



DATE: January 6, 2021

AGENDA ITEM #3

**TO:** Design Review Commission  
**FROM:** Steven Golden, Senior Planner  
**SUBJECT:** SC20-0014 – 110 Pasa Robles Ave

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve design review application SC20-0014 subject to the listed findings and conditions

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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This is a design review application for a first and second story addition and remodel to an existing two-story house. The project includes 378 square feet of rebuilt floor area on the first story<sup>1</sup> and 226 square feet on the second story. The following table summarizes the project's technical details:

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** Single-Family, Small Lot  
**ZONING:** R1-10  
**PARCEL SIZE:** 6,696 square feet  
**MATERIALS:** Composition roof shingles, stucco, wood clad windows

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Allowed/Required</b>
<b>COVERAGE:</b>	1,756 square feet	1,850 square feet	2,009 square feet
<b>FLOOR AREA:</b>			
First floor	1,633 square feet <sup>2</sup>	1,508 square feet	
Second floor	599 square feet	825 square feet	
Total	2,232 square feet	2,333 square feet	2,344 square feet
<b>SETBACKS:</b>			
Front	23.75 feet	25 feet	25 feet
Rear (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	45.1 feet	37.2 /35.4 feet	25 feet
Right side(1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	9.2 feet/14.33 feet	9.2 feet/14.33 feet	5.4 feet/12.9 feet
Left side (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	8.66 feet/13.5 feet	8.66 feet/13.5 feet	5.4 feet/12.9 feet
<b>HEIGHT:</b>	24.5 feet	25.75 feet	27 feet

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<sup>1</sup> There is no net new floor area on the first story. The project proposes to demolish a detached accessory structure and the existing garage. The public notice incorrectly stated that there was 375 square feet of net new floor area.

<sup>2</sup> Includes a 126 square-foot shed and 378 square-foot garage which are proposed to be demolished (a portion of the garage will be rebuilt).

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Neighborhood Context**

The subject property is located on Pasa Robles Avenue, west of Pleasant Way. The neighborhood is best defined as a Consistent Character Neighborhood, according to the City's Residential Design Guidelines. The single-family residential properties in this area primarily consist of narrow lots with an average width of 50 to 55 feet, although across the street from the subject property is the rear portion of the Los Altos Gardens apartment community. The houses in the neighborhood share similar front setback patterns and most have either front facing garages or detached garages in the rear of the property. Most of the residences on Pasa Robles are lower scale one-story homes with horizontal roof eaves and stucco or wood exterior siding materials. To the rear of the subject property is Del Monte Avenue which includes a mixture of one and two-story residences on narrow lots. Pasa Robles Avenue does not have a consistent street tree pattern, but does have a variety of mature trees and vegetation.

### **Zoning Compliance**

The property is 54 feet wide and is considered a narrow lot, as defined by Section 14.06.080 of the Zoning Ordinance because it has a width of less than 80 feet. For narrow lots in the R1-10 District, the required interior side yard setbacks for the first story are reduced from ten feet to ten percent of the average lot width or 5.4 feet. The second story side setback is reduced from 17.5 feet to the first story setback plus 7.5 feet or 12.9 feet. There is also an alternative daylight plane requirement for narrow lots as provided in Section 14.06.100.B. of the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Property History**

The existing two-story residence has an attached two car garage and a detached accessory structure/shed in the rear yard area. The second story was added in 1978 according to the building permit records. The existing second story side facing gable roof structure is non-conforming to the current daylight plane requirements and there is a non-conforming front setback at the garage according to the submitted site plan survey (please see further discussion below).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Design Review**

According to the Design Guidelines, in a Consistent Character Neighborhood, 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. The emphasis should be on designs that "fit in" and lessen abrupt changes.

The proposed project will demolish the existing detached accessory structure, rebuild the existing two-car garage with a smaller one-car garage and add floor area to the rear of the existing first and second stories. The project also includes a new front covered porch and the rear addition will also include a covered patio. The additional floor area and other modifications are generally in keeping with the existing architecture and retain the existing wall plate heights.

