



DATE: April 1, 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 4

TO: Design Review Commission
FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: 15-SC-03 – 1151 Volti Lane

RECOMMENDATION:

Continue design review application 15-SC-03 subject to recommended direction

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a design review application for a two-story, single-family house. The project will demolish an existing one-story house and construct a house with 2,281 square feet at the first story and 1,215 square feet at the second story. The following table summarizes the project:

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Single-family, Residential
ZONING: R1-10
PARCEL SIZE: 10,000 square feet
MATERIALS: Barrel tile roof, cement plaster, precast stone trim, columns, and a wood carriage garage door

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
LOT COVERAGE:	2,500 square feet	2,325 square feet	3,000 square feet
FLOOR AREA:			
First floor	2,500 square feet	2,281 square feet	
Second floor	n/a	1,215 square feet	
Total	2,500 square feet	3,496 square feet	3,500 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	27 feet	25 feet	25 feet
Rear	44 feet	46 feet	25 feet
Right Side	11 feet	11 feet/19 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side	15 feet	15 feet/20 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
HEIGHT:	18 feet	25 feet	27 feet

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Context

The subject property is located in a Consistent Character Neighborhood as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines. The homes in the neighborhood along the Volti Lane cul-de-sac are a mix of newer two-story houses and older one-story Ranch style, single-family houses, with low wall plate heights and simple roof forms (low-pitched gable and hipped roofs), rustic materials, with stucco dominant. While there is not a distinctive street tree pattern on either street, the streetscape is generally open with views of the houses.

DISCUSSION

Design Review

According to the Design Guidelines, in Consistent Character Neighborhoods, good neighbor design has design elements, materials and scale found within the neighborhood and sizes that are not significantly larger than other homes in the neighborhood. This requires a project to fit in and lessen abrupt changes.

The proposed two-story structure uses a more formal design approach, but it has some traditional elements, such as a two-car garage and covered entry. The design incorporates elements, such as single-story hip roofs, defined front entry, and two-car garage, which are found in the neighborhood. The proposal introduces new materials, such as precast stone trim, columns, and rustic wood garage door are high quality and compatible with the neighborhood character. The proposal introduces a new material with a monochromatic barrel tile roof, which is a rustic material and consistent with the neighborhood character. Overall, the project does a good job of integrating forms and elements from the neighborhood while still establishing its own design integrity.

The project's scale is larger than neighboring properties and will be one of four, two-story residences on the Volti Lane cul-de-sac. The proposed first floor plate height is ten-feet, and the second floor plate height is eight-feet, which is an increase from the eight-foot to nine-foot plate heights of existing residences in the neighborhood. Staff is concerned that the proposed 10-foot tall eave line is substantially taller than the low eaves and walls of the houses on the left and right side of property. Given the simplicity of the surrounding structures, the proposed structure is more complex in massing than the adjacent homes. Overall, the tall wall plates combined with the scale of the proposed structure creates an abrupt change.

Another concern is the use of too many window, shapes and sizes. The City's Residential Design Guidelines suggest avoiding the use of too many different window types and shapes, which leads to the proposed structure reinforcing the verticality of the structure.

Furthermore, the proposed second story massing does not appear as integral to the overall design concept. The exterior design appears to be based on the floor plan and appears "inside-out." This approach produces a more complex massing and unusual wall and roof forms such as the transition between the roof and the second story shown on the front (west) elevation. The City's Residential

Design Guidelines suggest designing a house from “outside-in” rather than the reverse as it tends to lack a clear overall design and often adds to the perception of excessive bulk.

The project is required to meet all findings as outlined by the Design Guidelines, specifically, designing a structure that will be compatible within the immediate context and reduce the perception of excessive bulk and mass. To meet the findings, staff recommends that the Design Review Commission provide the following direction:

- Reduce the prominence and height of single-story walls to nine feet;
- Simplify the number of windows, shapes and types; and
- Simplify the massing and design of the structure, including wall and roof forms, to maintain a similar style and character as the immediate neighborhood;

Privacy and Landscaping

On the right (south) side of the second story, there are two windows in the master bathroom with a five-foot sill height. As designed with the high windowsill height and smaller size, the second story windows on the right side maintain a reasonable degree of privacy for the adjacent property.

On the left (north) side elevation of the second story, there are six windows: one window located in the master bathroom with a five-foot sill height, two located in bedroom No. 2 with a five-foot sill height, one in the bathroom with a five-foot sill height, and two in bedroom No. 3 with five-foot sill heights. Therefore, as designed with the high windowsill heights, the left side second story maintains a reasonable degree of privacy for the adjacent property.

The rear (east) second story elevation includes three windows: one window located in the master bedroom with a three-foot sill height, one window in the master bathroom with a four-foot sill height and one window in bedroom No. 2 with a three-foot sill height. Along the rear elevation, the windows could create privacy impacts to the adjacent properties. As indicated in the landscape plan, the existing hedges and trees will be maintained along the left side (north) and rear (east) property lines. To limit additional privacy impacts, staff recommends that fast growing evergreen screening be planted along the right side (south) property line to fill-in existing vegetation along the property line (Condition No. 3). Therefore, as designed and with the recommended conditions, staff finds that the project maintains a reasonable degree of privacy for the adjacent properties.

