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To: [Los Altos Planning Commission](#); [Eliana Hassan](#); [Planning Services](#)
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Subject: 789 Raymundo Ave Proposed Remodel
Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 12:02:27 PM

Dear Design Review Commissioners and Eliana,

We are neighbors that live next door, behind or on Raymundo--a couple of doors down--from the proposed **789 Raymundo Avenue** construction project and have spent time reviewing the developer/homeowner's plans.

For clarification, neither the homeowner/developer nor his contractor has ever let any of us know what was going on regarding the renovation of this house. Despite the fact that the contractor has been doing **substantial tear out** and has repeatedly violated the City's construction hours, we learned about the extent of the proposed second story and ADU project from the City's postcard and/or the front yard sign.

Following are our issues with the proposed plan:

1) Roof Forms, Roof Lines and Materials

For clarification, this is a "**high**" **not** a "low" impact remodel since due to its overall height, high-pitched roofs, complex roof lines, and forward position of the second story, it will strongly impact the overall look of our neighborhood and dwarf adjacent homes.

- a. The forward position and roofline of the second story (which also results in a more complex set of roof lines elsewhere) is complex and not consistent with other homes on the street. This significantly magnifies the massiveness of the house, even though our City's Design Guidelines call for second stories to **minimize** impact.
- b. The steep slope of the roof, as noted in the Staff Report, is also incompatible with other adjacent homes. The gable roof lines, not just on the addition but on the garage and the opposite end of the house as they face the street, exaggerate the second story and increase the effect of other changes. They do not minimize the entirety of the new structure.
- c. The mix of roofing materials (standing seam metal and another material) is unattractive, lacks architectural integrity, and doesn't speak to high quality construction. **The Staff Report notes that "Mixed roof materials are typically undesirable, except in limited situations."** The developer should be asked to make the roof materials uniform.
- d. We ask that the Commission refer the project back to the developer to redesign the second story addition and make other changes to retain the type of roof line and simplicity of forms that are characteristic of the neighborhood.

2) Fenestration

- a. The windows on the right side of the second story (there are two groups: one goes into the landing and the other is in the primary bedroom) should be raised with bottom sills above 5 feet (eye level) for privacy. This will not affect natural light.

3) Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

We understand that this review does not cover the ADU, which is subject to ministerial review by Staff. Nevertheless, we wish to make Staff aware of the following concerns.

- a. It is positioned 8 feet from the next door neighbor's property line and 4 feet from the back property line. We would request that this structure be moved farther forward and more to the center of the lot. Additionally, we are not convinced that the Developer's interpretation in regard to daylight planes (A8) is correct and believe the property next door (781 Raymundo) would be affected.
- b. If the ADU is positioned only 4 feet from the back of the lot, we trust that Staff will require that the lot be surveyed and potential drainage issues for all neighbors but especially the rear neighbors should be identified. Follow up inspections should focus on making sure the legal setback is followed.
- c. Further, the ADU's complex and jumbled roof line is not acceptable nor is it compliant with other nearby homes.

The last time there was a two-story approval on Raymundo Avenue (766 Raymundo), the Design Review Commission had the homeowner replace the second story gables with hips and move the second story farther back from the front of the house. Both of these changes reduced the massive appearance of the house and helped it better fit in with the character of the neighborhood.

Questions for Staff:

- The drawing on A4 that lays out the floor plan—there is a label for a bath, a powder room, and a bath 4 on the first story. In addition, there's a primary bath upstairs. Is the powder room a half bath? Where is the third bath?
- The developer refers to a "partition"—what is this and does it have any architectural, planning or legal affect?

Thank you in advance for considering and responding to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Ron & Nancy Ellickson
820 Raymundo (3-doors down)

Adele Hennig
781 Raymundo (next door)

Lisa & James Woo
809 Raymundo (2-doors down)

Carol & Joel Sidel
790 Vista Grande (directly behind)

Robin Evans
798 Vista Grande (diagonally behind)