At the first story, the existing attached two-car garage will be replaced with a new one-car garage. The existing garage currently has a 23.75-foot front yard setback, whereas the new garage will conform to

the required 25-foot setback<sup>3</sup>. The front facing gable roof structure over the proposed garage will replace the existing hipped roof structure. Also, along the first story front elevation, the existing shed roof covering the front porch entry will be replaced with a gable under gable roof for the new covered front porch and adjoining projecting window of the living room. The Residential Design Guidelines recommend hipped roof structures over a garage, so they are less visually dominant, however, the wall planes are broken up by the multiple proposed narrow gable roof structures at the front elevation. The design also proposes an approximately 8-foot addition to the rear of the first story that has a 37.2-foot rear yard setback whereas 25 feet is required. Additional floor area will be added to the left rear and a covered porch area is being added at the right rear.

The project also proposes an 8.75-foot addition to the rear of the existing second story. The proposed second story wall projects nine inches beyond the first story wall at the rear and will have a 36.4-foot rear setback. There are two existing second story rear facing bedroom windows that will be replaced with smaller windows in window boxes.

The design of the first and second story additions minimizes the appearance of bulk and the vertical massing by setting the second story back from the first story, using eight-foot wall plate heights and using multiple gables to break up the horizontal eave lines and window box elements to break up the extent of wall planes and provide more articulation.

As noted above, the existing second story side facing gables are non-conforming according to the daylight plane requirement pursuant to Section 14.06.100.B. of the Zoning Ordinance which allows an alternative daylight plane for narrow lots. The existing roof structure will be structurally maintained; therefore, it does not have to be replaced with a conforming roof structure. The second story addition proposes to extend the existing walls along the sides and includes a rear facing (cross) gabled roof to match the existing 5:12 roof pitch that integrates into the existing roof eaves. As shown on the proposed south elevation on Sheet A3.1, the new roof structure is designed to conform to the daylight plane, however, the lower portion of the roof slightly encroaches into the daylight plane along the left side property line. The bottom portion of the encroaching “sliver” area with the greatest encroachment, encroaches three inches into the daylight plane. Pursuant to Section 14.06.100.D of the Zoning Ordinance, “an extension of an existing gable roof may project over or beyond the daylight plane when it is determined by the city planner that such projection is necessary to maintain the architectural integrity of the structure.” While the proposed roof is not an extension of the existing gable, the new gable roof maintains the architectural integrity by retaining the simple building forms by extending the existing wall, providing a consistent 5:12 roof pitch, and integrating with the existing roof to create a uniform horizontal eave line. Given the fact that the existing second story roof structure has a more severe daylight plane encroachment and the zoning code allows for encroachments of gable roof structures to maintain architectural integrity, staff recommends that the Design Review Commission consider the de minimis impact of the proposed daylight plane encroachment consistent with Section 14.06.100 of the Zoning Code.

The project design includes a composition roof, stucco siding, and fiberglass exterior cladded windows. The proposed materials are compatible with the existing house design and are similar to the materials used throughout the neighborhood. Overall, the project is consistent with the

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<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to Section 14.06.080 of the Zoning Ordinance

Residential Design Guidelines, meets the required design review findings and is compatible with the neighborhood context.

## **Privacy**

The addition to the second story maintains most of the existing second story window locations and sill heights; therefore, the changes are unlikely to introduce new privacy concerns. The location and placement of new windows are not likely to have unreasonable privacy impacts.

The left (east) side elevation includes adding one bathroom window to the second story with a sill height of 5.9 feet. The window height and placement above the sink vanity would avoid direct views from persons inside the room to the neighboring property. The right (east) elevation includes eliminating the second-story window in Bedroom #4<sup>4</sup> and increasing the size of an existing window that is located in the new stairway landing/lounge area. The window would have a sill height of 3.5 feet from the finished floor. The sill height is lower than the 4.5-foot sill height that the Design Review Commission has previously considered acceptable in eliminating direct views into neighboring properties; however, the window has a similar sill height and is smaller than the existing window being removed towards the front of this elevation at Bedroom #4. The Design Review Commission could consider requesting to raise the sill height, however, based on correspondence provided from the neighbor at 126 Pasa Robles Ave, they have reviewed the plans and are not concerned with any privacy impacts (included in Attachment C).

