

10/10/05

To the Berkeley City Council:

As the owner of 2633 Marin Avenue, I am writing regarding the Berkeley Zoning Adjustment Board's 4/28/05 approval of Use Permit #03-10000069 to construct a single family dwelling at 2615 Marin Avenue.

This communication is a summary of points for the City Council to consider prior to the meeting. I will present further visual aids at the time of the meeting.

Since the house plan presented before the City Council in 1/05, the ZAB has approved a house with a third floor 9 feet deeper (north) on the lot and 3.7 feet shorter. This move north has compromised my views while the decrease in height has not provided sufficient relief to my uphill neighbors at 2635 Marin Ave. Please see the attached photo which documents how progressive revisions of the house have moved the house into my view.

In evaluating this project, I ask that the Berkeley City Council consider the following issues:

- 1) **The plan as approved blocks my views of downtown Oakland, the Bay, and the Berkeley Marina from my main living floor. My sole unobstructed view of the bay is from my upstairs bedroom (NOTE: from nowhere in my house do I have a view of the Golden Gate bridge). My main concern is that some potential modifications to the project, such as moving the house deeper into the lot, will severely compromise my view of the Bay Bridge, Treasure Island, Berkeley Marina and the Bay itself.**
- 2) **It is not fair that the Kalmars should lose a sitting view from their only floor while the Richmonds retain sitting views from their second floor and full views from their third floor**
- 3) **The only solution to guarantee protection of all the existing neighbors' views -- without unfairly and unnecessarily pitting neighbor against neighbor in a battle to retain our respective views -- is to reduce the height of the overall structure.**
- 4) **This can be accomplished simply by digging the house into the hill as with all recent new construction in this neighborhood, such as at 901 Hilldale and**

2637 Marin Ave.

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- 5) **Regarding the builders' complaint about cost: a) This degree of excavation has been standard practice in surrounding homes; b) This cost could be mitigated by moving the garage back toward the street and out from underneath the house. Currently the garage is a major reason for the height of the structure.**
- 6) **Ultimately, we ask that the project height be reduced by another 4.8 feet to an elevation of 944 feet.**
- 7) **An increase in the *second floor* setback, as requested by the neighbors, is acceptable to me as long as the third floor setback does not increase beyond 45 feet.**

By my count this is our *ninth* appearance before either the ZAB of the City Council. The reasons for the delays are numerous, but chief among them is the rigidity of the Richmonds in making changes that help the neighbors. Please put this finally to rest by taking firm and final action by approving a plan that lowers the house from its current height.

Thank you for your attention.



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2637 Marin



2 stories
incl.
garage.

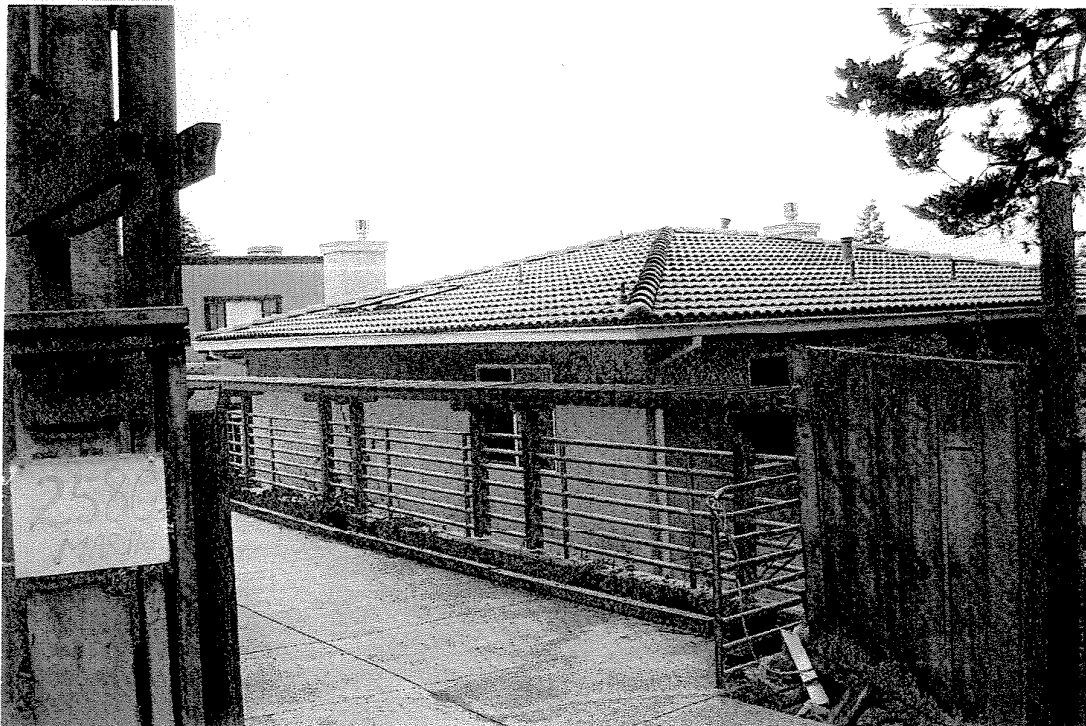


} retain.
wall

901 Hilldale



} retain.
wall
~12 ft



From
above

View 2633 Marin (white)



- 7/04
- ZAB Approved 8/04 (A.D)
- 3/05