

June 21, 2006

Mr. Ed Del Duca
2261 Broadway
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Re: Design Exception #DE23-06 2261 Broadway, Meadowlark Gardens, Lot #6 –
Grade and Drive Isle Width

Dear Ed:

Please find attached the committee's decision for the above referenced request. This design exception has been approved and you may use this decision to proceed through the development review process for this exception.

If you have any questions concerning this decision, please feel free to contact the Development Engineer in charge of your project or Tim Moore, Public Works Manager at (970) 244-1557.

Sincerely,



Sandi Nimon,
Sr. Administrative Assistant

Xc: Rick Dorris, Development Engineer (256-4034)

File

DESIGN EXCEPTION #DE 23-06

To: Mark Relph, Director of Public Works & Utilities
Sheryl Trent, Community Development
Jim Bright, Interim Fire Chief

From: Tim Moore, Public Works Manager

Copy to: Rick Dorris

Date: June 19, 2006

RE: 2261 Broadway, Meadowlark Gardens Lot #6 - Parking lot Grade & Drive
Isle Width

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

The owners of lot 6 in Meadowlark Gardens Development located at Hwy 340 and the Redlands Parkway request an exemption to the TEDS Manual related to the maximum grade permitted in a parking lot and the minimum street width for a proposed driveway between two parking areas to be constructed. TEDS lists the maximum grade permitted in parking lots of 8%, and the applicant is requesting a grade of 12%, but has limited the location to a driveway connecting two different parking lots. TEDS also requires a 25 foot wide driveway and the applicant is proposing a drive isle of 16 foot.

Site Description:

Topography on the project location varies by 25 feet across the site. Additionally, there are a number of mature trees on the site that serve as buffering and screening that the applicant is proposing to work around to avoid the need to remove them as part of the lot development.

EXCEPTION CONSIDERATIONS

1. Will the exception compromise safety?

Staff does not believe the exception will compromise safety.

2. Have other alternatives been considered that would meet the standard?

The applicant has considered alternatives that meet the TEDS manual but has elected to pursue the exception as described due to the benefits associated with the topography of the site.

3. Has the proposed design been used in other areas?

There are examples of this type of exception in other areas in Colorado including Glenwood Springs.

4. Will the exception require CDOT or FHWA coordination?

No

5. Is this a one-time exception or a manual revision?

This would be a one-time exception.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the exception as proposed.


Recommended by: _____


Approved as Requested:

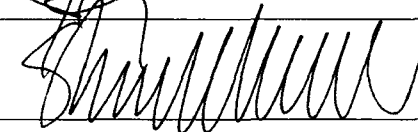
Approved as Modified:

Denied

Dated: 6/19/06







DE#23-06 2261 Broadway, Meadowlark Gardens Lot #6. – Parking lot Grade & Drive Isle Width

May 8th, 2006
9 Dubonnet Court
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Grand Junction Community Development Department
Attention: Rick Dorris

RE: Requested Exemption to Ted's manual standards

We would like to request an exemption to the TED's manual standard of a **maximum 8% grade permitted in parking lots** to allow a driveway proposed between two parking areas to be at a 12% grade for a distance of 25 feet. **In addition we request that this driveway be 16 feet in width.**

This exemption is requested due to:

1. Site topography, which varies by 25 feet across the site.
2. The elevation, location and size of many mature trees on the site, which are too large to move, and if destroyed unnecessarily, would diminish compliance with the intent of other city standards such as landscaping, buffering and screening.

Proposed Design

The proposed design, shown in the accompanying sketch, complies with city standards and zoning except for a 25-foot long driveway that is 16-foot wide and at a 12% grade to connect two parking areas.

The exemption facilitates many benefits, listed below, that we feel far out way any negative effects, if any.