The rear elevation includes replacing the two existing second-story bedroom windows with smaller windows in window box that project from the wall plane. The replacement windows are substantially in the same location as the existing windows and would not create any new privacy impacts. The windows maintain the existing 1.75-foot sill height. The new second story windows at the rear elevation would not result in new potential privacy impacts because the windows already exist, the distance to the rear property line exceeds the required setback and there is mature side and rear yard landscaping which will be supplemented with more landscaping that will further screen potential views into the neighboring properties.

## **Landscaping**

The property includes mature trees and vegetation that the applicant proposes to maintain with this project. The applicant has provided a landscape plan which shows the existing landscaping, along with a total of five new olive trees to supplement the privacy landscaping at the rear and along the right-side property line that will provide additional privacy benefits to the neighboring properties. Staff recommends standard conditions of approval included below that requires the applicant to maintain or provide new landscaping as needed, which will be inspected before final inspection. New or rebuilt landscaping would need to satisfy the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance requirements should it exceed the 2,500 square-foot landscaping threshold for residential additions. Staff also recommends that the applicant obtain an arborist report that would include mitigation measures, if needed for protecting the Shamel ash and Coast Live oak trees in the front yard throughout the construction (see Condition No 4).

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<sup>4</sup> As labeled in the proposed floor plan.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act because it involves the construction of an addition to an existing single-family dwelling.

## **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND CORRESPONDENCE**

A public meeting notice was posted on the property and mailed to 13 property owners on Pasa Robles Avenue and Del Monte Avenue.

Staff recommended the applicant reach out to their neighbors to discuss their proposed design plans and address any concerns. The applicant has provided email correspondence from three of the four abutting property owners included in Attachment C. In addition, staff received public correspondence from one community member included in Attachment D.

Cc: Samantha and Jason Enos, Applicants and Property Owners  
Jennifer Kretschmer, Architect

### Attachments:

- A. Vicinity and Public Notification Maps
- B. Materials Sample Board
- C. Neighbor Correspondence with Applicant
- D. Public Correspondence

## FINDINGS

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With regard to the second addition to an existing two-story house, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.060 of the Municipal Code:

- a. The proposed addition complies with all provision of this chapter;
- b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the addition, when considered with reference to the nature and location of residential structures on adjacent lots, will avoid unreasonable interference with views and privacy and will consider the topographic and geologic constraints imposed by particular building site conditions;
- c. The natural landscape will be preserved insofar as practicable by minimizing tree and soil removal; grade changes shall be minimized and will be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas;
- d. The orientation of the proposed addition in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize the perception of excessive bulk and mass;
- e. 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 been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings; and
- f. The proposed addition has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection.

## CONDITIONS

SC20-0014 – 110 Pasa Robles Ave

**1. Expiration**

The Design Review Approval will expire on January 6, 2023 unless prior to the date of expiration, a building permit is issued, or an extension is granted pursuant to Section 14.76.090 of the Zoning Code.

**2. Approved Plans**

The approval is based on the plans and materials received on December 10, 2020, except as may be modified by these conditions.

**3. Protected Trees**

The Shamel ash and Coast live oak in the front yard and existing privacy screening along the side and rear property areas shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Community Development Director.

**4. Arborist Report**

The applicant shall obtain a report from a certified arborist which shall provide an assessment of the condition of the existing trees on the property or neighboring properties that have significant dripline over the subject property. The arborist shall also review the proposed construction documentation, reference in the report, and include any measures that should be implemented throughout the construction process to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to trees. Those measures shall be incorporated into the building plans.

**5. Encroachment Permit**

An encroachment permit shall be obtained from the Engineering Division prior to doing any work within the public right-of-way including the street shoulder. All work within the public street right-of-way shall be in compliance with the City's Shoulder Paving Policy.

**6. New Fireplaces**

Only gas fireplaces, pellet fueled wood heaters or EPA certified wood-burning appliances may be installed in all new construction pursuant to Chapter 12.64 of the Municipal Code.

