



Architecture + Design

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PROJECT NARRATIVE

Addition & Renovations at the Hunn|Underwood Residence 13 April 2021

325 North Broadway
Upper Nyack NY 10960

S&Co. 1902

DESCRIPTION

The project is located at 325 North Broadway, which has been owned by Trina Hunn and Nick Underwood since 2008. The project includes the demolition of an existing deck at the main floor level and an existing balcony at the south end of the east façade, and the construction of a two-story, gable-roofed addition at that location, with a new deck extending towards the east and partially wrapping the addition at the north. The addition will house a family room at its main level, with the existing family room becoming the dining room, which the house does not presently have. The second level will include a master suite with an en suite bathroom and walk-in closet, as well as a second bathroom to serve the other bedrooms at this floor. This second bathroom will allow the removal of an existing bathroom that was created by a previous owner by taking space from the northwest bedroom; this bedroom will be restored to its original size. While the proposed addition will provide additional living space, it will also resolve the chronic water infiltration problem created by the existing flat roof over the current master bedroom by eliminating that roof in favor of a gable end roof that will match those at the existing house. The exterior features of the proposed addition, including but not limited to the cladding, trim, windows and shingles, will match existing elements at the house as closely as possible.

ZONING

The property does not conform with current bulk regulations in terms of lot size, street frontage and front and side yard setbacks. However, the lot is similar in size and proportion to adjoining lots and, to several of those in the immediate vicinity. The project will not increase the degree of nonconformity at either existing setback mentioned above. We believe that it meets the criteria required for the granting of an area variance as follows:

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- 1. Will an undesirable change be produced in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties be created by the granting of this variance?** We do not believe so, since the addition will be only obliquely visible from the street and will match the existing house in terms of style, appearance and materials, nor will the runoff from this property be increased in any substantive way.
- 2. Can the benefit sought by the applicant be achieved by some method, feasible by the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance?** The existing lot does not meet the current street frontage requirement, offering 63.36' where 90' are required. In addition, the existing house is situated parallel to the north and south property lines, yielding an available perpendicular dimension of approximately 62' between those two lines. Removing the required 25' for each side yard setback

leaves an available N-S dimension of 12' for an addition, or approximately 11' at the interior once the thickness of the exterior walls is accounted for. In order to provide spaces within the addition that are in keeping with the proportions with rooms in the existing house and that will accommodate the relatively modest program requirements, a north side yard variance is required.

- 3. Is the requested area variance substantial in relation to the zoning code?** The 3.4' wide deck outside the north wall of the proposed addition, which provides access to the existing patio at grade, will be 16.2' from the property line where 25' are required. This is a shortfall of 35%, which can be considered substantial in relation to the zoning code. It is important to note, however, that this portion of the deck will be set back from the north property line the same distance as the existing deck. The enclosed portion of the proposed addition will be set back 19.6' from the north property line. This is a shortfall of only 21.6% from the required setback which, while arguably substantial, is an improvement of over 13% from the current situation.
- 4. Will the proposed variance have an adverse effect on the physical or environmental conditions of the neighborhood or district?** There should be no effect on these conditions: no trees will be removed, wildlife habitats disturbed, etc., and grading will remain essentially as is, allowing runoff to continue towards the east.
- 5. Is the alleged difficulty self-created?** The alleged difficulty results from the desire to increase the utility the house in a way that makes sense architecturally. This is accomplished by centering the volume of the proposed addition on the southern portion of the existing house and balancing the new gable end roof with flanking flat roofs to the north and south, where such roofs already partially exist. While it can be argued that the difficulty is self-created due to a desire to add living space, the request for a variance is based on the fact that this lot is narrower than required by current zoning, and by the wish to add to the house in a rational and aesthetically pleasing manner.
- 6. Is the requested variance the minimum variance necessary to relieve the practical difficulty?** Based on the metrics of utility and aesthetics, we believe that the requested



variance is the minimum necessary to relieve the practical difficulties (see also 2. above).

7. **Would a significant economic hardship result if this variance were not granted?** A significant economic hardship will not result if this variance is not granted.
8. **Given that governmental facilities and services are available to this property, will the granting of this variance affect the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood or district?** There will not be any effect on governmental facilities or services if this variance is granted because the property will remain a single-family residence and there will be no increase in the number of bathrooms or bedrooms as a result of the granting of this variance.
9. **If this variance is granted, will the effect of the increased population density produce on available governmental facilities, services and schools be small or great?** There will be no increased population density as a result of the granting of this variance (see 8. above) and therefore no effect on available governmental facilities, services and schools.

10. Other factors the applicant may wish the Board to consider

are that the desire to add to the house is rooted in Trina Hunn and Nick Underwood's wish to remain residents of Upper Nyack, after having raised their children here. We believe that the work proposed will enhance and extend the building's character while greatly increasing its utility. We also wish to assure the Village that, as with all of our projects, all possible efforts have been made during the design and will be made during the construction of this project to ensure as comfortable a fit as possible between the new and existing work and the neighborhood at large. Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request that the Village of Upper Nyack Zoning Board of Appeals approve the requested side yard variance and acknowledge the long-standing existence of nonconformities proposed not to be made worse at this property.