

KT West Short Subdivision  
Lot Width Variance Narrative  
10/13/23

KT West is proposing to short subdivide parcel number 50383 (612 CC Street) into four residential building lots of between 6,000sqft and 7,000sqft each. Each of the lots would utilize City water and sewer.

There are currently three single-family residences on the single parcel; all in poor condition. A demolition permit was issued for removal of these three homes under DEM-2023-004. The landowner is proposing to create 4 lots from this parcel, with 4 new 3-bedroom homes to be constructed on each parcel.

In order to create four lots, the short subdivision will require variance approval for the lot widths of two of the proposed lots. The current standard identified in WMC 17.16.070(B) requires a 60' minimum lot width, however in order to reach the highest and best use for the property (four lots), two of the lots would be approximately 52.5 feet wide. This is similar to the lots widths of several existing lots in the immediate neighborhood. This is also wider than the minimum identified in WMC 17.16.090, the optional "Traditional Neighborhood" design standards. Despite being narrower than the minimum under WMC 17.16.070(B), the building envelopes would still be 42.5 feet wide and 75 feet deep (taking setbacks into consideration) and be large enough to accommodate a three-bedroom home.

While specific criteria for variances are not established under WMC 16.32.123, we can also look to WMC 16.08.280 for criteria typically applied to variance reviews. While it is unclear if these specific variance criteria are in effect, we felt they provided a backdrop to frame this request. Those criteria from WMC 16.08.280 are as follows:

A. *"There are special topographic or other physical conditions affecting the property that are not common to all property in the area"*

This parcel was originally created via the Ida E. Parent's Acre Tracts plat in 1916. The large majority of lots throughout this plat were one acre in size. At some point in the 1940s, the West 74' of the original parcel was divided off on its own, leaving the subject parcel at approximately 24,584sq ft (.56ac). Dimensionally, this left the subject parcel at approximately 192' deep and 135' wide. The parcel is flat, and bounded on the East, West, and North sides by existing residential development, and on the South by CC Street.

As modern zoning, and specifically the Growth Management Act became a reality in the 1990s, more emphasis was given to lot dimensions and increasing density in urbanized areas. In the

case of this parcel, the early division of the property prior to modern zoning requirements left a large parcel in an area that current zoning seeks to add additional density and support smaller lot sizes.

Based simply on the acreage, there is sufficient land area on this parcel to support 4-5 homes under current City minimum a lot size requirements. However, as it often the case with older properties that are longer than they are wide, dimensional requirements for lot width make maximizing density difficult.

As an infill project, we are looking to maximize density to support both the financial viability of the project, as well as achieve the City's goal of increased density in those areas zoned accordingly. To achieve 4 homesites on this property, we would need a minor variance of approximately 7.19 feet for Lots 2 and 3, largely due to the configuration of the parcel being longer than it is wide. The resulting Lots 2 and 4 would be 52.81' wide, rather than the required 60'.

This variance request is in line with many other lots in the immediate area, including:

- 720, 714, 706, 664, 701, 673, 629, 619, 611, 601, and 522 Washington Street
- 575, 576, and 509 CC Street

In summation, we are seeking to provide much needed city infill on an existing property whose dimensions do not lend themselves to strict compliance with current minimum lot width requirements, a situation created largely by the original platting of the property and the timing of previous divisions.

B. "Hardship, as distinguished from mere inconvenience, would result from strict compliance with the standards of this article..."

It can be considered a hardship for a parcel of this size to not be able to be developed to the maximum density allowed under City standards, particularly when a number of properties have already been divided narrower than what is proposed.

C. "A variance complies with the spirit and intent of this article and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or injurious to other property in the vicinity..."

The reduction in lot width to 52.81' does not create any detriment to public health, safety, or welfare; nor is it injurious to surrounding property. Many lots in this area are already at lot widths less than 60', and all of them already developed with an existing home. The proposed lots can be fully developed at the reduced width and still meet all applicable setback and other requirements contained in the WMC. Further, the completion of this project will remove three old, dilapidated, and dangerous structures and replace them with new homes.

D. "In the case of a variance to sidewalk standards, adequate provision nevertheless will be made for pedestrian and bicyclist movement and safety."

The approval of the subdivision will include the addition of new sidewalks and a partial reconstruction of CC street. This will improve pedestrian and bicycle movement and safety well above what is currently there.

We believe that this project presents an opportunity to clean up a degraded property, add additional housing units at a sorely needed price point in today's home market, and upgrade existing City facilities to improve safety and appearances. The requested variance will allow this project to move forward and provide those benefits to the landowner, neighborhood, and City at large. The resulting lots, although slightly below the minimum width standard, can easily be developed to comply with all necessary setback requirements, as well as other City dimensional standards.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nick Little  
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