

From: [Ken Jones](#)
To: [Jia Liu](#); [Los Altos Design Review Commission](#)
Cc: [Charlie Gray](#); [Marjorie GRAY](#); [Tila Enser](#); [J.J. Enser](#)
Subject: Comments to Design Review 628 Cuesta Drive
Date: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 6:59:33 AM
Attachments: [Response to Design Review \(1\).docx](#)
[Email chain.docx](#)
[Deck deletion 3D rendering 12-9-2021 email.docx](#)

To: Los Altos Design Review

Please find attached letter and two attachments that the Design Review Commission is requested to review regarding the Design Review scheduled for March 3, 2022.

It is requested that the letter and attachments be reviewed by the design commission resulting in changing the plans to reflect prior agreement between Yun the owner of 628 Cuesta Dr. and other affected properties cc'd on this message.

The current structure has always been a concern with issues mitigated by the previous owners as the home directly overlooks our home and backyard. You will note that this is the only current two story home within our local neighborhood.

For any questions, concerns or other information please feel free to email us at this address or call 650-492-1461. We look forward to expressing our concerns at the March 2nd meeting.

Kenneth & Nancy Jones
639 Arboleda Dr, Los Altos, CA 94024

February 23, 2022
Kenneth & Nancy Jones
639 Arboleda Dr.
Los Altos, CA 94024

Los Altos Design Review Commission

Los Altos, CA 94024

Subject: Design Review Project 628 Cuesta Drive Los Altos, CA

To: Members of Los Altos Design Review Commission

From: Kenneth & Nancy Jones

Reference: A) Meeting notice dated February 16, 2022, Wednesday March 2, 2022

Reference B) Los Altos Residential Design Guidelines (undated)

Attachment A) E Mail Chain Dated 12/06/21, 12/07/21, 12/09/21

Attachment B) Rendering of proposed changes to South view included in attachment A dated 12/09/2021

It is unfortunate that we strongly disagree with the plans submitted by Yun Li regarding the remodel and addition to the subject property pursuant to Section 5.3 of Reference B Design Guidelines. As noted in Attachment A emails all parties including our adjoining neighbors pointed out that the proposed addition of the 2nd story, specifically the addition of a deck, glass entry to deck and large windows, have a direct impact on our privacy including line of sight views of our back yard, master bedroom, bath living room and family room. None of these rooms have window coverings and the open view is key to an enjoyable lifestyle in a smaller home.

The primary "screen" we have is foliage provided by a very large magnolia tree that was fully matured when we purchased the home 45 years ago. To the best of our ability, we have attempted to ensure that the tree is healthy and is professionally trimmed every 3 or 4 years. We have been told by an arborist that the tree appears to be infected with bacterial blight and verticillium wilt which requires treatment including reducing the amount of foliage to allow adequate sunlight to penetrate the leaves. This action will significantly reduce the screen provided to the Questa property and may eventually require the tree to be removed which will result in an open and clear view of our home from the Cuesta property.

The email dated 12/09/2021 specifically stated that the deck would be removed and modifications to the windows would be changed. These changes were included in the 12/09/21 email and accepted by all the parties and considered a **binding agreement by** us. The 3 D rendering also reflects large citrus trees in place to enhance our privacy. Citrus trees are slow growing and would take 10 or more years to achieve the height in the rendering. We are requesting that Design Review committee require the design to be changed to eliminate deck, glass bedroom door and reduce windows from 2 to 1 with a smaller size

Hopefully the Design Review Commission will hold the parties to our prior agreement and require changes to the design. We also understand that in the event the Commission does not feel empowered to resolve clear breach of the agreement that we may protest the decision to the city council for review.

We are looking forward to the March 2nd meeting and are grateful to the commission for the time and effort required to satisfy all parties

Respectfully,

Kenneth & Nancy Jones

650 492 1461

Attachment email chain



Ken Jones <cruisingken@gmail.com>

Dec 6,
2021,
6:02 PM

to Yun, cegcs01, Jenny, Jia, Tila, Marjorie, Charles

Yun & Bella,

Thanks very much for your quick response to our messages. We are thrilled that your efforts to insure that our privacy concerns are mitigated. Attached are a couple of quick pictures that Nancy took with her IPAD where you can see our concerns related to the proposed addition.

