



Staff Report

Meeting Date: December 10, 2018

Planner: Karl Onsager, Planner I

APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name: 5556 S Sycamore Sketch Plan

Case Number: SP18-0011

Application type: Sketch Plan

Location: 5556/5558 S. Sycamore St.
(east side of S. Sycamore St. between W. Berry Ave. and W. Powers Ave.)

Size of Property: 0.28 Acres

Zoning: CA, Central Area District with a Planned Development Overlay (PDO)

Applicant: Dan Pearson

Owner: Venture Real Estate, LLC

Applicant Request: Overturn staff's denial of sketch plan

PROCESS:

In July of 2016, the planning commission approved a PDO through a public hearing process which allowed a reduced front setback from 18 feet to nine feet in consideration of special attention to creative, high quality design. City staff then approved a Site Development Plan (SDP) and building permit that exactly matched the illustrations shown on the PDO. During construction the applicant made changes to the building. The applicant then applied for a sketch plan to modify the approved SDP. Staff denied the sketch plan because the modifications differ from the approved PDO/SDP/building permit.

Planned Development Overlay

Approved by planning commission at July 25, 2016 public hearing

- Link to video of public hearing (to view the video, click on link holding 'Ctrl' or copy and paste the link into your browser)
<https://littleton.ompnetwork.org/sessions/11254?embedInPoint=609&embedOutPoint=3560&shareMethod=link>

Site Development Plan

Approved by administrative review on October 7, 2016

Building Permit

Issued October 31, 2016

Sketch Plan

Denied by administrative review on November 16, 2018

➤ Appeal of Staff Denial

Pursuant to Littleton City Code (LCC) section 10-7-4, an appeal of a sketch plan requires a public hearing by the planning commission. The planning commission may either:

- approve the sketch plan;
- approve the sketch plan with conditions; or
- deny the sketch plan.

LOCATION:

The site is an existing duplex building located on a single property with two addresses: 5556 and 5558 S. Sycamore St. in downtown Littleton near the intersection of S. Sycamore St. and W. Berry Ave.



Site Aerial



Site Zoning

BACKGROUND:

Timeline

8/14/2015	<i>Application date for SDP</i>
2/8/2016	<i>Application date for PDO</i>
7/25/2016	<i>PDO approved by planning commission</i>
10/7/2016	<i>SDP approved by staff</i>
10/31/2016	<i>Building permit issued after reviewed for consistency with approved SDP</i>
10/24/2018	<i>Certificate of occupancy request denied for inconsistency with approved PDO/SDP/building permit</i>
11/8/2018	<i>Application date for sketch plan</i>
11/16/2018	<i>Sketch plan denied by staff</i>
11/26/2018	<i>Appeal filed</i>
12/10/2018	<i>Public hearing for sketch plan</i>

APPLICATION DETAILS:

On November 11, 2018 the applicant submitted a sketch plan for “as-built” material and building detail modifications to the approved PDO/SDP/building permit. The five modifications are:

1. *Replace siding material from travertine tile to stucco*
2. *Remove front railing on porch*
3. *Modify design of front columns*
4. *Replace corner windows on the west/south elevations with individual windows on each elevation*
5. *Increase the height of the middle eave line on the north and south elevations by nine inches (does not affect overall building height).*

The modifications were made during the course of construction without formal approval. The applicant’s letter of intent explains the reason for the changes:

“We found builders who have tried this application found the tile tends to discolor and because of freeze and thaw the tile falls off the wall, creating a safety concern as well as an unsightly problem. Remove rail at front of porch as it is less than 12" above grade, therefore not required by code. This look is also much more inviting from the street.”

Figure 1 is the approved PDO/SDP/building permit elevations. Figures 2-3 illustrate the location of the changes between the proposed sketch plan and the approved PDO/SDP/building permit. The criteria and staff analysis section addresses each of the five changes in detail.

Figure 1: Approved PDO/SDP/Building Permit Elevations.