The project will retain 47 of the 51 existing trees on the property. The four trees being removed are a lemon tree, orange tree, peach tree and pomegranate tree. Five mature Italian cypress trees will be retained along the frontage. To help soften the impact and view from the street, the site may benefit by replacing the Italian cypress trees with two Category I or II street trees. Tree protection guidelines will be followed to maintain the remaining trees during construction. The proposed landscape plan will meet the City’s Landscaping and Street Tree Guidelines.

PUBLIC NOTICING

This project was noticed to the 12 neighboring property owners in addition to an on-site posting.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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

Cc: Akbar Abdollahi, Applicant and Owner

Attachments:

- A. Application
- B. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
- C. Area Map and Vicinity Map

FINDINGS

15-SC-03—1151 Volti Lane

With regard to design review for a two-story, single-family structure, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.050 of the Municipal Code that:

- a. The orientation of the proposed structure in relation to the immediate neighborhood does not minimize the perception of excessive bulk;
- b. 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 not been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings; and

RECOMMENDED DIRECTOPM

15-SC-03—1151 Volti Lane

1. With regard to minimizing bulk and promoting an appropriate relationship to the adjacent structure:
 - a. Reduce the prominence and height of the single-story walls of the structure to a height of nine feet;
 - b. Simplify the number of windows, shapes and types; and
 - c. Simplify the massing and design of the structure, including wall and roof forms, to maintain a similar style and character as the immediate neighborhood;
2. With regarding to incorporating landscaping that will be in keeping with the general appearance of the neighboring developed area: Revise the site plan and grading and drainage plan to determine whether inconsistencies correlate with a minimal practical grade change for the site.
 - a. Provide two Category I or II street trees to be located in the front yard;



ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

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

Permit # 1106491

<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: 1151 VOLTI LN

Project Proposal/Use: SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE

Current Use of Property: SINGLE FAMILY

Assessor Parcel Number(s) 193-32-012 Site Area: 10,000-

New Sq. Ft.: 3,500 Remodeled Sq. Ft.: — Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: 400

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: 2,500 Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): 3,500

Applicant's Name: AKBAR ABDOLLAHI EMAIL: AKBARABDOLLAHI.REALTOR@GMAIL.COM

Home Telephone #: 408-202-1100 Business Telephone #: —

Mailing Address: SAME

City/State/Zip Code: AS ABOVE

Property Owner's Name: AKBAR AND PARVIN ABDOLLAHI

Home Telephone #: 408-202-1100 Business Telephone #: —

Mailing Address: 1151 VOLTI LN SAME AS ABOVE

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, CA 94024

Architect/Designer's Name: CHEKINE BASSAL Telephone #: 408-674-2077

*** 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. ***



ATTACHMENT B

(650) 947-2750

Planning@losaltosca.gov

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 1151 VOLTI LANE

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: 1151 VOLTI LN.
Date: 2/26/2015

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: 10,000 square feet
Lot dimensions: Length 125 feet
Width 80 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 75 %
Existing front setback for house on left 30 ft./on right 30 ft.
Do the front setbacks of adjacent houses line up? Yes

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 7
Garage facing front recessed from front of house face 3
Garage in back yard 0
Garage facing the side 0
Number of 1-car garages ; 2-car garages 10; 3-car garages

Address: 1151 VOLTI LN.
Date: 2/26/2015

4. Single or Two-Story Homes:

What % of the homes in your neighborhood* are:

One-story 60

Two-story 40

5. Roof heights and shapes:

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

Are there mostly hip , gable style , 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*?

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?

If no consistency then explain: WOOD SHAKE / ASPHALT / TILES..

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

Does your neighborhood* have a consistent identifiable architectural style?

YES NO

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

Address: 1151 VOLTI LN.
Date: 2/26/2015

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?

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.)?

Front lawn, landscape to street edge

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)?

Fruit trees, privacy trees,

Public right of way is asphalt

10. Width of Street:

What is the width of the roadway paving on your street in feet? 60 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? curb/gutter

Address: 1151 VOLTI LN.
Date: 2/26/2015

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.:

