

Steve Benzing
12403 Fredericksburg Drive
Saratoga, CA 95070

Planning Department
January 14, 2021
Community Development Department,
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street Los Gatos, CA 95030

Re: The Cassidy residence, 16529 Marchmont Dr.

Project Description/ Letter of Justification

To Whom it May Concern:

The proposed project is for a second story addition to the existing single story residence at the subject address. This letter accompanies the submitted building plans and additional exhibits for the above referenced project, and contains descriptions of the property, the neighborhood, and how it complies with the Residential Development Standards.

EXISTING PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

The property is located on the west side of Marchmont Dr. This area was previously unincorporated County land. The immediate neighborhood consists of mainly one story single family homes, however on the entrance to Marchmont Dr. off Englewood Ave. there are quite a few new two story homes. The majority of the homes are semi-traditional farm, ranch and craftsman styled homes. 25% of the homes on Marchmont Drive are 2 story homes. The homes on either side are both one stories, as are all of the three homes across the street. Many of these homes are not as visible as they are surrounded by large trees and foliage, including multiple Redwood trees. There are also multiple two story homes on Topping Way (16520 & 16495 Topping Way) as well as all the other surrounding streets, Englewood, Hilow, and Littlefield. The house directly behind this property is one story, but is not visible due to multiple trees covering the back of the property.

The existing home is a 2,222 sq. ft. one story with a stucco exterior, 40 year composition shingle roof and wood framed windows. There is no attached garage, it is a detached unit in the back of the property with an attached Pool Room. The original garage was attached in the front of the house but at some point was converted into living space. There is no distinct architectural detailing or style to speak of. There are two trees in the front yard - one 15" diameter tree & one 8" diameter crepe myrtle, both are to remain. There is an enormous Pepper tree on the adjacent property to the east.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

The proposal includes the conversion of the existing M. Bedroom & Bath back to a two car garage, with the addition of a second story consisting of two Bedrooms, a Bath, A Laundry Room & a Master Suite. The proposed architecture will be what is commonly referred to as "Modern Farmhouse", with east coast forms and detailing, similar to the house at 16495 Topping Way. The existing first story & new second story will have features added to create this style such as shed roofs over boxed out windows. A dark grey standing seam metal roofing will be used on these sheds roof. The remainder of the house will continue with the heavy

composition shingles that currently exist on the residence. New horizontal shiplap siding on the first floor and board & batt siding on the second floor, all painted white will replace the current stucco siding. Wood framed exterior doors and windows will be black with white painted trim. The fascias, gutters and soffits will also be painted white. (See color boards for specifics)

LANDSCAPING:

Since the majority of the first floor will remain and there presently exists a concrete slab in front of the residence for the new garage door, no landscape work is proposed.

COMPLIANCE WITH RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

The proposed home specifically addresses the Residential Design Guidelines as follows:

SITE/ PLANNING: The new home is in the same location as the existing one. Grading has been kept to the minimum required for proper site drainage

HARMONY/COMPATIBILITY: The neighborhood character is somewhat smaller ranch style homes, however there are examples of other styles just a very short distance away. This neighborhood will be changing over time and the Farm house style is a classic style that does not overwhelm the surrounding styles. This mixture is evident throughout the town of Los Gatos as well as the surrounding neighborhood

SCALE AND MASS: The first floor of the proposed home is already setback over 29 feet, the second floor will be setback 4 feet further. The house has been carefully articulated with roof elevation lines and walls pushed in and out that break up each elevation. The second floors on both sides have been inset to provide additional relief. The overall height of the proposed residence is only 5'-6" feet more than the current house. Just under 25 feet.

EXTERIOR MATERIALS: High quality materials adorn this home, including the use of standing seam metal roofing to accent the front shed roofs, composition shingles to tie in with the existing shingles and the surrounding homes. The composition shingle roof is abundant throughout the neighborhood

ENERGY CONSERVATION: The house will employ high quality dual glazed, low E wood windows, ultra-high performance insulation packages and high efficiency mechanical systems for heating, cooling and domestic hot water. The new shed roofs over the boxed windows will shade the windows in the summer. Strategically placed skylights throughout the house will illuminate the interior to reduce the need for artificial lighting during the daytime. Cross ventilation is provided to allow natural cooling in order to reduce the need for A/C.

PRIVACY: The two story home does not pose any privacy issues to any adjacent neighbors. The windows that face the neighbor on the east are narrow and overlook their driveway and garage. The windows that face west are narrow and only look at the neighbors roof due to the fact the neighboring structure is built very close to the fence.

LANDSCAPING: Not Applicable

CONCLUSION:

This house has been conceived from the beginning to take the existing neighborhood into concern in terms of size, mass, & color. The exterior style, while different than the immediately surrounding homes, is consistent with the character, and blends in well, with Marchmont and the surrounding neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Steve Benzing
Architect C-17985

Cassidy Dev Rev

3/8/2021

Addendum to Justification letter May 5, 2021

1. The proposed design fits into the existing neighborhood by means of:
 - a. no change to the existing footprint – the first floor of the current home will not be changed. The pattern of the neighborhood will not change in terms of the siting of the house. The current landscaping will remain as much as construction allows.
 - b. The proposed exterior materials will be in keeping with what is currently in use on surrounding homes. The proposed design will be using wood siding, composition shingles, wood gridded windows. The current home has a stucco exterior which seems a bit out of place with the surrounding homes.
2. When designing this home, the challenge was to add a second floor onto an existing single story house and have it blend well with the immediate neighborhood. Although the surrounding nine homes are single story, down the street and in adjoining Marchmont neighborhoods there is a mixture of one & two story homes. The roof pitch was revised to be in keeping with the surrounding homes as were exterior materials. The second floor was stepped back from the exterior walls of the first floor so first floor rooflines could run thru and break up 2 story walls. This was done also to give the second floor a smaller presence. The second floor is not a square plan it was undulated to allow for the overall height to be minimized.
3. The second floor windows that are on the east and west elevations that could present a privacy issue do not. The east windows are placed so they are toward the south as much as possible and since the neighboring property extends more the north than the subject property the east Bedroom windows will only see the roof of the neighboring property. Additionally, there is a tree at the southwest corner of the subject property that will block any views. On the west side of the design, the M. Bath windows are to receive translucent glass and the two windows in the M. Bedroom will only be looking at the neighbor's roof.
4. Solar access for the neighbor to the east was taken into consideration. The second floor was placed toward the south to minimize shading. The floor plan was broken up and the roof pitch kept low all to keep shading to a minimum. The shade studies provided, show the shading is gone by 10 to 10:30 when the sun is the lowest in the winter. The large tree on the western property actually causes more shade than the addition.
5. The size of this home is much smaller than some of the homes that exist just a short distance down Marchmont. The existing square footage is 2420 and the proposed is only an additional 700 sf. This is a relatively small addition.

In conclusion – We have worked with the Town planner, the neighbors, and taken the consulting Architects recommendations into account with this submittal. The client really hopes that the Town planning staff and Commission will approve this design. Thank you