



DATE: April 24, 2023

AGENDA ITEM #1

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Historical Commission
FROM: Sean Gallegos, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: H23-0001 – 236 Eleanor Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of an addition and exterior alterations to a Historic Resource property subject to the listed findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This application seeks advisory review for a proposed project involving the addition of a 1,647 square-foot first story, 327 square-foot second story, and 832 square-foot basement to an existing two-story house that is a designated historic resource. Additionally, a new 588 square-foot detached accessory structure (garage) is also proposed as part of this project.

BACKGROUND

The C.W. Morris House, a 1914 farmhouse located at 236 Eleanor Avenue, is listed in the Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory as one of the few farmhouses remaining in the city. The property was owned by Charles Wadsworth Morris and his family, including wife Alice, daughter Dorothy, and son David, in 1921. Morris, who had retired from managing the W.W. Montague Company in San Jose, moved to the Fremont District (Los Altos) with his family in 1921. Although the original owner of the property is unknown, it is believed to have been occupied by the Morris family during this time.

The two-story, wood-frame Craftsman Style residence has a square plan and a side-gabled roof, with decorative wood knee brackets supporting the gable ends and exposed rafter tails visible from the open eaves. The ground floor entry porch features a large front-facing gable with a balcony, supported by paired, square wood porch posts. Although the balcony has been remodeled since 1997, it still retains its original design elements. Other paired porch posts, connected by simple wood railings, are located at either end of the full-width porch. The entrance is offset to the right, with two large plate glass windows to the left, while other original wood sash windows with smaller panes across the top remain intact. A circular driveway surrounds a single mature palm tree in the front yard.

The bungalow was originally associated with agriculture, specifically orchards, and was part of the 1911 Adams Subdivision. According to oral history transcripts, the Morris family owned the

surrounding 14 acres of orchards, and C.W. Morris was listed as an orchardist in city directories beginning in 1922. However, it is not clear if the Morris family was the original occupant of the home. The house is one of the few remaining farmhouses left in the city today.

Although the house has undergone several alterations, it retains the aspects of location, overall design, materials, and workmanship, making it a significant representation of the Craftsman Style. The house does not retain the feeling of a farmhouse due to the loss of acreage and the house's current location on a back parcel flag lot, not facing the street, diminishing the feeling of a farmhouse and the historical association with the property. Additionally, Charles Morris's retirement and lack of significant contribution to the history of the area further reduces the property's historical significance. The conclusion is that the design, materials, and workmanship of the Craftsman Style house is sufficient to consider that the house retains integrity. The property's historic report is included in Attachments A and B.

DISCUSSION

The proposed project entails adding a 1,647 square-foot first story, 327 square-foot second story, and 832 square-foot basement to the existing 1,790 square-foot, two-story historic house. The addition will be attached to the back utility porch area, which will be remodeled. The landscaping, including the rose gardens and most trees, will remain unchanged.

The site plan illustrates the existing house in white, with the proposed addition connecting to the rear façade and extending to the north façade. The plan also highlights the location of a new 588 square-foot one-story accessory structure (garage, which will replace the current pergola (carport) on the property.

The house at 236 Eleanor Avenue may not be a classic example of the Craftsman style, but it still incorporates many of its distinctive design elements. Originating from the Arts and Crafts Movement, this style emphasizes the use of natural materials and showcases the design, structure, and construction skills through exposed beams, rafters, and a combination of shingles, stucco, and timbers on the front paired posts of the porch. The following are the main design features of the house:

1. Wood construction with partial wood siding, including shingles
2. Low-pitched gable roofs
3. Overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and beams
4. Knee braces under the eaves, at the corners, and along the eave line (similar to those found in barn construction and farmhouses of the period)
5. Heavy timber, paired columns at the front porch
6. Patterned windowpanes on the upper sections of the sash
7. Full-width covered front porch with a low or half-lower wall

According to the National Park Service, integrity of a historic resource is defined by seven aspects: location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association. Although the house has undergone some alterations, there is still enough historic fabric to maintain its integrity and make a finding of historical importance. The house's design, materials, and workmanship from c. 1919 are significant enough to communicate its reason for being designated as a historic resource, even though the aspects of setting, feeling, and association may not be as present.

Historical professional, Bonnie Bamburg with Urban Programmers reviewed the project to ensure consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Structures (SOIS) (Attachment A and B), and the historian's and staff's comments are provided below:

1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

Response: The application proposes to maintain the house's current use as a single-family residence while expanding its footprint through the proposed additions and alterations, including the construction of a new garage. These changes have been carefully planned to ensure that the defining characteristics of the building, as well as its site and environment, remain unchanged.

