



DATE: January 4, 2023
 AGENDA ITEM #3

TO: Design Review Commission
FROM: Sean K. Gallegos, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: SC22-0027 – 363 West Edith Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve design review application SC22-0027 subject to the listed findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a design review application for a first and second-story addition to an existing single-story residence. The project includes adding 86 square feet for a porch at the first story and a new 805 square-foot second story. This project should be considered categorically exempt from further environmental review under Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) since it involves an addition to an existing single-family residence in an area zoned for residential uses. The following table summarizes the project’s technical details:

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Single-Family, Medium Lot
ZONING: R1-10
PARCEL SIZE: 10,400 square feet
MATERIALS: Composition shingle roof; stucco exterior and wood horizontal siding

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
COVERAGE:	2,825 square feet	2,993 square feet	3,120 square feet
FLOOR AREA:	2,777 square feet	3,519 square feet	3,640 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	25 feet	25 feet	25 feet
Rear	38.5 feet	38.5 feet	25 feet
Right side(1 st /2 nd)	10.2 feet	10.2 feet/18.1 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side (1 st /2 nd)	10 feet	10.3 feet/17.6 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
HEIGHT:	15.75 feet	23.5 feet	27 feet

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Context

The subject property is located on West Edith Avenue between Cypress Drive and Foothill Expressway. The surrounding neighborhood is considered a Consistent Character Neighborhood as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines with similar characteristics of low scale, house style, type, setbacks, and streetscape character. The residences on West Edith Avenue are a mixture of one and two-story residences that have mostly retained their original front façade aesthetics, architectural detailing, and exterior materials mainly consisting of stucco, wood, and brick materials. The landscape along the street is varied with no street tree pattern but most properties include at least one medium to large tree in the front yard.



DISCUSSION

Design Review

According to the Design Guidelines, in Consistent Character Neighborhoods, good neighbor design has design elements, material, and scale found within the neighborhood and sizes that are not significantly larger than other homes in the neighborhood. The emphasis should be on designs that "fit in" and lessen abrupt changes.

As depicted in the design plans (Attachment E), the applicant is proposing an 86 square-foot porch to the first story and a new 805 square-foot second story.

First-Story Addition and Exterior Modifications

A proposed 86 square-foot addition would add a one-story porch along the front elevation. The additional exterior changes include:

- Along the front elevation:
 - The addition of a projecting and defined 86 square-foot porch with hipped roof form;
 - Removal of the board and batten and horizontal siding, and its replacement with a stucco exterior finish;
 - Removal of the horizontal siding in the gables;
 - Replacement of a three-panel window with two, two-panel windows in the garage;
 - Removal of the bay window in bedroom No. 2 and its replacement with a two-panel window.
 - Addition of a projecting and defined porch with a gable roof form and wood

and stone veneer detailed columns.

- Along the interior right-side elevation
 - The gable roof was modified to a Dutch gable to eliminate existing encroachments into the daylight plane;
 - The replacement of a small window in the laundry room and bedroom No. 2 and large window in the office;
 - The addition of a new medium sized window in bathroom No. 1; and
 - A new garage door
- Along the interior left-side elevation
 - The gable roof was modified to a Dutch gable to eliminate existing encroachments into the daylight plane;
 - The replacement of a window in the laundry room and bedroom No. 2 and window in the office;
 - The addition of a new window in bathroom No. 1; and
 - A new garage door
- Along the rear (east) elevation
 - Replacement of a window in bathroom No. 1 with a similar window and the replacement of the window in the primary bedroom with a two-panel sliding door. The windows and doors will match the new window style for the house;
 - Replacement of a window in the dining with a large multiple-panel window with a door. The windows and doors will match the new window style for the house; and
 - Replacement of two windows in the kitchen.

Staff finds the proposed first-story addition and exterior modifications to be in compliance with the R1-10 zoning district development standards, the Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines, and the design review findings pursuant to Section 14.76.060 of the Zoning Code and therefore recommends design review approval of the first-story addition and exterior modifications. A materials board is provided in the project plans.

Second-Story Addition

The design plans propose an 805 square-foot second story addition to the existing one-story house. The second story will include area for an office, lounge, bedroom no. 4, bathroom no. 3, and bedroom no. 3. With regards to building setbacks, the second story addition exceeds the second-story setbacks as described in the table on Sheet A-2, and it is in conformance with the required standards. Please refer to the table above for more specific setbacks.

The second story addition's roof forms will match the existing 4:12 pitched roof that are integrated with the existing roof forms. Proposed second floor roof materials will match the first story roof material to be composition shingles. For the wall plate height at the second story, the proposed addition will feature an eight-foot-tall plate height, which is consistent with the existing first story wall plate height of eight feet. The proposed second story addition will have an overall height of 23.5 feet, which will be less than the allowed maximum height of 27 feet.

Consistent with the design review findings, given the minor exterior modifications to the first story wall plate heights along the right side and the modest sized second-story addition with its low scale wall plate heights and roof forms, the proposed design will minimize the perception of excessive bulk and mass.

