

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: Fwd: Support for home rebuild
Date: Monday, July 26, 2021 8:18:49 AM

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From: Hetal Pandya <hetal@onmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 23, 2021 6:07:57 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: hetal_k@yahoo.com <hetal_k@yahoo.com>
Subject: Fwd: Support for home rebuild

Support letter for the 41 Marvin Project from another neighbor on Marvin Ave.
This is from the family that lives at 60 Marvin Ave.

Thanks,
Hetal Pandya

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **BenJoaquin Gouverneur** <benjoaquin@hey.com>
Date: Wed, Jul 14, 2021 at 10:43 PM
Subject: Re: Support for home rebuild
To: Khoridastoor <kholidastoor@gmail.com>; Dushyant Pandya <dushyant@gmail.com>
Cc: Hetal Pandya <hetal@onmail.com>

Congrats to Hetal!

Thanks for sharing your plans with us. We are supportive of your project and which you all smooth progress.

Thanks.

BenJoaquin Gouverneur
60 Marvin Ave
Los Altos, CA 94022

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin Ave project
Date: Thursday, July 29, 2021 1:34:33 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Kathy Frates <kfrates@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Re: 41 Marvin Ave project

We support private homeowners' right to have a home that is pleasing to them as long as the home meets city codes, does not infringe on others' property rights, privacy, safety, or ability to have sunlight. We support our neighbors, Hetal and Dushyant Pandya at 41 Marvin Ave, Los Altos, in having the home design of their choice given that they've met these criteria. Please allow them to proceed with their project without further delay.

Kathy and Raleigh Frates
115 Marvin Ave
Los Altos

From: [Suzanne Kasso](#)
To: [Los Altos Design Review Commission](#); [Sean Gallegos](#); [Guido Persicone](#); [Chris Kasso](#)
Subject: 41 Marvin Avenue comments
Date: Friday, July 30, 2021 7:46:13 AM

To whom it may concern,

We moved into our home on Marvin Ave in 2000. Our home was built in 1938 and has undergone several renovations, including renovations directed by us. One of the aspects that drew us to Los Altos was the diversity, in population, culture and architecture. For us, a quality neighborhood consists of babies, retirees, teens, and middle agers. We looked for a neighborhood that wasn't filled with cookie cutter homes and that respected the history of the town. In renovating our home to better fit our family, we took care to reflect upon its history and heritage. We purposely brought in Craftsman elements to reflect its age and the style of the surrounding homes. We applaud renovations like the one that occurred at 144 Marvin. That home, like ours, was updated to modern standards, giving a thoughtful nod to the age of the property and the heritage of the street and community.

Marvin Avenue is an eclectic mix of architectural styles and there are two very modern homes on the private portion of the street, however, both of these homes replaced homes that did not have a strong history or architectural style. And, much like our former community center, they were in very poor condition. This is not the case at 41 Marvin. Hired experts have declared that this home is not a historical structure, and that it's OK to tear it down. We do not believe this is true. The house has stood since 1905. Like our home, the renovations took into consideration the home's original character, style, and age. The home was meticulously and lovingly cared for though 2017 when the Pandyas purchased it.

Replacing this "non-historical" home with the ultra sleek, modern structure that is being proposed will change the look and feel of our neighborhood. It's vertical, asymmetric windows and siding will most certainly stick out on a street filled with horizontal ranch and craftsman homes. While the new structure will be replacing an existing 2-story home, the vertical planes and massive 2nd story balcony will look and feel much more imposing than the current home. This home is located on a prominent flagstone, corner lot, giving visual access to the entire structure. This lot sets the tone for the street due to its location. The proposed structure looks nothing like the existing 60+ homes on Marvin Avenue and will stick out like a sore thumb. Living directly across the street from the back side of the property, we will be gazing upon the sore thumb daily.

While we agree the proposed structure will be a nice building, it will look sorely out of place on Marvin Avenue. It does not reflect the character of our neighborhood and will forever change it. On a bigger lot or nestled in between two other imposing homes, this design would work and we would be excited about it. This is not the case at 41 Marvin and we are incredibly disappointed that the owners and architect could not find a way to create a home that reflected the history and character of this town, street and existing home at 41 Marvin. We are sad to see the loss of another "non-historic" historic home in Los Altos.

We are opposed to the proposed development at 41 Marvin Avenue.

Suzanne and Chris Kasso
90 Marvin Ave

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#); [Ramakrishnan, Erik](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin Avenue comments
Date: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 11:19:52 AM
Attachments: [Recommendations to DRC.docx](#)

From: Jon Baer
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 11:17 AM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Guido Persicone <[gpsericone@losaltosca.gov](mailto:gpersicone@losaltosca.gov)>
Subject: 41 Marvin Avenue comments

Below and attached are my comments as regard the subject property.

I am always delighted when I hear that people move to Los Altos because of the charm and character of the town and the neighborhood where they choose to live. What has continued to shock and disappoint me is how many of those same people tear down and destroy exactly the elements in a neighborhood that provide that charm and character. It is unfortunate, bordering on tragic, that this applicant, who bought a 100 plus year old house that is an iconic landmark for the neighborhood, has chosen to tear it down instead of finding a suitable way to remodel it to meet their needs.

While I am disappointed that the current owners want to tear down a charming historic home that adds so much to the neighborhood, if a new house is built it should be a net add to the community. The current design does not achieve that goal. It is not a house that fits the neighborhood and really is not a house that is appropriate for Los Altos. If the homeowners are wedded to the current design they should look for a suitable lot in Los Altos Hills or another city where this particular design would be more appropriate.

The design as proposed presents a number of challenges in terms of neighborhood compatibility and fit with the design review guidelines. I would recommend that DRC not approve the proposed design and provide specific direction to the applicant on the major changes required before it returns to the commission. Should the applicant be unwilling to make those necessary changes I would recommend that the DRC deny the application.

