

Michael Alvarez, Planner II Community Development Department 316 North Park Avenue, Rm. 445 Helena, MT 59623

Phone: 406-447-8459 Fax: 406-447-8460 Email: <u>malvarez@helenamt.gov</u>

helenamt.gov

#### DATE: April 14, 2022

#### STAFF REPORT

- TO: Helena Board of Adjustment
- FROM: Michael Alvarez, City Planner II

#### SUBJECT: Consideration of:

1. A variance from Section 11-4-2 to decrease the allowable minimum side lot line setback from 8' to 0' for a property with a legal description of Lot 10 in Block 532 of the Easterly Addition to the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana. The property generally occupies the southeast corner of State St and Beattie St.

The reason for the variance is to place a shed on a narrow property.

#### **OVERVIEW**

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

DATE OF APPLICATION: Complete application received March 30, 2022

#### PUBLIC HEARING DATE: Board of Adjustment - 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 03, 2021

APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER: Sam Carlson

MAILING ADDRESS: 701 State St, Helena, MT 59601

CONTACT NUMBER: 406.599.5871

EMAIL ADDRESS: sam.p.carlson@gmail.com

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 701 State St., Helena, MT 59602

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 10 in Block 532 of the Easterly Addition to the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

GENERAL LOCATION: The property generally occupies the southeast corner of State St and Beattie St.

PRESENT LAND USE: Single Dwelling-Unit

#### ADJACENT LAND USE:

North: Residential uses (largely single dwelling units) South: Residential uses (largely single dwelling units) East: Residential uses (largely single dwelling units), vacant land and trails up the hill West: Residential uses (largely single dwelling units), Clinton Park across the street

PRESENT ZONING: R-1

#### **VARIANCE PROPOSALS:**

#### **Consideration of**

A variance from Section 11-4-2 to decrease the allowable minimum side lot line setback from 6' to 0' for a property with a legal description of Lot 10 in Block 532 of the Easterly Addition to the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

#### **History of Building Permits:**

- Re-roof: 05/2010
- Water Line: 01/2006
- Electrical: 08/1986
- Plumbing: 08/1986
- Roof: 09/1982
- Bldg-Porch: 07/1953
- Roof: 08/1943

# ZONING EVALUATION for the property legally addressed as 701 State St, Helena, MT, located in an R-1 zoning district.

ZONING REQUIREMENT	Applicable ZONING REGULATION	PRESENT CONDITION	PROPOSAL	VARIANCE REQUIRED
<b>City Code:</b> 11-4-2 Side Lot Line Setback	8'	0'	0'	Yes

#### **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VARIANCE CRITERIA**

Section 11-5-5 of the Helena Zoning Ordinance includes certain criteria that must be reviewed as part of the variance procedure.

To approve a requested variance for a new building or portion thereof, the board of adjustment shall consider the following standards and find as follows:

1. The variance will not create a significant risk to the public health, safety, or general welfare;

2. The variance will not significantly reduce or impair the peaceful use of existing property or improvements in the vicinity and the zoning district in which the subject property is located; and 3. Strict compliance with the provisions of this title would create unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty.

In evaluating the standards above, the board of adjustment may consider the following factors:

1. Special conditions and circumstances that are unique to the applicant's site, including the size of the property, unusual or extreme topography, or unusual shape of the property.

2. The height, location, or dimensions of existing structures located on the site or in the vicinity of the site.

3. Whether there is a prevalence of nonconformities in the vicinity of the site that are similar to the variance requested.

4. The subsequent imposition of zoning restrictions creating nonconforming lots or parcels, and governmental actions beyond the applicant's control.

5. Whether a literal interpretation of the provisions of this Title would deprive the property owner of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties similarly situated in the same district under the terms of this Title.

6. The extent to which the hardship or difficulty results from the actions of the applicant.

7. Whether granting the variance requested will confer an unreasonable special privilege to the subject property that is not available to other properties similarly located in the same zoning district.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

As of Friday, April 15, 2022, no public comment has been received for the variance.

