



DATE: September 18, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 4

TO: Design Review Commission
FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: 13-SC-16 – 767 Santa Rita Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve design review application 13-SC-16 subject to the listed findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a design review application for a new two-story, single-family house. The project will demolish an existing one-story house and accessory structures and construct a new house 2,528 square feet on the first story and 1,465 square feet on the second story. The following table summarizes the project:

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Single-family, Residential
ZONING: R1-10
PARCEL SIZE: 12,500 square feet
MATERIALS: Composite shingle and copper roof, horizontal wood lap siding, wood trim, aluminum wood clad windows and doors, and painted wood garage doors

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
LOT COVERAGE:	2,663 square feet	3,497 square feet	3,750 square feet
FLOOR AREA:			
First floor	2,663 square feet	2,528 square feet	
Second floor		1,465 square feet	
Total	2,663 square feet	3,992 square feet	4,000 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	31 feet	25 feet	25 feet
Rear	38 feet	27 feet	25 feet
Right side	36 feet	20 feet/36 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side	13 feet	15 feet/27 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
HEIGHT:	None	27 feet	27 feet

BACKGROUND

The subject property is located along Santa Rita Avenue between Van Buren Avenue and West Portola Street. The street is considered a Diverse Character Neighborhood as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines. The neighborhood includes larger lots and smaller narrower lots. This mixture in lot sizes has a range of house sizes, architectural styles and building materials. While the vegetation along the street is not uniform, the majority of homes have moderate to heavy landscaping. The east side of the street has an uncharacteristically wide (30 feet) unimproved shoulder.

DISCUSSION

According to the Design Guidelines, in Diverse Character Neighborhoods, good neighbor design has its own design integrity while incorporating some design elements, materials and scale found in the neighborhood (Design Guidelines, page 9).

The project uses a fairly traditional style with a form and materials found in the surrounding neighborhood, but it is designed in a way to be compatible with the area. The design has a high level of integrity due to the coordination of design elements, detailing and symmetry. These elements include the two-car garage, gable roofs, single-story entry, horizontal porch and low eave line (nine-foot tall). The building's materials, which include horizontal lap siding, composition shingle roofing, wood shutters, copper accents are rustic in appearance are high quality materials and appropriate for the architectural design and character of the area. Overall, the project does a good job of integrating forms and elements from the neighborhood while still establishing its own design integrity.

The project is designed to be compatible with the scale of surrounding homes. The design uses a broad front porch, low (nine-foot tall) eave lines and gable elements to balance the massing of the structure by creating horizontal lines that break up the front elevation. The second floor is centered over the first story and visually softened by the roof massing, low eave line and siding material. The structure's massing is diminished with the second story being recessed within the roofline of the structure. The 12-foot tall eaves on the garage are broken up and softened by the use of accent trim, horizontal lap siding, and a 55-foot setback from the roadway. In addition, the applicant worked with the staff to provide heavier landscaping to mitigate the larger structure. Overall, the two-story design is well proportioned and articulated to reduce the effect of bulk and mass and is appropriate for the context of the area.

Privacy and Landscaping

The Residential Design Guidelines recommend that the finished floor be no more than 22 inches above grade. The lot is sloped toward the left side of the lot and the house is designed with a foundation that results in a finished floor height of three to thirteen inches above the existing grade, which is two inches above the finished floor height of the existing structure. With this low finish floor height and six-foot tall solid fences, with two-foot of lattice, proposed between adjoining properties, the proposed first-floor side and rear elevations do not create any privacy issues.

On the left (north) side elevation of the second story, there are six windows; three located in the bedroom No. 3 bathroom, and three located in the bedroom No. 4 bathroom. These windows

propose a sill height of five feet, six inches. Due to their placement and sill heights, the proposed second story left side elevation windows do not create any unreasonable privacy impacts.

On the right (south) side elevation of the second story, the project also includes a balcony off the master bedroom. This balcony, which is 12 feet wide and 10 feet deep, is partially buffered to the side by the project's adjacent first story roof ridge and a six-foot tall solid fence with two-foot of lattice. As a result, it maintains privacy impacts to the rear, but some exposure to the side property lines. To provide additional privacy screening, the applicant is proposing new Italian cypress along the side and evergreen hedging along the rear property lines. In order to ensure that there are no unreasonable privacy impacts, a faster growing evergreen screening will be planted along the right side and rear property lines to further minimize privacy impacts (Condition No.4 and 5).

