

From: [RICHARD SILLMAN](#)
To: [Public Comment - ZA](#); [Jia Liu](#); [Nick Zornes](#)
Subject: The project at 741 Sunshine Court
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 6:06:36 PM

Dear Zoning Administrator, et.al.,

This is Dick Sillman and Jennifer Chao residing at 740 Sunshine Drive located directly behind the new project at 741 Sunshine Court. We've reviewed the building plans briefly with Jia Liu and have also exchanged emails with the property owner, Henry Yao and his architect, Leo Li. Evidently, the design approval process has changed drastically since our project back in 2001 when all adjacent neighbors plus anyone within 200' of the project needed to grant their approval via the "Architectural Site Control Committee" before seeking plan approval from your office. We have been further advised by Jia Liu that privacy and character concerns are no longer considerations for project approval and we find that unfortunate and regrettable. Nonetheless, we offer these suggestions into the public record with the hope that some design changes will be stipulated or, at the very least, plan approval will be made conditional on their resolution.

1. The landscape plan includes 5 bamboo plants directly adjacent to our back fence. Bamboo is a highly invasive species that will quickly spread roots underneath our shared fence, grow into our yard and disrupt the root system of our redwoods. We have direct experience with this and can assure you it's a huge problem and unacceptable. To provide a privacy screen, please consider substituting *C. Sempervirens* (Italian Cypress) or equivalent to be planted in a line west of the 3 redwood trees on our property (stipulated by your department back in the day). Our 20-year-old redwoods offer a pretty good screen from the existing structure, but the proposed two-story residence necessitates additional screening. We would suggest a row of 6 to 8 Italian Cypress (a.k.a. Green Pencil) to the westward side of our existing redwoods.

UPDATE: We now have emails from owner Henry indicating the bamboo will be removed from the plan and we're looking to see this documented in the landscape plan prior to approval. We also noticed the plan includes 33 Carolina Cherry Laurels for screening on either side of the property and these may also be considered as a possible substitute for the bamboo.

2. The backyard-facing balcony off the master bedroom is currently almost 12' wide by 5.5' deep, large enough to accommodate patio furniture and small gatherings. We have been made aware that privacy concerns are no longer arbitrated by the city planning department, however it is critical to note the sight lines lead directly from this balcony to our master bathroom. If owner Henry would consider reducing the size and/or depth of this upper balcony, it would reduce the probability and frequency of congregating or lounging there with the corresponding direct view into our highly personal space. We've heard the ZA recommend interior window coverings in previous public hearings on this topic, but on our frequently beautiful sunny days, this is a terrible sacrifice to be asking of us.

3. We have a common backyard fence that, due to recent rainstorms and heavy winds, needs to be replaced. During construction of this project, there will be many different teams of workers onsite, so we hereby ask this fence be reinforced and/or replaced early in the project to maintain a secure perimeter for our adjacent property.

We further suggest the maximum height of 6' solid plus 2' lattice be constructed of heart redwood, pressure treated for longevity, and ensure the fence posts are both potted in concrete and also coated with creosote (or equivalent) moisture protection. We have seen our existing fence posts begin to fail after only 10-15 years due to irrigation moisture buildup and rotting at the base. Please advise whether and how this fence project can be scheduled to ensure open access to our property will be minimized at all times throughout the course of this project.

All of us currently residing within Sunshine Drive invest considerable time and effort to maintain a friendly and collaborative neighborhood with families that watch out for and support each other in various ways. We welcome Henry Yao and his family and look forward to more direct communication as the project proceeds. In the meantime, please consider the above requested modifications to the project and either modify the plans, or make them conditions of the plan approval process.

Thank You,

-Dick Sillman and Jennifer Chao

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