

43 Hillside Road

1. Brief Description of proposed project:

When we met with our Architect our goal was update to current standards the kitchen, bathroom and powder room that are probably 40+ years old and relocate them, if required, to create a more efficient and improved circulation flow. We wanted to create an adequately sized master suite, not too large but comfortable enough to fit our furniture, a walk in closet and add a second bathroom to our 4 bedroom home. We also wanted to have a breakfast area where we could comfortably fit a table with enough room, for a family of tall people, to maneuver around the chair and tables without constantly banging into them along with an intimate but comfortable family room. We also wanted to enhance the back yard and its relationship to the neighboring back yards. All our yards sit in a naturally landscaped bowl and have the feel of one combined open space. The neighborhood children play back and forth using all the yards. We wanted to enhance this by removing the driveway up to the end of the existing house and replace it with grass. (under the proposed site plan we would be increasing the green area of our lot by 336 square feet even with the proposed 11' extension to our house.

When it was determined that our house as is would exceed the new Far requirements and we would not have the time to go through the Special Permitting process before the October 15 deadline, we decided to get a building permit under the existing Far to ensure that we would, at the minimum, have the right by existing zoning to upgrade our house to some extent. With our basement exposed only 1.08' above what is required to be 50% below grade we did not realize it would take a 3' high and 122' long retaining wall to bury the basement 1'.

2. Description of history of site, structures, and/ or uses- include any background information relevant to why the applicant is seeking zoning relief.

The house is a Victorian Era home designed by noted architect Annie Cobb, to the best of our knowledge the footprint of the existing house has not been touched. The house sits on a naturally sloping site were all the abutting backyards flow together into a gently sloped bowl extending to the existing aqueduct. The backyards still maintain the look and feel I imagine they had when the lots were developed during the Victorian Era, which is one of the reasons we were attracted to the property.

We are seeking zoning relief from the required retaining wall. The fact that our basement sits 1.08' above the required midpoint to have the basement 50% below grade and to bury the basement 50% below grade would require a 122' long retaining wall 3'+ high at some points. We would like to maintain the connection and gentle flow between all the abutting backyards. The neighborhood children play back and forth using all the yards and we feel the retaining wall would be detrimental aesthetically, preserving the consistency of the houses and yards all

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along the street and throughout the neighborhood, and more importantly to how we all use and enjoy the space. The retaining wall would also require destroying all the existing mature vegetation on that side of the house, which creates a gentle buffer between our house and the neighbor's house. The vegetation runs between the houses but does not continue into the backyards.

We also feel we have addressed the issue of the basement being exposed in the future as a walk out basement. The proposed addition would sit on a crawl space locking the existing basement permanently below grade at the rear. Also on the right hand side we are adding a bulkhead and on the left hand side are the driveway / parking area which would prevent the basement being opened on that side because there would be no space to park cars.

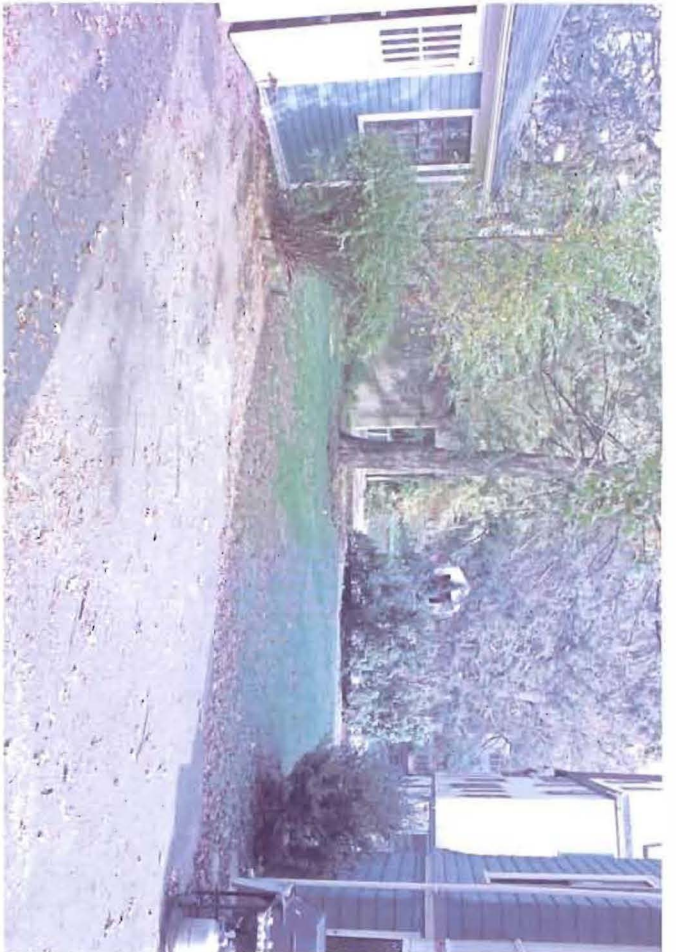
We are seeking relief from the FAR requirements because we are permitted for a 9' addition under the pre October 15th calculations which would give us an 8'9" wide breakfast area and we understand that is a little tight to comfortably be able to circulate around a table and chairs, especially for a tall family and we only have minimum circulation around our 2' wide island and would appreciate the ability to work in our new kitchen with a little more comfort.