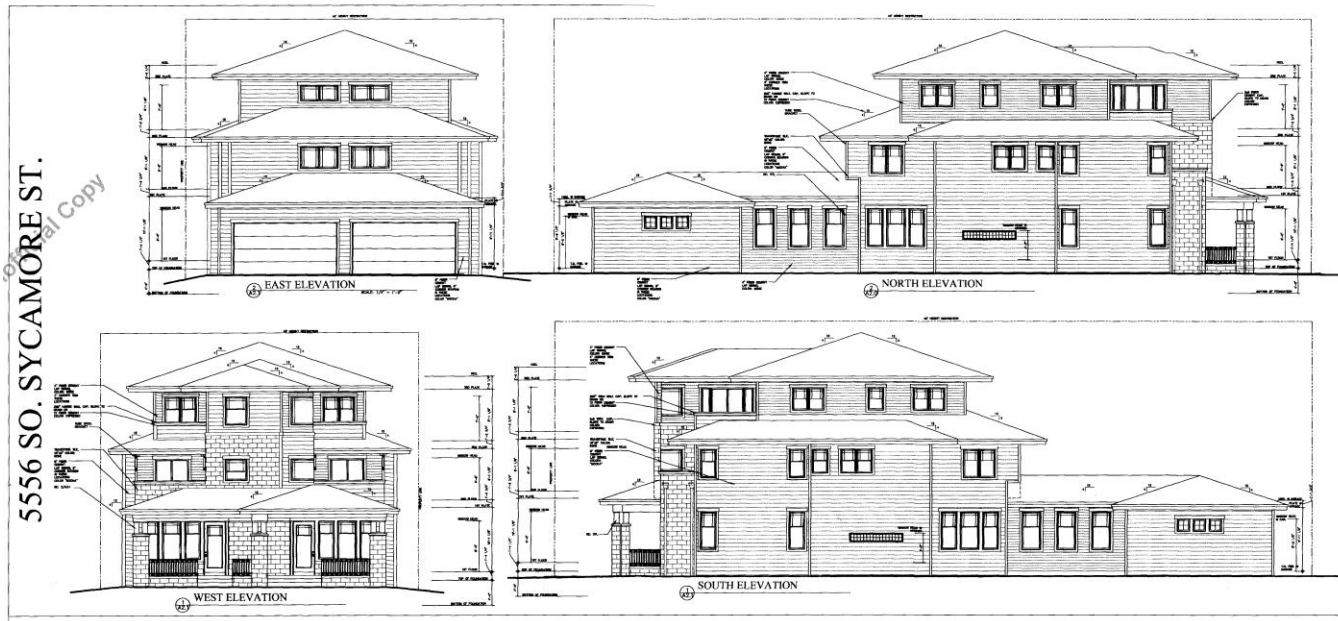


Figure 2: Proposed Sketch Plan With Highlighted Change Locations (West and North Elevations)

