

1160 El Medio Addition Narrative

My name is Michael Gonzales. My wife, Sunny, and I are the owners of 1160 El Medio Avenue, a beautiful ranch style mid-century home. We purchased the home in August 2011. We moved in with our son, Sebastian, in March 2012. Violet was born in July. Our kids are now almost 7 and 4. First, I must say that we love our home. We love the property and our neighborhood. But, we simply have and will continue to outgrow the space we have (currently approximately 2,100 square feet). Faced with this problem, Sunny and I thought that selling our home and looking for something bigger was best for our family. We took a look at other Palisades neighborhoods and homes, but just couldn't find a home or property that possessed so much character and was a true reflection of us. Don't get me wrong, there were tons of homes that were nice, but the fit wasn't perfect. To this day we have daily solicitations from agents representing developers seeking to buy our property, tear down our home and develop it with something that would fetch top dollar in today's market.

We then decided to pursue an addition to our home because we could make the fit perfect by designing a home that we wanted, not one designed by others. With that in mind we interviewed 7 architects over the course of 8 months. Our simple vision was to add square footage in what is currently the backyard, preserve the house's integrity and existing lines and add some height. Our living room is sloped and is the lowest point of the living area, which makes it feel tight and cramped, especially when entertaining. We also insisted that the addition to the home comply with applicable City development regulations. As a Land Use Attorney who works primarily in the City of Los Angeles, I know all too well the problems and time delays associated with the City's entitlement process.

We settled on architect Glen Bell of DEX Studio. Glen understood our goal of preserving our home's integrity and character. We want the home to continue to read similar to how it does now. After all, it is the home we fell in love with. Glen has done, what we feel, is a tremendous job in balancing our goals of expanding the home, while preserving the character and ensuring the new home fits the neighborhood context. Attached are a set of plans that show the extent of our addition. Overall, the addition complies with all requirements set forth in the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions ("CCR") governing our property.

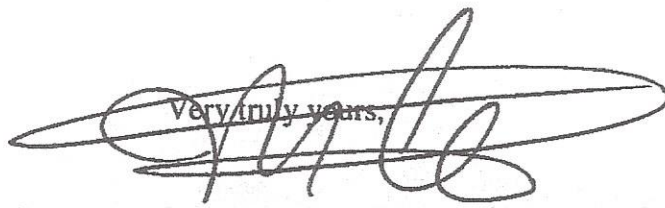
There, is, however, one deviation that we are requesting. Our property is located on the Temescal Canyon side of El Medio Avenue. Accordingly, we do not have any neighbors behind us. This provides us tremendous views, which could include ocean views. Glen is proposing an approximately 400 square foot loft area over our new living room. This loft space requires a maximum height of 18 feet. We understand this height exceeds the permissible CCR height by 2 and ½ feet. I've attached an exhibit prepared by Glen showing that only 21% of our total roof area will exceed the 15 and ½ foot CCR height restriction. We feel that given the overall effort to preserve the homes integrity and character and to design a home that fits the neighborhood context, this requested deviation is minor.

Additionally, given that: (i) we have no neighbors behind us (and cannot block any views); (ii) we have pulled the height to the rear of the structure so that it does not impede 1170's and 1150's views; and (iii) the increased height will be difficult to see from the street because our pad is elevated and the height is pulled back, the requested deviation should be approved.

We intend to stay in this house forever. Sunny constantly tells me this is our forever home but we just need more space because our kids will continue to grow and hopefully we can add one more to the family. As noted, our goals are to design a home that complies with all City development regulations, preserves the home's integrity and fits the community context. We feel that even with the minor height deviation, we have done just that. We hope that you would agree with our view and approve the minor height deviation, allowing us to proceed with a design that fits the neighborhood and respects the integrity of the CCR. We love our home and love Glen's plan. It would be shame to be precluded from executing this plan, left facing the choice we faced a year ago: Do we sell?

We have reached out to Patti (1170) and Jane (1150) to discuss our plans with them, but have not found a convenient time to meet with them. We hope to meet with them this weekend, so hopefully you will not immediately transmit the attached plans to them. I always feel it is best to have communication amongst neighbors especially because they will be most affected during construction.

Thanks for your time and consideration. I am free to discuss if you have any questions. My cell is 562-234-9793 and my email is Mgonzales@gonzaleslawgroup.com.

Very truly yours,


Michael Gonzales