With regards to exterior materials, the project is matching the aesthetics of the existing residence and utilizing materials of similar quality to those found in the existing neighborhood. The first-story addition and other modified portions of the first story will use stucco siding and horizontal wood siding board will be used on the second-story which is similar to the horizontal lap wood siding installed on other residences in the neighborhood. The existing roof will be replaced, and the new roof will be a composition shingle material.

Overall, the design of the project appears to be an appropriate design within this Consistent Character Neighborhood and conforms to of the Residential Design Guidelines and Design Review findings.

Privacy

Along the left (west) elevation, there is a small window with a minimum windowsill height of five feet, ten inches in the office. Due to tall sill height of the windows of the bathroom, the proposed window does not create unreasonable privacy impacts.

Along the right (east) elevation of the second story, there are three windows proposed along the second story. The elevation includes a medium-sized window in bedroom no. 4 with a three-foot, six-inch sill height, a small-sized window with a 5.9-foot sill height, and a medium-sized window in bedroom no. 3 with a three-foot, six-inch sill height. Due to tall sill height of the windows of the bathroom, the proposed window does not create unreasonable privacy impacts. The bedrooms with the three-foot, six-inch sill height may impact privacy due to its views towards the adjacent house or side yard area. To ensure that there are no additional privacy impacts, staff recommends Condition No. 4 to raise the sill of the bedrooms to four-foot, six-inches. With the proposed windowsill heights, the proposed windows along the left elevation will not create unreasonable privacy impacts.

Along the rear (north) second story elevation, there are three windows proposed: one medium-sized window with a sill height of three feet, six inches for bedroom no. 3 and two large six-panel windows for the dining room with a sill height of 9 feet, two inches. The rear elevation may have potential privacy impact due to the large window with a lower sill height. Staff considered the privacy impact will be minimal because the setback from the rear property line to the window will be 36 feet and 6 inches, greater than the required rear setback of 25 feet. Also, existing dense screening vegetation and trees along rear property line and the applicant proposing new *Podocarpus gracilior* along the right property line should mitigate potential privacy impact. The details of the proposed screening vegetation are provided in the “Landscaping and Trees” section of this staff report.

Landscaping and Trees

Ten existing trees are depicted within the proximity of the subject site, please see sheet A-1 for the table identifying all trees on the site. Since the proposal is a minor addition to the first story and the second-story addition is within the footprint of the existing structure, the applicant is not proposing to remove any trees. Consistent with the Submittal Requirements for Two-Story Residential Design review handout, an arborist report is not required for the proposal due to the proposed addition not falling within the inner 2/3rds of the dripline of any protected tree.

A new landscaping plan is proposed including a number of evergreen screening vegetation on Sheet A-13. The proposed screening vegetation will be planted along all the property lines and are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proposed Screening Plant List

Common Name	No.	Size	Description
Podocarpus Gracilior	10	15-gallon	20-60' tall x 10' wide

The plans indicate the existing landscaping is to remain, therefore staff has included the standard condition of approval that requires the applicant to maintain or provide new landscaping as needed, which will be inspected before final inspection. In addition to preserving many of the existing trees and landscaping on the site, the project will be planting new evergreen screening. New or rebuilt landscaping would need to satisfy the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance requirements should it exceed the 2,500 square-foot landscaping threshold for residential additions (Condition of Approval No. 6 and 18). Overall, the existing and proposed landscaping meets the intent of the City's landscape regulations and street tree guidelines.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project should be considered categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act because it involves the addition of a second story on an existing single-family residence on an existing lot in an area zoned for residential uses.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

A public meeting notice was posted on the property and mailed to 8 property owners in the immediate vicinity on West Edith Avenue, Cypress Drive, and Warec Way. The applicant also posted the public notice sign (24" x 36") in conformance with the Planning Division posting requirements.

No correspondence was received from neighboring property owners.

Cc: Varada Malavika Rao, Architect and Applicant
Sankaralingham Anand and Ganeshan Ramya, Property Owner

Attachments:

- A. Public Notification Map
- B. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet and Neighbor Review Document
- C. Applicant Outreach
- D. Public Notice Poster
- E. Design Plans

FINDINGS

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With regard to the first-story modifications and second story addition to an existing one-story house, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.060 of the Municipal Code:

- a. The proposed residence complies with all provision of this chapter;
- b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the new residence, when considered with reference to the nature and location of residential structures on adjacent lots, will avoid unreasonable interference with views and privacy and will consider the topographic and geologic constraints imposed by particular building site conditions;
- c. The natural landscape will be preserved insofar as practicable by minimizing tree and soil removal; grade changes shall be minimized and will be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas;
- d. The orientation of the proposed new residence in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize the perception of excessive bulk and mass;
- e. General architectural considerations, including the character, size, scale, and quality of the design, the architectural relationship with the site and other buildings, building materials, and similar elements have been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings; and
- f. The proposed residence has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

SC22-0005 – 363 West Edith Avenue

GENERAL

1. Expiration

The Design Review Approval will expire on January 4, 2025 unless prior to the date of expiration, a building permit is issued, or an extension is granted pursuant to Section 14.76.090 of the Zoning Code.