Because of the natural slope of our house and the fact that we are not proposing to expand the existing basement, the addition is sitting on posts about 6'2" above existing grade and will be open to the outside. We would like to enclose this space with lattice so it is not unsightly for our neighbors to look at when using their back yards. We understand that under the new FAR regulations this also needs to be included in our FAR calculations, so we are also asking for relief to be able to install a lattice enclosure of this open space.

In summary, we would appreciate the ability to increase the square footage of the permitted addition by 126 square feet, to install lattice to cover the unsightly open area below the addition, which accounts for 355 square feet of FAR, and relief from the 122' long retaining wall.



Back yard



View through back yard



Adjacent yard



View through all 3 back yards

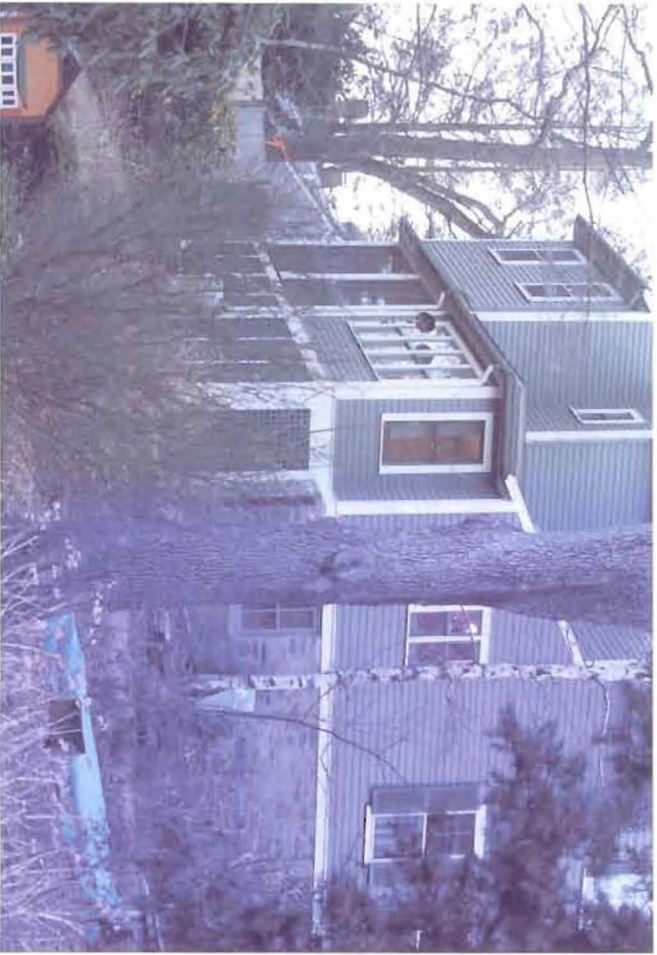


Vegetation to be removed
with retaining wall

Continuous vegetation
along property line



Example from Neighbor
What we do not want neighbors to look at



Example from Neighbor



Example from Neighbor



Example from Neighbor

Lattice Proposal