1. The steeper grade and narrower width substantially reduces the depth and proximity of excavation close to the root structure of the existing mature trees including a walnut and catalpa on either side of the driveway and the 20 mature evergreen tress on the south and east property lines. The walnut and catalpa tress have a trunk diameter of approximately two feet and stand 30 feet or higher. The evergreen trees on the property lines also stand 30 feet tall and are too large to move. They create a very effective screen and buffer between this commercial use and the residential uses on the south and east that would take many years to replace. Without the exemption, the adjacent excavation at the depth required would more than likely kill these trees.
2. By facilitating the site plan, the exemption permits us to avoid the other large trees that are in various locations internal to the site, and minimizes the extent of grading next to them as well.
3. The exemption allows us to use the topography as an asset to provide convenient parking, including handicapped parking, at both levels of the two-story building without use of ramps or stairs. This serves the public and handicapped persons

much better than if the parking were all at one level or substantially below the finished floor levels.

4. The exemption permits us to reduce the slope in the parking spaces themselves and at the entry driveway, where we feel having less steep slopes matters the most.
5. By facilitating the site plan, the exemption lessens the visual impact of the parking area and the building from the street and main driveway of the development. The bulk of the parking area is out of sight and the narrow elevation of the building is the front, reducing the scale significantly, which is one of the goals in this Planned Development's design standards.
6. The site layout conforms to the character of the other lots in the development with the building fronting on parking off the main driveway, separated from the parking and walkway with a landscape area.
7. The proposed 16-foot wide driveway is adequate to serve the traffic generated by the 20 parking spaces that will serve small professional offices.
8. Access for emergency services is adequate from other locations on the site. If necessary, access by emergency vehicles is possible using the 16-foot wide driveway.

Alternatives Considered

Several alternatives were considered in an attempt to fully comply with the TED's standards. The best of these are discussed below.

Alternative 1.

This alternative uses the same site plan as the proposed plan with a straight 8% grade throughout the parking lot.

This results in the following:

1. A substantial cut for the length of the parking lot adjacent to the mature trees in the islands and along the east and south property lines. The cut at the trees on either side of the driveway would be 5 foot as compared to 2 ft or less with the proposed plan. A 4 foot cut would be required adjacent to the trees on the east and south property lines, compared to 0" - 6" of cut with the proposed plan. The excessive cuts required by this alternative would probably eliminate 26 mature trees that currently provide a dense 35-foot high screen from the adjacent neighborhoods to the east and south as well as the two large trees on either side of the driveway.
2. The bulk of the parking ends up 4 feet below the finished floor elevation of the upper level compared to being close to the finished floor elevation of the upper level in the proposed plan.

3. Providing handicapped access to the upper or lower level of the building would be difficult. The upper level access would require ramps about 80 feet in length to meet ADA's 5% grade standards. Other access would require steps compared to no steps with the proposed plan.

Although we dislike this alternative, if the proposed exemption cannot be granted, it would be preferred over Alternative 2 from a strictly economic viewpoint. We could probably increase the number of parking spaces provided to 33 and increase the building size by 1200 sf. to offset the additional cost of ramps and steps and replacement of the tress. The loss of screening does not effect this property as much as it would the adjacent property.

But, we would rather have the trees and landscaping facilitated by the exemption.

Alternative 2.

Placing the parking lot parallel to the main driveway in front of the building and turning the building 90 degrees, preserving the mature trees as shown in sketch 2a, and without preserving the mature trees as shown in sketch 2b.

This results in the following:

Alternative 2a

1. Only 12 parking spaces are possible compared to 29 in the proposed plan reducing the size of the building supported to 3600 sf of office or 2400 sf or retail compared to the 7200 sf of mixed retail and office in the proposed plan.
2. Most of the Parking is less convenient to the building.
3. The building is far from the main driveway and this layout does not conform well to the character of the development.

Alternative 2b

1. This layout eliminates three mature trees.
2. The parking is all at one level. No handicap parking or access is provided to the upper level of the building. The upper level of the building can only be accessed by stairs making it much less convenient and less desirable as commercial space.
3. The building would be set back from the main driveway by three bays of parking, which would be a very different character than that established through out the development. The visual impact on the entrance of the development would be parking and retaining walls. This is the opposite of the character described in the design guidelines of the development and probably would not be acceptable to the Property Owners Association.

4. 22 parking spaces are possible compared to 29 with the proposed plan reducing the size of the building by 1700 sf. However, the second floor level would be less desirable.
5. Access for emergency services would be less convenient.

