

May 16th, 2025

Property address: 511 Escalona Drive

APN: 036-125-02 Owner: Christine Meserve

Owner's Statement:

If approved, the deck will be called Sparrow's Landing. See, my Dad's nickname has been Sparrow since he was in high school, and he loves sitting outside and looking down towards the ocean. This will be our spot. To drink our coffee, to be together, and to cherish the time we have together.

The roof top design and parapet wall were originally approved knowing it would likely be approved to be converted to a deck. This was mentioned in the original hearing, and I had hoped this would be the plan all along. Unfortunately, at the time that I would have needed to submit a modification request, I was reeling from my contractor dying in an auto accident. Aside from losing a dear friend and someone I trusted, it was impossible to find a new contractor. It was Covid, there were supply chain issues, costs were doubling and tripling, and I spent months meeting possible new contractors only to be told they were scheduled out years...that is unless I wanted to pay a massive premium.

To say I was distracted was an understatement. Not because I was careless, as it was suggested at the last hearing by the city council, but because there was an unmanageable tsunami of demands, changes, and decisions trying to bring my new contractor up to speed. During this time, I was physically in the planning office or on the phone with them many times. The building inspector was at my home several times after the door was installed. Nothing about changing the code was mentioned. At no point did anyone say anything to me or my representatives about the deck code changing during these many visits to the planning department. That is, until the time-period to submit had closed.

Had my professionals, or I been told at any time that the deck code was changing, we would have immediately submitted the deck modification. We were trying to be efficient and submit all of the changes at once. That decision proved to be devastating, stressful, and expensive.



Current exterior with approved parapet wall.

The parapet wall does not change its exterior look with or without the variance.



The look of the door does not change from the look of the window. The look is the same from any angle.



This is what you see from a standing position looking out from the double doors. You can barely see the exterior doors of my neighbor's Stan's home. You cannot see inside Stan's home from my deck.

The distance exceeds all side yard setbacks and is over Sacramento.

Stan is in full support of the variance.

Because this exact space met code at the time, and the parapet wall was already approved, I ordered the door with the other windows that took 6 months to ship knowing we would submit for the modification.

Without the variance, I will have to wait for the approved window to ship at another 3-4 month delay.



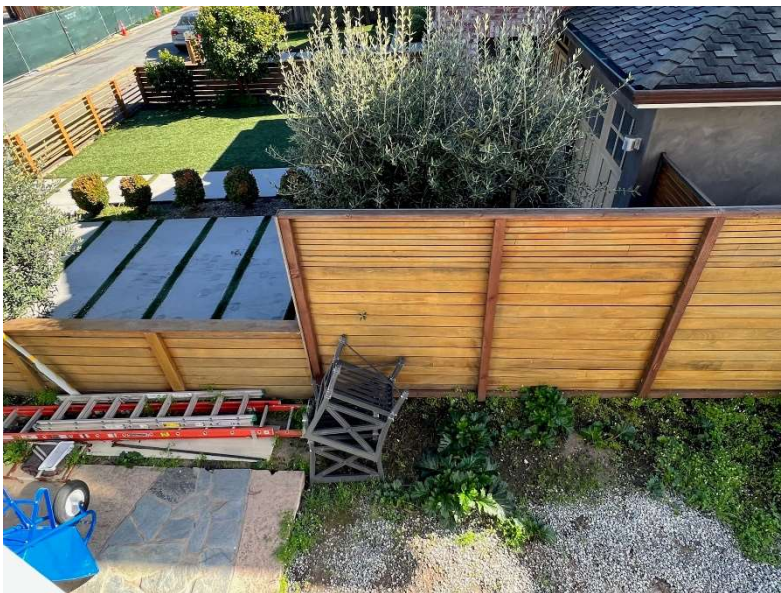
This is the view from the deck down Sacramento. My home sits forward from the homes beside me on Sacramento, thus you cannot see in any of their windows at all.

The roof you can see in the photo is 3 doors down on the corner of Sacramento and El Salto.

Every neighbor that borders my home (plus many others) have given their blessing and approval for the variance.

My neighbor Nick at 205 Sacramento that immediately borders my property on this side even wrote a letter of support.

This space does not impede the enjoyment of or violate any right to privacy for any of my neighbors.



Standing at the very end and looking down towards 205 Sacramento. **NOTE- this view will not be possible to anyone standing on the deck. There will be a low profile outdoor seating that does not allow for anyone standing at that edge of the deck.

The setbacks meet side yard setbacks. Being a reverse corner lot, most setbacks for planning and building are treated as a side yard setback. Only the side yard and the front of the garage is visible at 205 Sacramento.

This distance is further than most newly approved projects (for example- Hollister) where there are window-to-window views at 8 feet apart. The distance to the nearest window is over 20 feet.



This is the view looking towards Escalona. The roof line straight up from the deck is my own.

The white home to the right is 514 Escalona. These neighbors are in support of the variance and have written a letter of their support.

The door to the left shown is 3 feet wide. A 6 feet limitation means the same size amount of space would extend from the edge of the door, and something else would have to be built to block the right 2.5 feet. It is not enough space to have a seating area and to be able to walk around it.

The cost would be punitive and create additional hardship. The size would be punitive, and the space would be completely unfunctional. By limiting the extension of the deck to 6 feet, the roof top materials may be compromised by further construction.

To say that this has been a long road is the understatement of the century. One that I wouldn't wish on anyone. Both my neighbors and I just want this to be finished. My Mom need's to be able to move into the ADU. I started this whole project to do right by my family, and to be a caring and contributing part of this community. I am eternally grateful to my neighbors for their patience. I really look forward to this all being behind me, and to completing the project without any further delays or construction to the exterior of the home.



Just a reminder to where it all began. This home looked like this for decades. It was infested with rodents and pests. It even had an existing gas leak that had gone undetected. It had been rented without smoke or CO2 detectors. It was not safe or cared for in any way.

Yes, it has been a long road, and yet it has come a long way. Once completed, this home will be a stunning part of this neighborhood for the first time in over 30 years.