

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
Subject: FW: 789 Raymundo Ave Proposed Remodel
Date: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 4:50:42 PM

From: Nancy Ellickson <nellickson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 4:45 PM
To: Los Altos Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@losaltosca.gov>; ehassan@losaltosca.gov; Planning Services <planning@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: rellickson@yahoo.com; 'adele hennig' <adele@hennigco.com>; lsidcarman@aol.com; 'james woo' <jaws241@pacbell.net>; 'Lisa Leung' <lisaleungc@yahoo.com>
Subject: 789 Raymundo Ave Proposed Remodel

Dear Design Review Commissioners,

Thank you for once again discussing the **789 Raymundo Avenue** remodel. We appreciate that the Commission visited the site during the holiday season and also took the time to review this most recent set of plans.

We are neighbors that live next door, behind or on Raymundo—a couple of doors down—from the proposed construction project and have reviewed the most recent developer/owner's plans and Staff's evaluation. Our comments follow.

- It is concerning that the look of the second story really hasn't changed from the prior submission (December 16, 2020 DRC Meeting). The current design continues to present significant bulk and mass to the front of the house rather than **minimizing** the impact as referenced in the City's Design Guidelines. The forward position and roofline of the second story is complex and not consistent with other homes on the street. While the developer/owner has slightly decreased the home's overall height, the unchanged high-pitched, complex gabled roofs lines and forward position of the second story will strongly impact the overall look of our neighborhood and dwarf adjacent homes.
- There are 28 homes on Raymundo Avenue. Of those:
 - There are 2 two-story homes (**766 Raymundo** and **721 Raymundo**)—both have hipped roofs, specifically on all 4 sides of the 2nd story. For both homes, the roof slopes are all 4/12, this has minimized the perception of excessive “bulk” and mass of the 2nd story.
*Note that when the DR Commission approved the plans for **766 Raymundo**, they did so with the requirement that the homeowner would change the roofs from gables to hips, move the 2nd story back (towards the rear), and keep it to a 4/12 roof slope. These changes reduced the massive appearance of the house and helped it better fit in with the character of the neighborhood. In fact, when the current Commission reviewed this new project during the December 16, 2020 meeting, the Chair made similar suggestions and we agree, it is a better solution.*
 - For reference, while we didn't measure each roof on Raymundo Avenue, the appearance from the street is that every house has/or is close to a 4/12 roof slope. However; the developer/owner's plans for 789 Raymundo show varying roof slopes—some are at 2/12, some at 4/12, some at 6/12, and some at 7/12. While this might be aesthetically “interesting,” we agree with Staff's recommendation to reduce the roof pitch “to be more compatible with the neighborhood's low-

scale roof pitches.” And we also suggest a consistent roof slope—again, to better comply with the look of surrounding homes.

- Based on comments from the Commission during the December 16, 2020 meeting, the developer/owner eliminated the stairway to the balcony however; there continues to be a privacy issue since the balcony (which runs across the majority of the backyard-facing second story) still provides a wide view into the neighbor’s kitchen / great room where they spend a majority of their time. We’re concerned that the only reason for such a large balcony is that it will be used for entertaining—again creating noise and privacy issues.
- We note that the developer/owner has eliminated the ADU from this submission but we understand it could be separately submitted to the Los Altos Building Department for ministerial approval. While we would prefer that there isn’t an ADU, the developer/owner has every right to build one—our request was that it be a minimum of 15 feet from the rear and side property lines for privacy and also that a drainage evaluation be done.

In summary, with the current design, this is potentially a “high” not a “low” impact remodel for our neighborhood. **The developer/homeowner could do a lot more to minimize bulk and mass without sacrificing floor space or design.** While the simple change from gabled roofs to hip roofs will not change anything inside the house, it will make it seem less massive and minimize impact (per the City’s guidelines).

We ask that the Commission again refer the project back to the developer/owner to redesign and truly minimize the impact of the second story on the street view which this submission doesn’t do.

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)