2. *"The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided."*

Response: The rear façade has undergone significant alterations that removed historic materials, including a protruding section with a multi-pane glass door and three non-original wood windows. The original design of the farmhouse included a utility porch with a wood back door with a glass panel at the top, small and plain framed windows, and stairs along the side of the house. The current windows, which appear to be from an earlier remodel, are not character defining.

While the original style roof framing may have been used, it is unusual. Typically, the roof was straight across, and a second shed roof covered the utility portion. The roof has been extended over the protruding section with exposed rafter tails. The shed dormer seen on the front of the house would have dictated a cross gable or gable dormer on this house, making the shed dormer out of proportion with the rest of the house. It appears to have been added to create a bedroom in the attic storage area, and is not an original character defining feature.

In addition, a deck has been added to the rear of the house, which is also not a character defining feature. In summary, the rear of the house has been remodeled and the original style and materials have been changed. The rehabilitation plan proposes to remove characteristic elements such as the roof slope with exposed rafter tails, which is a defining element of the Craftsman style, and the siding on half of the rear wall, which is typical of the Craftsman Style and this house. The removal of these elements will alter the design and character of the house's rear façade. However, the proposed rehabilitation plan retains the existing historic character of the Craftsman design and construction in the building along the front and side elevations.

3. *"Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken."*

Response: The proposed addition to the building does not include any conjectural features. Instead, it utilizes compatible forms without any stylistic decoration. Additionally, any similar materials used in the addition are offset or textured to distinguish the different eras of construction and maintain the historic integrity of the original building.

4. *“Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.”*

Response: The historic building did not showcase any artistic or significant changes, and the alterations made, especially to the rear of the house, are not of historical importance. A more detailed explanation of the significance of alterations along the rear elevation is discussed under Standard 3.

5. *“Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.”*

Response: The original design and construction, workmanship and materials are preserved in the historic house and the addition is located on the rear of the building.

6. *“Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.”*

Response: There are no known deteriorated features.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

Response: Because the work is limited, there will be no physical or chemical treatments that will affect the wood shingle or wood trim.

8. *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

The project scope does not include invasive foundation work or landscaping that would affect the site. Because the ground was disturbed previously in 1911, and subsequently with landscape improvements, it is unlikely that undisturbed archeological resources are present at the site.

9. *“New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and environment.*

Response: The proposed new rear addition is designed to be compatible with the historic building, using wood construction and shingles with an off-set pattern that differentiates it from the historic materials. Additionally, stucco siding with a slightly different texture is also used. The addition does not exceed the height of the historic building and is located on the secondary rear, which has already undergone remodeling. This design is in keeping with the massing, size, and scale of the historic building and does not diminish its feeling or presence.

Moreover, the proposed detached garage is a simple gabled roof design without any historical ornamentation. The materials used in its construction will match those used in the addition, and it will not appear as a historic structure.

10. *“New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”*

Response: If the new addition were to be removed, the historic building could be repaired without significant damage to the historic envelope of the building. This is because the alterations and addition are made of wood construction, and therefore the original could be recreated in the roof and rear façades. Additionally, the proposed new garage is a separate structure and does not affect the historic envelope of the building in any way. However, it should be noted that the new addition and garage have been designed to be compatible with the historic building, and their removal would alter the building's current design and character.

As outlined in the report from the Historical professional, Bonnie Bamburg with Urban Programmers, the proposed demolition, addition, and exterior alterations do not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property and are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Structures.

In order to make a positive advisory recommendation, the Commission will need to find that the project is consistent with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the property. Once the Commission provides a recommendation, the project will be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Variance

As part of the application for a two-story addition to the existing two-story historic structure and the new one-story accessory structure, a variance will need to be approved with the design review application.

As part of the proposal for a two-story addition to the existing house, a variance is requested for the following:

1. The applicant is seeking a variance from the current definition of a "basement" as per the Zoning Code, which specifies that a basement can only extend a maximum of two feet above the surrounding ground level. The applicant is requesting permission to build a basement that exceeds this height limit and still be classified as a basement under the Zoning Code.
2. The applicant is requesting a variance to allow for the construction of a second-story addition to an existing two-story house on a flag lot, where the Zoning Code currently prohibits the construction of second stories.

The applicant is also seeking a variance to allow for the construction of an accessory structure in the front yard, which is currently prohibited by the Zoning Code. The proposed structure is a one-story building that would serve as a garage. The applicant has argued that the location in the front yard is necessary for the structure's intended use and that it would not be feasible to locate it in the rear yard due to site constraints due to being a historic resource.