There are a number of specific issues with the design as follows:

Neighborhood compatibility-while a diverse neighborhood, most if not all the houses have elements of traditional style to them that is not reflected in the proposed design. The neighborhood two story houses all feel more horizontal with a breakup of the two story volume to reduce verticality. The front elevation of the proposed project has tall panels and tall windows which exacerbates the two story vertical appearance. The metal roof is such a big change that adding more metal elements (windows, railings etc.) exacerbates the abrupt change from neighboring houses.

The roof extension over the balcony also makes the house appear unbalanced, at best.

Several of the answers to questions in the neighborhood compatibility worksheet have been answered incorrectly by the applicant. Answer to question #5 in neighborhood compatibility document should be that most roofs are shake or tile, there is almost no metal roofing in the immediate neighborhood. Question #7 on neighborhood style should have been answered as Yes—while the homes are diverse in style most homes are traditional with horizontal volume that helps break up the two story massing.

Architectural integrity—there is a lack of organization of design between first and second floor—windows and doors which do not align in any organized way, multiple different types of windows on any single elevation, all of which contribute to a lack of architectural cohesiveness. This is also a lack of balanced design between first and second floor, and lack of human scale with first floor windows taller than those on the second floor. Overall the placement of windows, doors, and roof peaks lack cohesiveness. All ridges are asymmetrical which is jarring as this style is not used in the neighborhood. The garage, with its symmetrical roof actually does work, but it is inconsistent with the asymmetrical (and inappropriate) design of the main house.

While modern house designs are an acceptable design choice, modern design does not mean lack of organization and a consistent style. By comparison the modern house at 235 Marvin exhibits a much better executed design while blending in with other adjacent houses.

Bulk and mass—the main ridge on second floor is parallel with long axis of house, creating the feel of big shoulders even though the design meets daylight plane. This makes the second floor more intrusive on the neighborhood. Roof overhang on the deck further exacerbates the issue. This is a high visibility corner location where two primary elevations are visible. The second story and the two story roof impacts need to be better addressed with changes to the design.

Privacy—a very large deck on the south elevation creates potential privacy and noise issues for both the next door neighbor and one across street. While perhaps not a significant impact today, when either property is redeveloped the impacts will be greater.

Presentation—eye level drawings are needed so we can see what the building looks like for people in neighborhood. Flyover perspectives do not provide these necessary insights.

Staff report—while on pages 2-4 of the staff report the character of the neighborhood is correctly described as follows:

*“The exterior materials commonly used include stucco and wood siding and wood trim accents. Roof forms are mostly intermediately pitched side gables with composition and tile shingles, apart from Spanish tile roofing on 90 Marvin Avenue and 80 Pepper Avenue. The residences have **low scale horizontal eave lines** with wall plates that appear to be between eight to nine feet in height and garages that face the street. The **neighborhood character appears consistent through rustic materials, similar house scale, and roof forms.** The homes appear to have been remodeled and altered throughout different periods of time but **maintain a similar neighborhood character.** Landscapes in the front consist of a variety of trees, including mature street trees.*

Unfortunately the applicant's project is incorrectly characterized by staff as being appropriate and consistent with the neighborhood, which it isn't:

*"The proposed project uses a more contemporary architectural style and materials than those found in the surrounding neighborhood but is **designed to relate to the houses in the immediate vicinity**. The project incorporates design elements that are found in the neighborhood such as a low-pitched hipped roof and defined recessed entry. The detailing and materials of the structure reflect a high level of quality and appropriate relationship to the rustic qualities of the area. The proposed building materials, which include cement plaster and cedar siding, steel columns, metal fabricated planters, redwood trim, aluminum windows, metal doors and garage door, and standing seam metal roof, are integral to the design. Overall, the design incorporates a contemporary style with simple elements and quality materials that **produce a thoughtful and integrated appearance that is compatible with the character of the area**. According to the Residential Design Guidelines, a house should be designed to fit the lot and **should not result in a home that stands out in the neighborhood**."*

The analysis in the staff report is flawed and does not square with the specific design of this application as evidenced above. This issue is found in other parts of the staff report as well, including the discussion of how the project reduces mass and bulk, which ignores a number of design issues with the roof, windows and doors as previously noted in my above remarks.

Finally while outside the purview of DRC I want to go on record that I believe the historic assessment of this property needed to be reviewed and received sign off/approval from the Historical Commission. The County assessor's office records indicate that this house was built in 1905, which if correct, makes it an important accessory structure for City landmark #1 located on Pepper Drive. The consultant report does not state with any certainty what date the subject house was built, which leaves the historic importance of the building unanswered.

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin Ave Project
Date: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:00:42 AM

From: Jessica Agarwal
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 10:07 AM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Naveen Agarwal
Subject: 41 Marvin Ave Project

Dear Los Altos Design Commission,

We are residents of 50 Marvin Ave, Los Altos and have lived here for 19 years. We love our city, street and neighbors. Marvin is a laid back street and all our neighbors meet under a big oak tree every year. We care about our neighbors and their well being.

We have talked to our neighbors at 41 Marvin. We understand their situation and their house design issue is a classic case of a street torn in doing the right thing in helping them to upgrade - to meet their needs, yet not lose the very character of the street that's defined by the very house they live in. Their house is on the corner that sets the mood for the entire street. All houses on that part of Marvin Ave have their little personalities but they are all part of a family. When we have visitors, they always like the uniformity of size and the laid back style of our street. The proposed design we believe is way too imposingly contemporary and will take a beautifully done period house and convert into a rather out-of-place corner home.

We as neighbors wish nothing but best to our neighbors yet feel they should try to integrate the new house in more the current style. There is a lot that can be achieved by human ingenuity. After all we live in a place known for innovation. How can the design be better integrated. How can modern and old be blended to enhance the character of the street vs fracture it?

