



MINUTES ARCHITECTURE AND SITE REVIEW COMMITTEE

6:00 p.m., December 5, 2007
Los Altos Youth Center
One North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, California 94022

Call to Order

Vice-Chair BAER called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call

Present: Commissioners BRESSACK, BAER and LORELL

Staff: Senior Planner KORNFIELD, Associate Planner DAHL, and Assistant Planners LACEY and KOO

Minutes

Consideration of the minutes from the November 7, 2007 Architecture and Site Review Committee meeting.

Motion: BRESSACK/BAER

Moved to adopt the November 7, 2007 meeting minutes with corrections.

PASSED: 2/0/1 (LORELL abstained)

Consent Calendar

None.

Discussion

1. 07-SC-39 – R. Koo – 655 Riviera Drive

Consideration of a design review application for a new, two-story house. The project includes 3,288 square feet on the first story and 291 square feet on the second story. *Project Planner: Lacey*

Assistant Planner LACEY presented the staff report and made himself available to answer questions.

Public Comment

The property owner and project architect spoke in favor of the design, stated that they responded to the right side privacy issues by raising the sill heights, and removed the Avocado trees in the east yard as the neighbor wanted. Several neighbors spoke with concern about privacy impacts from the courtyard and about style issues.

Discussion

In discussing the design the Committee noted the modest design approach, the privacy impacts of the courtyard in the side yard, and mitigating the privacy impacts of the courtyard by landscape screening, soft paving, and limiting access.

Motion: BRESSACK/LORELL

Moved to approve application 07-SC-39 per the staff report findings and conditions, with the following additional conditions:

- Clarify that access is provided to the rear yard through the Engawa room; and
- Minimize active use of the side garden/courtyard by:
 - Limit doors to the courtyard to only one in the kitchen; and
 - Use “soft” landscape paving for the courtyard.
 - Change the bamboo to a fast growing evergreen shrub

PASSED: 3/0

2. 07-SC-41 – Chapman Design Associates – 500 University Avenue

Consideration of design review for a remodel and addition to a historic landmark residence. The project includes an addition of 83 square feet to the second floor, addition of 424 square feet to the first floor, replacement of an existing detached garage with an attached garage, and upgrading and expanding an existing basement. *Project Planner: Dahl*

Associate Planner DAHL presented the staff report and made himself available to answer questions.

Public Comment

The project designer spoke in favor of the project and stated that the projects adds and keeps historic structure intact. The property owner stated that the Mills Act only protects the front façade of the house. A neighbor, and former owner of the subject property, spoke in support of the design stating that the house needs to evolve over time to meet the current needs of occupants; however, he had concerns with relation to Adobe Creek Way and thought that the paving should be minimized, the screening be kept intact, and that a gable should not be done on the side of the house. A former member of the Historical Commission spoke with concern about the scale of the project and the attached garage not being historic. An architect and local historian spoke about the design preserving the front of the house, the addition’s minimal appearance, and the project’s good use of good materials; he did not like the garage attachment, however, and thought that the rear courtyard was too modern and that the new chimney was too generic with the use of stone and should be unique to the style of the house. The project designer said that he could use klinker style brick on the chimney instead of stone.

Discussion

Commissioner LORELL stated that he liked the project and thought it was ok to let historic houses evolve. Commissioner BRESSACK stated that she did not like the stone on the chimney and that either klinker style brick or a shingle chimney should be used instead. She also expressed concern with attaching the garage and the modern basement; however, she noted that keeping the detached garage constrains the addition to the. Commissioner BAER stated that he spoke to three Historic Commissioners as well as former Historical Commissioner Steve Aced and local historian George Espinola about the garage attachment being out-of-character, using brick instead of stone on the chimney, and the proposed addition being too complex in form. Commissioner BRESSACK further stated that the Redwood trees along Adobe Creek Way should be protected to screen the attached garage.

Motion: BRESSACK/LORELL

Moved to continue application 07-SC-41 with the following direction:

- Refine the chimney architecture on the left side of the house to reflect the historic character;
- Do not use stone on the chimney, use klinker brick or shingles instead;
- Protect the Redwood trees along Adobe Creek Way to minimize the garage appearance;
- Maintain or create the balcony in the design of the historic house with its important recess; and

- Revise the access to the basement to be more in keeping with the historic architecture.
- Make changes consistent with pre 1990 architecture.

PASSED: 3/0

3. 07-SC-42 – E. Benjamini – 951 Echo Drive

Consideration of design review for a new two-story home. The project includes approximately 2,680 square feet on the first floor and approximately 1,399 square feet on the second floor. *Project Planner: Koo*

Assistant Planner KOO presented the staff report and made herself available to answer questions.

Public Comment

The project architect spoke in favor of the project. A neighbor stated that he used to live at the subject lot and that the neighborhood had a single-story character. He also spoke with privacy concerns regarding the deck off the master bedroom. Two other neighbors spoke in opposition of the project with concerns about privacy and the size and bulk of the windows. A petition opposing the project was shown to the Committee as well as some photos of the side of the house from the roof.

Discussion

Commissioner BRESSACK discussed issues with the complex roof design, the mass and bulk of the house due to the hips filling the daylight plane, and the size of the deck. She stated that the second floor should be made smaller, the windows be reviewed for privacy, and the plans should be kept organized with the north arrow orientation consistent on all the pages. LORELL stated that the house was big and agreed with BRESSACK's concerns. Commissioner BAER expressed concern about the turn-around on Covington Road and the garage in the middle of the elevation and making it the most prominent feature of the house. BRESSACK further stated that the second floor plates should be lowered and tucked into the first story roof volume and that the landscape plan needed to be developed along both streets as well as any patios in the rear yard.

Motion: BRESSACK/LORELL

Moved to continue application 07-SC-42 subject to staff direction and the following additional direction:

- Reduce the mass and bulk of the structure;
- Enhance the privacy by reviewing the window size and placement and balcony design;
- Develop the landscape plan further;
- Consider revising the garage and driveway location to make it appear less prominent; and
- Add north arrows to all the plans and orient them consistently facing up.

PASSED: 3/0

Adjournment

Commissioner BAER adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

Prepared by:

David Kornfield, AICP
Senior Planner