

Oct. 1, 2025

Community Development Department,
Town of Los Gatos
110 East Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Re: Letter of Justification for a proposed two-story residence and ADU at 70 Reservoir Road.
Attn: Planning Staff

My client, Vasiliki Douglas-Kidder owns and lives at the property at 10 Reservoir Road, Los Gatos. She has subdivided the property into 2 parcels. The proposed new home is on parcel 2, adjacent to parcel 1 where her current home resides. The current parcel 1 home is a historic two story-Victorian style home and is at the top of the lot. Parcel 2 currently contains three existing buildings to be removed. Two Accessory Dwelling Units (D-97-01), and small accessory building. All existing buildings on Parcel 2 will be demolished in order to build the new home.



Existing two-story ADU to be demolished



Existing ADU and existing accessory building to be demolished

The property is surrounded by mature trees and is set back far away from Reservoir Road. Neither the property nor new home will be visible from Reservoir road. The new proposed home will be a 4,923 sq. ft. contemporary style and will be constructed in approximately the same vicinity as the demolished existing ADUs and accessory building to minimize grading. The proposed home will include a 903 sq. ft. attached ADU on the lower level, and a 668 sq. ft. two-car garage, and fire truck turnaround, features which are currently not present.

Since the home is in the Hillside Planning Area, the building is designed to conform to the Residential Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines (HDS&G), and to address comments from the Town's Consulting Architect.

The exterior of the home will have a combination of non-combustible materials, and colors will be darker tones; plaster, stone and a composite rainscreen siding which has the appearance of wood. The roof combines a low pitched standing seam metal roof, and a flat portion of roof and parapet to screen the location of solar panels. The metal roof color will be dark gray, so as not to easily stand out visually. The materials are all low maintenance and environmentally friendly.

The home is located within the "least restrictive development area" (LRDA) and is less than the 25' maximum height as it steps back along the hillside grade. The "high to low" height is 31.79 ft. (less than the 35' maximum allowable)

The second story floor and roof steps back from the lower floor to follow the slope and avoid having two-story wall planes facing the downward slope. The front forward-facing elevation is broken up with a lower roof and deck to emphasize the lower story mass.

(4) total parking spaces are provided on site in addition to the two-car garage.

The home is not visible to any valley floor and only slightly visible from Reservoir Road. The home is also very distant from any other homes, with the exception of 10 Reservoir road which is the owner's current home. The home has minimal impact on the neighbors. There will be no privacy impacts or solar access impact to the neighbors.

The home's location is nestled between many mature trees. Six trees are proposed to be removed, two of poor condition, three of fair condition and one small tree of good condition. There are 58 other mature trees on site that will remain.

The home does not significantly alter the site's topography or drainage patterns. Retaining walls are terraced such that they do not exceed 5 feet exposed height and grading conforms to the HDS&G. The floor area is below the allowable F.A.R and all setbacks are met. **No exceptions are being requested.**

Findings Summary:

The scope of work includes the removal of two existing Accessory Dwelling Units, and one accessory building, to be replaced with one single family home and attached ADU. A condition of approval will be added requiring an Accessory Dwelling Unit to be included prior to issuance of building permit.

The proposed single family home meets required setbacks, lot coverage, parking requirements, and maximum allowable FAR, square footage, as illustrated on the plans submitted for approval.

The proposed project is not the largest in the immediate neighborhood for FAR or square footage.

The project meets the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines;

- proposed structure is within the LRDA
- proposed structure is below max 25' height and max 35' high to low height
- proposed retaining walls do not exceed 5 feet max height
- proposed site work is within maximum graded linear cut and fill - no exceptions required
- grading outside the building footprint is minimal

HDS&G Exceptions Requested:

A cut exception at the northern corner of the turnaround area (driveway) due to the fire protection standards that require the entire turnaround area to be flat with a max slope of no more than 5%, after trying out different configurations and looking at possible locations on site, we believe that the proposed shape and location of the turnaround area will require the least amount of grading. In addition, a cut exception at the parking spots due to the driveway widths requirements per fire protection standards that require the entire width of that portion of the driveway to be 18 feet, after trying out different configurations and looking at possible locations on site, we believe that the proposed shape and location of the parking spots. The use of site retaining walls has been carefully thought-out at the rear yard with a tier configuration since it avoids creating large flat areas and to keep the retaining walls to be 4 feet high. No other access or alternative is feasible given the site constraints.

A fill exception is being requested at the southern corner of the proposed wood deck retaining wall to conform with the existing grade while the majority of the proposed grade aligns with the existing grade with a 2% slope away from the house; therefore, a fill of 5 feet for a portion of 18 linear feet is proposed. Additionally, a portion of the driveway is shown to be 6.1 ft of fill along proposed contours 496 to 492 to maintain existing conditions along the existing creek. A fill exception is being requested along the treatment area of 6 feet along the entrance of the driveway to maintain a flat slope inside the treatment area as much as possible. Grading outside of building footprint is minimized. Maximum graded cut and fills per the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines is shown in the table below for Parcel 2:

Maximum Graded Cut and Fills Per the HDS&G				
Site Element	Max Cut*	Max Proposed Cut	Max Fill*	Max Proposed Fill
House and Attached Garage	8 FT*	11.3 FT	3 FT	1.75 FT
Driveways*	4 FT	7 FT	3 FT	6 FT
Other (Decks, Yards)*	4 FT	3.3 FT	3 FT	5 FT
*Combined depths of cut plus fill for development other than the main residence shall be limited to 6 feet.				

****Excludes cellars**

We hope that this project description provides the Planning Department with sufficient justification to demonstrate general compliance with the HDS&G, for approval of the project.

Sincerely, LOUIE LEU ARCHITECT, Inc.

Louie Leu, AIA
Cc: Vasiliki Douglas-Kidder