In order to grant the requested variances, the applicant will need to demonstrate that:

1. That the granting of the variance will be consistent with the objectives of the zoning plan set forth in Article 1 of Chapter 14.02;
2. That the granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of persons living or working in the vicinity or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity; and
3. That variances from the provisions of this chapter shall be granted only when, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, the strict application of the provisions of this chapter deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classifications.

The applicant will provide evidence that there are unique or unusual circumstances related to the property due to the site being a historic resource that justifies the need for the variance. The applicant will show that the addition will not adversely affect the surrounding properties or the character of the neighborhood and that it will meet the requirements for setbacks, lot coverage, and other zoning regulations. The decision to grant the variance will ultimately be considered by the Planning Commission, which will consider the specific circumstances of the case and weigh the potential impacts on the neighborhood against the need for the proposed structure.

Community Outreach

The applicant conducted community outreach by mailing letters with renderings of the accessory structure to neighbors in the immediate neighborhood context. A copy of the letter mailed to neighbors is provided as attachment C. Staff has not received any public comment regarding the proposed project.

Cc: Walter Chapman, Applicant and Designer
Jennifer Jacobsen and Todd Parmacek, Owners

Attachments

- A. Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Report, Urban Programmers
- B. Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Addendum, Urban Programmers
- C. Community Outreach Letter
- D. Materials Board
- E. Project Plans

FINDINGS

H23-0001 – 236 Eleanor Avenue

With regard to the Advisory Review, the Historical Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 12.44.140 of the Municipal Code:

1. The project complies with all provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 12.44) due to the project not adversely affecting the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property, and the project being in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; and
2. The project does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property. Although the house has undergone alterations, it still retains enough historic fabric to be considered as having integrity. The house is significant as a variant of the Craftsman style, and although the aspects of setting, feeling, and association are not present, the design, materials, and workmanship from around 1919 are still evident enough to convey the historical importance of the building.

CONDITIONS

H23-0001 – 236 Eleanor Avenue

GENERAL

1. Expiration

The Historical Commission Advisory Review approval will expire on April 24, 2023, 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 April 11, 2023, except as may be modified by these conditions.

3. 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.

INCLUDED WITH THE BUILDING PERMIT SUBMITTAL

4. Conditions of Approval

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

May 23, 2023

Sean Gallegos, Sr. Planner
City of Los Altos
1 North San Antonio Street
Los Altos, CA 94022

Via Email: [Sean Gallegos](mailto:Sean.Gallegos@losaltosca.gov) (SGallegos@losaltosca.gov)

Subject: 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

Dear Mr. Gallegos:

The 1914 farmhouse at 236 Eleanor Avenue is listed as the C.W. Morris House in the Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory. The house is recognized as one of the few farmhouses remaining in the City.¹ The original owner was not identified. The property is known to have belonged to Charles Wadsworth Morris and his wife (Alice), daughter (Dorothy), and son (David) in 1921, seven years after it was constructed. Morris retired from the hardware sales business, where he was the manager of W.W. Montague Company in San Jose before the family moved to the Fremont District (Los Altos) in 1921.¹ Charles W. Morris passed away in 1932; his family, and later his son, continued to live on the property. A lot split created a “flag lot” with the 1914 house facing the back fence of the parcel in front. Access from Eleanor Avenue is by a driveway on the side of the parcel.

Purpose of the study: Recently, the property was sold to a new owner who wishes to expand the living space of the house to accommodate the family and provide a modern living arrangement of spaces. Urban Programmers was asked to review the rehabilitation plans prepared by Chapman Design Associates, Inc. for compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Property* and the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* (<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/treatment-standards-rehabilitation.htm>).

Methodology: The first task is to establish the integrity of the house, the setting, and the appropriate context from which we can identify the character-defining features and evaluate any proposed changes. Additional research added to what had been known about the C.W. Morris family but did not identify the original owner.¹ Observing the existing architecture, it is apparent that the house has been altered and enlarged several times over the years. The past alterations followed the basic Craftsman style, although the details differ considerably from one remodel to another. The integrity of a building is composed of seven aspects.¹ In assessing these aspects, we found the property met the aspects of location, that it retained overall Craftsman design, and that it retained sufficient original materials and workmanship to be recognized as c. 1914. However, the aspect of feeling and setting of a farmhouse among agricultural

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Footnotes from first page.

¹ Los Altos Historic Resources Inventory, DPR 523, prepared by Circe Historic Property Development, 2011.