We ourselves are renovating our place. We did not add a floor. We did not change much of the exterior. Our next door house is a sister house and our actions can enhance the value and ambience of both our houses. Our decisions were based on keeping the character of our small neighborhood.

We strongly urge our neighbors to upgrade, yet upgrade with a design that blends the street. The current design in our opinion is too radically different and will hurt the character and worse may lead to more divergent vs integrative architecture for our street in years to come, therefore we can't fully support the current design proposal as it's been shared to us for 41 Marvin.

Thanks.

Jessica & Naveen Agarwal
50 Marvin Ave.

650-714-7210

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: Support for 41 Marvin Ave Design
Date: Monday, August 2, 2021 5:32:35 PM
Attachments: [Screen Shot 2021-08-01 at 4.01.25 PM.png](#)
[Screen Shot 2021-08-01 at 4.01.03 PM.png](#)

From: Tom Burns <tanddburns@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 5:15 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Support for 41 Marvin Ave Design

Dear Los Altos Design Review Committee:

Members of our family have been residents of Los Altos since 1967 and have welcomed the vast majority of changes being proposed in our town. I have recently studied the plans published on the city's website for the new home being proposed at 41 Marvin Ave. We understand that the new home footprint is similar to the current 2-story building being replaced and lower in height. This means the new home will have less mass and bulk than the current home. We have also walked by the property location and have looked at the design proposal posted at the front gate as it relates to the rest of the property and the surrounding neighborhood. We really love the design of the front of the home; I have copied the pictures from the designs the home owner has submitted. It looks very elegant and deserving of the diverse neighborhood and wooded corner lot. The color scheme and placement of the doors and windows makes it very interesting and breaks up the height of the building. The metal roof being proposed is also an excellent idea as we try to make all our homes safe from wild fires. We particularly like the view of the proposed new home from the corner of the lot. It fits the brick maze and the oak trees in the front. We believe this home design shows amazing cohesiveness and consideration for neighborhood compatibility and privacy. That said, most of the home is not visible from the street as it is surrounded by mature trees. We would recommend the Los Altos Design Review Committee to pass the design of this new home for 41 Marvin Ave. As more homes are sold in Los Altos, we hope they are all built with the same level of detail and thoughtfulness shown in this home. Thanks,

Bernice Reynolds
Deborah Burns
Thomas Burns
681 Meadow Lane
Los Altos, CA 94022





From: [Gayle Dilley](#)
To: [Los Altos Design Review Commission](#); [Sean Gallegos](#); [Guido Persicone](#)
Subject: 41 Marvin Avenue Design Review August 4
Date: Monday, August 2, 2021 6:32:28 PM

Los Altos Design Review Committee:

My husband and I have owned and lived at 44 Marvin for 25 years. We are directly across the street from 41 Marvin.

Marvin Avenue is a special street. Ask any realtor in the area and they will tell you it is highly sought after. This is mostly due to its charm. People come to see the houses and yards by car and on foot. From my front window, I see them pausing the longest at 41. The view is a charming, well maintained craftsman house surrounded by oak trees and a picket fence. It is also in a prominent location on a turn in the street allowing for viewing a large yard. This house is a huge piece of the charm of this neighborhood.

Being close to downtown, Marvin Ave neighbors are often seen walking to the store or out to dinner. They often stop and talk. A summer picnic is hosted each year at 60 Marvin under the big oak tree. Our neighbors are friendly and supportive of one another. It is understandable they want to support this neighbor.

I have wanted stay quiet about this project for the same reason. The Pandyas are a nice family and our neighbors. I don't want to upset anyone. However, the plans are concerning. Other neighbors share the concerns – even some who have publicly expressed support. This design review process is in place for discussion and consideration. I appreciate this opportunity and the time members of the design review committee spend on this.

The proposed house is of modern style, with glass, steel, and reinforced concrete elements. It would be elementally different and larger than all existing houses on the street. It would be positioned 17 feet closer to the street on one side and 7 feet closer on the other. It would have a large balcony overlooking the street. It would have a big impact to the character of our neighborhood especially being on a prominent corner.

The view of the existing house is obscured by a 50 foot redwood tree on the south side. This redwood is slated for removal as well as the crepe myrtle next to it. The other tree that softens the corner view is a 34" diameter live oak that has been called out as unhealthy and recommended for removal by the arborist. It is not currently on the list for removal. With 6 trees slated for removal, 1 is planned in the landscape design.

I believe in property rights and welcome progress. I find it unfortunate to be in the position of not being in favor of this project.

41 Marvin was the first house on our street. The surrounding houses were designed and built at various times but all were influenced by this beautiful old craftsman. It would be sorely missed and the neighborhood would lose cohesiveness and some of its charm if this house is torn down and replaced by something so different from the other homes.

I would like to see a design that fits better in this neighborhood, but if the design team determines this project should go on, a couple of items could help with the impact. I might suggest: A close review of the elements looking for potential to soften the design and bulk; A reduction or removal of the upper balcony; More trees planted to soften the look from the street.

I am opposed to the current proposal for 41 Marvin.

Sincerely,

Gayle G Dilley

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: [External Sender]item 5-41 Marvin avenue
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 12:54:31 PM

From: George K. Hill <ghill@interorealestate.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 12:48 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>; Guido Persicone <gpersicone@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: [External Sender]item 5-41 Marvin avenue

Dear Commissioners-

I am not supportive of the plans as proposed for this house. This is not a personal issue but one of disagreement in the style of a new home at 41 Marvin Avenue. The proposed style is not in keeping with the other homes in the immediate neighborhood.

41 Marvin is a local landmark home that I believe is worthy of being saved. I would much prefer the homeowners remodel and expand the structure instead of tearing it down.