#### **<u>City Attorney's Office:</u>**

It is the recommendation of the City Attorney's Office, that staff does not make a recommendation to approve or deny a variance.

#### CONCLUSION

Montana law states the Board of Adjustment has authority to consider "...upon appeal in specific cases such variance from the terms of the ordinance as will not be contrary to the public interest, where, owing to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship and so that the spirit of the ordinance shall be observed and substantial justice done." (76-2-323 MCA)

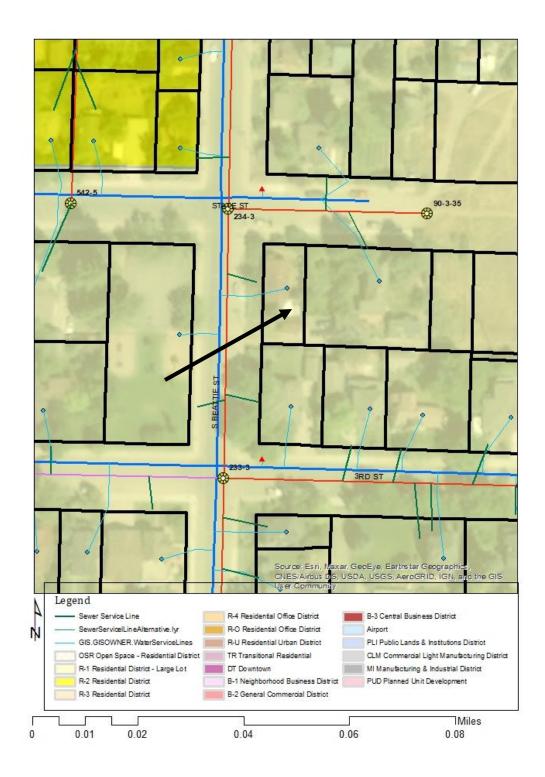
#### Motion:

#### Move to <u>Approve or Deny</u>

A variance from Section 11-4-2 to decrease the allowable minimum side lot line setback from 6' to 0' for a property with a legal description of Lot 10 in Block 532 of the Easterly Addition to the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

If the Board of Adjustment approves the requested variance, the following condition is recommended:

Building Permit: A building permit must be obtained within one (1) year.





Michael Alvarez, Planner II Community Development Department 316 North Park Avenue, Rm. 445 Helena, MT 59623

Phone: 406-447-8459 Fax: 406-447-8460 Email: <u>malvarez@helenamt.gov</u>

helenamt.gov

Apr 14, 2022

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:** A land use change is being proposed in your area. Please review the enclosed description, and vicinity map. You may respond to the proposal at the public hearing or submit written comments prior to the May 03, 2022 Board of Adjustments public hearing to the City Planning Division, 316 North Park, Helena MT 59623. For written comments to be distributed to the Board of Adjustments with the staff report, they must be submitted to the City by <u>Apr 25, 2022</u>.

The Helena Board of Adjustments will hold a public hearing on the variance request on <u>Tuesday, May</u> <u>03, 2022</u> at <u>5:30 p. m. via a Zoom at https://zoom.us/j/95139091644</u>, Meeting ID: 951 3909 1644. Dial in at (346) 248-7799 or find your local Zoom phone number by going to <u>https://zoom.us/u/abx78Gko9e.</u>

Interested parties are encouraged to attend this meeting. We may not be able to reach all who may be interested in this application, and we encourage you to talk to your neighbors about this proposal.

#### **PROPOSAL**:

A variance from Section 11-4-2 to decrease the allowable minimum side lot line setback from 8' to 0' for a property with a legal description of Lot 10 in Block 532 of the Easterly Addition to the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

The reason for the variance is to place a shed on a narrow property.