2. Approved Plans

The approval is based on the plans and materials received on December 1, 2022, except as may be modified by these conditions and as specified below.

3. Encroachment Permit

An encroachment permit shall be obtained from the Engineering Division prior to doing any work within the public right-of-way including the street shoulder. All work within the public street right-of-way shall be in compliance with the City's Shoulder Paving Policy.

4. Protected Trees

The existing trees and proposed evergreen screening shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Development Services Director.

5. Windowsill Height

The sill height of the bedroom no. 3 and 4 along the right (east) side elevation shall be increased to a minimum of four-foot, six inches.

6. Landscaping

The project shall be subject to the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELo) pursuant to Chapter 12.36 of the Municipal Code if 2,500 square feet or more of new or replaced landscape area, including irrigated planting areas, turf areas, and water features is proposed. Any project with an aggregate landscape area of 2,500 square feet or less may conform to the prescriptive measures contained in Appendix D of the City's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

7. Underground Utility and Fire Sprinkler Requirements

Additions exceeding fifty (50) percent of the existing living area (existing square footage calculations shall not include existing basements) and/or additions of 750 square feet or more shall trigger the undergrounding of utilities and new fire sprinklers. Additional square footage calculations shall include existing removed exterior footings and foundations being replaced and rebuilt. Any new utility service drops are pursuant to Chapter 12.68 of the Municipal Code.

8. Indemnity and Hold Harmless

The applicant/owner agrees to indemnify, defend, protect, and hold the City harmless from all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City or held to be the liability of the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions in any proceedings brought in any State or Federal Court, challenging any of the City's action with respect to the applicant's project. The City may withhold final maps and/or permits, including temporary or final

occupancy permits, for failure to pay all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City in connection with the City's defense of its actions.

INCLUDED WITH THE BUILDING PERMIT SUBMITTAL

9. Conditions of Approval

Incorporate the conditions of approval into the title page of the plans.

10. Tree Protection Note

On the grading plan and/or the site plan, show all tree/landscape protection fencing and add the following note: "All tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground."

11. Green Building Standards

Provide verification that the house will comply with the California Green Building Standards pursuant to Chapter 12.26 of the Municipal Code and provide a signature from the project's Qualified Green Building Professional Designer/Architect and property owner.

12. Air Conditioner Sound Rating

Show the location of any new air conditioning unit(s) on the site plan including the model number of the unit(s) and nominal size of the unit. Provide the manufacturer's specifications showing the sound rating for each unit. The air conditioning units must be located to comply with the City's Noise Control Ordinance (Chapter 6.16) and in compliance with the Planning Division setback provisions. The units shall be screened from view of the street.

13. Storm Water Management

Show how the project is in compliance with the New Development and Construction Best Management Practices and Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention program, as adopted by the City for the purposes of preventing storm water pollution (i.e. downspouts directed to landscaped areas, minimize directly connected impervious areas, etc.).

14. California Water Service Upgrades

You are responsible for contacting and coordinating with the California Water Service Company any water service improvements including but not limited to relocation of water meters, increasing water meter sizing or the installation of fire hydrants. The City recommends consulting with California Water Service Company as early as possible to avoid construction or inspection delays.

15. Underground Utility Location

Show the location of underground utilities pursuant to Chapter 12.68 of the Municipal Code. Underground utility trenches shall avoid the drip-lines of all protected trees unless approved by the project arborist and the Planning Division.

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF BUILDING OR DEMOLITION PERMIT

16. Tree Protection

Tree protection shall be installed around the dripline(s) of the trees as shown on the site plan approved with the building permit plans. Fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five

feet in height with posts driven into the ground and shall not be removed until all building construction has been completed unless approved by the Planning Division.

17. School Fee Payment

In accordance with Section 65995 of the California Government Code, and as authorized under Section 17620 of the Education Code, the property owner shall pay the established school fee for each school district the property is located in and provide receipts to the Building Division. The City of Los Altos shall provide the property owner the resulting increase in assessable space on a form approved by the school district. Payments shall be made directly to the school districts.

PRIOR TO FINAL INSPECTION

18. Landscaping Installation

All front yard, exterior side, interior side, and rear yard landscaping, street trees and privacy screening trees shall be maintained and/or installed as shown on the approved plans or as required by the Planning Division.

19. Tree Protection

Tree protection fencing shall be installed around the dripline(s), or as required by the project arborist, of the existing trees as shown on the site plan. Tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground and shall not be removed until all building construction has been completed unless approved by the Planning Division

20. Landscape Privacy Screening

The landscape intended to provide privacy screening shall be inspected by the Planning Division and shall be supplemented by additional screening material as required to adequately mitigate potential privacy impacts to surrounding properties.

21. Green Building Verification

Submit verification that the house was built in compliance with the City's Green Building Ordinance (Chapter 12.26 of the Municipal Code).