Along the rear (east) second story elevation, there are five windows: one window in bedroom No. 3 with a four-foot sill height, one window in bedroom No. 2 bathroom with a five-foot sill height, one window in bedroom No. 2 with a three-foot sill height, one window in the master bathroom with a three-foot sill height, and one window in the master bedroom with a three-foot sill height.

Along the rear , the master bedroom and bathroom, bedroom No.2 , bedroom No. 3 and the balcony may create privacy impacts to adjacent properties. A faster growing evergreen screening will be planted along the left, right, and rear property lines mitigate privacy impacts (Condition No. 4 and 5). Therefore, as designed and with the recommended conditions, staff finds that the project maintains a reasonable degree of privacy

The applicant is maintaining the majority of trees located in the front, side and rear yard, except the Redwood (Tree No. 5) and Walnut tree (Tree No. 3). To provide additional privacy screening and bulk mitigation, staff recommends retention of the Redwood tree (Condition 6) . Tree protection guidelines will be followed to maintain the trees during construction. The project includes a detailed landscape plan for the front yard that retains a circular drive. Although the Design Guidelines discourage the use of circular driveways, there is another on Santa Rita Avenue, and a circular driveway currently exists on the site. The careful landscape plan adds landscaping to mitigate the visual impacts of maintaining the circular drive. Thus, staff is in support of maintaining the circular driveway.

CORRESPONDENCE

Staff received an email from residents behind (south) the subject site that expressed privacy, scale and height concerns.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15303 of the Environmental Quality Act because it involves the construction of a single-family land use.

Cc: Enrique Gantisky, Applicant/Owner

Attachments:

- A. Application
- B. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
- C. Area Map and Vicinity Map
- D. Neighbor Letter from 764 Los Altos Avenue

FINDINGS

13-SC-16—767 Santa Rita Avenue

1. With regard to design review for the two-story structure, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.050 (A-F) of the Municipal Code:
 - a. The proposed structure complies with all provision of this chapter;
 - b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the proposed structure, when considered with reference to the nature and location of residential structures on adjacent lots, will avoid unreasonable interference with views and privacy and will consider the topographic and geologic constraints imposed by particular building site conditions;
 - c. The natural landscape will be preserved insofar as practicable by minimizing tree and soil removal; grade changes shall be minimized and will be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas;
 - d. The orientation of the proposed structure in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize the perception of excessive bulk;
 - E. General architectural considerations, including the character, size, scale, and quality of the design, the architectural relationship with the site and other buildings, building materials, and similar elements have been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings; and
 - F. The proposed structure has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection.

CONDITIONS

13-SC-16—767 Santa Rita Avenue

1. The approval is based on the plans received on September 3, 2013 and the written application materials provided by the applicant, except as may be modified by these conditions.
2. An encroachment permit must be issued from the Engineering Division prior to doing any work within the public street right-of-way.
3. Only gas fireplaces, pellet fueled wood heaters or EPA certified wood-burning appliances may be installed in all new construction pursuant to Chapter 12.64 of the Municipal Code.
4. Provide a fast growing evergreen landscape screening along the side and rear property lines to the rear of the structure. As shown on the plans, the screening shall be a minimum of 15 gallon in size.
5. All proposed privacy screening along the left, right, and rear property lines and the proposed Oak street in the semicircular driveway, as shown on the landscape plan are protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Community Development Director.
6. Revise the site plan, tree protection and landscape plans to accurately coordinate the location of existing trees and to retain the Redwood tree (No. 5) along the rear of the property.
7. **Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit**, install tree protection fencing around the dripline, or as required by the project arborist, of the following trees (Nos. 1-3, 4, 6-7) as shown on the site plan. Tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground. **The tree protection fencing shall not be removed until the building permit is ready for final.**
8. **Prior to zoning clearance, the project plans shall contain/show:**
 - a. The conditions of approval shall be incorporated into the title page of the plans.
 - b. On the grading plan and/or the site plan, show all tree protection fencing and add the following note: "All tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground." **The tree protection fencing shall be installed prior to issuance of the demolition permit and shall not be removed until all building construction has been completed.**
 - c. Provide a landscape plan prepared by a licensed landscape professional showing how the plans comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Regulations (LAMC Chapter 12.36).
 - d. Verification that the house will comply with the City's Green Building Standards (Section 12.26 of the Municipal Code) from a Qualified Green building Professional.

