



DATE: February 16, 2022

AGENDA ITEM # 3

TO: Design Review Commission
FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: SC20-0007, 48 Pasa Robles Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve design review application SC20-0007 subject to the findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a design review application for a two-story addition to an existing one-story house. The project includes a 715.1 square-foot addition at the second story. The following table summarizes the project's technical details:

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:	Single-Family, Residential
ZONING:	R1-10
PARCEL SIZE:	6,193.1 square feet
MATERIALS:	Composition shingle roof, smooth stucco and horizontal hardie board siding, shutters, wood trim, and aluminum clad wood windows

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
COVERAGE:	1,653.3 square feet	1,635.3 square feet	1,858 square feet
FLOOR AREA:			
First floor	1,452.3 square feet	1,452.3 square feet	
Second floor	-	715.1 square feet	
Total	1,452 square feet	2,167.4 square feet	2,167.7 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	31.2 feet	31.2 feet	25 feet
Rear	43.75 feet	43.75 feet	25 feet
Right side (1 st /2 nd)	4.6 feet/-	4.6 feet/12.5 feet	5 feet/12.5 feet
Left side (1 st /2 nd)	9.2 feet/-	9.2 feet/12.5 feet	5 feet/12.5 feet
HEIGHT:	15.6 feet	24.1 feet	27 feet

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Context

The subject property is a narrow lot in a Diverse Character Neighborhood as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines. Pasa Robles Avenue is a neighborhood with a variety of architectural styles. The street mainly consists of single-story houses, however, two-story houses can be found in the immediate vicinity. The landscape along the street is varied with no distinct street tree pattern.

Zoning Compliance

The existing house is non-conforming due to having a four-foot, eight-inch left interior side setback, where a five-foot setback is required in the R1-10 (Single-Family) zoning district. Since the project will not eliminate or replace more than 50 percent of the floor area, the non-conforming setback can be maintained.

DISCUSSION

Design Review

According to the Design Guidelines, in Diverse Character Neighborhoods, good neighbor design has its own design integrity while incorporating some design elements and materials found in the neighborhood.

The proposed project will demolish approximately 715 square feet of the existing first story roof form, and a 715 square-foot second story addition will be added to the structure. The second story addition will permit the new stairwell, a new master bedroom, master bathroom, walk-in closet, bedroom No. 2 and bathroom No. 2. The project will include a new pergola structure along the rear elevation.

The proposed two-story addition maintains a traditional style that uses design elements and materials that are compatible with the existing house and neighborhood. The project uses design elements such as gable roof forms, articulated massing, low-pitched roof, and high-quality materials that are compatible with the neighborhood. The project does a good job of integrating the gable roof form from the neighborhood while still establishing its own design integrity. The building materials include composition shingle roof, smooth stucco and horizontal hardie board siding, shutters, wood trim, and aluminum clad wood windows, are compatible with the design style and relate to the surrounding area. A materials board is provided as Attachment C.

In staff's initial review of the application, staff raised concerns that the stairwell element along the right elevation was not well integrated into the overall composition of the structure. The feature created an awkward and bulky feature, which did not result in an integrated design. The stairwell should be modified and improved upon to improve its integration into the overall design. The applicant worked with staff and the stairwell has gone through several iterations to reduce its height and mass. The proposal extends the existing roof eave up to the mass, creating a visual break to help reduce the appearance of mass. The small-scale stairwell feature has improved its integration by minimizing scale of the structure and the variation in roof forms, and simplifying the window pattern.

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 proposed project is sensitive to the scale of the neighborhood and incorporates similar massing found within the neighborhood context. The proposed eight-foot tall second story wall plate is consistent with the eight-foot to nine-foot plate heights of existing residences in the neighborhood.

The height of the addition is 20 feet, which is in scale with other houses within the surrounding neighborhood. With the low eight-foot-tall plate height for the second story, staff believes the addition will be adequately screened with trees and various landscaping and several mature trees that line the side and the rear of the property. Overall, the two-story design is well proportioned to reduce any perception of excessive bulk and mass, and it is an appropriate design within this context.

Privacy

With regards to privacy, the Residential Design Guidelines are most concerned with second story sight lines having direct line of sight into neighboring yards and residences, especially at the rear elevations. Some visual impacts may occur if they are found to avoid unreasonable interference with views and privacy impacts.

On the left (west) side of the second story, there are three small windows: one two-pane window in the master bathroom, and two windows in the master bedroom. The windows have four-foot, eight-inch sill heights. As designed, the second story windowsill heights and the potential views do not create unreasonable privacy impacts.

On the right (east) side of the house, there two windows at the second story and one set of large sized windows for a stairwell approximately about 1.5 stories above grade. At the second story there is one small window in bedroom No. 2 and one small window in bathroom No. 2, and the sill heights are four feet, six inches. The second story windows have four-foot, eight-inch sill heights. As designed, the second story windowsill heights and the potential views do not create unreasonable privacy impacts. As designed, the stairwell windows have a two-foot, eight-inch sill height, which potentially creates privacy impacts. However, the proposed evergreen screening along the right-side property line will reduce privacy impacts to a reasonable degree of privacy for the adjacent property. Therefore, as designed, staff finds that the project maintains a reasonable degree of privacy along the right elevation.

