitted by or on behalf of Applicant, 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). Specifically, Applicant presented evidence that the intent of IDO will still be met in that the subject site will continue the existing use and the proposed wall would merely add to the safety and security of the site.
11. Based on evidence submitted by or on behalf of Applicant, 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). Specifically, Applicant testified that any lower construction of the wall would be ineffective. Thus, the applicant is not requesting more than what is minimally necessary for a variance.
12. A neighboring property owner testified in support of the proposed wall and stated that he has a similar wall on his property.
13. City Transportation submitted a report stating no objection.
14. The proper "Notice of Hearing" signage was posted for the required time period as required by Section 14-16-6-4(K)(3).
15. The Applicant has authority to pursue this Application.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of a variance of 5 feet to the required 3-foot wall height in the front setback.

APPEAL:

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by February 17, 2021 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.

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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Robert Lucero, Esq.  
Zoning Hearing Examiner

cc:

ZHE File  
Zoning Enforcement  
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