

May 02, 2022

County of Orange, OC Public Works, OC Planning
Land Use Planning
300 N. Flower Street
Santa Ana, CA

**RE: Letter of Justification/Explanation
Coastal Development Permit, Use Permit and Variances for 412 Emerald Bay,
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
The Reda Residence**

This letter of explanation is submitted on behalf of the owner of 412 Emerald Bay, Zach and Maha Reda. The project includes a major remodel with additions to an existing 2581.6sf two story residence with existing attached 464.3 sf two car garage. The proposed additions include 414.4 sf of added living area, 23.6 sf of added garage area, and 243.2 sf addition at the existing balcony. The project entails the addition of a new second bedroom and reconfiguration of the lower family room at the lower level and a small addition at the upper-level dining room and master bedroom with an enlarged outdoor balcony at the rear of the property. This upper-level addition includes a revised master bathroom and a reconfigured or the public living area for a more modern open approach. Additionally, we had to increase the size of the existing garage to meet Emerald Bay's standards for a two-car garage. The exterior site is being developed with the creation of a new updated courtyard, lower-level patio, landscape, site walls, and refurbished driveway. A series of new planter walls, minor retaining walls, and grading at the front and rear of the residence. The new privacy wall at the front of the residence will be approximately 7.3' above the existing grade at the highest point. The project is fundamentally aimed at updating this dated home and bringing it into Emerald Bay's conformance criteria.

How the proposed use is justified:

Request:

The location of the property falls within the Emerald Bay LCP, so a Coastal Development Permit will be required. Due to the irregular lot lines and lot shape, a request for front and rear yard variances are necessary. Existing setbacks off the front lots line is 16'-2 ¾" and 18' at the rear of the property at the worst condition. For the revised condition we are following the Emerald Bay standard of 5'-0" for the front, rear, and side where 25' is required at the rear of the property and 20' at the front of the property. As noted, this falls in-line with the requirements within the Emerald Bay Community Association. Per the community association's request, the front wall was reduced in height from our initial submittal. A use permit will be required for over height walls within the front setback. The new screen wall at the front of the residence will be approximately 7.3' above the finished grade at its highest point, exceeding the maximum 3.5', a use permit will be required.

Compatibility:

The residence has been designed to be in keeping with the original residence along with an articulated entry courtyard and screen wall which helps to mitigate car lights from the street that essentially dead ends at the residence. This screening element is within keeping of the original home and adjacent neighbors. With the renovating of the residence, we will be better able to update the residence to a level much more in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. The site development has taken measures, including layering the entry wall, developing the surrounding planters, and landscape approach, to be in keeping with the mass and feel of the adjacent neighbors. The slatted fencing was developed to aid in reducing the overall massing of the entry element with landscaping further softening the project. Additionally, the development of the design has paid respect to its original structure, keeping a majority of the primary aesthetic elements. At the rear of the property, we have mitigated the enlarged balcony by utilizing clear glazing at the guardrails and pulling the deck back 1'-10" from the 5' Emerald Bay setback to reduce the overall massing.

General Welfare:

The proposed addition and site development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare of the community of which it is a part.

Required justification:**Special Circumstances:**

The community of Emerald Bay is developed under a standard that is inconsistent with the general plan and zoning regulations of Orange County. Throughout the community, residences, as a matter of course, stand outside the County zoning regulations. While this project exceeds standard Orange County zoning regulations it is consistent with the community of which it is a part.

No Special Privileges:

The requested variance is consistent with existing setback that has been in place for the residence and is enjoyed by the surrounding properties either by land use privileges, "Grandfather Conditions," or by variance. The proposed changes are consistent with the community and these modifications will help in bringing this aging residence in line with the community of which it is a part.

Status:

The proposed project has been through the Emerald Bay Community Design Review process, conforms to the association's regulations, and received Preliminary approval from the architectural committee obtained Board of Directors approval on April 5th. The requested variance is common to Emerald Bay properties, consistent with the rights enjoyed by the surrounding properties and will not cause any conditions contrary to the public health, safety and general welfare.

Sincerely,

Agent for the owner – architect

Craig Schultz
Laidlaw Schultz architects