#### ADDRESS:

701 State St, Helena, MT, located in an R-1 (Residential) zoning district.

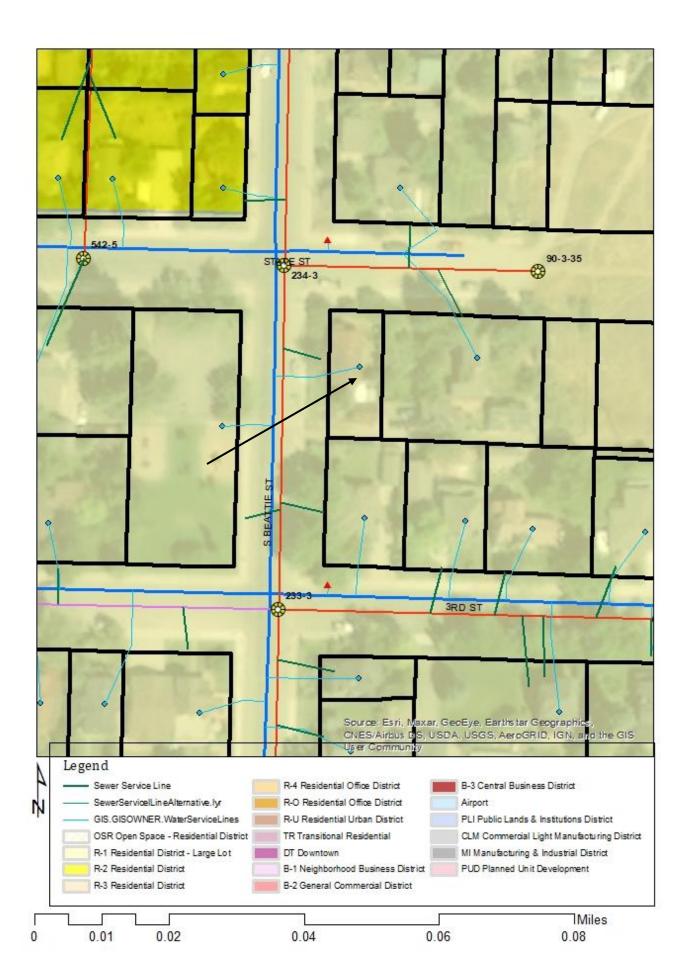
#### **GENERALLY LOCATED:**

The property generally occupies the southeast corner of State St and Beattie St.

If you have questions concerning the proposed change, please contact the City Planning Division of the Community Development Department at 447-8459.

Sincerely,

Michael Alvarez, Planner II





3.

4.

City of Helena BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE Community Development Department Phone (406) 447-8490 Fax (406) 447-8460 citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov



MAR 3 0 2022

City Comm. Dev. Dept.

- 1) APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE MUST USE THIS FORM.
- 2) AN APPLICATION FEE OF <u>\$125.00</u> MUST BE PAID TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BEFORE THE CITY WILL PROCESS THE APPLICATION.
- 3) THE MOST RECENT DEED FOR IMPACTED PROPERTY MUST BE INCLUDED.

CITY STAFF RESERVE THE RIGHT TO RETURN MATERIALS THAT ARE DEEMED INCOMPLETE OR LACK SUFFICIENT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION. THIS MAY ALSO DELAY THE SCHEDULING TO PRESENT A VARIANCE REQUEST.

#### (Part A) PLEASE PROVIDE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW.

- 1. <u>1 copy</u> of a scaled site plan and supporting data/documents. The site plan must clearly show the existing standard and the proposed variance to the standard.
- 2. APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE:

Name:	Sam Carlson	Cell Phone Number:	406-599-5871
Address:	701 State St, Helena, 59601	Other Phone Number:	
Email:	sam.p.carlson@gmail.com		
PROPERTY	OWNER (If different from applican	t):	
Name:		Cell Phone Number:	
Address:		Other Phone Number:	
Email:			
ADDRESS O	F PROPERTY:		
701 State	St, Helena MT, 59601		