Impacts of granting the exemption

1. The 25 foot long driveway connecting the upper and lower parking areas would exceed the 8% maximum grade by approximately 4%.
 - ✓ The driveway only affects access to a parking area with 20 parking spaces
 - ✓ It does not access directly onto a larger circulation driveway.
 - ✓ No parking spaces are directly accessed off this driveway
2. The exemption permits the remaining parking areas to be at an approximate 7% grade, and less steep at the entrance.
3. Numerous existing mature trees, all of which are too large to move, would be saved. Preservation of screening and buffering between this property and adjacent properties to the east and south would be possible.
4. The public would be better served since the parking provided would be at the same level as the uses they serve (including handicapped parking) and access to both upper and lower levels would not require ramps or stairs.
5. The proposed 16 feet width is adequate to safely handle the traffic generated by the parking area it serves.
6. Do to the topography of this particular site and the location of existing mature trees on this site, the exemption would not set a precedent for other sites.

If granted, will the exception compromise safety?

1. The propose exemption does not compromise safety.
2. **The fire department has done a preliminary review of the plan with the proposed exemptions and has indicated that the upper driveway would be acceptable as shown with a width of 16 feet**
 - ✓ Adequate access is available to and around the proposed structure from the front and lower level parking areas.
 - ✓ From a fire truck parked in the driveway of the lower lot or parked in the front driveway a 200' hose could reach 2/3 of the way around the building in either direction.
 - ✓ There are two fire hydrants within 100 feet of the structure, one to the south and one to the west.
 - ✓ The proposed 16-foot driveway width would permit vehicular access by fire trucks and emergency vehicles to the upper level if it were necessary.

3. The short stretch of steeper driveway permits several safety benefits including:
 - ✓ Less steep grades within the parking areas.
 - ✓ Less steep entrance from the parking lot to the main driveway.
 - ✓ Pedestrian and handicapped access at grade at both the upper and lower levels.
 - ✓ Better, safer pedestrian access to the buildings and fewer retaining walls and stairway steps.
4. The driveway only serves 20 parking spaces and does not access directly onto the larger circulation driveway.
5. No parking spaces are accessed directly from the steeper driveway and no turning movements are required in this steeper area.

Have other alternatives been considered that would meet current standards?

Several alternatives have been considered, the best are discussed above. In this particular case, exemption seems to provide many benefits over the alternatives.

Has the proposed design been used in other areas. Locally, State or National? Have examples, including data, been provided?

There are examples in the city on commercial property with grades steeper than 8%. More examples exist in communities where the natural terrain is less flat than in Grand Junction, for example in Glenwood Springs around the Colorado Hotel and elsewhere.

ITE.

The proposed recommended Practice of the Institute of Transportation Engineers suggest that grades up to 15% may be used on residential streets where there is no icing and 8% to 10% where there is icing. While the proposed driveway is not a residential street, it would carry less traffic than a typical residential street and at much lower speeds. Icing seems infrequent in Grand Junction and the property owners association employs a service to remove snow and ice from the driveways, walks and parking areas. Alternative parking is available in the development; all parking is required to be within shared parking easements.

The main driveway in Meadowlark Development that runs from Lot 1 towards the Redlands Parkway, between Lot 3 and Lot 7 was approved at 10% grade due to the topography. We have observed the use of this area during the few times there was snow and there seem to be no problems to date. This driveway is much longer and carries many times more traffic than the driveway proposed and also serves adjacent parking spaces, where as this proposed driveway exemption is short and has no adjacent parking spaces.

Will the exception require CDOT or FHWA coordination?



No CDOT or FHWA coordination seems necessary.