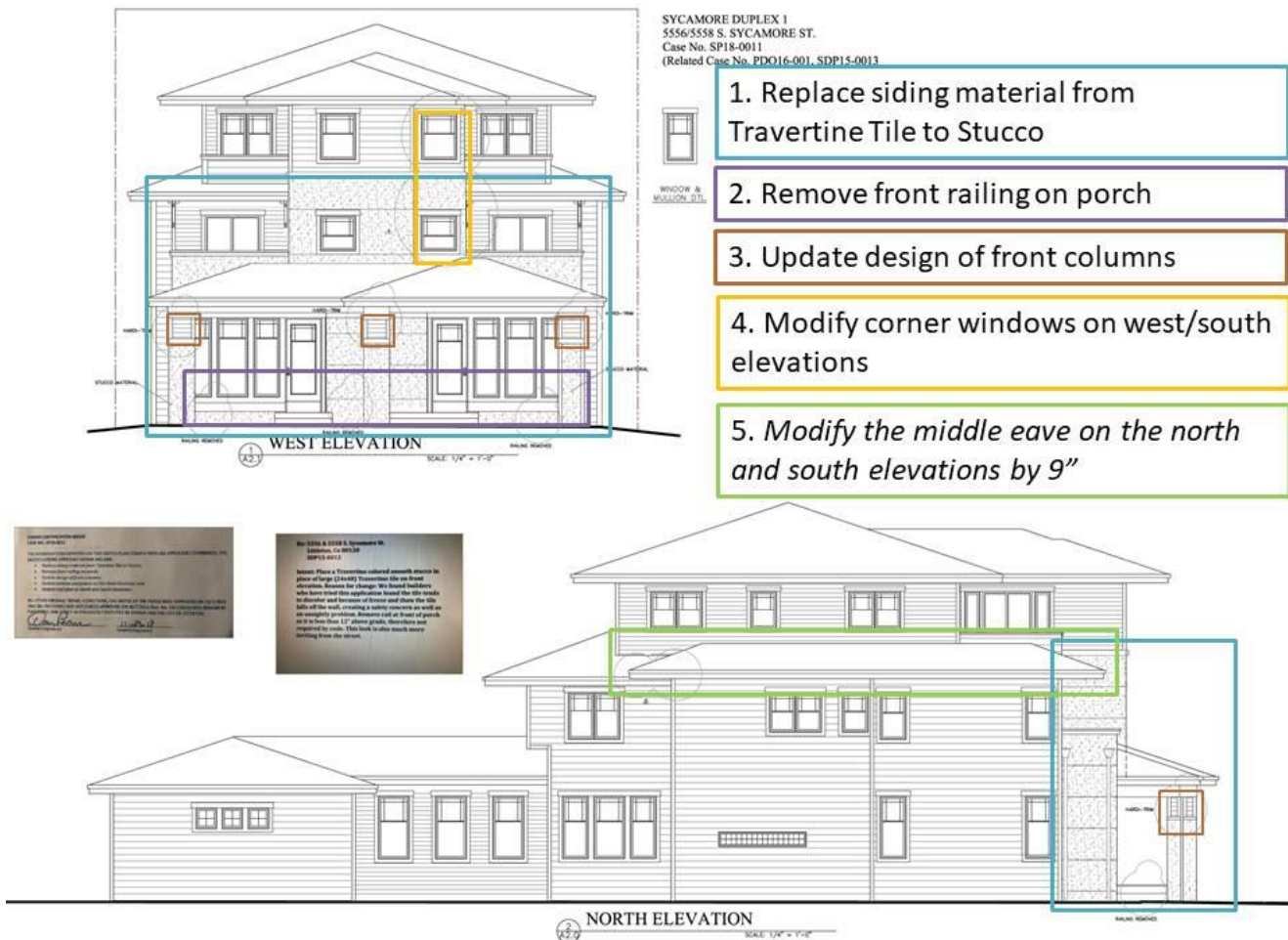
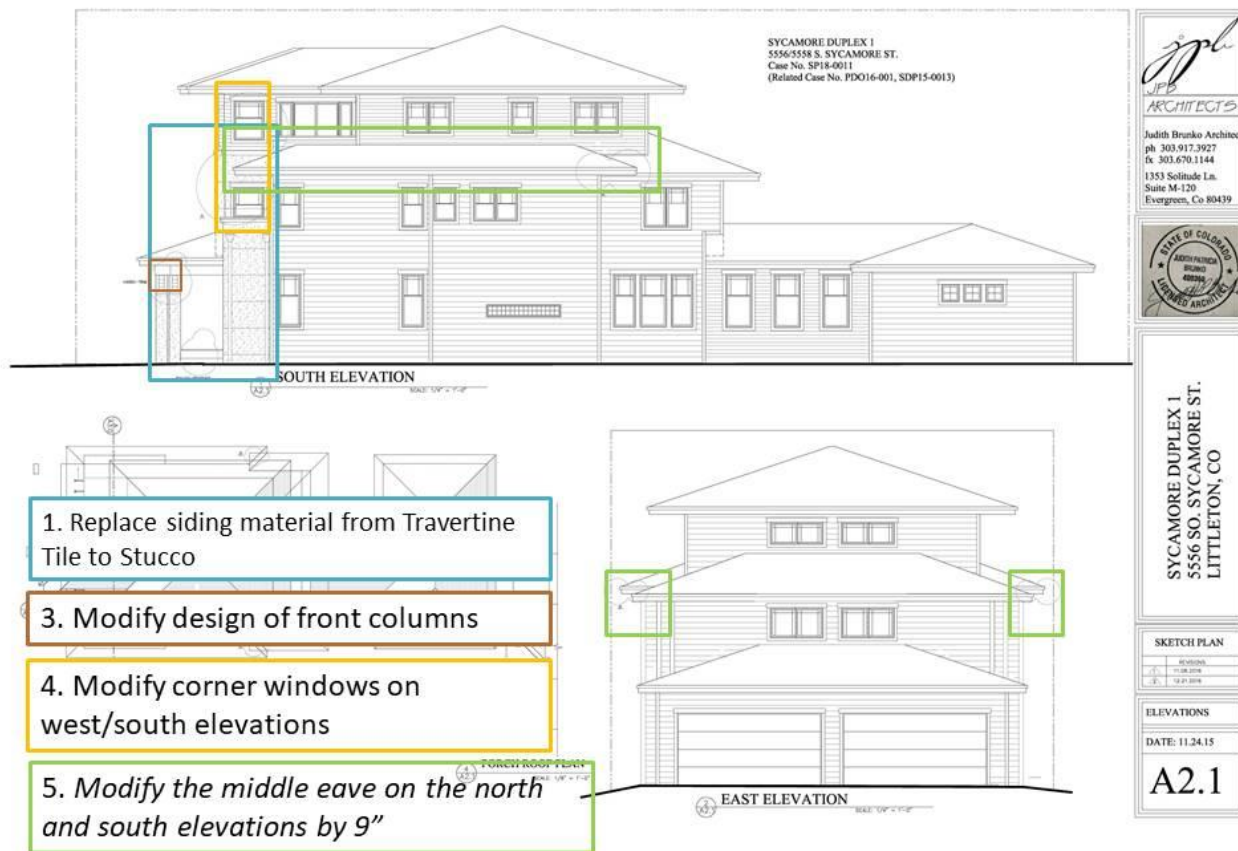