**7. Landscaping**

The project shall be subject to the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELo) pursuant to Chapter 12.36 of the Municipal Code if 2,500 square feet or more of new or replaced landscape area, including irrigated planting areas, turf areas, and water features is proposed. Any project with an aggregate landscape area of 2,500 square feet or less may conform to the prescriptive measures contained in Appendix D of the City's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

**8. Indemnity and Hold Harmless**

The applicant/owner agrees to indemnify, defend, protect, and hold the City harmless from all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City or held to be the liability of the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions in any proceedings brought in any State or Federal Court, challenging any of the City's action with respect to the applicant's project. The City may withhold final maps and/or permits, including temporary or final occupancy permits, for

failure to pay all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions.

## **INCLUDED WITH THE BUILDING PERMIT SUBMITTAL**

### **9. Conditions of Approval**

Incorporate the conditions of approval into the title page of the plans.

### **10. Applicant Acknowledgement of Conditions of Approval**

The applicant shall acknowledge receipt of the final conditions of approval and put in a letter format acceptance of said conditions. This letter will be submitted during the first building permit submittal.

### **11. Tree Protection Note**

On the grading plan and/or the site plan, show all tree protection fencing and add the following note: "All tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground."

### **12. Reach Codes**

Building Permit Applications submitted on or after January 14, 2021 shall comply with specific amendments to the 2019 California Green Building Standards for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and the 2019 California Energy Code as provided in Ordinances Nos. 2020-470A, 2020-470B, 2020-470C, and 2020-471 which amended Chapter 12.22 Energy Code and Chapter 12.26 California Green Building Standards Code of the Los Altos Municipal Code. The building design plans shall comply with the standards and the applicant shall submit supplemental application materials as required by the Building Division to demonstrate compliance.

### **13. Green Building Standards**

Provide verification that the house will comply with the California Green Building Standards pursuant to Chapter 12.26 of the Municipal Code and provide a signature from the project's Qualified Green Building Professional Designer/Architect and property owner.

### **14. Air Conditioner Sound Rating**

Show the location of any air conditioning unit(s) on the site plan including the model number of the unit(s) and nominal size of the unit. Provide the manufacturer's specifications showing the sound rating for each unit. The air conditioning units must be located to comply with the City's Noise Control Ordinance (Chapter 6.16) and in compliance with the Planning Division setback provisions. The units shall be screened from view of the street.

### **15. Storm Water Management**

Show how the project is in compliance with the New Development and Construction Best Management Practices and Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention program, as adopted by the City for the purposes of preventing storm water pollution (i.e. downspouts directed to landscaped areas, minimize directly connected impervious areas, etc.).

## **PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF BUILDING OR DEMOLITION PERMIT**

### **16. Tree Protection**

Tree protection fencing shall be installed around the dripline(s), or as required by the project arborist for the Shamel ash and Coast live oak in the front yard area as shown on the site plan.

Tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven



into the ground and shall not be removed until all building construction has been completed unless approved by the Planning Division.

## **PRIOR TO FINAL INSPECTION**

### **17. Landscaping Installation**

All front yard, exterior side, interior side, and rear yard landscaping, street trees and privacy screening trees shall be maintained and/or installed as shown on the approved plans or as required by the Planning Division.