- 5. LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (Block & Lots, Subdivision/Addition): Lot 10 in Block 532 of the EASTERLY ADDITION to the City of Helena
- 6. LOT OR PARCEL SIZE (Square feet): 4200 Square Feet
- 7. CURRENT AND PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURE OR PROPERTY: Single Family Residence
- 8. ZONING DISTRICT: R-3 Residential



## City of Helena BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

# (Part B) INDICATE WHICH VARIANCE(S) IS (ARE) BEING REQUESTED AND THE EXTENT OF THE VARIANCE.

EXAMPLE: [X] Reduce Front Lot Line Setback: From the required 10 feet to 3 feet.

Dim	ensional Criteria:
	Reduce front lot line setback:
	Front lot line setback #2 (corner lot):
	Reduce garage entrance setback:
×	Reduce side lot line setback: From the required 6 feet to 0 feet 2 inches
	Reduce rear lot line setback:
	Exceed building height limitation:
Lot	Coverage/Area Criteria:
	Lot coverage percentage:
	Front porch lot coverage percentage:
	Lot area per dwelling unit:
Lanc	Iscaping Criteria:
	Reduce or eliminate landscaping area:
	Reduce or eliminate screening area:
Park	ing Criteria:
	Exceed the maximum parking spaces allowed:
	Reduce the amount of required on-site parking spaces:
	Reduce or eliminate loading berths:
	Reduce or eliminate required bicycle spaces:
<b>C</b> <sup>1</sup>	
	<u>Criteria</u> :
	Sign area (square footage):
	Sign height:
	Sign location:
	Number of signs:
Upd	lated: 08/2020 2



### City of Helena BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

(Part C) BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS VARIANCE REVIEW CRITERIA. To approve a requested variance for a new building or portion thereof, the Board of Adjustment shall consider the following standards in section 11-5-5 of the Helena City Code and find as follows:

1. The variance will not create a significant risk to the public health, safety, or general welfare;

2. The variance will not significantly reduce or impair the peaceful use of existing property or improvements in the vicinity and the zoning district in which the subject property is located; and

3. Excluding monetary hardship, strict compliance with the provisions of this title would create unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty.

It is the applicant's burden of proof to show that a variance should be granted. As part of your application, you are required to provide information for each of the following factors including all alternatives considered. Failure to provide adequate responses or requested documentation may result in a returned application.

1. Are there special conditions and circumstances that are unique to the applicant's site, including the size of the property, unusual or extreme topography, or unusual shape of the property? If so, state the specific factors and provide supporting documentation. For example, if the variance request is due to an abnormal lot configuration, provide a survey of the lot that specifically demonstrates the issue.

Due to lot size, corner lot, and topography, there is no alternate location for a storage shed that is compliant with the setback requirements while preserving yard space and the appearance of the house.

2. How is the proposed variance compatible with the other structures located on the site or in the vicinity of the site? Provide a site plan that accurately and to scale represents the height, location, and dimensions of existing structures.

The existing footprint of the house extends all the way to the Side Lot Line, and the footprint of the existing shed is within 1'4" of the lot line. The proposed shed expansion will extend to the edge of an existing slab, 0'2" from the lot line.

3. Describe whether there is a prevalence of nonconformities in the vicinity of the applicant's site that are similar to the variance requested. If so, what are those nonconformities and provide supporting documentation.

There are 4 other nonconformities that are very similar to the proposed variance within the immediate block, all involving a shed or outbuilding placed closer than 6 feet to a side lot line. Many other setback nonconformities exist within the vicinity

4. Is the need for a variance request a result of government action? For example, the front yard setbacks were increased after construction of the structure, there fore creating the non-conformity. Explain.

5. Would a literal interpretation of the provisions in this title deprive the property owner of rights commonly enjoyed by other similar properties in the same zoning district? For example, would the denial of the variance deny the property owner the right to safe placement of a garage where garages are typical. If so, explain.