Marvin Avenue is a close knit community that supports our neighbors and neighborhood. But in this case what is being proposed is not compatible with the neighborhood. As my wife and I live 4 houses away from the subject property, we will be directly impacted by whatever changes are made to the house. We urge the commission to not approve this application.

George 135 Marvin Avenue



George Hill

650-823-5542

CA BRE# 00368799



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From: [Katrina Sherer](#)
To: [Los Altos Design Review Commission](#); [Sean Gallegos](#); [Guido Persicone](#)
Subject: 41 Marvin Ave comments
Date: Monday, August 2, 2021 6:33:26 PM

August 2nd, 2021
24 Marvin Ave

To whom it may concern,

We bought our home at 24 Marvin Ave 25 years ago in 1996 and moved here with our daughters, who were both under 2 years old at the time. We chose to buy on Marvin Ave as it was, and is, a street filled with charm and character with several old Los Altos homes setting the tone. Our home was built in 1935 and sits across the street and one house over from 41 Marvin. In fact, 4 of the 8 homes immediately surrounding 41 Marvin were built between 1905 and 1938. If you include 41 Marvin, 5 of the 9 houses at the top end of Marvin were built prior to 1938, giving the street a truly lovely feeling. Whilst Marvin Ave overall has an eclectic mix of architecture, the predominant feel at the top end of Marvin is one of old world charm. Given this character, we have worked hard to renovate and add in ways that are in harmony with our environment: we added a picket fence to mirror the charm of 41 Marvin and a front porch that blends with the architecture of our old home and also the surrounding homes.

We first saw at the plans for 41 Marvin Ave in July, 2021 and are truly shocked at the proposed structure. Whilst we agree with the premise that home owners have the right to build a new house, we feel strongly, as long term neighbors and homeowners, that we also have rights. We started the process of looking at the plans for 41 Marvin by first looking at the Los Altos Design Review guidelines. Firstly, in order to avoid potential issues, the City recommends that the homeowner speaks to the immediate neighbors early in the process. We were never consulted early in the process and would have much preferred to outline our concerns directly way earlier, as recommended by the city. The guidelines also state the new house should be "compatible with the surrounding neighborhood"; we feel that the proposed house at 41 Marvin could not be more different to the surrounding houses. This has put us, as neighbors directly impacted by this proposal, in the uncomfortable position of having to address this in a public forum - something that we are not choosing to do lightly or with any comfort.

We believe there are a few iconic, pivotal homes that set the character on Marvin Ave and that 41 Marvin, with its corner position and age, is the most important of these. The home may not be listed on the City's historic registry, but at over 100 years old it is without doubt an important part of the history of the neighborhood, one of the old homes built before the subdivisions that started in the Fifties. It sets the tone for this end of Marvin Ave.

As homeowners and neighbors we believe this design is simply not a fit and will truly change the aesthetics and charm of our home, street and neighborhood. We feel that, given the house is on the most visible corner, any new home built to replace the current one should work thoughtfully to compliment the overall character of the immediate neighborhood. We have always strived to be good neighbors on this very special street, and truly hope that the Pandya's can design and build their new home in a way that works for them while also being in harmony with the surrounding homes.

Unfortunately we cannot support the current proposed plans.

Katrina and Brian Sherer

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: Support for approving the design of 41 Marvin Avenue
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 9:08:12 AM

From: Lisa M. Guerra <lisa.guerra@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 1:32 AM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Hetal Pandya <hetal@edison.tech>
Subject: Support for approving the design of 41 Marvin Avenue

Attention: Design Review Commission

I have written previously in support of allowing the Pandya's 41 Marvin Avenue reconstruction project to move forward. I am glad to see that there is now agreement that the home does not have a historic designation and that the project has now moved on to the design approval phase. I am now writing to extend my support for their design.

In terms of my background, I have lived in Los Altos since 1999 and have been a Los Altos home owner since 2001. My husband and I have loved living in Los Altos and raising our two boys, who are now teens, here in this city. We were thrilled to welcome Dushyant and Hetal Pandya, friends and colleagues to Los Altos when they moved here several years ago.

We live just 4 minutes away and I have visited the Pandya home multiple times and have seen their plans for rebuilding. Their plans would enable them to expand living space, increase comfort, maintainability, function, and usability of the space, and create a home that can support a multi-generational family. Given the significant improvement to the property, the new home would increase property value of the home and, by extension, the overall neighborhood. In addition, a few key features of the new design include:

- Neighborhood feel and charm is retained by special effort to understand and survey styles of neighboring homes, and then by thoughtful design and color choices, and also by the fact that they are keeping the unique maze feature that is visible from the street
- Privacy for neighbors is kept intact by retaining the current fence footprint and all mature landscape trees.
- Attractive street-facing front of the home, that incorporates tiered levels with upper story set back. Design choices including window placement add interest to the home and have a nice design aesthetic.

I would like to extend my support for the project and I hope the commission can quickly resolve outstanding issues and approve the plans so that the Pandyas can

move forward in improving their home and enjoying their time in Los Altos.

Thank you,

-- Lisa Guerra

146 Frederick Court, Los Altos, CA

From: [Hetal Pandya](#)
To: [Guido Persicone](#); [Jon Biggs](#); [Sean Gallegos](#); [Los Altos Design Review Commission](#)
Cc: [Eugene Sakai](#); [Dushyant Pandya](#); [Alessandra Brown](#)
Subject: Response to our 41 Marvin Neighbors concerns Part -1
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 3:36:31 PM

Hi Jon, Guido, and Sean-

We have made sure to address concerns our neighbors have about the neighborhood context, diverse home styles, mass, bulk and privacy. Please let us know if you have any other areas you or the design review commissioners would like us to address.

It was big file due to neighborhood pictures and I had to load it to a one drive in the cloud. Please let me know if you cannot access it.