About 5 years ago we were anticipating the sale of the Coan's property and have been trying since that time to trim the large magnolia tree to provide blockage and at the same time to prevent overgrowth. We also planted 18 pittosporum across the back fence to attempt to increase our privacy. Over the last 5 years we have made great progress in protecting about 80% of our privacy. What we have found is that due to the lack of sunlight in the area near the magnolia has not allowed a number of the pittosporum trees to flourish thus not allowing the coverage we anticipated

We think planting the necessary vegetation now is a great idea and hopefully you can find suitable plants/trees that will fill in the "gaps" and are significantly mature to quickly enable the privacy we need. in a timely manner

We would welcome you and Jenny Zhao to directly see our concerns by visiting our home and taking a first hand view.

Best Regards,

Ken & Nancy Jones
639 Arboleda Dr.
Los Altos, CA

2 Attachments



Yun Li <muziriyun@gmail.com>

Dec 7,
2021,
8:00 AM

to me, cegcs01, Jenny, Jia, Tila, Marjorie, Charles

Hi, everyone,

Tonight we have discussed with our designer about the options, and we decided to remove the patio from the plan, we are currently working on the new design and I'll post the new rendering once we get it.

Thanks Ken so much for the photo, it's really helpful for us to evaluate the privacy issue. In your photo, there is a gap between the magnolia tree in your yard and pittosporum trees in my yard, we will patch the gap with pittosporum or similar evergreen trees to create a consistent view. In the proposed design, that big window you can see through the gap today will be relocated, and the room behind this window will be converted to a bathroom, you could expect a tiny bathroom window 5ft above the floor with frosted glass there instead of the big picture window. I'll render how the new design looks through your yard with proposed trees in a follow up email.

The 2nd story addition will be served as our master bedroom because we love direct sunlight from south side, meanwhile we also don't want our bed to be visible through the window from outside, the original plan is to place some potted trees in the patio and use the patio railing to block views, but due to the privacy concern we will drop that plan.

Best wishes,
Yun & Bella Li



Ken Jones <cruisingken@gmail.com>

Dec 7,
2021,
4:58 PM

to Yun, cegcs01, Jenny, Jia, Tila, Marjorie, Charles

Thanks for the rapid response and plans for a quick resolution. Nancy and I really appreciate your efforts to address our concerns.

I didn't mention the picture window you are replacing. Rarely was that room used over the years, if the light in the room was left on it would shine through our master bath window and into our master bedroom.

Just a note on the porch. We built a home in the Sierra mountains many years ago with a master bedroom glass door leading to a wrap around deck. Big mistake for us; we can't open the curtain in the mornings without a direct view from our neighbors. Nancy is always concerned that if we open the door for ventilation a bear may visit us. Finally, we can't remember actually walking out the door unless it is to clean the windows. We plan on replacing it with a window one of these days

We look forward to seeing the new design and are confident that you are doing the very best you can to accommodate us.

Happy Holidays,

Ken & Nancy Jones



Yun Li <muziriyun@gmail.com>

Dec 9,
2021,
8:00 AM

to me, cegcs01, Jenny, Jia, Tila, Marjorie, Charles

Hi, everyone,

We got the new design ready to share, see attached photos (view from south and view from south west) for the details. We have removed the patio and sliding door entirely and reduced the width of the window. To mitigate the privacy concerns, we will: 1) Add 3 trees on the south side of my yard to mitigate privacy impacts. 2) Install shutters on the 2nd floor window for additional privacy.

Ken, I use 3D tool to rendered the view from your backyard, existing trees could block the whole window (see Jones view before and after for the difference), you can only see the window if you step under the magnolia tree (see Jones view under Magnolia tree and with new trees for the difference). I hope this helps to understand the design.

We are looking forward to hearing from all of you about the new design, and happy holidays :-)

Best wishes,
Yun & Bella Li

6 Attachments

3D rendering of modified design as indicated in E mail dated December 9, 2021
This shows the removal of the bedroom glass door and patio.