Figure 3: Proposed Sketch Plan with Highlighted Change Locations (East and South Elevations)



Zoning Requirements

The as-built modifications in the sketch plan do not affect setbacks, open space, parking requirements, or building heights established by the approved PDO.

CRITERIA & STAFF ANALYSIS:

The subsequent analysis will detail each of the changes on the sketch plan and their relation to the approved PDO/SDP/building permit elevations and downtown design standards, which were adopted after approval of the PDO/SDP/building permit approvals.

1. Material Change from Travertine Tile to Stucco

The applicant cites concerns regarding durability of travertine tile as the justification for the change to stucco. Figure 4 (on the following page) is a comparison of the subject property with stucco and a different property with travertine tile installed.

Figure 4



Subject Property



Example of travertine tile

The travertine tile is shown on the approved PDO/SDP/building permit. The material is mentioned specifically during the architect's presentation at the public hearing. Stucco is an acceptable building material listed in the downtown design standards.

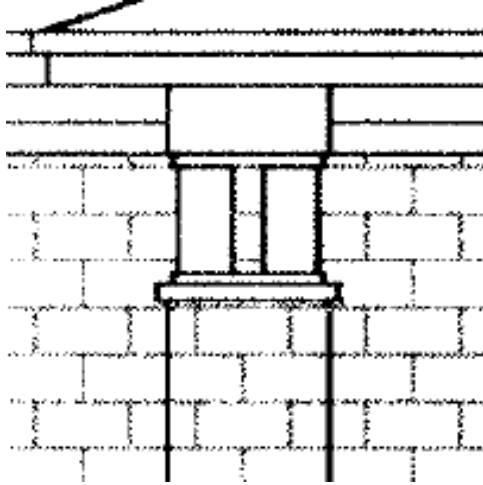
2. Front Porch Railing

The high quality of the front façade was noted in the public hearing. Railings were shown on the approved PDO/SDP/building permit elevations. The downtown design standards emphasize the inclusion of front porches, but do not address front porch railings. The applicant states that the railing is not required by code due to the less than 12-inch grade change and further contends the omission of the porch railing is "much more inviting from the street."

3. Front Porch Column Design

Figure 5 (on the following page) illustrates the difference in column design on the approved PDO/SDP/building permit plans and the constructed column.