Stucco exterior, Hips, Standard setbacks

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

- 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

- 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

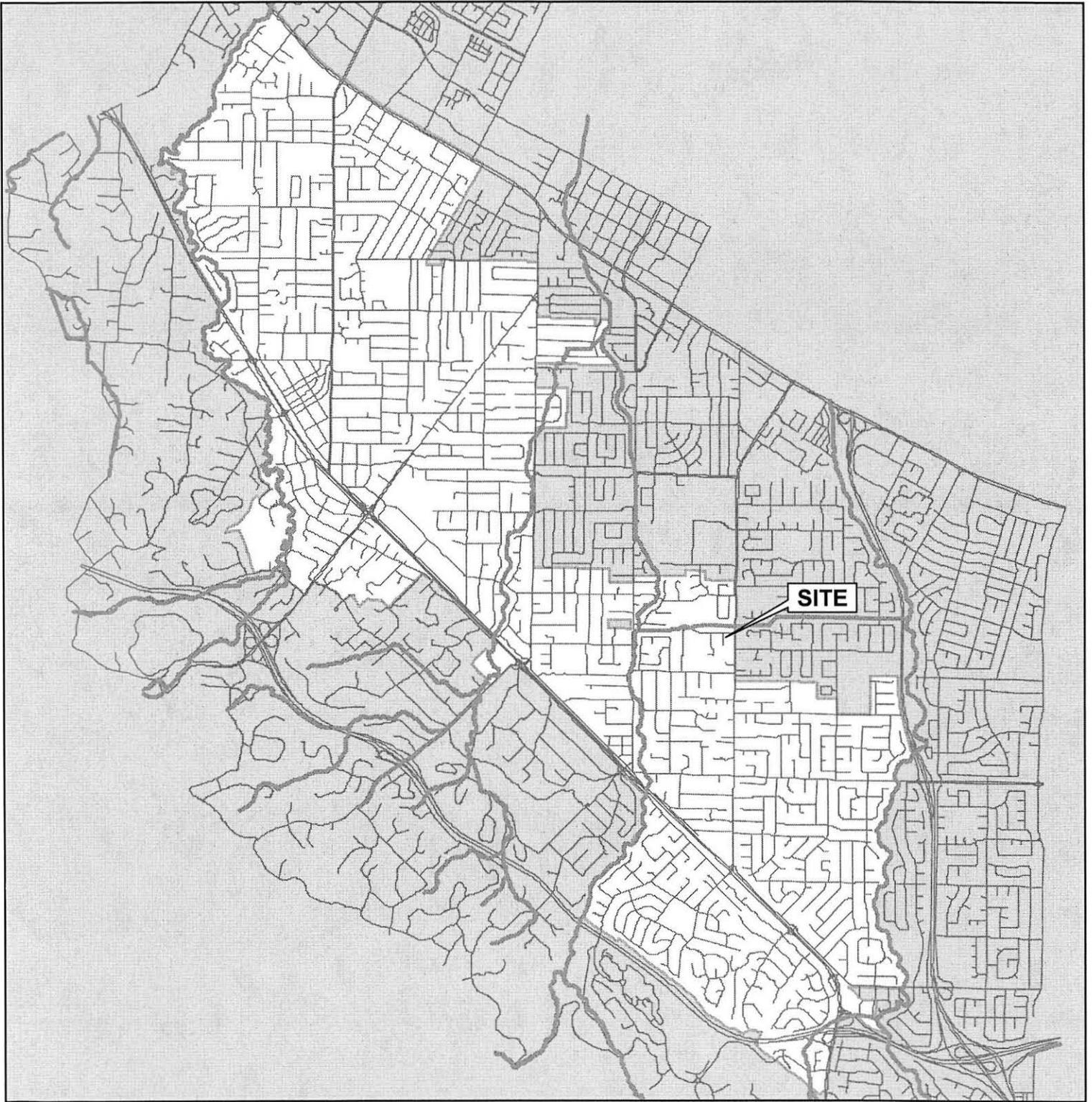
Address: 1151 VOLTI LN.
 Date: 2/26/2015

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)
1161 Volti Lane	25	+/- 40	Right	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple
1270 Altamead Drive	25	+/- 40	Right	Two	+/- 27	Stucco	Complex
1170 Grant Road	25	+/- 40	Left	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple
1250 Altamead Drive	25	+/- 35	Left	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple
1170 Volti Lane	25	+/- 35	Left	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple
1171 Volti Lane	25	+/- 30	Left	Two	+/- 27	Stucco	Complex
1180 Volti Lane	25	+/- 40	Right	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple
1181 Volti Lane	25	+/- 25	Left	Two	+/- 27	Stucco	Simple
1190 Volti Lane	25	+/- 25	Right	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Complex
1192 Volti Lane	25	+/- 25	Left	One	+/- 18	Stucco	Simple

AREA MAP



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 15-SC-03
APPLICANT: A. and P. Abdollahi
SITE ADDRESS: 1151 Volti Lane

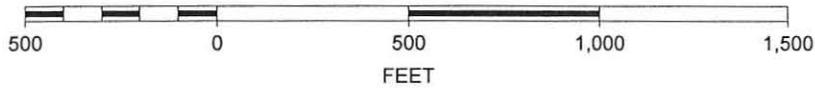


Not to Scale

VICINITY MAP



SCALE 1 : 6,000



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 15-SC-03
APPLICANT: A. and P. Abdollahi
SITE ADDRESS: 1151 Volti Lane