Many other property owners in this neighborhood utilize sheds or outbuildings that violate side lot setbacks. Like the nearby property owners, we are looking for a protected location to store tools, garden and yard items, bicycles, etc....



City of Helena BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE

(Part C Continued...)

6. Explain the extent of the circumstances that are creating hardship or difficulty in compliance with the City Code and list alternatives and options considered by the applicant. Provide supporting documentation.

On our small corner lot, options for covered, out of sight storage are limited. Placing a shed on the SW corner of the lot would reduce setback encroachment, would degrade the appearance of the house and displace our sunny patio

7. Describe whether or not granting the variance requested will confer an unreasonable special privilege to the subject property that is not available to other similar properties located in the same zoning district and provide supporting documentation.

Granting this variance would not confer special privilege as most properties in the neighborhood have a structure similar to the proposed shed, and many of these structures violate the setback standards in a similar manner to this proposed shed

8. Do you think a rebuttable presumption, as identified in City Code Section 11-5-5(E), should apply to your property, yes or no? For example, do you have an existing non-conforming structure that you wish to rebuild in the same location? If yes, show the original footprint of the building. Provide documentation that proves the existence of the prior nonconformity. Document that the nonconformity can be in compliance with building and fire codes.

no

9. Provide any additional information you would like the Board to consider.

We have discussed this project with our neighbors to the East (the direction of the requested setback variance), and they have no issue with the proposed project.

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CITY OF HELENA'S BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT TO NOT ACT ON A PROPOSAL IF THE APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER OR REPRESENTATIVE IS NOT PRESENT AT THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS HEARING. CITY STAFF REPRESENT THE CITY AND CANNOT ANSWER QUESTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT AT THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT HEARINGS.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THE ABOVE STATEMENTS AND ANY ATTACHED INFORMATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: C

DATE: 3/24/2022

DATE:

**PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE:** 

(Property owner must sign application if different than the applicant)



#### City of Helena LAND USE Application Form

#### Please provide all of the information requested in the Application Instructions. AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION MAY DELAY REVIEW OF YOUR REQUEST.

1.	APPLICANT: 2.	<b>PROPERTY OWNER</b> (if different from applicant):
	Name: Sum Carbon	Name:
	Address: 701 Shate St	Address:
	Helma N1 59601	
	Primary Phone: 406 544 587	Primary Phone:
	Secondary Phone	Secondary Phone:
	Email address: Sam. p. Carlson & gmail. com	Email address:
	Authorized Representative	erty owner and to receive all correspondence)
3.	LEGAL DESCRIPTION (submit a deed and recent	
	Subdivision/Blocks/Lots and COS number: Lot 1	0 in Block 532 of the
	Easterly Addition to the City of	
	Section, Township, and Range: 531, 710	N, RO3W
4.	ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 701 State St. Helen, Mr 54601	
5.	CURRENT ZONING: <u><u><u></u><u></u><u><u></u><u></u><u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u><u></u></u></u></u></u></u>	
6.	GEOCODE: 05-188-31-1-12-21-	0000

Please indicate the type of land use/land use change you are requesting and submit this form with your application:

Pre-Zone 

 Annexation
 Conditional Use Permit 
 Variance from Zoning Regulations 
 Zone Change
 Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat 
 Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plat 
 Amended Plat

#### IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CITY COMMISSION <u>NOT</u> TO ACT ON A PROPOSAL IF THE APPLICANT/ APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE IS NOT PRESENT AT THE COMMISSION MEETING. City Planning Staff represents the City; staff cannot answer questions for the applicant.

The taxes and assessments on the applicant's property, which is the subject of the proposed action, must be paid or payment of said taxes and assessments must be made a condition of final approval of said action by the city commission, with the taxes and assessments to be paid within fourteen (14) days after final passage. In the event the taxes and assessments are not paid, the proposal will be brought back before the city commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting for reconsideration.

