



**TO:** Nick Zornes, Zoning Administrator

**FROM:** Jia Liu, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT:** SC23-0004 – 630 Arboleda Drive

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## RECOMMENDATION

Approve design review application SC23-0004 for the construction of a new 3,753 square foot, two-story house subject to the listed findings and conditions of approval; and find the project categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303 (“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures”).

## BACKGROUND

### Project Description

- Project Location: 630 Arboleda Drive, on southeast corner of Arboleda Drive and Parma Way
- Lot Size: 10,212 square feet
- General Plan Designation: Single-Family, Medium Lot (SF4)
- Zoning Designation: R1-10
- Current Site Conditions: One-story home

The proposed project includes the demolition of the existing single-story house and replacement with a new two-story house (see Attachment A – Project Plans). The new residence is designed in a transitional modern architectural style, incorporating high-quality materials including composition shingle roof, smooth finished stucco exterior finish with aluminum trims, aluminum framed windows and wood doors.

The subject property is a corner lot in a rectangular shape, measuring approximately 86.9 feet in width and 118.5 feet in depth. While the new house will expand further into the southeast yard compared to the existing house’s footprint, the orientation of the house will remain the same as the existing house with its front entry oriented towards Arboleda Drive. The new driveway will continue to take access from Arboleda Drive but is proposed further away from the corner of Arboleda Drive and Parma Way than the existing driveway.

A total of 21 trees, including 12 protected trees, are located on or within proximity to the subject site. All the protected trees will be protected and maintained during future construction. Five unprotected trees in the rear yard will be removed.

## ANALYSIS

### Design Review

The proposed home complies with the R1-10 district development standards found in LAMC Chapter 14.06, as demonstrated by the following table:

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Allowed/Required</b>
<b>COVERAGE:</b>	2,034 square feet	3,064 square feet	3,064 square feet
<b>FLOOR AREA:</b> First floor Second floor Total	2,034 square feet -- square feet 2,034 square feet	2,695 square feet 878 square feet 3,573 square feet	3,574 square feet
<b>SETBACKS:</b> Front Rear Right side (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Left side (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	25 feet 52.83 feet 9.67 feet/-- feet 10.92 feet/-- feet	25 feet 25.00 feet 20.92 feet/26.42 feet 10 feet/26.67 feet	25 feet 25 feet 20 feet/20 feet 10 feet/17.5 feet
<b>HEIGHT:</b>	16.17 feet	23.5 feet	27 feet

The proposed home generally complies with the Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines because it exhibits an appropriate design with elements, materials, scale, and landscaping that are consistent with the neighborhood.

The surrounding neighborhood is considered a Consistent Character Neighborhood according to the Design Guidelines. The immediate neighborhood is comprised of one-story houses with mostly ranch styles. The homes in the neighborhood exhibit similar front setback patterns, massing, and a combination of simple and complex roof forms due to past renovations and upgrades. The horizontal eave lines at the first story typically range from approximately eight to nine feet in height. Many of the homes feature attached garages in the front yard facing the street.

The front elevation of the proposed two-story house is designed in a transitional modern architectural style that is a mixture of traditional architecture and modern architecture by incorporating a flat roof for the first story and pitched roof for the second story, along with asymmetrical window fenestrations. The proposed residence retains key design attributes indicative of the neighborhood including gable roof lines, traditional exterior materials such as stucco and shingle roofing material, and maintains a moderate scale found in the neighborhood. The first floor of the proposed residence will feature two different plate heights, with a first-floor plate height of nine feet and six inches and a twelve-foot plate height for the great room area only that is further away from the public right-of-way. The second story has a uniform plate height of nine feet. The proposed design thoughtfully aligns the first story and second story eave lines with the adjacent structure's eave line and the roof ridge line, respectively. The alignments have shown the design consideration for a harmonious architectural composition within the neighborhood.

The proposed landscaping includes approximately seven new trees and evergreen screening vegetation and new trees along the perimeter of the site which will be integrated with existing vegetation to remain. The

landscaping plan will comply with the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, which requires water-efficient landscaping for new residences with landscaping over 500 square feet.

The proposed project meets the development standards in the R1-10 zoning district and complies with the Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines because it is compatible with the character of the neighborhood as the design maintains an appropriate relationship with adjacent structures, minimizes bulk, preserves existing trees, and enhances landscaping to the extent possible.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15303 (“New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures”) of the California Environmental Quality Act because it involves the construction of a single-family dwelling in a residential zone.

## **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

A public meeting notice was posted on the property, mailed to property owners within a 300-foot radius, and published in the Town Crier newspaper. The applicant also posted the public notice sign (24” x 36”) in conformance with the Planning Division posting requirements.

The applicant contacted nine neighbors in the immediate area for the community outreach. No comments from neighbors have been received by staff as of the writing of this report.