<https://1drv.ms/w/s!AnsXJjWsDigggrmxvB5v6fnlEUI>

Thanks,

Hetal

41 Marvin Ave

Our response to the objections from Mr. Baer, Ms. Kasso and others. Regarding the historic nature of the current home, we defer to the multiple experts that the city has independently hired and that have over a two-year extensive research agreed the home is not historic. Also, the current home on 41 Marvin is a very different home than 40 Marvin, 44 Marvin, 24 Marvin, 21 Marvin. Basically, there is no uniformity in our immediate neighbors to our current home and no theme of homes in our neighborhood.

Mr. Baer's Letter-

Neighborhood compatibility-while a diverse neighborhood, most if not all the houses have elements of traditional style (1) to them that is not reflected in the proposed design. The neighborhood two story houses all feel more horizontal with a breakup of the two story volume to reduce verticality. The front elevation of the proposed project has tall panels and tall windows which exacerbates the two story vertical appearance (2). The metal roof is such a big change that adding more metal elements (windows, railings etc.) exacerbates the abrupt change from neighboring houses (3). The roof extension over the balcony also makes the house appear unbalanced, at best. (6)

Several of the answers to questions in the neighborhood compatibility worksheet have been answered incorrectly by the applicant. Answer to question #5 in neighborhood compatibility document should be that most roofs are shake or tile, there is almost no metal roofing in the immediate neighborhood. Question #7 on neighborhood style should have been answered as Yes- while the homes are diverse in style most homes are traditional with horizontal volume that helps break up the two story massing. (4)(5)

41 Marvin's Response-

Our city officials work hard to be experts in this area of neighborhood compatibility. We absolutely agree with the city's assessment of the neighborhood being a diverse character neighborhood and our proposed home setting and lot description. The Staff report and many neighborhood comments have said,

Overall, the design incorporates a contemporary style with simple elements and quality materials that produce a thoughtful and integrated appearance that is compatible with the character of the area.

1. Please note that all the immediate homes have no uniformity when compared to 41 Marvin. As the neighborhood does incorporate multiple "traditional style" homes, this is not meant to be a restriction for future homes in an already defined **diverse character** neighborhood. By definition, diversity means the condition of having or being composed of different elements; the quality or state of having many different forms, types, ideas, etc. Thus giving the freedom to incorporate architectural design already expressed in the neighborhood as well as design not yet present is a welcoming and encouraged principle as depicted in the proposed design.

We have referred to the city of Los Altos design guidelines that are maintained here.

https://www.losaltosca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/community_development/page/41321/single-family_residential_design_guidelines.pdf

Here are the pictures of our neighboring homes next to current 41 Marvin home to showcase that the claim being made by neighbors from 24 Marvin, 44 Marvin, and 50 Marvin is inconsistent to what is actually present in the neighborhood.



90 Marvin Ave

44 Marvin Ave

Current 41 Marvin Ave



Neighbors Homes

Do not look like the current 41 Marvin home. There is no uniformity



80 Pepper ave

21 Marvin Ave

41 Marvin Ave

101 Marvin Ave



Neighbors Homes

Based on the Los Altos city staff report, Marvin and Pepper are a Diverse Character neighborhood. Some examples of immediate homes that are very different on Marvin/ Pepper neighborhood are shown below. There is no uniformity in the neighboring homes.

See pictures below of 80 Pepper Ave, 50 Marvin Ave, 44 Marvin Ave, 56 Marvin Ave, 41 Marvin Ave, 21 Marvin Ave, 90 Marvin, 101 Marvin Ave, 108 Marvin ave, 97 Pepper Ave, 115 Marvin Ave, 180 Marvin Ave, 235 Marvin Ave, 259 Marvin Ave, 228 Marvin.

The homes are immediately around 41 Marvin and are NOT uniform in size or style. On the left of 41 Marvin is 21 Marvin and in the front is 44 Marvin and 40 Marvin. All the homes are very different to each other.

