

# HOWARD F. MCNENNY, AIA

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## ARCHITECTURE / PLANNING / DEVELOPER SERVICES

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October 4, 2012

Planning and Zoning Commission  
City of Albany  
Albany, CA

RE: 918 Cerrito Street, 2" Window Recess

Dear Commissioners:

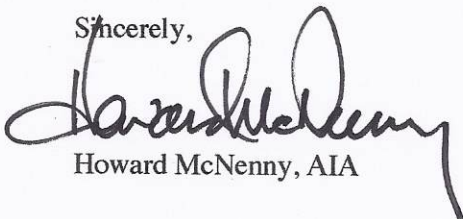
The design review application for the residential addition at 918 Cerrito was approved at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting of February 14, 2012, subject to the Conditions of Approval as prepared by staff. One of the conditions (Arch-2) is for a 2" recess for all new windows. I believe this requirement was inadvertently left in after discussions at the previous hearing on December 13, 2011 in which I obtained verbal agreement from the Commission that the requirement should not apply in this case. It was at that meeting that I noted the house is a contemporary design, and all the existing windows are installed flush with the plane of the wall. It would not look right for some to be recessed and some not recessed (especially since some are immediately adjacent to one another). My assumption was that the matter was settled, however I now learn that planning staff is unable to approve the plans until the matter is resolved, and that means another action by the Commission.

I have read the City's Residential Design Guidelines, and the very first sentence of Part 6 reads: "Trim and details should be consistent in style, regardless of whether the architectural style of the home is to change or remain the same." If half the windows are recessed and half are not, I would be in violation of this guide. There is a subsequent sentence that mentions the 2" recess, with the added proviso: "unless approved otherwise by the Planning Commission in Design Review". That is the approval I thought I had.

Please understand that I agree with the 2" recess for traditional style houses. It is more expensive, it harder to detail, and is harder to keep from leaking, but I do agree with the principle. A good example is my design for the house at 817 Ramona. This is actually a good time to look at it--the flashing is just now being installed. On the other hand, a contemporary house often looks best with windows that do not recess. (Think Sea Ranch, for example.)

Attached is a photo showing in detail the actual condition for a typical existing window. Your clarification on this matter will be much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Howard McNenny, AIA