

Letter of Explanation

Rev: 6/19/22

To Whom it may concern:

I am informed I need to write a letter of explanation as to why I wish to add a second story (or portion) to my home which I feel is cleverly designed while correcting this aged structure so below is my attempt to satisfy this requirement.

I have lived in my current home since 1977 (+/-). I have tried to always live as a responsible citizen to the community. I do though own 2 classic automobiles and wish to preserve them.

When my mother purchase the home which is a corner lot, the garage had a strange design flaw, it is elevated above the street more than 2' such that it is near impossible to park a car in so she just parked on the street. As I grew up and also obtained vehicle(s), I have had to do the same. I had a driveway installed on the front of the home but pondered several different improvements that the house will one day need including restoring the garage to a functional feature. I have done several design renditions so that it blends in with the other homes as best while still offering functional use. Most currently, after someone slipped on the garage driveway (due to its incline), I decided this proposed alteration really is the most logical, and allows an opportunity to correct the garage so it can be used while updating the aged permitted enclosed patio that ties the House to the Garage structures which makes these two structures essentially one. I have taken into account several problems noted the house has thru the decades so not too create new ones including watershed, electrical loads, lighting and heating of a spa.

With the increased stress on the power grid these days, this home currently promotes responsible environmental impact by incorporating both solar electric and spa water heating (we were an early adopter). These features are to remain in this improvement and will also accommodate proportionally the future challenges we all face with electric car charging by providing in garage charging requirements.

Lastly there is the addition of a 4th bedroom / Master suite and a small game room above the current enclosed patio cleverly incorporated.

This home has served its past purpose but is in need of updates and hopefully are all addressed in concept herein.

Thank you,



Andrew Benun
443 N. Clinton St.
Orange

11/4/2024

Mr. Michael O'Toole
Mr. Russell Bunim

Re: 443 N. Clinton St. Variance Request

Gentlemen:

I received the email Friday 11/1. In the email it states for me to provide a letter/argument in support of my 443 N. Clinton St. variance request.

I have lived at this home for nearly 50 years. My mother purchased the home in the mid - 70's and the garage like all in this neighborhood and especially on the east side of Clinton Street, were originally built according to what has been referred to as a "non-conforming Garage" standards. The driveway to this garage was approved and built with an impossibly steep rate-of-rise grade and this created 2 major problems. Most vehicles are unable to enter the driveway and garage without severe scraping of both the front and bottom of the vehicle and second, the driveway itself is dangerous to pedestrians. I myself had suffered a minor concussion requiring hospitalization from a slip and fall incident. The current driveway renders the garage useless and also a potential liability for me and should also be of similar concern for the city. With the plans I have already submitted to planning, I am trying to remedy this problem.

During the last several years, I have applied to the City of Orange about upgrades to the permitted Patio room added in the later 70's, early 80's as well as the unusable garage with its current lack of accessibility because of the rate-of-rise. I have presented documentation to augment the garage by lowering the floor area of the existing garage. Although it may be more logical and likely more economical to tear down the old structure and build a new one, I have been informed the new structure MUST then meet New set-back rules that were not in place at time of original construction in the 60's? The new set-back rules require the following;

1. Must have a 20' clearance from the sidewalk (currently 10'),
2. Must have a 20'x20' unobstructed floor space (currently 19.5' x 19.5'), and,
3. Must have a 5'0" side set-back from the property line (south side is currently 4'6").

Even though I fail to comprehend the requirement for a garage to have a 20' x 20' floor space when the city allows garages to be converted into ADU's thus forcing some parking into the streets, I have submitted a re-design that is in compliance with items 2 & 3 above, leaving only item #1 open for discussion. My request for variance is based on the following facts;

A. Currently any vehicle maintenance must be performed off site or as shown below;



B. The rear and side yard space currently enjoyed as usable space would be drastically reduced. This very same space is enjoyed by many of my neighbors with similar homes, so if the set-back rule is enforced, I would be singled out not to have the same back yard originally allotted and paid for. This is also likely to reduce the property's value considerably.

C. It would force a very challenging task to relocate a small communications Antenna which currently stands in the backyard. This antenna has been addressed in the past and has served the public with emergency communication's assistance (Federal License #'s: KBW8882 and KB6DZZ).

D. There is NO evidence residents or visitors will be prevented from blocking the sidewalk with the 20' sidewalk set-back. I see nearby neighbors frequently block sidewalks by parking vehicles in their 20'+ driveways. It is simply a matter of an individual's courtesy and respect for the law and No city set-back rule is going to fix that.

Examples of nearby homes with a 20+ foot setback garage.





By adjusting the garage forward the requested 2 feet, it would allow use of the garage and would be the only logical reason to enter the driveway to begin with. My intention is to finally enable the garage to serve its intended purpose – to house vehicles and offer a safe place to do maintenance. This is of special importance to me as I own a classic car that has been in the family since new and the insurance company has already put me on notice that I need to garage the vehicle or be faced with cancellation.

I submit this request and hope for a favorable decision. I am convinced that I will be able to improve the property, both for myself and the neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and efforts in this important matter!
Respectfully submitted,

Andy Benun
"Class of '80 OHS"
443 N. Clinton St.