#### I HEREBY CERTIFY AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE ABOVE STATEMENTS AND ANY ATTACHED INFORMATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Date: 3/30/2022 SIGNED: Applicant

Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sam Carlson and Hannah Rasker 406 599 5871 <u>sam.p.carlson@gmail.com</u> 701 State Street, Helena MT, 59601

#### **Application for Variance from Setback Standards**

This application describes the variance that is necessary to complete the proposed expansion and improvement of a small shed that is attached to our house at 701 State Street. Our goals for this project are to gain storage space for tools, bikes, and yard and garden supplies by increasing the size, security, and quality of the existing shed, while minimizing the impact on our yard space and on the aesthetic value of our house. Due to the size and arrangement of our lot, expanding and improving the current attached shed is the best way to achieve these goals.

As documented in this proposal, neither existing shed, nor the footprint of our house immediately south of the existing shed, are compliant with the current setback standards. The footprint of the house extends fully up to the eastern property line, the footprint and roof overhang of the existing shed extend to within 1'4" and 4" of this property line, respectively. Further, there is a concrete slab underlying a portion of our house and the existing shed that extends to within 2" of this eastern property line. All of these conditions predate our ownership of this property.

The proposed improvement of the shed will expand the shed footprint to the eastward extent of the slab, located 2" from the eastern property line. Although this will bring the shed very close to the property line, the shed extent will remain further from the property line than the extent of the house (immediately to the south of the shed), and the expanded will remain behind the existing fenceline and therefore will not visually encroach upon the neighbors property.

We include with this application documents that more precisely describe this project, and the relevant context. In addition to the *Application for Variance* form, we include:

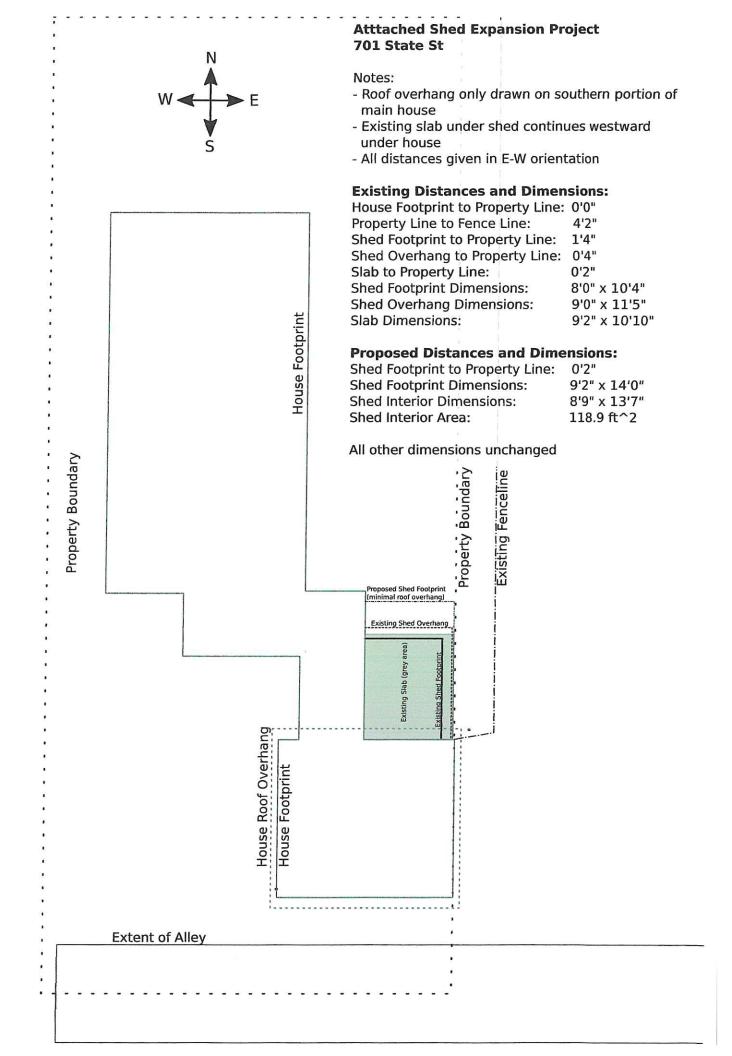
A plan view of the existing house, shed, and property line, along with the proposed shed extent,
 A plan view illustrating the standard setbacks for our property, the proposed shed extent, and the location of a disfavored alternative shed placement,