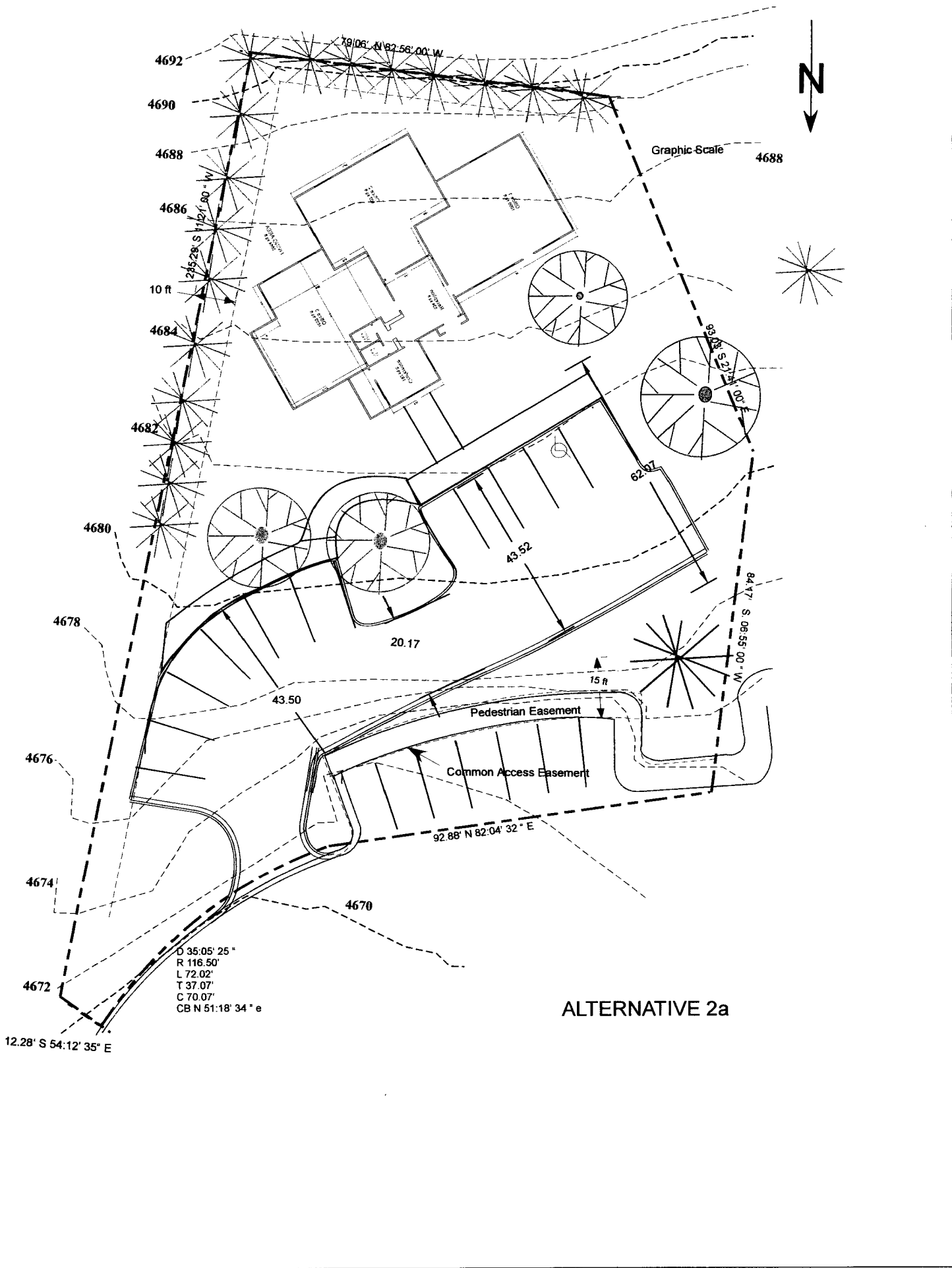
Is this a one-time exception based upon unique circumstances, location, topography, traffic flow, etc?

A combination of site-specific factors including topography and the location of mature trees on this lot necessitate this one-time exception.