Figure 5



Column design on approved PDO/SDP/building permit



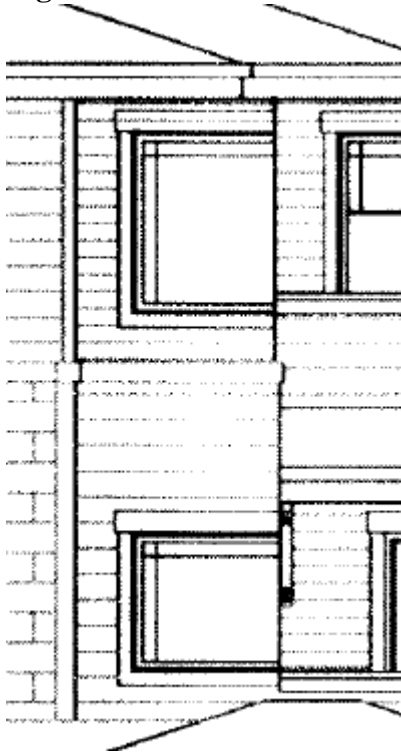
Column as constructed

The approved plans show the top of the tile-clad porch columns with double-pilar detail, which has some negative space where travertine tile can be seen in the backround. The as-built columns in the proposed sketch plan show a solid cap to the stucco-clad porch columns with a lap-siding detail. During the public hearing, the quality of the building face was noted; however, the design of the columns was not specifically discussed. Applicant did not address this change in the letter of intent.

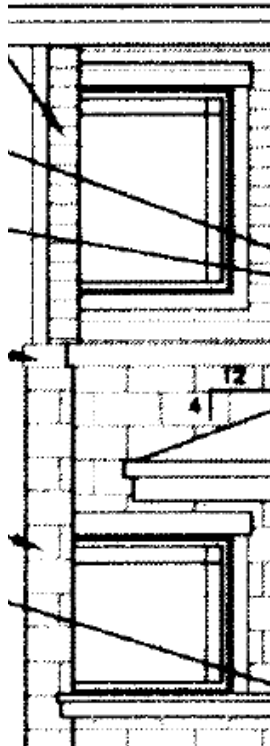
4. Window placement on the West and South Elevations

The approved PDO/SDP/building permit plans show two “corner windows” on the second floor that wrap around the 90-degree corner on the west and south elevations. Figure 6 (on the following page) illustrates the difference in window placement on the approved PDO/SDP/building permit plans and the as-built construction with four individual windows.

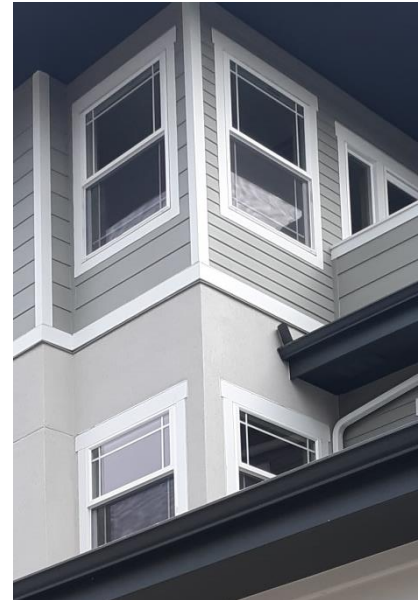
Figure 6



*Front/west elevation on
PDO/SDP/building
permit plans*



*Side/south elevation on
PDO/SDP/building
permit plans*



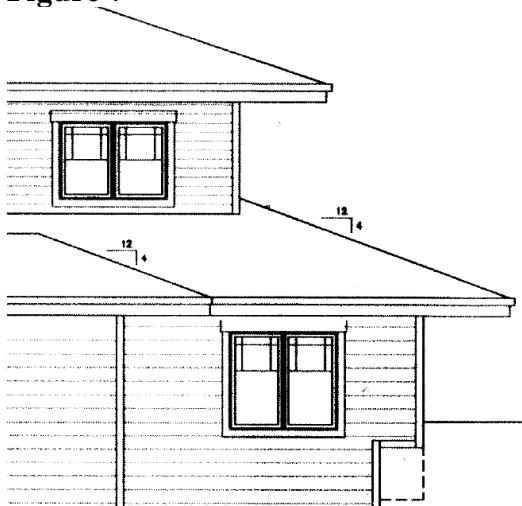
*Four individual windows as
constructed*

The window design was not specifically discussed during the public hearing. The Applicant did not address this minor change in the letter of intent. This alteration is relatively minor in nature and may have been eligible for approval with the building permit.

5. Roof Plan

The roof alterations identified on the proposed sketch plan illustrate how the height of the middle eave lines on the north and south elevations were increased nine inches. The applicant did not address this minor change in the letter of intent. Figure 7 (on the following page) illustrates the modification, but the change is not easy to photograph or notice from the ground view.