- e. Fire sprinklers to be installed pursuant to Section 12.10 of the Municipal Code.
- f. The location of underground utilities pursuant to Section 12.68 of the Municipal Code. Underground utility trenches should avoid the drip-lines of all protected trees.
- g. The location of any air conditioning equipment on the site plan and the sound rating for such equipment.
- h. Show the measures to comply with the New Development and Construction Best Management Practices and Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention program, as adopted by the City for the purposes of preventing storm water pollution (i.e. downspouts directed to landscaped areas, minimize directly connected impervious areas, etc.).

9. **Prior to final inspection:**

- a. All front yard landscaping and privacy screening shall be maintained and/or installed as required by the Planning Division.
- b. Submit verification that the house was built in compliance with the California Green Building Standards pursuant to Section 12.26 of the Municipal Code.



ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

Type of Review Requested: (Check all boxes that apply)

Permit # 1105708

<input type="checkbox"/> One-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Sign Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple-Family Review
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Two-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk Display Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Rezoning
<input type="checkbox"/> Variance(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Use Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> R1-S Overlay
<input type="checkbox"/> Lot Line Adjustment	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenant Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> General Plan/Code Amendment
<input type="checkbox"/> Tentative Map/Division of Land	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Project Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision Map Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

Project Address/Location: 767 SANTA RITA AVE

Project Proposal/Use: RESIDENTIAL

Current Use of Property: SAME

Assessor Parcel Number(s) 167-21-004 Site Area: _____

New Sq. Ft.: 3992 Remodeled Sq. Ft.: N/A Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: 0

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: _____ Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): _____

Applicant's Name: ENRIQUE GANITSKY

Home Telephone #: 650 255-9278 Business Telephone #: 650 255 9278

Mailing Address: 120 PLUM COURT

City/State/Zip Code: MT VIEW CA 94043

Property Owner's Name: SAME AS APPLICANT

Home Telephone #: _____ Business Telephone #: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Architect/Designer's Name: DAVE HAUGLAND Telephone #: 208 323-0199
AHJ ENGINEERS, PC

*** If your project includes complete or partial demolition of an existing residence or commercial building, a demolition permit must be issued and finalized prior to obtaining your building permit. Please contact the Building Division for a demolition package. ***

(continued on back)



NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY WORKSHEET

In order for your design review application for single-family residential remodel/addition or new construction to be successful, it is important that you consider your property, the neighborhood's special characteristics that surround that property and the compatibility of your proposal with that neighborhood. **The purpose is to help you understand your neighborhood before you begin the design process with your architect/designer/builder or begin any formal process with the City of Los Altos.** *Please note that this worksheet must be submitted with your 1st application.*

The Residential Design Guidelines encourage neighborhood compatibility without necessarily forsaking individual taste. Various factors contribute to a design that is considered compatible with a surrounding neighborhood. The factors that City officials will be considering in your design could include, but are not limited to: design theme, scale, bulk, size, roof line, lot coverage, slope of lot, setbacks, daylight plane, one or two-story, exterior materials, landscaping et cetera.

It will be helpful to have a site plan to use in conjunction with this worksheet. Your site plan should accurately depict your property boundaries. The best source for this is the legal description in your deed.

Photographs of your property and its relationship to your neighborhood (see below) will be a necessary part of your first submittal. Taking photographs before you start your project will allow you to see and appreciate that your property could be within an area that has a strong neighborhood pattern. The photographs should be taken from across the street with a standard 35mm camera and organized by address, one row for each side of the street. Photographs should also be taken of the properties on either side and behind your property from on your property.

This worksheet/check list is meant to help *you* as well as to help the City planners and Planning Commission understand your proposal. Reasonable guesses to your answers are acceptable. The City is not looking for precise measurements on this worksheet.

Project Address 767 Santa Rita 94022
Scope of Project: Addition or Remodel _____ or New Home
Age of existing home if this project is to be an addition or remodel? _____
Is the existing house listed on the City's Historic Resources Inventory? NO

Address: 767 Santa Rita
Date: 7/10/2013

What constitutes your neighborhood?