² U.S. Census 1900, U.S. Census 1920.

³To identify the original owner would require a complete title search, and that is beyond the scope of a rehabilitation plan review.

⁴Integrity was defined by the National Park Service and has been adopted by California and CEQA. The seven aspects are location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, setting, and association.

The current setting is suburban, with the house on a “flag lot” behind a parcel with a newer house. In addition to the loss of agricultural land, the house lost its orientation to the street and faces the back fence of the newer front parcel. The feeling of a c. 1914 rural house is also lost due to the alterations and loss of a rural setting. The aspect of association is also diminished because the Morris family were not the original owners who developed the house, and for the most part, Charles was retired and did not contribute in a significant way to the history of the area. The conclusion is that, overall, design, original materials, and workmanship of the Craftsman Style house are sufficient to conclude that the house retains integrity. It is also noted that most alterations were sensitive to the Craftsman design, which reinforces the building’s integrity. Following this analysis, the character-defining features were identified as primarily Craftsman details.

Character-defining features of the C.W. Morris house are found primarily on the front with fewer on the sides of the house. It appears the rear façade has been extensively remodeled. Character-defining features include;

1. Cross-gable roof with wide overhanging eaves showing exposed rafter tails and brackets.
2. Wood construction and partial wood siding, including shingles
3. Low-pitched gable (triangular) roofs
4. Overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and beams
5. Knee braces under the eaves, at the corners and along the eave line (This is a carryover from barn construction and often appears in farmhouses of the period)
6. Heavy timber, paired columns at the front porch
7. Patterned windowpanes on the upper sections of the sash, grouped windows in an assembly
8. Full-width covered front porch with a low or half lower wall.
9. Horizontal banding between floors.

Alterations to the historic building:

Large shed dormers on the rear roof

Enclosed utility porch and most of rear façade

Glass pane doors, windows, and wall of the rear façade.

With the information defining integrity and character-defining features to be preserved, we looked at the proposed addition to the building to determine if historic character-defining features were altered. Noting that the significant character-defining features were on the front façade where no alterations were proposed, we then looked at the changes to the character-defining features of the sides and rear. We compared the *Secretary of the Interior’s*

Standards for Rehabilitation to the proposed architectural plans prepared by Chapman Design Associates Inc. Due to the flag lot parcel, we also looked at the Los Altos Zoning Code for orientation or view corridor.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation include a description of rehabilitation and 10 Standards.

The definition of rehabilitation is an *“act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.”*⁵