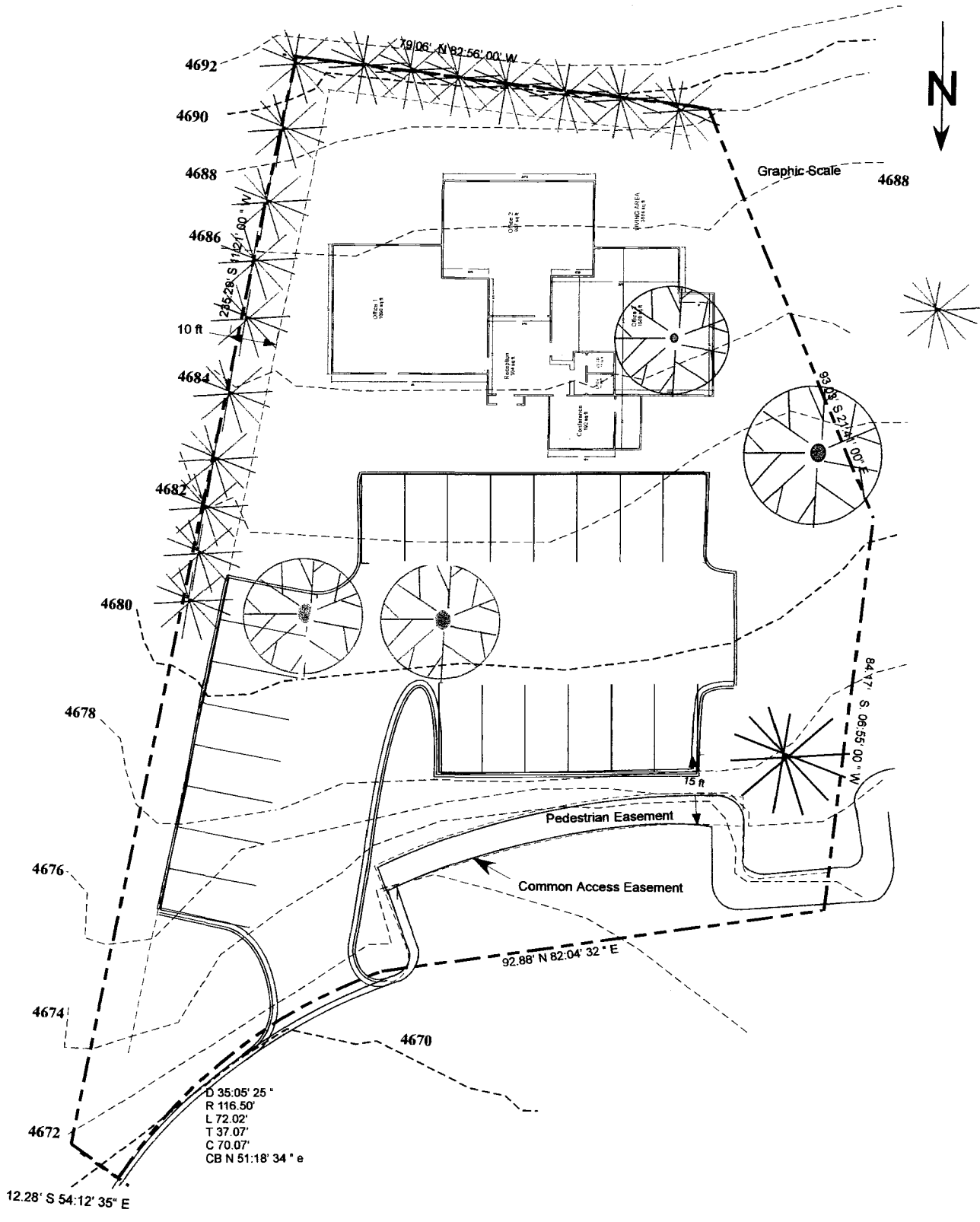
In this case, the exemption seems to offer a better overall solution than strictly following the standards.

Requested by:

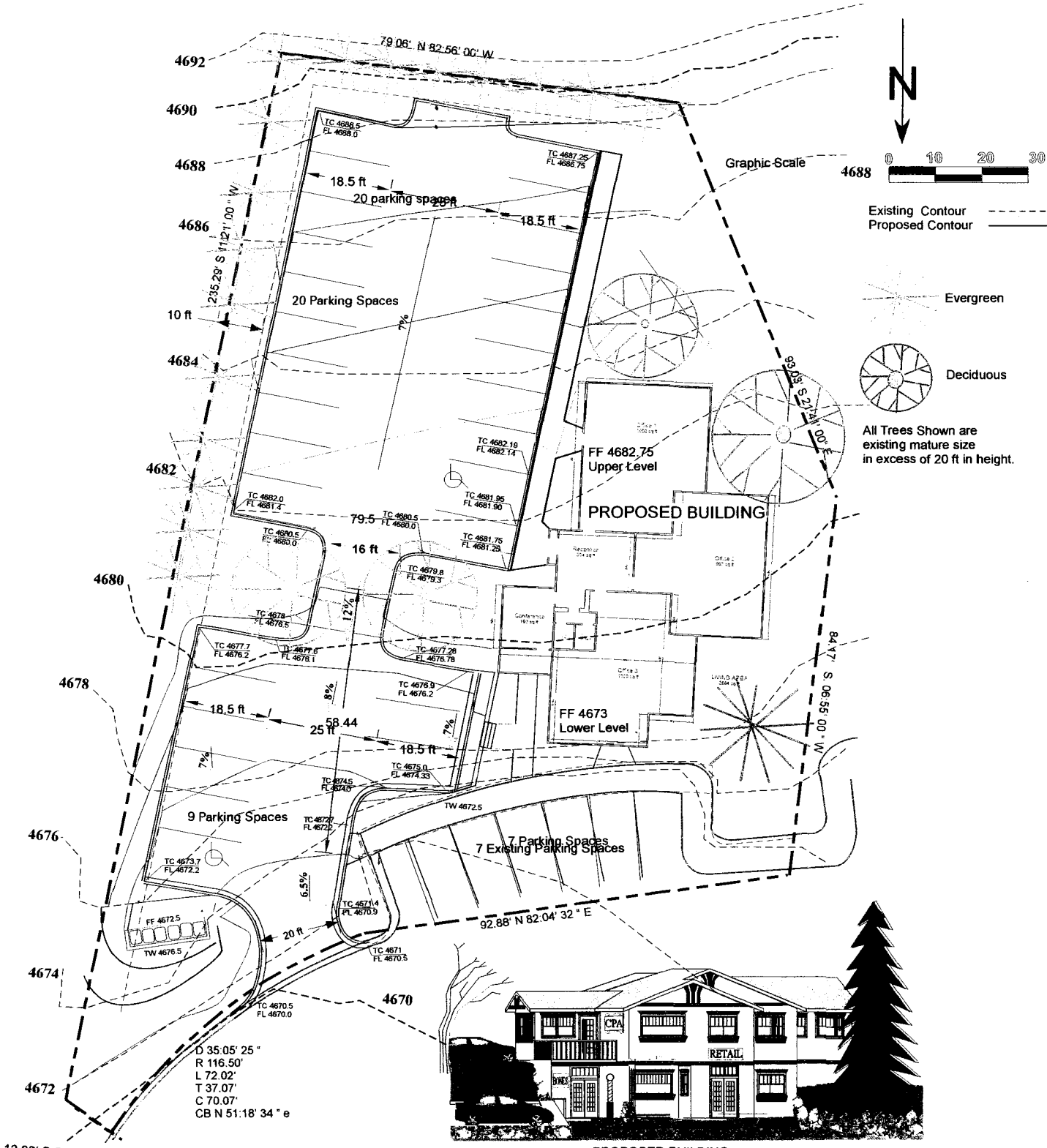
 & 
Ed Del Duca & Angeline Barrett
Owners of Lot 6
242-3379



ALTERNATIVE 2a



ALTERNATIVE 2b



- Requested Exemption from TEDs Manual Requirements
1. Maximum parking lot slope 8% to permit 12% slope on driveway to address site slope and to reduce slope of parking spaces.
 2. Minimum driveway width of 20' to permit 16' width as shown to preserve existing trees.

Approved _____ City of Grand Junction _____ Date _____

Approved _____ City of Grand Junction _____ Date _____

<p>Preliminary Site Plan Grading and Drainage</p>	<p>Meadowlark Garden Development Lot 6 2261 Broadway Grand Junction, CO 81503</p>	<p>Submitted by: Ed Del Duca 242-3379 9 Dubonnet Ct. Grand Junction, CO 81503 Date: May 1, 2006</p>
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City of Grand Junction GIS Regional Map ©

- Highways
- Rivers
- Grand Mesa Lakes
- Lakes
- Street Lables
- USGS
- DOQQS



SCALE 1 : 4,526



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