Request for a 5 foot height variance.

We are proposing a 10 unit building with two units in the back that face the ravine to the east. This would have been a very private back yard for these units and one that other similar developments have enjoyed. However the city is requiring a public path as close as 15-20 feet from the homes. Because of this requirement all privacy is lost. In order to mitigate this we decided to create a private rooftop deck for these units and in order to access them with stairs and an elevator we are requesting an additional 5 feet in height, from the base height of 30 feet to 35 feet – only for these stair towers.

It should be noted that although an additional 5 foot height variance could be requested for the entire building we are asking for a minimum amount - only 5% of the building footprint.

From the sidewalk at the north corner of the property this building is only 23 feet above the sidewalk, and the stair tower is set back into the middle of the building so it’s impact is really minimal from the street.

I can understand that there are objections from owners in the Seabreeze Building. But there are some things that should be considered. First that building enjoyed a building height of 45 foot because it is right up against 200 foot to the shoreline, which puts them outside the shoreline jurisdiction. Second, most of the units will be able to look over the top of the stair tower, and those on the lower floor would be affected even with a 30 foot height. Also there is a piece of property between the two properties and the average grade for that building is more than 5 feet above the average grade for ours, so future development on that property even at 30 foot height limit will be higher than our stair towers.

As an additional benefit we have offered to not put any mechanical equipment on the roof. Looking out over finished terraces will be much more attractive than a roof full of equipment.

In this development we are proposing to provide for the public waterfront trail across the east side of the property. This is a public benefit, which compromises the privacy for the two townhouses on the east of the property. This is a hardship unique to this particular piece of property, to the installation of a new segment of the waterfront trail, and the public exposure that the new trail will create. To mitigate that, we have designed private space on the roof of the building in rooftop decks. It is the desire of the owners of the two townhouses to provide handicapped access to the rooftop decks for themselves and future owners. The only way to do that is to provide an elevator/stair tower, which needs another 5 ft. of height to be able to go to this rooftop level. This is why we have applied for this variance. This variance for an extra 5 feet in height allowance is limited to the two elevator/stair towers in the two townhouses. The variance is not requested for the entire building – it represents approximately 5% of the roof area of the building proposed and would be a minimum impact to surrounding properties.