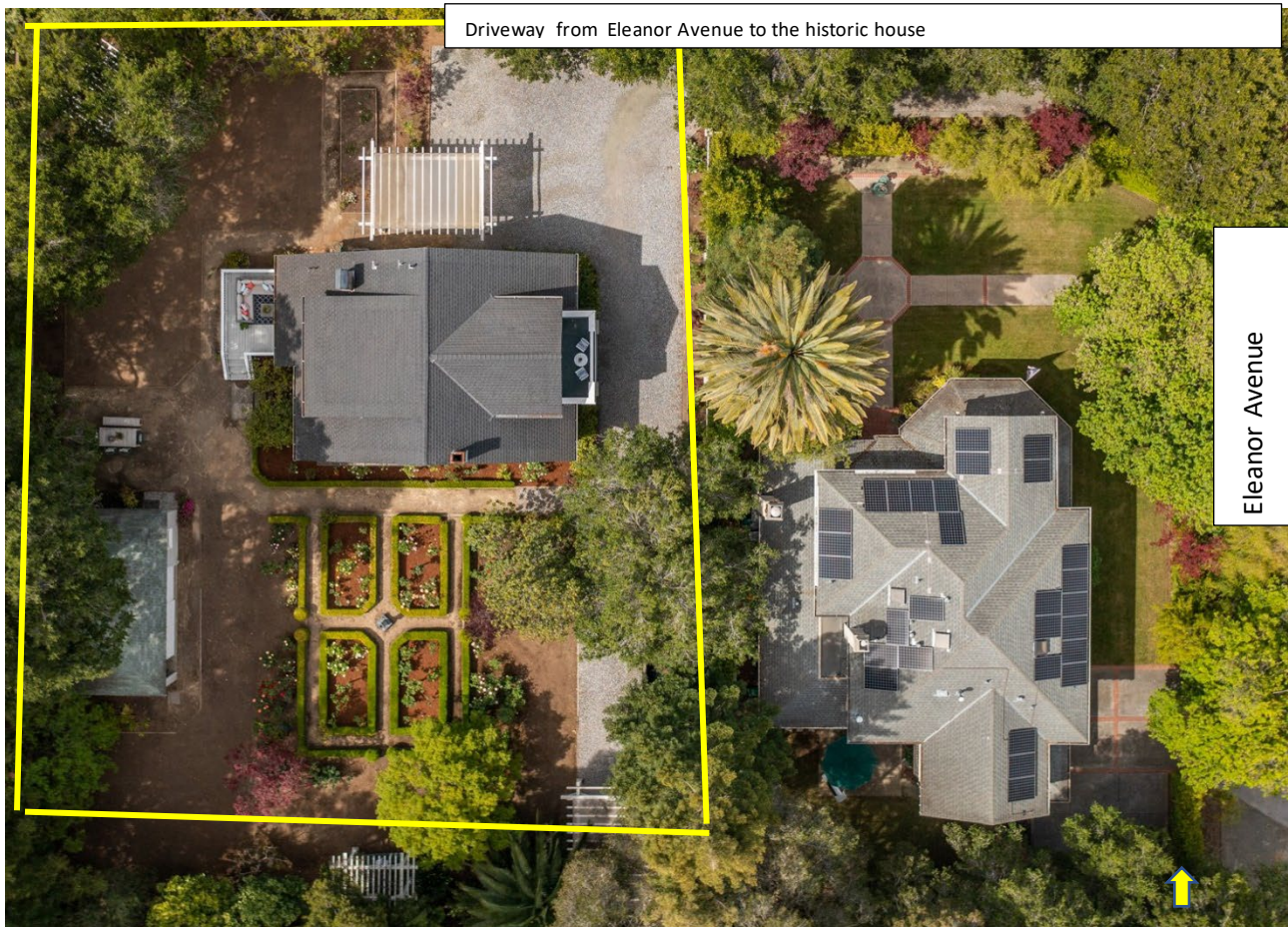
To allow the owners additional living space and modern conveniences while maintaining the character of the Craftsman style, the heavily remodeled rear façade was identified for the addition because it had the least character-defining features and original material. The rehabilitation plan will remove some historic material on the side and the rear roof frame where the addition connects to the existing framework of the house. Since the side has less important character-defining features than the front façade, the connection is not considered a significant loss of material and does not remove significant character-defining features.

Executive summary: Following the methodology above, Urban Programmers provided the architect with the character-defining features of the house and where we noted previous alterations to the original building. The architect agreed with the findings. After a review of the architectural plans for the rehabilitation, Urban Programmers concluded that the rehabilitation plans prepared by Chapman Design Associates, Inc. did not destroy significant character-defining features or remove extensive historic fabric to provide an addition to the rear façade which had been remodeled in the past. Urban Programmers determined that the proposed rehabilitation plan met the intent of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

The following pages describe the process and information used to reach the above conclusion.

⁵ <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/treatment-standards-rehabilitation.htm>

Photographs of the existing house taken in 2022.



Photograph 1 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

View: An aerial view shows the house with a narrow setback from the property line across the front façade and larger areas on each side. On one side are raised gardens; otherwise, the house is surrounded by crushed stone. The orientation of the lot is north and south, while the original entry to the house was east on Eleanor Avenue. Currently, the functional “front” entry is on the north side. The house cannot be seen from the public way.



Photograph 2 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

View: The primary east or front façade showing a full-width covered porch and projecting entry porch on the first level. This level is raised above a basement. The first level is sheathed in stucco, which appears to be an alteration of the original horizontal wood siding. The second story shows a cross-gable roof with a second-story gable. Projecting above the porch is a balcony with side walls and a railing in front; this appears to be an early addition. The south side façade has a brick chimney and continues the Craftsman details with an assembly of windows on the first level and knee braces under the open eaves, and an exposed rafter. Cut shingles are the sheathing on the second level.



Photograph 3 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

View: Front entry porch showing the low base and walls for the paired columns and the six stairs to the porch. The entry door is off set to the left.



Photograph 4 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

View: The north side façade showing the window alteration to fill the side of the porch and the second-level gable. A carport is under the pergola structure and the side entrance to the house.



Photograph 5 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos
View: West and rear façades showing the pop-out addition to the original design. The view shows the shed dormer addition on the rear roof, creating a second level.



Photograph 6 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos
View: Rear and north side showing the rear and deck additions. A large shed dormer appears to be an addition that is out of proportion with the style and original dormer on the front façade. A contemporary shed is behind the house.



Photograph 7 236 Eleanor Avenue, Los Altos

View: Rear façade showing the extensive alterations, enclosing a utility porch on the right and remodeled wall with glass pane doors and windows.