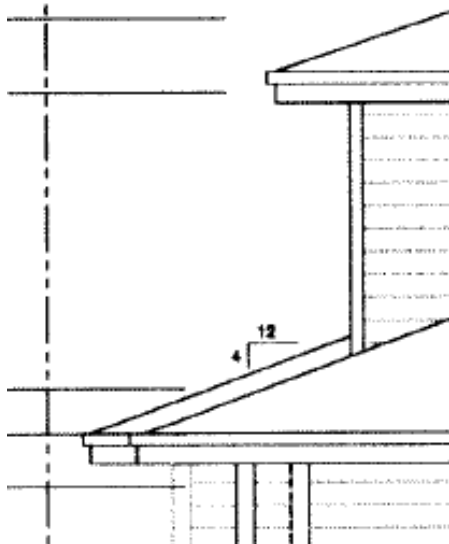
Figure 7



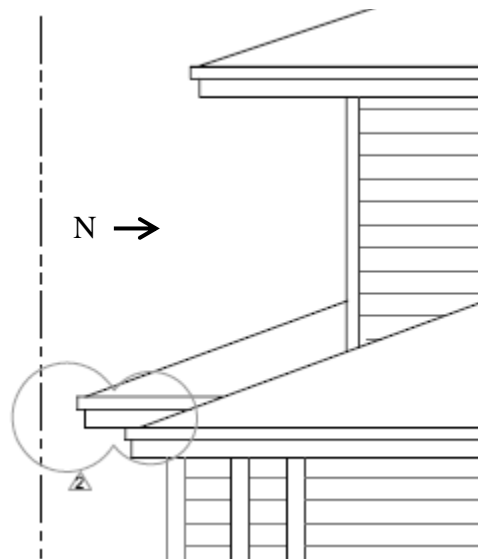
South elevation on PDO/SDP/building permit



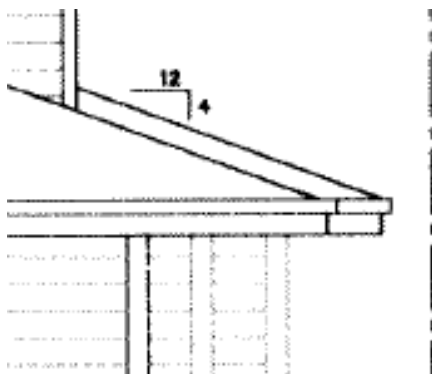
Sketch plan south elevation



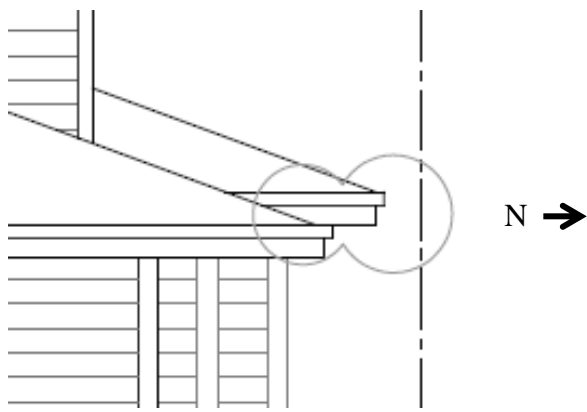
Southeast corner on PDO/SDP/building permit plans



Sketch plan southeast elevation



Northeast corner on PDO/SDP/building permit plans



Sketch plan northeast elevation

The modification made during construction was not readily apparent from the original site inspection. After being made aware of the change, staff was only able to minimally observe the modification from the alley. This type of alteration would normally be approved through the building permit process, especially since it does not affect overall height or setback.

NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH & PUBLIC NOTICE:

Notice of a public hearing was posted on the subject property and at city locations in advance of tonight's commission meeting in compliance with the city's public notice requirements.

OUTSIDE REFERRAL AGENCIES:

Not applicable to this sketch plan application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The original PDO was approved because the proposed development demonstrated special attention to creative, high quality design. If planning commission wishes to approve the sketch plan, staff recommends approval of PC Resolution 38-2018 with or without modifications. If planning commission wishes to deny the sketch plan, staff recommends denial of PC Resolution 38-2018.

After a decision on the appeal request, the following outcomes are possible:

1. If the planning commission approves the sketch plan, the applicant can change the building permit and staff will issue the certificate of occupancy for the structure as built.
2. If the planning commission either denies the sketch plan or approves the sketch plan with modifications, the applicant may either:
 - a. Construct the revisions necessary to bring the structure into compliance with the modifications or the original approval; or
 - b. The applicant may appeal the decision of the planning commission through the court system.