Attachment:

A. Project Plans

Cc: J. Steve Collom, Applicant  
Andrew Mo, Property Owner

## FINDINGS

SC23-0004 – 630 Arboleda Drive

With regard to the proposed new two-story residence, the Zoning Administrator finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.060 of the Municipal Code:

- A. The proposed new two-story residence complies with all provisions of this chapter because the proposed residence is consistent with the development standards of the R1-10 zoning district and policies and implementation techniques described in the Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines.
- B. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the proposed new house is compatible when considered with reference to the nature and location of residential structures on adjacent lots, and will consider the topographic and geologic constraints imposed by particular building site conditions as the proposed home maintains a similar finished floor elevation and orientation on the lot as the existing home and complies with the allowable floor area, lot coverage, and height maximums as well as the daylight plane requirement pursuant to LAMC Chapter 14.06.
- C. The natural landscape will be preserved insofar as practicable by minimizing tree and soil removal; grade changes shall be minimized because the existing site is relatively level and does not require substantial grading and does not involve the removal of soil. No existing protected trees will be removed as part of the project.
- D. The orientation of the proposed new residence in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize the perception of excessive bulk and mass because the proposed structure incorporates architectural design features such as moderate scale, horizontal eave lines, building articulation, and roof forms that break up the massing and minimize excessive bulk.
- E. General architectural considerations, including the size and scale, 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 on the same project site. The proposed home complies with the allowable floor area, lot coverage, and height maximums as well as the daylight plane requirement pursuant to LAMC Chapter 14.06 and the design of the home incorporates consistent and compatible features including composition shingle roofing, smooth finished stucco exterior finish with aluminum trims, aluminum framed windows and wood doors.
- F. The proposed new house has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection because the because the site is relatively flat and has incorporated softscape and hardscape surfaces into the plan and proposes a drainage plan to minimize off-site stormwater drainage.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

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### **GENERAL**

1. **Expiration**

The Design Review Approval will expire on September 6, 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 June 21, 2023, except as may be modified by these conditions.

3. **Protected Trees**

Trees Nos. 1-15 and 21 along with the approved privacy screening and new trees shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Development Services Director. The tree protection plan outlined in the arborist report (Kielty Arborist Services LLC, dated 12/5/22) shall be incorporated into the building permit plans and implemented before and during construction.

4. **ADU Not Reviewed**

The proposed ADU included in the plan set is not part of this design review application. Prior to commencement of the ADU construction, a separate building permit issued by the Building Division shall be obtained by the applicant.

5. **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 over 500 square feet or more of new landscape area, including irrigated planting areas, turf areas, and water features is proposed.

6. **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.

7. **New Fireplaces**

Only gas fireplaces, pellet fueled wood heaters or EPA certified wood-burning appliances may be installed in all new construction pursuant to Chapter 12.64 of the Municipal Code.

8. **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.

9. **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**

### **10. Conditions of Approval**

Incorporate the conditions of approval into the title page of the plans and provide a letter which explains how each condition of approval has been satisfied and/or which sheet of the plans the information can found.

### **11. Tree Protection Note**

On the grading plan and/or the site plan, show all tree 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."

### **12. Water Efficient Landscape Plan**

Provide a landscape documentation package prepared by a licensed landscape professional showing how the project complies with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Regulations and include signed statements from the project's landscape professional and property owner.

### **13. Reach Codes**

Building Permit Applications submitted on or after January 1, 2023 shall comply with specific amendments to the 2022 California Green Building Standards for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and the 2022 California Energy Code as provided in Ordinances No 2022-487 which amended Chapter 12.22 Energy Code and Chapter 12.26 California Green Building Standards Code of the Los Altos Municipal Code. The building design plans shall comply with the standards and the applicant shall submit supplemental application materials as required by the Building Division to demonstrate compliance.

### **14. California Water Service Upgrades**

The applicant is 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. 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.

### **16. 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.

### **17. Outdoor Condensing Unit Sound Rating**

Show the location of any outdoor condensing unit(s) on the site plan including the model number of the unit(s), nominal size (i.e. tonnage) of the unit, and setback to the nearest property line. Provide the manufacturer's specifications showing the sound rating for each unit. The condensing unit(s) 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.

### **18. 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.).

## **PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF BUILDING OR DEMOLITION PERMIT**

### **19. Tree Protection**

Tree protection fencing shall be installed around the driplines, or as required by the project arborist, of trees Nos. Nos. 1-15 and 21 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. 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**

### **21. Landscaping Installation and Verification**

All landscaping materials, including plants or trees intended to provide privacy screening, as provided on the approved landscape plans shall be installed prior to final inspection. The applicant shall also provide a landscape Certificate of Completion, signed by the project's landscape professional and property owner, verifying that the trees, landscaping, and irrigation were installed per the approved landscape documentation package.

### **22. 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).