The rear façade has been significantly altered from the original design as a farmhouse in a variation of the Craftsman style. A search for building permits did not find permits for this work,

Alterations that previously removed historic material include the protruding section with a multi-pane glass door and three wood windows that were not original to the location nor probably to the building. The rear façade facing an orchard would have a utility porch with a wood back door that might have had a glass panel in the top. The porch stairs were usually located to the side. This is the pattern of the existing foundation. The windows would be small with plain frames. All windows appear to be from a previous remodel. The rear of the house was not used for recreation but was utilitarian, with clotheslines, a barn, and other ancillary buildings behind. Windows on the rear were also less formal but operable.

Although this may be the original style roof framing, it would be unusual. Typically, the roof was straight across the building, with a second shed roof covering the utility portion. The roof appears to have been extended over the protruding section, continuing the design of exposed rafter tails.

While the Craftsman style may include a shed dormer, the style seen on the front would have dictated a cross gable or gable dormer that would have occurred on this house. The shed dormer is out of proportion with the rest of the house. It appears to have been installed to create a bedroom in the attic storage area. Although the shed roof incorporates exposed rafter tails and a knee brace (Craftsman elements) these are not original to the building. Looking at the front and sides of the house, a dormer would have had a gable and not a shed roof. The shed-roofed

dormer is not original, and because of the scale, it has not gained significance and is not a character-defining feature of this house.

The windows in the protruding section are neither original to that location nor likely to the house. Recycling windows during a remodel is not a new concept and may have happened, although the frames do not appear to be early twentieth century. The small, almost square, windows (rear of the house) may or may not be the original frame and lungsil. Prior to when central heat and ventilation became important, kitchen windows, in particular, would have been operable to expel kitchen odors and circulate air into the kitchen. The fixed pane kitchen window may have been relocated to this area or be a feature of the remodeling; it is not a character-defining element. The deck has also been added and is not a character-defining feature of the house.

236 Eleanor Avenue, Proposed Rehabilitation Plans

The two-story historic house of 1,790 sq. ft. is proposed to have an addition attached to the back utility porch area (previously remodeled). The addition is proposed to be 2,157.41 sq. ft. with two stories. The historic house is shown to remain, as is the landscaping with rose gardens along with most trees.

All architectural drawings were provided by Chapman Design Associates, Inc., February 10, 2023.

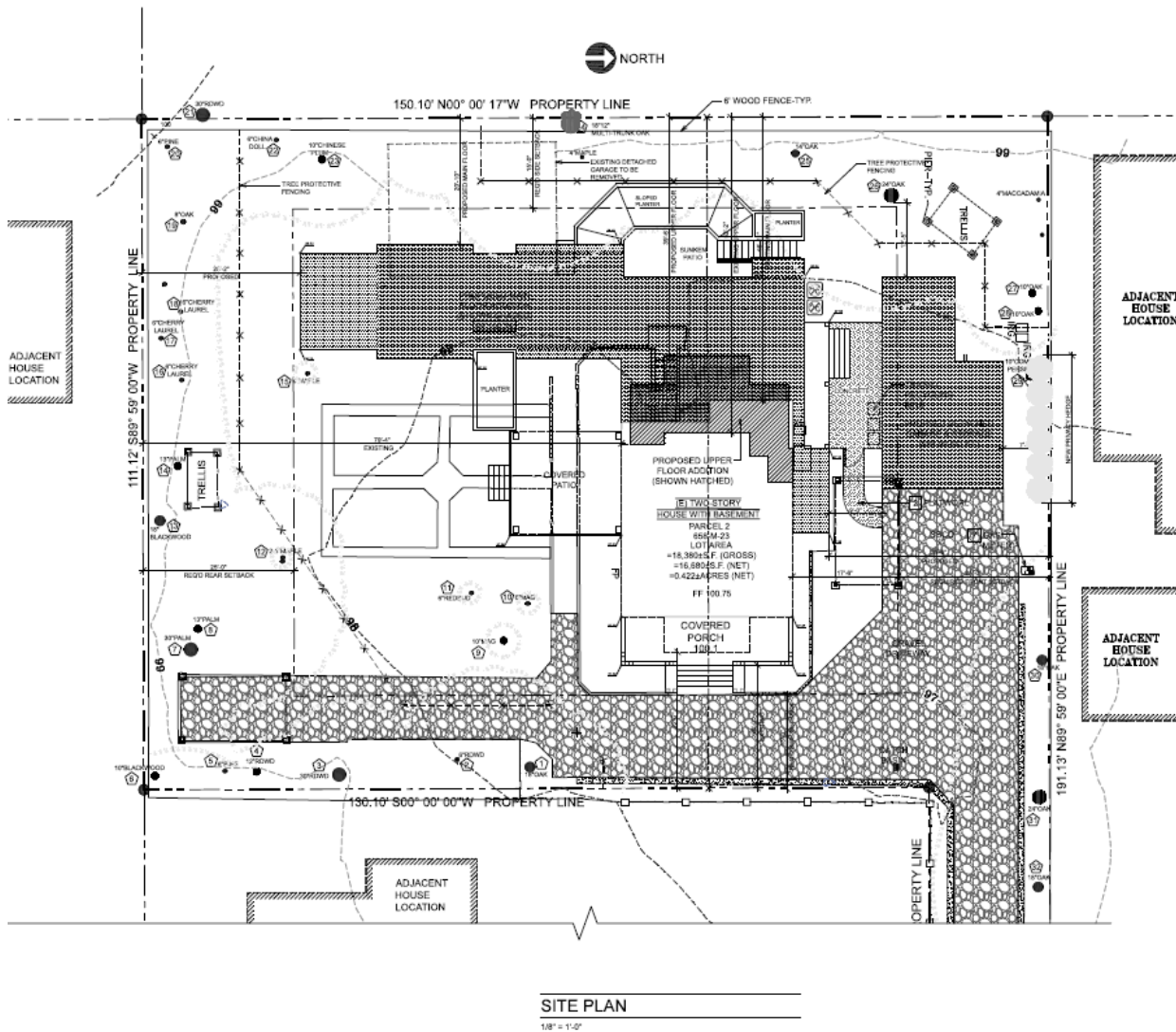
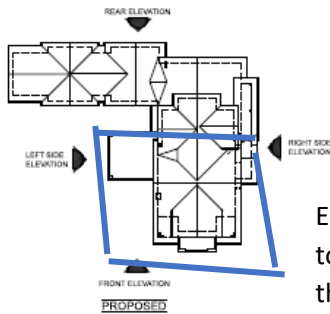


