

Updated Letter of Justification

To whom it may concern,

We live at 16668 Shannon Road (APN 532-05-002), and would like to remodel the home. The lot is 15,392 sq feet with less than 1% slope. The house was built in 1957. The yard was very overgrown with dried Juniper, Oleander and Ivy that we have slowly been removing for future landscaping as it was a fire hazard. The current home needs a new roof as it is very old shake (another fire hazard) and at the end of its life span . It also needs single pane windows replaced, improved insulation, grounded electrical work, and other repairs.

We have lived in Los Gatos for 10 years, and absolutely love it! Our roots here go deep, as Peter grew up in Saratoga and his father graduated from Los Gatos High School in 1958. We moved to this house recently because it had a larger south facing lot for gardening, with great solar power potential, and a location that allows Peter to bicycle commute, and the kids to walk to school. We hope to make our forever home here in this spot.

Environmentalists at heart, we hope to build a home that is efficient, uses solar energy (hopefully enough to power the home and a couple of vehicles some day), and possibly uses greywater for irrigation. We also hope to enlarge the garage a bit to make space for a family of bikes that we use for our day-to-day transportation, while still having two vehicles in the garage. Our current garage is too narrow for 2 cars and definitely does not fit a family of bikes & scooters. The allowed area for the garage is 1077 sq feet and we are requesting only 715 sq feet. We think the town is more beautiful when the cars aren't all lining the streets and filling the driveways.

The committee brought up concerns about the 3 car garage element. The proposed width of the garage is 32 feet which is only 8 feet more than a standard 2 car 24 foot garage. We purpose only 2 openings, one existing, and a 2nd opening set back in order to reduce the overall appearance. We would like to have this space in order to keep our cars out of sight and house a family of bikes and scooters. Reducing cars on the sides of the road and in driveways is more aesthetically pleasing plus it gives more space for children walking and helps visibility for safety on Shannon Rd., which is a Safe Route to School. Many of the older homes in our neighborhood have garages that are frankly too small to realistically fit two cars. They therefore keep cars in the driveway and on the side of the road.

We feel a small recessed 2nd garage door is better than a window in that location, since it helps reduce the mass & scale of the home itself, plus allows for easy access to bikes for every-day use. Any bike-commuter can testify: it is frustrating to push a bike through a hinged pedestrian door regularly. Storing bikes in a shed around the back is also not viable given the difficulty of access and for security reasons given the current cost of bikes.

We have added the use of trellising and landscaping to help beautify the 2nd garage door. Furthermore the adjacent property behind us at 16317 Englewood has a 3 car garage facing our backyard. Looking at the extended neighborhood, this element is present including examples at: 16428 Englewood and 16373 Englewood. Forward facing three car garages can be seen along W. La Chiquita at property addresses 16316, 16396, and 16355.

To address the committee's concern about mass & scale, we have changed several elements and would like to highlight others. We have decreased the size of the entry and will be adding rows of decorative olive and citrus trees in the driveway island and around the driveway to soften the look of the home. The second story will be set back from the bottom floor - 18 feet set back over the garage and 15 feet set back over the front left. The first floor roof line softens the mass of the second story. Other 2nd story design elements such as side set backs are included in the design. We would also like the committee to consider that our home is set back up to 16.5 feet further than others in our immediate neighborhood. For example our home is 67 feet from the middle of Shannon Rd, while by comparison, 16667 Shannon Road is 50.5 feet from center of road, and 16675 Shannon Road is 54 feet back. Keeping this set back will greatly reduce the size and appearance of the home and allow room for landscaping to obscure the house.

Other second story homes in our immediate neighborhood, we completed prior to being annexed into the city. Therefore, the second stories of both of these homes were pushed to one side of the home. Per Los Gatos, design guidelines we have the second story set back from the front and both sides.

The Planning Committee's architectural review by Cannon Design Group notes that, in regard to our immediate neighborhood, "newer homes [have] 2 stories and greater floor area than the older homes." We feel that our remodel will fit the neighborhood in that regard. Our intention is to enclose the current front courtyard, and add a second story. The property across the street at 16675 Shannon Road has similar front entry and mass when viewed from Magneson Loop. Also the property at 16653 Shannon Road is 4,588 sq feet, uses a larger portion of the lot, plus is closer to the road at 53 feet. Another example is 16608 Shannon Rd which is 4147 sq feet and approx 50 feet from the center of Shannon Road. The next door property 16301 Englewood appears small from Shannon Road but viewed from Englewood, has a much wider house, 114 feet long with the garage and is much closer to the road at only 36 feet from the middle of Englewood.

Homes in the extended neighborhood that have similar appearing 2nd stories include:
16516 Shannon Road
16457, 16428, 16401, 16373, 16358, 16330 Englewood
16358, 16382, 16394 Robbie Ln
16336 W. La Chiquita

Per the Architectural Review by the Cannon Design Group "The site is relatively large and surrounded by other similar sized parcels, some of which have recently seen the addition of larger homes..." and "Overall the proposed design is well done with substantial architectural integrity on all sides." Furthermore the review finds "ridge heights of the house would be similar to other new two story homes in the immediate neighborhood."

The architectural style of the neighborhood varies quite substantially. Nearby homes range from Craftsman, Contemporary to Ultramodern. Our next door neighbors at 16668 Shannon Road have a Mediterranean styled home, and across the street 16675 Shannon Road is Modern Farmhouse with metal roofing. We hope to style our home Modern Mediterranean to

fit into this section of Shannon Road and allow for drier landscaping ideas for less water usage.

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As part of our community outreach efforts, we have spoken to our neighbors at 16680 Shannon Road. They are very supportive of the project but had a concern about the upstairs bedroom windows on the right facing them. Those windows were removed. We are also going to put frosted windows on the higher bathroom windows which they do not find problematic. The home owners at 16667 and 16675 Shannon Road directly across the street is completely supportive and Sheila Bony across the street states "two thumbs up." We are continuously discussing the plans with neighbors and continuing our outreach. Everyone we have spoken to is excited to have this home update for fire safety and aesthetics.

Thank you for your consideration of our project!

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