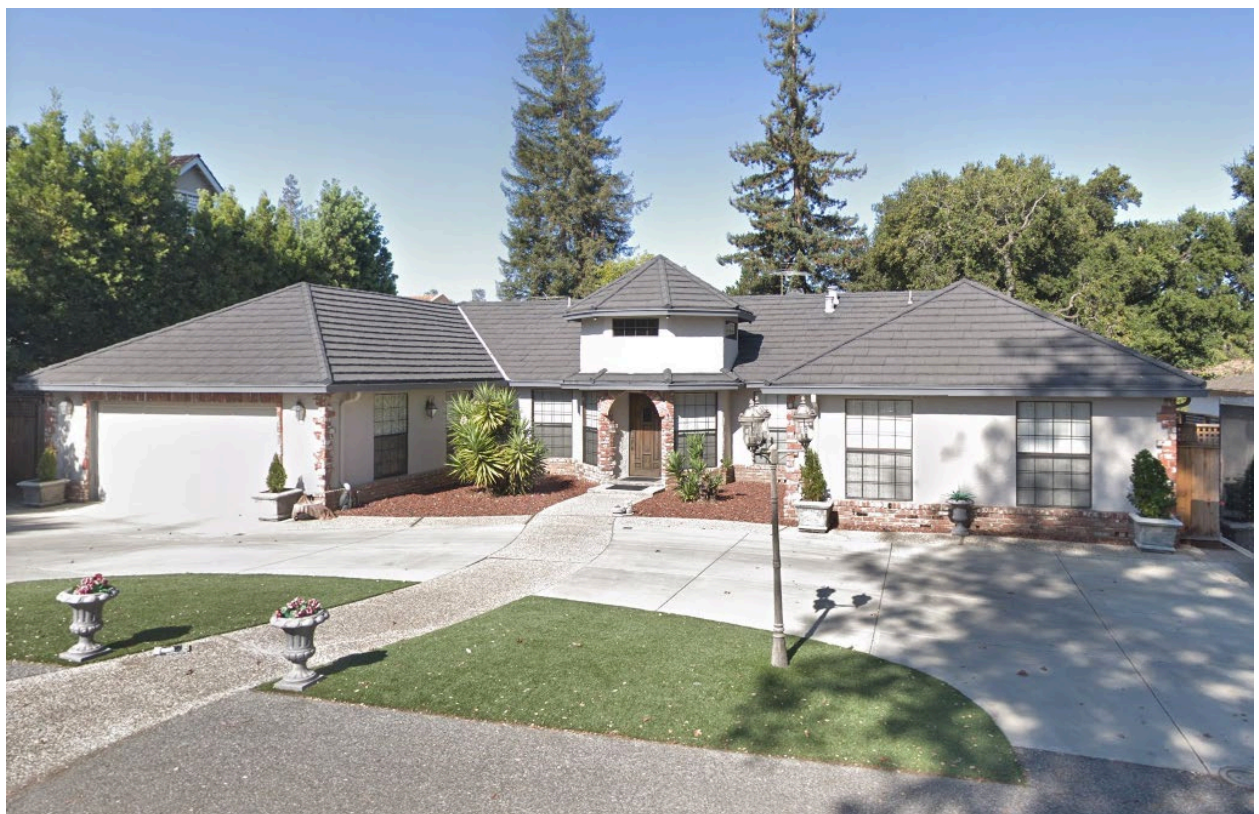




















2. While it is pointed out that the front elevation includes tall windows (vertical enhancement), it is also the only instance of this verticality which can be similarly seen across many neighboring homes with the tall entry features. The remainder of the home however does the opposite through horizontal shifts in material, volume depth, shallow roof slopes, and varying termination heights of architectural features.
 1. The front design with glass windows breaks up the appearance of the two story as many neighbors have mentioned to us AND also this is what is recommended in the design guide by the city of Los Altos. Most of the proposed home's height is not visible because of the trees and mature greens in the front yard. See attached pictures.



“The roof extension over the balcony also makes the house appear unbalanced” “ there is almost no metal roofing in the immediate neighborhood”

3. It may be that the more common roof material used in the neighborhood is that of tile or shingles, however there are existing examples of homes utilizing metal roofs. Multiple new homes on Pepper Drive/ Eleanor/Marvin have metal roofs.

a. **97 Pepper Dr.** : current 2 story residence with a metal roof only about 350 feet away from the proposed new home on Marvin Ave. This is the only home on Pepper Drive (others seen on adjacent streets) that has a metal roof and it blends in perfectly in the **diverse neighborhood**.



b. Another neighborhood house on Marvin with the metal roof is 259 Marvin Ave.



c. The city has also recently allowed a brand new home shown below on 260 Eleanor Ave that T's into Hawthorne Ave with a metal roof that works beautifully in this diverse neighborhood.



4. Neighborhood Diversity: Within 500 feet of 41 Marvin Ave, there are numerous distinctly different houses that add to the beauty of and diversity of this integrated neighborhood. Three houses on the same side of 41 Marvin Ave are distinctly different. (Pictures of 80 Pepper Dr, 21 Marvin Ave, 41 Marvin Ave)



a. Additional houses with distinct and different architectures within the neighborhood
108 Marvin



- b. There is evidence of many diverse neighborhoods in Los Altos where there is only one new modern home constructed with a metal roof. We believe this works beautifully in a diverse neighborhood.

5. We would like to ask the DRC to come check out the homes on 21 Marvin, and 55 Pepper (probably the tallest home in the city) that is within 500 feet of 41 Marvin. These homes are extremely tall, vertical, and big in mass. They are not set back as per current city rules due to their age of construction. So we believe we have answered question #7 correctly. We nor the Los Altos city planners agree that all the homes are horizontally placed and all traditional. Example 80 Pepper that is only 2 doors down from 41 Marvin is a prime example of a very different architecture in our neighborhood and on a very prominent flag lot.



6. The roof over the proposed balcony does not create unbalance nor does it add to the bulk as its over open balcony space, but in fact adds interest to the home and the design. We have had multiple neighbors inform us that they love the design of the home.

Architectural integrity-there is a lack of organization of design between first and second floor-windows and doors which do not align in any organized way, multiple different types of windows on any single elevation, all of which contribute to a lack of architectural cohesiveness. This is also a lack of balanced design between first and second floor, and lack of human scale with first floor windows taller than those on the second floor. Overall the placement of windows, doors, and roof peaks lack cohesiveness.(1) All ridges are asymmetrical which is jarring as this style is not used in the neighborhood. The garage, with its symmetrical roof actually does work, but it is inconsistent with the asymmetrical (and inappropriate) design of the main house.(2)

While modern house designs are an acceptable design choice, modern design does not mean lack of organization and a consistent style. By comparison the modern house at 235 Marvin exhibits a much better executed design while blending in with other adjacent houses.(3)

41 Marvin Response-

The goal here is to abide by all city rules and regulations and build a home that is suitable for this lot that has the iconic and unique brick maze and lovely oak trees.

1. If we are to define “alignment” and “organization”, there are too many interpretations of what may be meant. In generalized terms, we can agree that the intent is “the proper positioning or arrangement in relation to one another” “with a particular purpose and function.” Just because a window is not equally spaced does not mean there is no alignment or organization. The strategy behind door/window placement goes further into the 3-dimensional space to accommodate for the human experience rather than an arbitrary 2 dimensional elevation. That is exactly what has been proposed with the asymmetrical placement of doors and windows, to provide a cohesive functional yet beautiful design.
2. Asymmetry is more common than one may realize. Almost every home in the neighborhood (and elsewhere) has some version of asymmetry. Either in floor plan or elevation, small or large details, interior or exterior spaces, 100% symmetry is not only uncommon but uninteresting. As the existing context across the neighborhood is all unique and individualistic, the proposed asymmetrical design not only compliments but draws intrigue to all who pass through. As the roof slopes are proposed asymmetrical, they still maintain an alignment between the location of the ridges at the upper and lower levels.
3. 235 Marvin is indeed a beautiful design with their intentional window placements and asymmetrical material alignments. In fact, this house shares some common features with that of the proposed design. The asymmetrical placed overhang at the garage is comparable to the asymmetrical roof ridge placement over the front entry. While this house aligns the overhang with the side of the garage door, the roof ridge is directly aligned with the right side of the entry glazing. The tall vertical window placement on the house may not be directly aligned with any other window at the front elevation but instead relates to the interior experience at the stairwell. This is similar to the tall windows in the front room of the proposed design. These are just a few or many other comparisons that show similarity rather than difference.