There is no clear answer to this question. For the purpose of this worksheet, consider first your street, the two contiguous homes on either side of, and directly behind, your property and the five to six homes directly across the street (eight to nine homes). At the minimum, these are the houses that you should photograph. If there is any question in your mind about your neighborhood boundaries, consider a radius of approximately 200 to 300 feet around your property and consider that your neighborhood.

Streetscape

1. Typical neighborhood lot size*:

Lot area: 12,500 square feet
Lot dimensions: Length 100 feet
Width 125 feet

If your lot is significantly different than those in your neighborhood, then note its: area _____, length _____, and width _____.

2. Setback of homes to front property line: (Pgs. 8-11 Design Guidelines)

Existing front setback if home is a remodel? _____
What % of the front facing walls of the neighborhood homes are at the front setback 15 %
Existing front setback for house on left 35 ft./on right 35 ft.
Do the front setbacks of adjacent houses line up? some do

3. Garage Location Pattern: (Pg. 19-Design Guidelines)

Indicate the relationship of garage locations in your neighborhood* only on your street (count for each type)
Garage facing front projecting from front of house face all
Garage facing front recessed from front of house face _____
Garage in back yard _____
Garage facing the side _____
Number of 1-car garages _____; 2-car garages ✓; 3-car garages _____

Address: 767 Santa Rita
Date: 7-10-13

4. Single or Two-Story Homes:

What % of the homes in your neighborhood* are:

One-story 60
Two-story 30 % 30 %

5. Roof heights and shapes:

Is the overall height of house ridgelines generally the same in your neighborhood*? _____

Are there mostly hip , gable style and , or other style _____ roofs*?

Do the roof forms appear simple _____ or complex _____?

Do the houses share generally the same eave height NO?

6. Exterior Materials: (Pg. 22 Design Guidelines)

What siding materials are frequently used in your neighborhood*?

siding wood shingle stucco board & batten clapboard
 tile stone brick combination of one or more materials
(if so, describe) _____

What roofing materials (wood shake/shingle, asphalt shingle, flat tile, rounded tile, cement tile, slate) are consistently (about 80%) used?

composition 80%
If no consistency then explain: _____

7. Architectural Style: (Appendix C, Design Guidelines)

Does your neighborhood* have a consistent identifiable architectural style?

YES NO

Traditional
Type? Ranch Shingle Tudor Mediterranean/Spanish
 Contemporary Colonial Bungalow Other

Address: 767 Santa Rita
Date: 7-10-2013

8. Lot Slope: (Pg. 25 Design Guidelines)

Does your property have a noticeable slope? no

What is the direction of your slope? (relative to the street)

Is your slope higher _____ lower _____ same in relationship to the neighboring properties? Is there a noticeable difference in grade between your property/house and the one across the street or directly behind? no

9. Landscaping:

Are there any frequently used or typical landscaping features on your street (i.e. big trees, front lawns, sidewalks, curbs, landscape to street edge, etc.)?

big trees

How visible are your house and other houses from the street or back neighbor's property?

not visible

Are there any major existing landscaping features on your property and how is the unimproved public right-of-way developed in front of your property (gravel, dirt, asphalt, landscape)?

gravel

10. Width of Street:

What is the width of the roadway paving on your street in feet? _____

Is there a parking area on the street or in the shoulder area? yes

Is the shoulder area (unimproved public right-of-way) paved, unpaved, gravel, landscaped, and/or defined with a curb/gutter? unimproved

Address: 767 Santa Rita
Date: 7-10-13

11. What characteristics make this neighborhood* cohesive?

Such as roof material and type (hip, gable, flat), siding (board and batten, cement plaster, horizontal wood, brick), deep front yard setbacks, horizontal feel, landscape approach etc.:

General Study

A. Have major visible streetscape changes occurred in your neighborhood?
 YES NO

B. Do you think that most (~ 80%) of the homes were originally built at the same time?
 YES NO

C. Do the lots in your neighborhood appear to be the same size?
 YES NO

D. Do the lot widths appear to be consistent in the neighborhood?
 YES NO

E. Are the front setbacks of homes on your street consistent (~80% within 5 feet)?
 YES NO
SANTA RITA YES LOS ALTOS AVE. NARROWER 50%