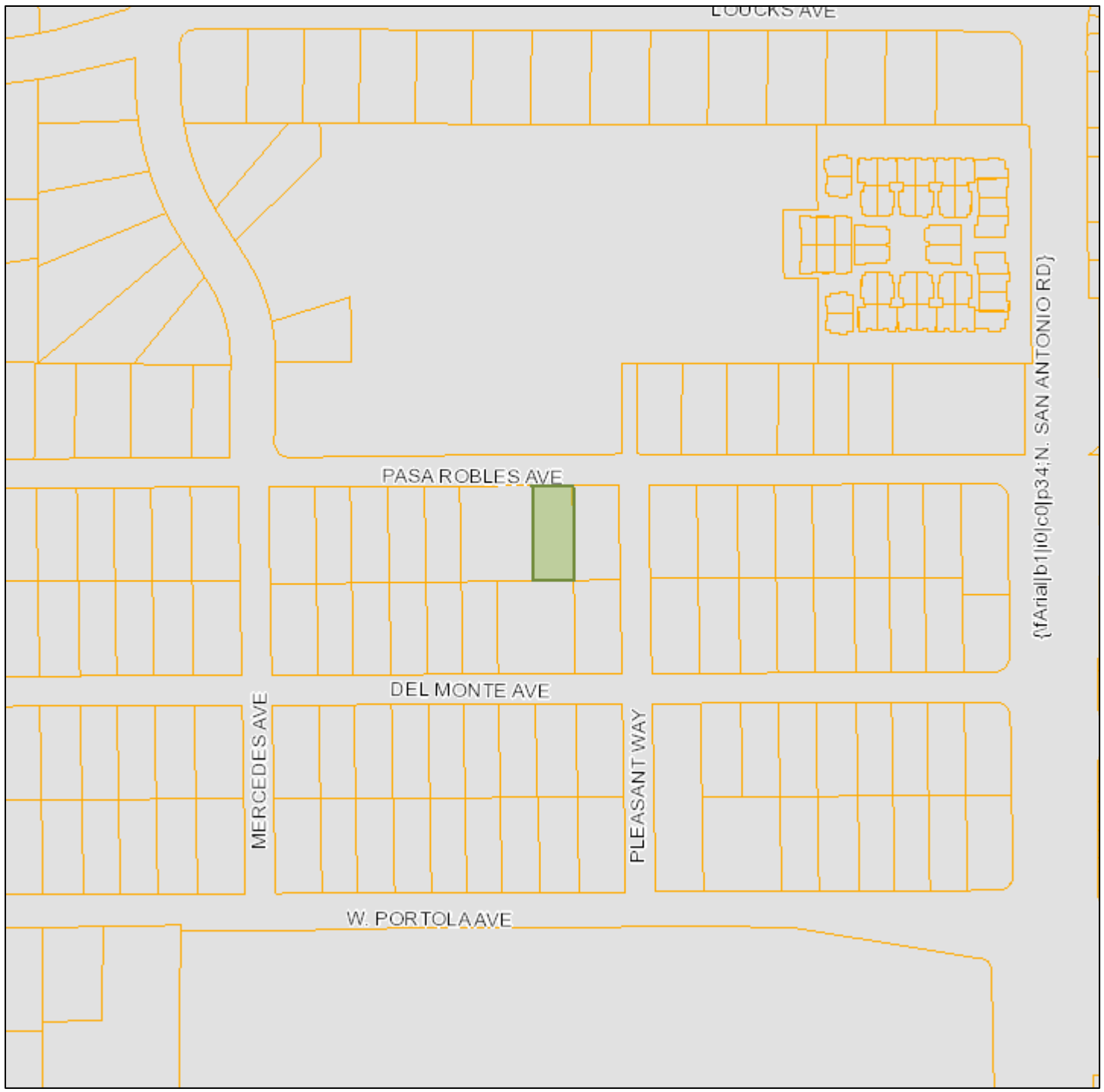
### **18. Landscape Privacy Screening**

The landscape intended to provide privacy screening shall be inspected by the Planning Division and shall be supplemented by additional screening material as required to adequately mitigate potential privacy impacts to surrounding properties.

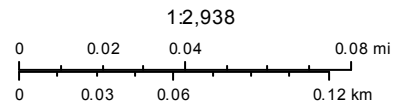
### **19. Green Building Verification**








Submit verification that the house was built in compliance with the City's Green Building Ordinance (Chapter 12.26 of the Municipal Code).