Bulk and mass-the main ridge on second floor is parallel with long axis of house, creating the feel of big shoulders even though the design meets daylight plane. This makes the second floor more intrusive on the neighborhood. Roof overhang on the deck further exacerbates the issue. **(1)** This is a high visibility corner location where two primary elevations are visible. The second story and the two story roof impacts need to be better addressed with changes to the design **(2)**

41 Marvin Response-

We are going to go over this in our presentation with examples of homes in our vicinity. We will show you how the proposed home is in a similar footprint to the existing home and lower in height. The bulk, mass, and height are actually LESS than the current home and neighboring homes.

1. If you look at the current home (picture below) from the corner of the street, you see a similar bulk and mass that you would in the proposed home. Corner homes cannot add big trees or fences on the corner as it obstructs the view of the traffic.



2. The second floor overhang at the balcony may be more visible from the street views but in fact is highlighting the view with an architectural feature that draws intrigue. As the corner lot does not only have to consider views from 1 street side but rather 2, the architectural design of this overhang provides the visual connection across all elevations to further create design cohesion and neighborhood compatibility.

Privacy-a very large deck on the south elevation creates potential privacy and noise issues for both the next door neighbor and one across street. While perhaps not a significant impact today, when either property is redeveloped the impacts will be greater.

41 Marvin Response-

We have done a privacy study from various angles of the neighboring homes. Our immediate property neighbors with whom we share boundaries have liked our plans and we will present how the balcony is not visible to any neighbors from their current homes/ yards/ everyday spaces.

1. We have added a picture here from the south side of the street to show how the balcony is covered from the different sides- especially the view from the Kasso property located on 90 Marvin ave.

VIEW FROM south side where 90 MARVIN AVE (Kasso residence) is located, directly in front of the proposed balcony. The trees completely cover the view from the street or any property in front.



The experts in our city who approve and review plans on a regular basis approve of the balcony and the current trees that cover it from the street on the south side.

Los Altos City Staff notes-

On the front (south) side elevation, there are five windows, a french door with a side light, and a three-panel siding door. The windows are oriented toward the public right-of-way, and there are no potential privacy impacts from the windows. The french door is located in bedroom No. 2 and the sliding door is located in the master bedroom. The two doors exit onto a large balcony, which is 27.25 feet wide and a depth between 4.75 feet and 13 feet and primarily faces the public right-of-way with a secondary view toward the interior side yard and house at 101 Marvin Avenue. The balcony size does not comply with the four-foot maximum balcony depth recommended in the Residential Design Guidelines, and it is active in nature due to its depth. While the balcony has a second story setback of 23.25 feet, there may be a perception of potential privacy impacts to the adjacent properties. However, the existing evergreen screening along the side property line and the existing mature trees along the side property line will further contribute to a reasonable degree of privacy for the adjacent properties. Therefore, the front elevation maintains a reasonable degree of privacy.

The proposed structure's height, elevation and placement do not contribute to increased privacy impacts to adjoining properties, and any potential privacy impacts are addressed through design or evergreen screening to diminish potential privacy impacts.

From: blmaltos@yahoo.com
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: 41 Marvin Ave
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 4:56:18 PM

The loss of this vintage home will change the profile of this immediate neighborhood. If any new project is approved, I hope it would include SOME of the same special character, design and style. Bob McCorkle 105 Marvin

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: Support 41 Marvin - Los Altos project
Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 8:05:17 AM

From: Gretchen Swall <gretchenswall@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 8:23 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Support 41 Marvin - Los Altos project

Dear Los Altos Design Review Committee,

We are a direct neighbor of 41 Marvin and have been residing in the neighborhood for the last 18 years. The neighborhood is extremely diverse made up many homes that are different in styles and size.

We have reviewed the design of the home being proposed for 41 Marvin and love the new design, with the metal roof, the balcony, the green roof and the front arrangement of the windows. We recommend the design committee approve their design without any changes.

The design of the new home has more than complied to the city laws of building a new home around:

1. Neighborhood compatibility
2. Reduced Bulk and Mass
3. Increased Privacy
4. Design cohesiveness
5. Architectural Integrity

I believe this home will increase the overall value and beauty of homes in the neighborhood. I would know as I believe all the homes in this neighborhood as they are sold will go through a rebuilding period.

Our city hires the best planners that vet the projects in excruciating details and give their time and attention to providing their staff comments. **I think it is a waste of city resources to continuously double guess our city planners AND when so many neighbors of 41 Marvin have provided support for their project and design.** I would also like to draw your attention to our own **City Planner, Sean Gallegos' report** for these important points around the proposed design of this home that shows that this homeowner has complied with the design rules in Los Altos:

<Copied from the City Planner's report for 41 Marvin Home>

Overall, the design incorporates a contemporary style with simple elements and quality materials that produce a thoughtful and integrated appearance that is compatible with the character of the area.

The architectural design of the structure, including colors, materials and design elements, is compatible with surrounding development based on General Plan Land Use Policy 1.7 of the General Plan, which requires that the City ensure that developments "compatible in the context of

surrounding neighborhoods.”

