



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

Eric Stebbins (Agent) & Michelle Negrette (Applicant) request a Variance to waive the wall opacity requirements for a Permit – Wall or Fence – Major pursuant to IDO Table 5-7-2 for Lot G1, Block 12, Vista Larga, located at 2212 Vista Larga Dr NE, zoned R-1D (J-16) IDO Section 14-16-5-7 (D)(2), Table 5-7-2

Special Exception No: **VA-2026-00041**
Project No:
Hearing Date:..... 04-21-26
Closing of Public Record: 04-21-26
Date of Decision: 05-06-26

On April 21, 2026, Eric Stebbins (“**Agent**”) for Michelle Negrette (“**Applicant**”) was scheduled to appear before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (“**ZHE**”) requests a Variance to waive the wall opacity requirements for a Permit – Wall or Fence – Major pursuant to IDO Table 5-7-2 (“**Application**”) upon the real property located at 2212 Vista Larga Dr NE. (“**Subject Property**”). Below are the ZHE’s findings of fact and decision:

FINDINGS:

1. This is a request for a Variance to the opacity requirements of Table 5-7-2: Options for a Taller Front or Side Yard Wall, for Lot G1 Block 12 VISTA LARGA SUBD ZND REPL, located at 2212 VISTA LARGA DR NE, between Haines Avenue NE and Cornell Drive NE, containing approximately 0.3 acres.
2. Applicant has authority to pursue this Application, pursuant to 14-16-6-4(D).
3. Applicant has duly authorized an Agent to act on Applicant’s behalf regarding the Application.
4. Applicant is not required to offer a meeting to Indian Nations, Tribes, and Pueblos, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(B).
5. The Planning Director’s delegee has determined that the Application is complete, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(G).
6. The analyses and studies listed in IDO Section 14-16-6-4(H) were delivered.
7. The Application was forwarded to commenting agencies pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(I).
8. The content of the notice of the Application satisfies IDO Section 14-16-6-4(J)(1).
9. Applicant has sent an electronic mail notice to the email addresses on file with the Office of Neighborhood Coordination for each pertinent Neighborhood Association as required by IDO Section 14-16-6-4(J)(2).

10. Applicant has sent a mailed notice to all property owners within 100 feet of the subject property as required by IDO Section 14-16-6-4(J)(3).
11. Applicant has posted sign notice(s) as required by IDO Section 14-16-6-4(J)(4).
12. The Subject Property is located at 224 Moon Street NE in a R-1B zone district.
13. Therefore, a wall or fence on the Subject Property requires a Permit-Wall or Fence-Major pursuant to IDO Subsection 14-16-6-6(H).
14. IDO Section 14-16-6-6(O)(3)(a) (Review and Decision Criteria– Variance) 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 a single lot that are not self-imposed and that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone district and vicinity, including but not limited to size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, physical characteristics, natural forces, or by government actions for which no compensation was paid. Such special circumstances of the lot either create an extraordinary hardship in the form of a substantial and unjustified limitation on the reasonable use or economic 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 this IDO, the applicable zone district, or any applicable Overlay Zone.*
 5. *The Variance approved is the minimum necessary to avoid extraordinary hardship or practical difficulties.*
15. Applicant bears the burden of providing a sound justification for the requested decision, based on substantial evidence, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(E)(3).
16. Applicant bears the burden of showing compliance with required standards through analysis, illustrations, or other exhibits as necessary, pursuant to IDO Section 14-16-6-4(E)(4).
17. 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, and such special circumstances of the lot either create an extraordinary hardship in the form of a substantial and unjustified limitation on the reasonable use or economic return on the property, or practical difficulties result from strict compliance with the minimum standards, as required by Section 14-16-6-6(O)(3)(a)(1). The location of the subject property and pre-existing improvements, as well as the topography of the lot, create special circumstances that create practical difficulties that would result from strict compliance with the minimum standards. While opponents point out that the wall at the property line is out of compliance without a variance, evidence submitted on behalf of Applicant establishes that setting the wall back further from the property would result in a much taller wall than where currently located, because of the rising topography of nearly 4 feet in elevation. The opaque wall does not

appear to cause any traffic concerns, given that the City Traffic engineer did not object, and the wall provides for privacy and security of the front and side yards.

18. 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(O)(3)(a)(2). The fence design is attractive and in line with the architectural character of the neighborhood. Photographic evidence establishes that there are multiple tall walls in front and side yards in the neighborhood or various designs.
19. 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(O)(3)(a)(3). The fence provides for security and views. The City Traffic engineer did not object to the Application.
20. 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(O)(3)(a)(4). Applicant testified the proposed wall will be built in compliance with all IDO requirements.
21. 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(O)(3)(a)(5). Any smaller fence would be insufficient to provide for security and mitigation of negative circumstances.
22. The City Traffic Engineer submitted a report stating no objection to the Application.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of a Variance request to waive the wall opacity requirements for a Permit – Wall or Fence – Major pursuant to IDO Table 5-7-2.

APPEAL:

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by May 06, 2026 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.

THIS NOTICE OF DECISION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE APPROVAL OF PLANS FOR A BUILDING PERMIT.

Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City must be complied with, even after approval of a special exception is secured. If your Application is approved, bring this Notice of Decision with you when you apply for any related building permit or occupation tax number. Approval of a Conditional Use is void after two (2) years from date of approval if the rights and privileges granted thereby have not been executed or utilized. Approval of a Variance is void after one (1) year from date of approval if the rights and privileges granted thereby have not been executed or utilized.



Robert Lucero, Esq.
Zoning Hearing Examiner

cc:

Michelle Negrette, Agent, Strata Design LLC, stratadesign.nm@gmail.com

Eric Stebbins, Owner/Applicant, eeestebbins@gmail.com

Michael Kious, District 7 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, mikekious@aol.com

Jaemes Shanley, District 7 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, jaemes1@mac.com

Tim Davis, North Campus Neighborhood Association, tdavisnm@gmail.com

Maia Mullen, North Campus Neighborhood Association, maiamullen@gmail.com

Paula Hensley, 1413 Cornell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, plh321@gmail.com

James Scott & Heidi Fleischmann, 1513 Cornell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106,
jscott672@comcast.net

Catherine Squire, 1519 Cornell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, darcey70@yahoo.com

Mary E. Wommack, 2301 Vista Larga Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

David & Noel Westlake, 2207 Vista Larga Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Shanti Randall, 2219 Vista Larga Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Steve & Gillian Mazer, 1507 Connell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Samuel Hodder, 1419 Connell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Sara Hiat, 2213 Vista Larga Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Christiane Cuse, 1505 Cornell Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

John Craig, 2200 Vista Larga Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Andrew Coon, City Legal, acon@cabq.gov

ZHE File

Zoning