Figure 1 236 Eleanor Avenue -Rehabilitation Plan
 View: The site plan shows the existing house in white and the proposed addition to the rear of the house connecting on the rear façade, extending to the north façade, and the location of a new garage where an existing pergola (carport) is located.
 Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A10

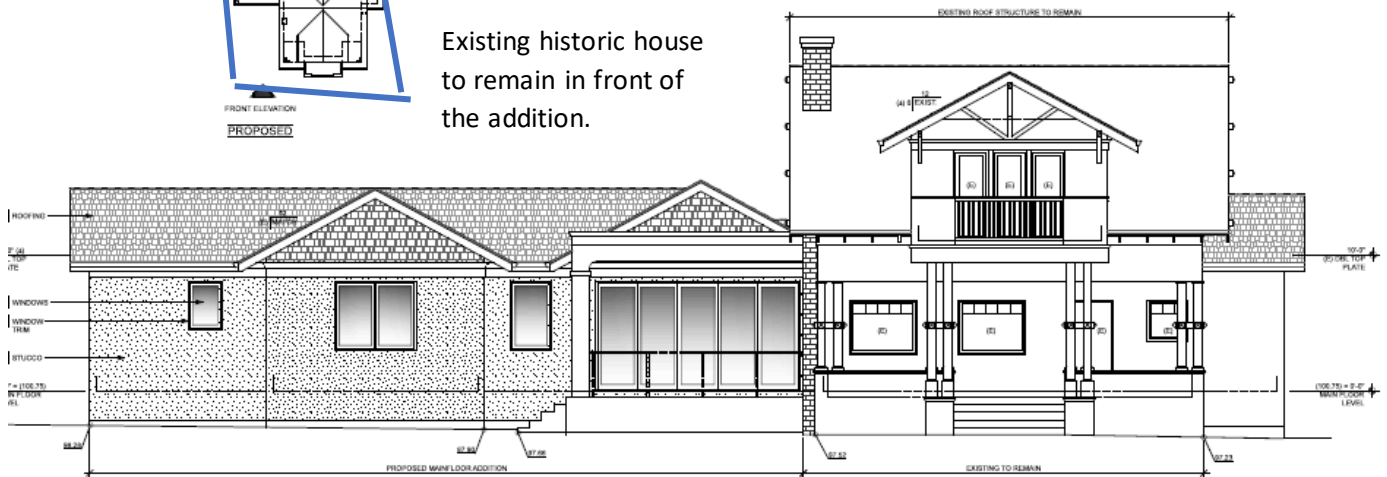


Figure 2-A 236 Eleanor Avenue - Rehabilitation Plan
View: Existing front façade

EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



Existing historic house to remain in front of the addition.



