

Zoning Hearing Officer Addendum
Hillside Development Permit No. 7134
1530 Scenic Drive
August 27, 2025

It is my understanding that a member of the public has filed an appeal of my decision to approve Hillside Development Permit No. 7134. This permit authorizes the construction of a new 4,280-square-foot, two-story single-family residence above an attached 2,685-square-foot six-car garage. The project also includes approval of a Variance to allow 37.5 percent paving in the front setback area (where a maximum of 30 percent is permitted), and a Tree Removal Permit authorizing the removal of two protected trees located at 1530 Scenic Drive.

Prior to the public hearing held on April 16, 2025, I carefully reviewed the staff report and all related exhibits, conducted a site visit of the subject property, and considered all written testimony submitted by members of the public. The concerns expressed during the process primarily related to: the overall size of the residence; removal of protected trees and potential impacts on wildlife; flooding and drainage issues; increased impermeable paving in the front setback; light trespass; and construction-related nuisances such as noise, traffic, and staging.

After thorough review of the record, I agreed with staff's recommendation that the findings required to approve the permit could be made. I found staff's analysis to be comprehensive and well-reasoned, providing a solid basis for approval. In addition, I was persuaded by the applicant's presentation that community concerns could be reasonably addressed through the conditions of approval and a commitment to working with neighbors. The following considerations were most significant in informing my determination:

Design of the Proposed Single-Family Residence

The proposed residence exceeds the maximum house size per the neighborhood compatibility requirement but does not exceed the average FAR of the neighborhood. Additionally, the project complies with the maximum allowable floor area based on the lot size and slope. The front building line has been designed at an angle, and the residence is recessed into the natural grade, which reduces the apparent bulk of the structure and maintains scale compatibility with surrounding homes. The residence avoids development on the steeper portions of the lot, ensuring that no view impacts result from the project. Furthermore, while the project includes a slight exceedance of impermeable paving in the front setback, this increase does not result in an incompatible design relative to the neighborhood character.

Environmental Considerations and Protected Species

Of the 65 existing trees on the property, only two protected trees are proposed for removal. Conditions of approval require the applicant to obtain all necessary permits for removal, plant replacement trees, and ensure monitoring of the replacements to confirm compliance. Additionally, sufficient native landscaping will remain onsite to support the local habitat and wildlife.

Construction-Related Nuisances and Traffic Management

Conditions of approval impose clear requirements to address construction-related impacts, including those related to traffic, staging, and noise. Conditions Nos. 19–26 specifically require a construction staging and traffic management plan to ensure proper oversight of construction activity. Concerns

regarding light trespass were also carefully evaluated. While initial review identified potential light spillover from vehicles entering the proposed driveway, the applicant agreed to work collaboratively with neighbors to identify effective measures to reduce potential impacts.

Conclusion

Based on these findings, and supported by the staff's detailed evaluation, I determined that the proposed single-family residence is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and consistent with the purpose and intent of the City's hillside development regulations. In my judgment, the proposed development will not result in significant adverse impacts on adjoining properties or the broader community.

Accordingly, I reaffirm my decision to approve **Hillside Development Permit No. 7134**.

Respectfully,



Alex Garcia
Zoning Hearing Officer