# Vicinity Map ATTACHMENT A



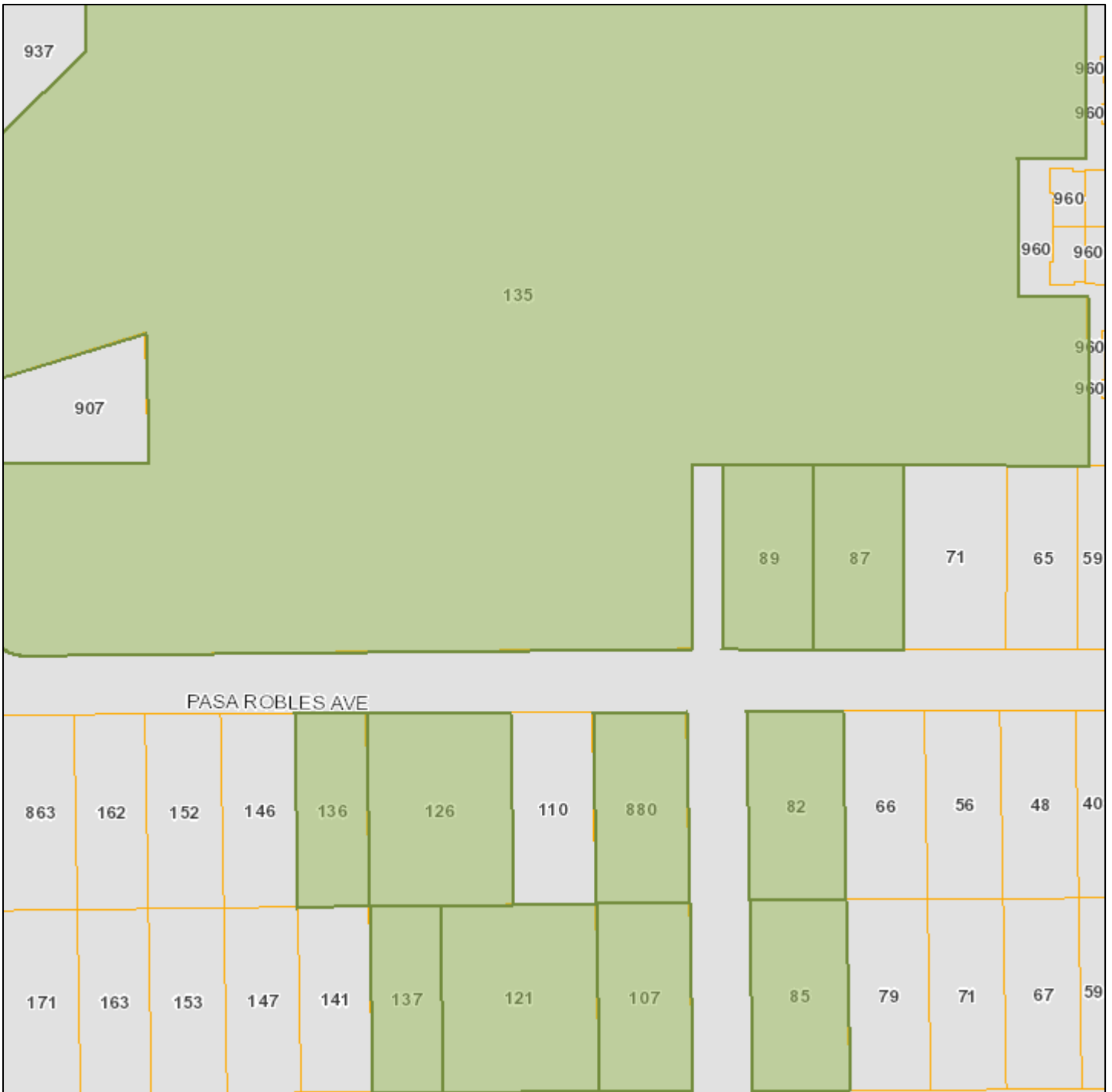
Print Date: December 2, 2020



-  Schools
-  Park and Recreation Areas
-  City Limit
-  Road Names
-  Waterways
-  Situs Label
-  TaxParcel

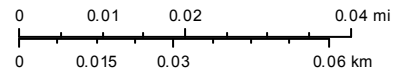
The information on this map was derived from the City of Los Altos' GIS. The City of Los Altos does not guarantee data provided is free of errors, omissions, or the positional accuracy, and it should be verified.