*Along the interior (east) side elevation, the building’s massing is broken up with the second floor being recessed in the first-floor roof form, a projecting balcony, green patio roof feature, variation in the wall planes using fenestration, articulation of the first and second story wall plane, the use of more than one material on the elevation to break-up vertical mass, **and increasing the front setback to 39.5 feet, where 25 feet is required.***

*Consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines, the applicant has proposed to reduce the appearance of bulk using multiple architectural features. The front (south) elevation massing is broken up with a projecting balcony, variation in the wall planes using fenestration, articulation of the first and second story wall plane, the use of more than one material on the elevation to break-up vertical mass, the use of a vertical planter, and increasing **the side setback to 20.4 feet for the first story and 20.8 feet for the second story, where 10 feet is required for the first story and 17.5 feet is required for the second story.***

Thank you for your time and we hope you do not delay the approval of this home anymore.

Best,

Gretchen Swall
108 Marvin Ave
Los Altos, CA 94022

Compass | Bay Area Sales
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650.810.5678 M

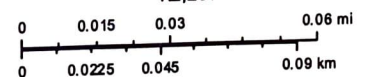
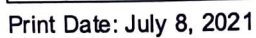
From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 marvin neighbors for and against project
Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 8:08:05 AM
Attachments: [Adobe Scan Aug 3, 2021.pdf](#)








From: Jon Baer <baerjc@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 9:41 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Guido Persicone <gpersicone@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: 41 marvin neighbors for and against project

While I do appreciate that design review is not, nor should it be, a popularity contest on the part of a neighborhood, I know that neighborhood input is an important part of the process. And while I realize you have gotten many letters in support of the project, most of those are from people who don't live in the immediate neighborhood and in some cases don't even live in town.

In reviewing the publicly stated positions of the close proximity neighbors, I have put together the attached map which indicated who is in favor of the project (yes) and who is not (no). I think the results speak for themselves-most of the neighbors who will have to look at the project from their house are opposed to it. Thx-j

ATTACHMENT B



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

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.

Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin Ave
Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 9:41:34 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Nancy Friedhoff <nanixo@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 9:26 AM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: 41 Marvin Ave

Dear Commission Members,

I am the owner of 65 Pepper Drive, just a few houses down the street from 41 Marvin Ave. I am, of course, saddened that a charming and beloved house is possibly going to be replaced, especially when there are many other "less charming" houses that could be replaced without a serious loss of character to the neighborhood.

However, I also understand that the owners have rights and desires. If the house is going to be torn down, I would ask that the commission require a house, which I know will be modern, that is more in keeping with the neighborhood. I believe that it is possible that such a house could be built while still fulfilling the needs of the owners.

41 Marvin is a very prominent lot. Any new house may be there for another 100 years. Please keep our neighborhood in mind when evaluating the proposed house.

Respectfully,

Nancy Friedhoff

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin, Los Altos
Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 2:12:24 PM

From: Patricia Foerster <pdfoerster@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: 41 Marvin, Los Altos

Dear Los Altos Design Review Committee,

I am writing as a long time Los Altos resident in support of the proposed design at 41 Marvin. I was born and raised in North Los Altos and currently live in The Highlands. Our family has owned property in Los Altos for over 65 years.

I have seen many homes sold and rebuilt during the many years I've lived here. Los Altos neighborhoods have become very diverse and each owner has invested in well thought-out plans in their home design that have added to the beauty of the neighborhood and increased in the overall value of all homes. I believe the proposed design of the home at 41 Marvin will do just that.

I recommend the Committee approve the design of this home.

Thank you,
Patricia Foerster

From: [Guido Persicone](#)
To: [Sean Gallegos](#)
Subject: FW: 41 Marvin Ave Design Review
Date: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 8:59:30 AM

From: Thomas Parker <thomasparker@dslextre.me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 4, 2021 8:48 AM
To: Los Altos Design Review Commission <DesignReviewCommission@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Guido Persicone <gpsicone@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: 41 Marvin Ave Design Review

Regarding the proposed project at 41 Marvin Avenue, I am not in favor of this design or plan. My family moved into our home (built circa 1937) at 70 Marvin Ave over 65 years ago. I've enjoyed the tasteful evolution of the property at 41 Marvin Avenue for several decades. And today, 41 Marvin Avenue now stands as the quintessential centerpiece-expression of the casual and elegant style that so attracted my parents to this charming and beguiling community and neighborhood so many decades ago. Thankfully, and in harmony over the decades, our neighboring homeowners have nudged and remodeled their homes to fit their specific needs - always seeking a harmonious blend with their neighboring homes.

The proposed redesign of 41 Marvin Avenue is a radical departure from all of the surrounding homes! Should it be constructed as described, this redesign would not blend-in with surrounding homes at all! It would literally destroy the casual, historic, old-world nature that drew my parents to this exceptional town and neighborhood back in 1956 because this pivotal and very-visible corner property sets the "tone" for our entire neighborhood! And 65+ years later, the house at 41 Marvin Ave is precious as is!

As my property has now been designated "historical" to preserve a rapidly disappearing fragment of the history of Los Altos and is to potentially be juxtaposed to this proposed radical redesign - it would at the very least create visual cacophony!

As a retired business owner and design engineer, I cannot imagine a more destructive and out-of-place redesign of our comfortable, warm and friendly neighborhood! My comments have *only* to do with the intentions to rip-out and destroy an historically significant Craftsman house - perhaps over 100 years old - with casual old-world charms and classic European-garden accents and replace it with what? A home that belongs in a more appropriate neighborhood - but definitely somewhere else.

The proposed new home design and yard modifications would forever destroy the charm that drew most of us to this unique, exceptional, and very fragile niche. It's always easy to say yes ... sometimes it takes greater courage and wisdom to say no! ... and to understand why "no" is the correct response!

I am hereby on record saying **no** to this design!!

Thomas Parker
70 Marvin Ave.
Los Altos, CA 94022