F. Do you have active CCR's in your neighborhood? (p.36 Building Guide)
 YES NO

G. Do the houses appear to be of similar size as viewed from the street?
 YES NO

LOS ALTOS AVE YES SANTA RITA NO

H. Does the new exterior remodel or new construction design you are planning relate in most ways to the prevailing style(s) in your existing neighborhood?
 YES NO

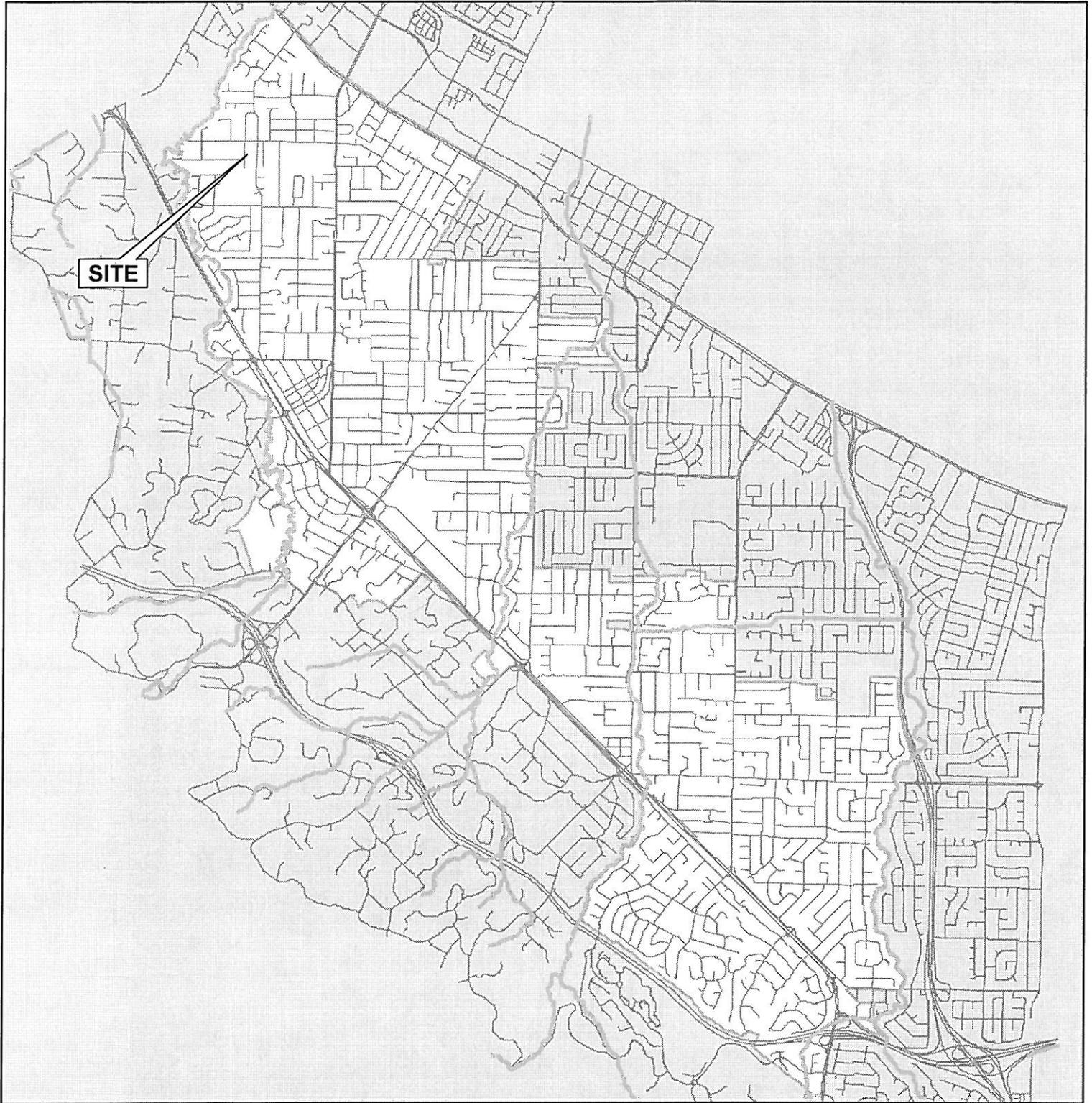
Address: 767 Santa Rita
 Date: 7-10-13

Summary Table

Please use this table to summarize the characteristics of the houses in your immediate neighborhood (two homes on either side, directly behind and the five to six homes directly across the street).

