



**Bernal Heights**  
**East Slope Design Review Board**

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Dear Peter & Fred,

The Bernal Heights East Slope Design Review Board held a neighborhood meeting on July 6, 2023, to review plans for the proposed renovation of an existing single-family home at 74 Banks Street. The meeting was held over Zoom and attended by neighbors who live across the street and next-door, uphill from the project.

The Board believes that the project is in general conformance with the Bernal Heights East Slope Building Guidelines. The proposal reflects a pleasing updating of the front and rear façades while still maintaining the integrity of the existing elements. The removal of the top floor “sunroom” and replacement with a deck and airy, light-filled trellis visually and physically reduce the overall bulk of the building. At the ground level, the elimination of the second, uphill garage provides the opportunity to celebrate the front entrance and allow for a transition to the interior space of the home. On all three levels, articulation of the façade also continues to reduce the sense of mass visually and physically.

The rear (west side) of the building reflects a fresh, updated version of the existing structure. The removal of the rear staircase allowing egress at the second level did bring up the question of whether egress was required above ground at the rear because the home is three levels. However, it is noted that the building plans call for a fire-sprinkler system to be “design-build” by a subcontractor and subject to approval by the architect prior to purchase and installation.

A neighbor expressed a concern about the requirement that trash bins must be secured off the street and noted that the plans do not designate space for trash bin storage. In addition, in keeping with current parking requirements, no where on the plans is it shown where and how bicycles are stored. Neighbors requested that new street parking not be allowed in front of the removed garage, since that would make accessing neighbors’ garages very difficult.

Finally, the Board noted that the Bernal Heights East Slope guidelines call for adding greenery to the front of a home as much as possible. The Board proposes two opportunities: 1) the removal of the garage makes it possible to plant a tree on the sidewalk, similar to the one shown on A1.1, in front of the house to the south of the subject property; and 2) extending the length of the planter box to the left of the front door, so that the box extends to the end of and in place of the guard rail proposed at the front. The planter box will serve as an attractive protective barrier to the elevation change and will bring more greenery to the street.

The Board thanks you for presenting the plans to the neighborhood. Since the Board is not a City agency, it does not have the power to either approve or disapprove the application.

Cordially,



Anne Batmale, Secretary

On Behalf of the Bernal Heights East Slope Design Review Board