# Notification Map



Print Date: December 2, 2020

1:1,469



-  Schools
-  Park and Recreation Areas
-  City Limit
-  Road Names
-  Waterways
-  Situs Label
-  TaxParcel

The information on this map was derived from the City of Los Altos' GIS. The City of Los Altos does not guarantee data provided is free of errors, omissions, or the positional accuracy, and it should be verified.

# ATTACHMENT B

## 110 Pasa Robles Avenue

### 3D Perspective – Exterior Materials



# ATTACHMENT C

**From:** Thomas Erichsen [REDACTED] m  
**Subject:** Building Plans  
**Date:** December 23, 2020 at 8:03 AM  
**To:** Samantha [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Erichsen, Wally & Carol [REDACTED]

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Samatha,

Good morning! It was nice talking with you about your plans. Janna and I have no objection to your plans as you have shown us (blueprints) and explained that there are no variances or easement issues.

Good luck with your renovations!

Tom Erichsen  
107 Del Monte Ave  
Los Altos, CA. 94023

**From:** Sasha and Brian Hahn/King [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Proposed remodel  
**Date:** December 22, 2020 at 9:40 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]



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Hi Samantha,

Nice meeting you today! Thanks for dropping off the plans for your remodel project. We took a look and have no objections. Good luck and let us know if you need anything else from us.

Thanks!  
Sasha Hahn and Brian King  
121 Del Monte



**From:** Joanna Reynolds [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Your new residence remodel plans  
**Date:** December 22, 2020 at 2:35 PM  
**To:** S [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Thomas Reynolds [REDACTED]

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Hi Samantha,

Thank you for sharing your remodel plans with us. This looks like a huge undertaking, but should result in a very livable home for your family.


Though we are not delighted by the added bulk on the South side of the house, we appreciate that there will not be additional windows overlooking our house and yard. The one window you plan on the West side second floor, (with window bench,) should not be a problem for us.

Best wishes for a successful project. We look forward to having you for our neighbors!

Warm regards,  
Joanna and Thomas Reynolds  
126 Pasa Robles Ave, Los Altos, CA 94022

# ATTACHMENT D

Corcoran Steven E and Marcia L Trustee  
82 Pasa Robles Avenue  
Los Altos, CA 94022-1235



December 28, 2020

Steven Golden, Project Planner for 110 Pasa Robles Avenue  
Design Review Commission  
[sgolden@losaltosca.gov](mailto:sgolden@losaltosca.gov)

Dear Project Planner,

Steve and I live at 82 Pasa Robles Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94022, and we are writing you about our concerns regarding the project proposed by our neighbors at 110 Pasa Robles Avenue. We have lived in this home since 2008, and we purchased it with the idea that we would spend the rest of our lives there, given that it is a one-story home with a sunny back yard and views of the trees and sky.

As you know, this section of north Los Altos has a mix of properties, with some larger and some smaller lots and homes. Unfortunately, as new developers and owners have come in, they are building homes which tend to take up almost the entire square footage of the lot, and most of them are adding or expanding second stories and taking down trees, taking away from the peaceful, rural nature of this desirable neighborhood.

We have reviewed the plans for 110 Pasa Robles and our main concern has to do with how the proposed second story will ruin our view of the sky, trees, and sunset. In the Existing East Elevation (see page A3.0), and from our kitchen window and back yard, we can see the upper half of the roof and the fireplace of 110 Pasa Robles, and beyond that, we enjoy seeing a little open space with tall pines in the distance framed against the sky. The top of the existing chimney is the highest point, and the top peak or ridge of the roofline looks to be a couple of feet shorter than that.

In the Proposed Existing East Elevation (see page A3.1), it looks as if the peak or ridge goes up another 3 or more feet, and then stays up at the same level an additional 7 or more feet out into the yard. It also looks as if the chimney might even go higher. This proposed roofline creates a huge wall or barrier which will be right in line with our view. We do not object to the footprint going out, but we do object to the height going up and to the height staying up as it extends out into their backyard. If the extension out stayed lower in height, in line with the existing daylight plane, then the extension would not block our view.

We are confident our neighbors can work with their architect to improve upon these plans, so that the surrounding homes will not be hugely affected by their addition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Marcia and Steve Corcoran