

Randall Adams

From: John Stott <jpstott@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2026 11:34 AM
To: Randall Adams
Cc: Code Compliance; Shawna Rooks
Subject: Opposition to application No. 251357 - APN: 028-221-16

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Santa Cruz County Planning Department
Attn: Zoning Administrator & Project Planner
701 Ocean Street, 4th Floor Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: OBJECTION to Variance & Coastal Development Permit Application
Subject Property: 154 Sunny Cove Dr. (APN: 028-221-16)
Applicant/Owner: Ed Shimmon

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing as a nearby property owner to formally object to the proposal to recognize the construction of the approximately 234-square-foot storage shed at the subject property. This application is essentially an after-the-fact request to legalize a non-compliant structure that was built in clear violation of local zoning ordinances. I strongly urge the Commission to deny both the Coastal Development Permit and the requested variances, and to reject the proposed California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption.

I would appreciate the following points being added into the official comments record :

- **Excessive Setback Violations and Encroachment:** The applicant is requesting a major reduction of the mandatory 15-foot rear yard setback to 0 feet, and the mandatory 5-foot side yard setback to 0 feet. Eliminating these setbacks entirely leaves zero clearance between the structure and the property line fence. This poses severe safety hazards, completely eliminates emergency access corridors, and prevents proper structural maintenance. My particular property has a fence directly attached to the common fence between 154 Sunny Cove Dr. and 145 18th Ave.
- **Loss of Natural Light and Airflow:** Due to its significant 234-square-foot footprint and zero-foot positioning, this oversized structure severely blocks natural sunlight and restricts essential airflow. This creates an oppressive, suffocating effect on the adjacent properties and drastically reduces the ambient livability of our backyard spaces.
- **Potential for Unpermitted Living Space and Traffic Congestion:** A 234-square-foot structure is roughly the size of a studio apartment or a single-car garage. It is entirely large enough to be converted into an unpermitted dwelling unit. My understanding is that it actually has a separate address sign, which could suggest that this is already in place. Our neighborhood

already suffers from traffic and parking congestion issues. Allowing an accessory structure of this scale on the property line creates an unacceptable risk of adding unvetted residential density to an already overwhelmed area.

- **Inappropriate CEQA Exemption:** The agenda indicates the Commission is considering a determination that this project is exempt from CEQA analysis. A zero-lot-line, 234-square-foot encroachment should not be granted a blanket exemption. The cumulative environmental and spatial impacts on neighboring properties demand rigorous scrutiny, not a rubber-stamped dismissal.
- **Adverse Precedent and Neighborhood Character:** If the Planning Commission grants variances to reduce 15-foot and 5-foot setbacks down to zero, it sets a dangerous, destructive precedent. It signals to other property owners that they can build first and ask for forgiveness later. This will systematically destroy the open-space character of our residential coastal neighborhood and ultimately depress surrounding property values.

Zoning setbacks and Coastal Development standards exist to protect residents, preserve community aesthetics, and ensure public safety. This project represents a severe abuse of those protections. I respectfully request that the Planning Commission deny the Coastal Development Permit, deny the variances, and require the applicant to bring the structure into full compliance with local laws.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to serving and protecting our community.

Sincerely,

John Stott
137 18th Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062