Address	Front setback	Rear setback	Garage location	One or two stories	Height	Materials	Architecture (simple or complex)
397 VAN BUREN	35'?		ON SANTA RITA	TWO	24'+	STUCCO COMPOSITION ROOF	TRADITIONAL
780 SANTA RITA	25'		SANTA RITA	ONE	15-17'	STUCCO COMPOSITION	TRADITIONAL
400 W. PORTOLA	25'	25'	ON SANTA RITA	TWO	24'+	SHINGLE COMPOSITION	TRADITIONAL
755 SANTA RITA	30'		SANTA RITA	SINGLE ONE	17'+	STUCCO SIDING WOOD SHAKE	RANCH
779 SANTA RITA	40'		SANTA RITA	ONE	17'+	WOOD SHING SHAKE ROOF	RANCH
366 W. PORTOLA	30'+		SANTA RITA	ONE	17'+	STUCCO COMPOSITION ROOF	RANCH
780 LOS AUTOS AVE	25'		LOS AUTOS	ONE	17'+	SIDING WOOD COMPOSITION	RANCH
772 LOS AUTOS	25'		LOS AUTOS	ONE	17'+	COMPOSITION	RANCH
764	25'		LOS AUTOS	ONE	17'+	COMPOSITION	RANCH
754	25'		LOS AUTOS	ONE	17'+	COMPOSITION	RANCH

ATTACHMENT C AREA MAP



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 13-SC-16
APPLICANT: E. Ganitsky
SITE ADDRESS: 767 Santa Rita Avenue

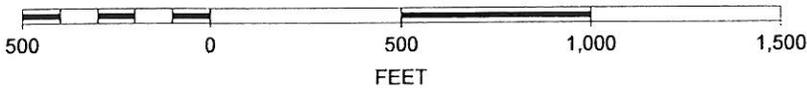


Not to Scale

VICINITY MAP



SCALE 1 : 6,000



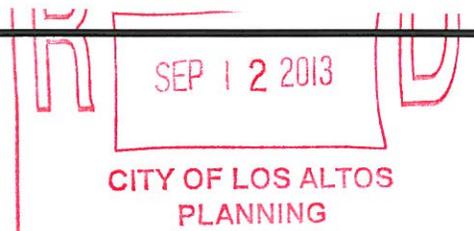
CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 13-SC-16
APPLICANT: E. Ganitsky
SITE ADDRESS: 767 Santa Rita Avenue

ATTACHMENT D

Sean Gallegos

From: Clinton Nagy [cnagy@earthlink.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 12, 2013 8:17 AM
To: Sean Gallegos
Cc: Clinton Nagy
Subject: 767 Santa Rita proposed two-story residence



Attachments: IMG_3187.jpeg; ATT00001..txt; IMG_3185.jpeg; ATT00002..txt



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To: Members of the Design Review

Commission and staff

Re: New two-story residence proposed at 767 Santa Rita

My wife, Susan, and I live at 764 Los Altos Avenue, directly behind the proposed new residence. We have lived here in Los Altos for over 35 years. To accurately locate us on an Assessor's map, we are parcel 167-21-10.

We recognize that the existing residence at 767 Santa Rita will be removed and a new home built to replace it.

We oppose the new 2-story home as planned by Mr. Ganitsky for the following reasons:

1. On our block of 14 contiguous homes, there are no 2-story homes.
2. Our privacy will be significantly compromised by a two story home overlooking our backyard and the interior of our home. The proposed home's 2nd story windows and Master Balcony allow for unfettered sight into two bedrooms and our multi-windowed enclosed porch. In the winter months when our mature deciduous trees have lost their leaves, the proposed second story provides even more visibility into our home.
3. The height of the proposed home will deny us late afternoon sunlight.
4. Our grade level is at least 24 inches lower than the grade of the residence behind us. That makes the proposed residence that much taller, invade more of our privacy and affect more of our daylight.

I have included a photograph taken towards the proposed new residence and a photo taken from the property line back towards our home. Although being on-site would provide a better understanding and appreciation of our concerns, these photographs show where our privacy would be compromised, the filtered light that would disappear and the changes in the grade of both properties.

We invite members of the Design Review Commission and staff to visit our property to see and imagine the proposed new home and the possible effects on our property.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan and Clinton Nagy
764 Los Altos Avenue