3) Aerial imagery documenting the numerous structures within the immediate neighborhood that are similar to this proposed project in their noncompliance with the standard setback requirements,

4) The plan of our lot and house, taken from the title for this property, and

5) The most recent deed for this property.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Sam Carlson Hannah Rasker



# **Proposed and Alternate Shed Placement, and Property Setbacks**

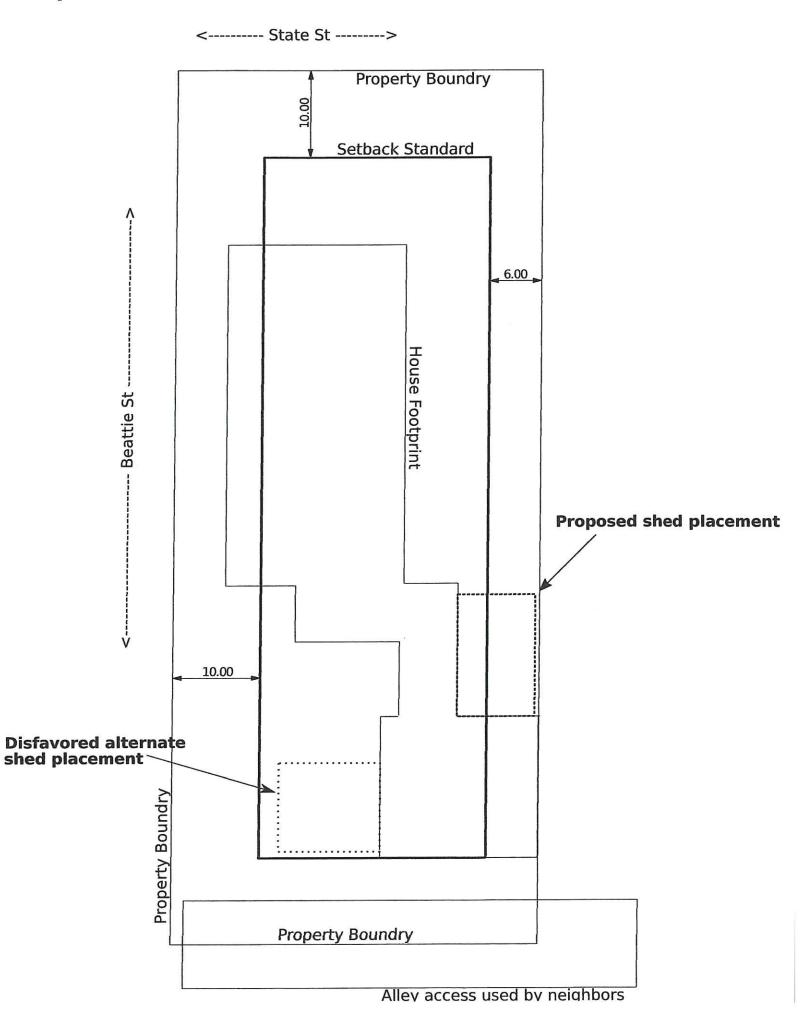
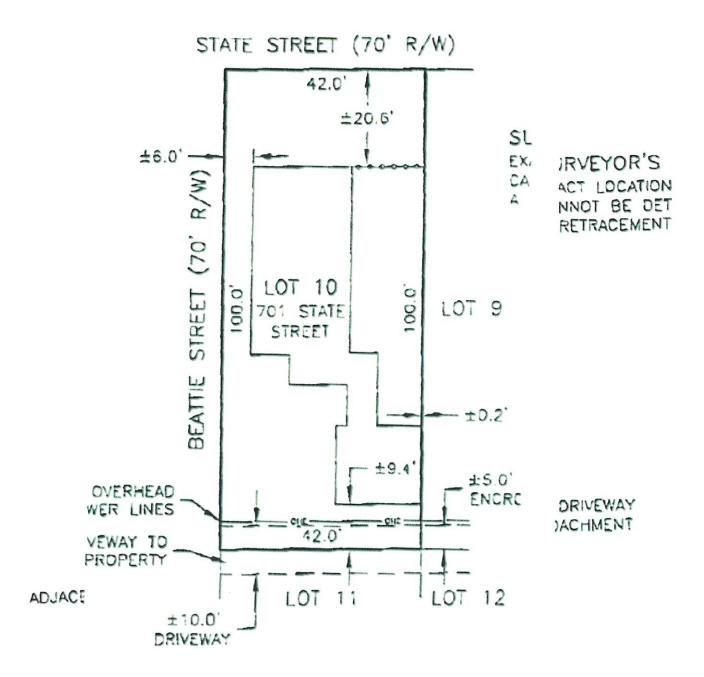




