



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

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From: [Jim Wing](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 08-MEETING DATE 11-30-21
Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 12:06:03 PM

Los Altos Mayor Fligor and Distinguished Council Members,

Subject: Council 11-30-21 Meeting Agenda Item 8, Resolution 2021-57 Objective Standards

Please approve following recommended changes to ensure Objective Standards for Single Family Residents include requirements that are unique to Los Altos and help residents to better understand.

- **1. Definition – Minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet except for properties filed with Santa Clara County prior to Los Altos incorporation or annexation.**
- **F. Setbacks Table – Car garage door to side walk or street drainage swale minimum setback is 20 feet.**
- **I. Basements – e. Light wells for bedrooms to provide door / ladder for emergency exit.**
- **3.C. Balcony and Rooftop Deck – f. All outside lighting to be “down lighting”.**
- **E. Landscaping a.2) – “shall be planted onsite per Los Altos procedure LI -1 to enhance growth with minimum water.**
- **G. Site and Building Design a.1) – “Arterial or Collector road. Driveway fronting Arterial road to be designed such that cars exiting driveway are always driving forward.**
- **G. Site and Guiding Design a.4) – “impacts a street shoulder (no curb or gutter) then”**
- **G. Site and Building Design a.4) – “Improvement Policy SU-20A. For Lots less than 70 feet wide, Rain Garden feature is optional.**
- **G. Site and building Design k. – “downward facing and fully shielded or recessed. Motion sensing security lighting are exempted**

Thank you for your consideration! Jim Wing, Milverton Road, Los Altos

From: [Anne Paulson](#)
To: [Sally Meadows](#); [Lynette Lee Eng](#); [Anita Enander](#); [Jonathan Weinberg](#); [Neysa Fligor](#)
Cc: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 8 - Nov. 30, 2021
Date: Friday, November 26, 2021 10:08:57 PM

Dear Mayor Fligor and City Council members,

Staff is to be commended for coming up with the new objective standards so quickly. However, one of the proposed standards restricts appealing housing options to no purpose. It requires that two houses on a Los Altos lot be attached. That would mean more huge residences in single family areas, and fewer cottages and modest-sized homes, the opposite of what many residents would prefer.

If someone is building two houses on one of our very expensive lots, they'll almost certainly use all the floor area they're allowed. That means for a typical unsplit Los Altos lot, they'd be choosing between building one huge duplex house, or two modest-sized houses. The standards as written would make that choice for them: they'd have to build the huge duplex house. But many Los Altans don't like huge houses. I'm not a fan of them myself. If I had to choose for my neighbor, I'd pick the two modest houses rather than the larger one. Instead, the standards would put the big duplex house next to me, even if that is not what the builder or the neighbors would prefer. Los Altos should not be promoting huge duplex houses over modest single family houses.

Similarly, if someone wanted to build two houses on a split Los Altos lot, under the standards as proposed they'd be forced to build a modest-sized duplex house, even when they preferred two small cottages. Again, Los Altos shouldn't make this decision for them.

Some defenders of this change might argue that it is necessary to prevent houses sprawling over the lots. But it doesn't do that. The objective standards specify the same building envelope and maximum total size, whether there are one or two houses on a lot. The standards specify the front, side and rear setbacks for first and second stories, and the maximum height of houses, based on what the city allows now, with the changes the city believes the law requires. The standards also specify the floor area ratio, which in most cases would be the same as what we allow now.

So all the attached duplex requirement accomplishes is to force Los Altans to build big bulky buildings instead of smaller ones.. We don't need objective standards to promote McMansions. We should instead leave the decision to individual Los Altans.

I urge you to omit from the standards the rule that two houses on a lot must be attached.

Sincerely,

Anne Paulson