



Bernal Heights
East Slope Design Review Board

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March 16, 2022

Andy Rogers
Andy Rogers Design Studio
156 South Park
San Francisco CA 94107
andy@rogersarchitecture.com

RE: 48 Peralta Avenue
Block/Lot #5512/005A
CC: Ella Samonsky, SF Planning
ella.samonsky@sfgov.org

Dear Andy,

The Bernal Heights East Slope Design Review Board held a neighborhood meeting on March 3, 2022 to review drawings dated January 3, 2022 for the proposed remodel and addition to 48 Peralta Avenue. The meeting was held over Zoom and attended by a group of approximately 12 - 14 neighbors. Revised drawings dated March 11, 2022 were provided to the Board and neighbors (via email) after the meeting, and are the basis for this letter.

The meeting was requested by the BHESDRB and neighbors to review changes made to the project subsequent to the last meeting with the BHESDRB, held in January 2021, and our letter dated January 19, 2021, which is no longer applicable. Since then, an additional story had been proposed.

A number of concerns were discussed at the meeting, and the Board believes that some revisions are necessary to bring the project into conformance with the Bernal Heights East Slope Building Guidelines.

- Building Bulk and Architectural Massing

- Primary Facade:

- By filling the existing recessed entry stair and garden, and extending three stories above grade at Peralta, the facade evokes the “maximum building envelope shoebox” and “solid plane of the facade” the Guidelines seek to avoid.
- The proposed three-story facade would visually dominate adjacent two-story facades on the north side of Peralta. Rather than “stepping with the slope along the street” as called for in the Guidelines, the new building would visually step *upward* as Peralta slopes *downward* to the west.
- While the bay windows, small planters and material changes provide some relief in the facade, the Board believes that the bulk and massing should be reduced to be more compatible with the scale of adjacent buildings on the north side of Peralta, and to maintain the step down of facades along Peralta.
- *Neighbors suggested, and the Board agrees, that the visual dominance of the facade could be reduced by setting the top floor addition back from the facade.*
- This strategy was used effectively next door at 54 Peralta (new construction) and up the block at 20 Peralta (an addition). Since other neighbors on the north side of Peralta may consider adding a story, neighbors noted, and the Board agrees, that it is important that the subject project continue the established precedent rather than creating a new one.

- Rear Facade:

- At the meeting, neighbors and the Board requested clarification of the height of the proposed project relative to adjacent homes. The question was also raised about whether or not the rear of the proposal complied with heights allowed by both the Guidelines and San Francisco Planning Code Section 242 Bernal Heights Special Use District.
- We understand that the revisions shown in the March 11, 2022 drawings were intended to address issues of height compliance by reducing the footprint of the top floor addition so the building could step down at the rear.

- The Board believes that setting the top floor addition back from the front facade to create a more compatible primary facade is more important than height issues at the rear. Neighbors at the meeting noted that the height at the rear was not a particular concern.
- *The Board generally believes that complying with the height requirements of the Guidelines and Section 242 are very important. However, given that the project site is less deep than adjacent properties so there is a smaller developable floor plate, that the site backs up to undeveloped land that seems likely to remain so, and that the site is zoned R-2 which seems to allow Planning more discretion in establishing allowable height under Section 242, Planning could consider accepting a taller rear facade in order for the architect to achieve a less bulky primary facade.*

The Board thanks you for presenting the plans to the neighborhood and invites you to schedule another meeting to review refinements in response to the points enumerated here. Please email us at bhesdrb@gmail.com to schedule once you have revised the drawings.

Since the Board is not a City agency, it does not have the power to either approve or disapprove the application.

Cordially,



Wendy Cowles, Chair
On Behalf of the Bernal Heights ESDRB