Along the rear (south) second story elevation, there is one large three panel window in the master bedroom with a two-foot, two-inch sill height. Existing and proposed evergreen screening trees along the side yards, and sixteen trees in the rear yard provides screening to obscure sight lines and maintain a reasonable degree of privacy. Due to the right interior side yard setback of 15.2 feet, left interior side yard setback of 26.1 feet and the rear yard setback of 61.5.5 feet and existing and proposed evergreen screening, the rear facing windows do not create any unreasonable privacy impacts.

Landscaping

There are 16 trees on the property, and the applicant is requesting to retain all trees. A complete list of the on-site trees and immediately adjacent trees on adjacent properties is provided on Sheet AS1.1. An arborist report is provided as Attachment D.

The landscape plan also includes a variety of other shrubs and groundcover type plants throughout the site. With the existing and new trees, new landscaping and hardscape, the project meets the City's landscaping regulations and street tree guidelines. Since the project includes new landscaping area that exceeds 500 square feet, it is subject to the City's Water Efficient Landscape regulations. Overall, the existing and proposed landscaping meets the intent of the City's landscape regulations and street tree guidelines.

Environmental Review

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act because it involves the construction of an addition to an existing single-family house.

Public Notification

A public meeting notice was posted on the property and mailed to 12 nearby property owners on Pasa Robles Avenue and Del Monte Avenue. The Notification Map is included in Attachment B. The applicant has provided an outreach letter, and it is provided as Attachment E. The applicant also posted the public notice sign (24" x 36") in conformance with the Planning Division posting requirements, as shown in Attachment F.

CC: Kendra Rosenberg, Applicant/Architect
J. Davis and H. Aki, Property Owners

Attachments:

- A. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
- B. Notification Maps
- C. Materials Board
- D. Arborist Report
- E. Outreach Letter
- F. Public Notice Sign

FINDINGS

SC20-0007 – 48 Pasa Robles Avenue

With regard to the second story addition to an existing one-story, single-family home, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.050 of the Municipal Code that:

- a. The proposed addition complies with all provisions of this chapter;
- b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the propose 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

SC20-0007 – 48 Pasa Robles Avenue

GENERAL

1. Expiration

The Design Review Approval will expire on February 16, 2024, 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 January 18, 2022, except as may be modified by these conditions. The scope of work is limited to that shown on the plans and may not exceed rebuilding 50 percent of the existing floor area of the structure.

3. Evergreen Screening

Evergreen screening, minimum 15-gallon in size, shall be provided along the right (south) side property line as approved by the Community Development Director.

4. Protected Trees

Trees Nos. 1 to 17, and privacy screening shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Community Development Director.

5. 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.

6. 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.

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. Underground Utility and Fire Sprinkler Requirements

Additions exceeding fifty (50) percent of the existing living area (existing square footage calculations shall not include existing basements) and/or additions of 750 square feet or more shall trigger the undergrounding of utilities and new fire sprinklers. Additional square footage calculations shall include existing removed exterior footings and foundations being replaced and rebuilt. Any new utility service drops are pursuant to Chapter 12.68 of the Municipal Code.

9. 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

10. Conditions of Approval

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

11. 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.

12. 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."

13. Water Efficient Landscape Plan

Provide a landscape documentation package prepared by a licensed landscape professional showing how the project complies with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Regulations and include signed statements from the project's landscape professional and property owner.

14. Reach Codes

Building Permit Applications submitted on or after January 26, 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.

15. California Water Service Upgrades

You are responsible for contacting and coordinating with the California Water Service Company any water service improvements including but not limited to relocation of water meters, increasing water meter sizing or the installation of fire hydrants. The City recommends consulting with California Water Service Company as early as possible to avoid construction or inspection delays.

16. 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.

17. Underground Utility Location

Show the location of underground utilities pursuant to Chapter 12.68 of the Municipal Code. Underground utility trenches shall avoid the drip-lines of all protected trees unless approved by the project arborist and the Planning Division.

18. 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.

19. 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

20. Tree Protection

Tree protection fencing shall be installed around the driplines, or as required by the project arborist, of trees Nos. 2 to 17 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.

21. School Fee Payment

In accordance with Section 65995 of the California Government Code, and as authorized under Section 17620 of the Education Code, the property owner shall pay the established school fee for each school district the property is located in and provide receipts to the Building Division. The City of Los Altos shall provide the property owner the resulting increase in assessable space on a form approved by the school district. Payments shall be made directly to the school districts.

PRIOR TO FINAL INSPECTION

22. Landscaping Installation

All front 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.

23. Landscaping Installation and Verification

Provide a landscape Certificate of Completion, signed by the project's landscape professional and property owner, verifying that the trees, landscaping and irrigation were installed per the approved landscape documentation package

24. 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.

25. **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).