Image Source: Landsat/Copernicus. 46°34'55"N, 112°01'45"W. Imagery Date 7/25/2014. Accessed in Google Earth

In addition to the preexisting noncompliance of the structures on our lot with the standard setback requirements, there are numerous other structures within the neighborhood that are noncompliant with the contemporary setback standards. Four such instances within the immediate block are indicated in this image, with the structures encircled with dashed white lines, and the approximate property lines associated with the infringed setbacks identified by solid orange lines. As residents, we do not feel like these setback violations along interior property lines detract from the quality of the neighborhood. Our house is located in the upper left corner of this image, on the corner of State and Beattie streets. The approximate extent of the proposed shed on our property is indicated by the blue rectangle, and the adjacent property boundry is indicated by the solid orange line.



400 North Park Avenue, Ste 100 Helena, MT 59601 # 117171

## WARRANTY DEED

(JOINT TENANTS)

For Value Received:

BENJAMIN S. CARREON and SARAH L. CLARK, as joint tenants

the grantor(s) do(es) hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto

HANNAH RASKER and SAMUEL PAUL CARLSON

The grantees, as joint tenants (and not as tenants in common), and to the survivor of said named joint tenants and to the heirs and assigns of such survivor, the following described premises, in Lewis & Clark County, Montana, to-wit:

Lot 10 in Block 532 of the EASTERLY ADDITION to the City of Helena, according to the official map or plat on file and of record in the office of the County Clerk and Recorder of Lewis and Clark County, Montana.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same premises, with the appurtenances unto said Grantee(s), joint tenants with the right of survivorship (and not as tenants in common) and to the heirs and assigns of the survivor of said named joint tenants forever. And the said Grantor(s) do(es) hereby covenant to and with the Grantee(s), that he/she/they are/is the owner(s) in fee simple of said premises; that is free from all encumbrances SUBJECT to all legal taxes and assessments levied with respect to said premises and that he/she/they will warrant and defend the same from all lawful claims whatsoever.

Dated: April 15, 2021

BENJAMIN S. CARREON

SARAH L. CLARK

STATE OF Montana

COUNTY OF Lewis & Clark

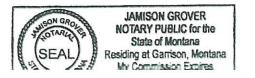
I, a Notary Public of the County and State first above written, do hereby certify that

Benjamin S. Carreon and Sarah L. Clark personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.

	1	
Notary Public		

My Commission Expires:

(SEAL)



3376781 B: M59 P: 785 DEED 04/16/2021 12:57 PM Pages: 1 of 1 Fees: 7.00 Amy Reeves Clerk & Recorder, Lewis & Clark MT

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