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

Figure 2-B 236 Eleanor Avenue - Rehabilitation Plan
View: Front Façade showing the existing house in white, and the proposed addition set back to the rear from the front portico. The historic house and front roof structure are shown to remain. The proposed addition will attach to the existing roof structure and have compatible materials. The differentiation will be in a course laying pattern. An example is hanging the shingles in an offset, providing a different appearance for the new construction using compatible materials.

Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A4.

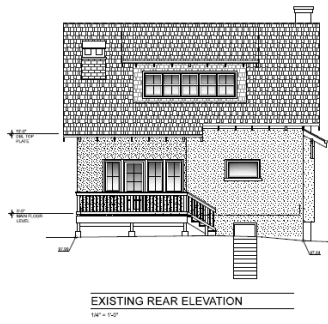


Figure 3-A 236 Eleanor Avenue - Rehabilitation Plan
View: Existing rear elevation

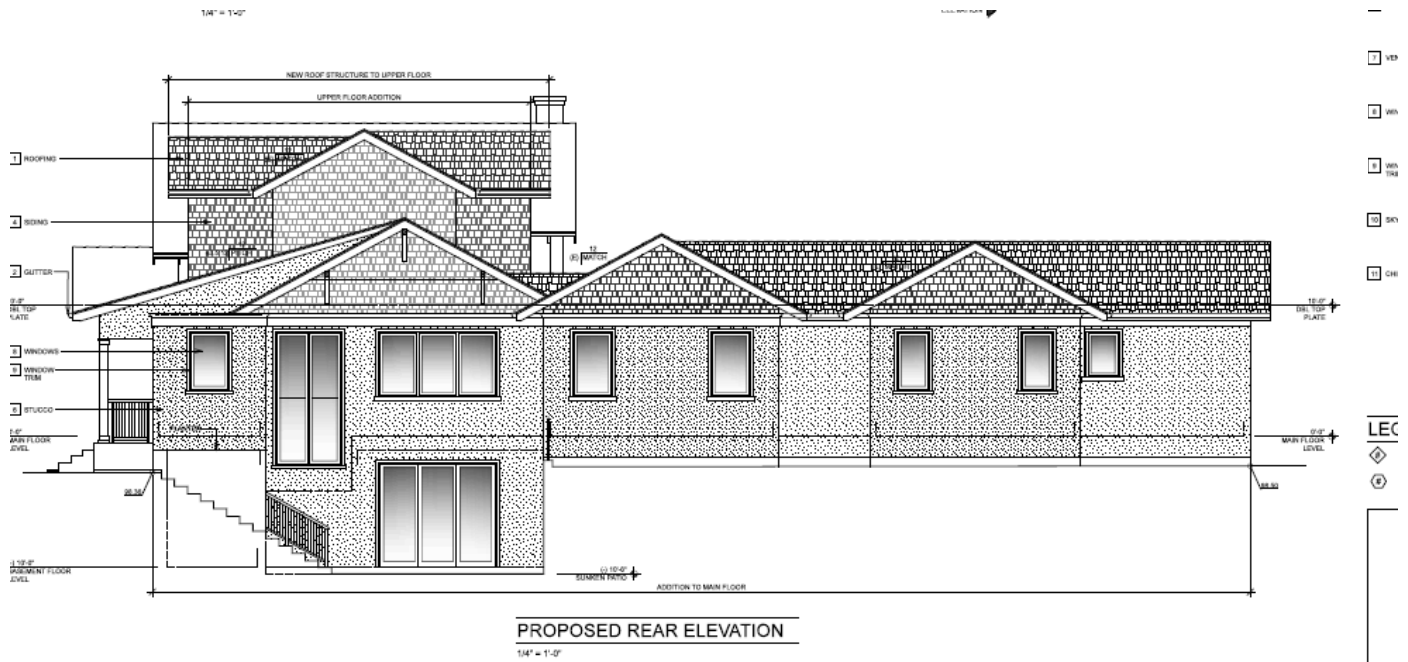


Figure 3 -B 236 Eleanor Avenue- Rehabilitation Plan
View: Rear Façade showing the proposed rear and side additions. The rear of the house had previously been remodeled and was not the original design. Maintaining the elevation of the floor plate in the historic house into the addition provides consistency with the raised elevation of the historic house.
Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A4.0

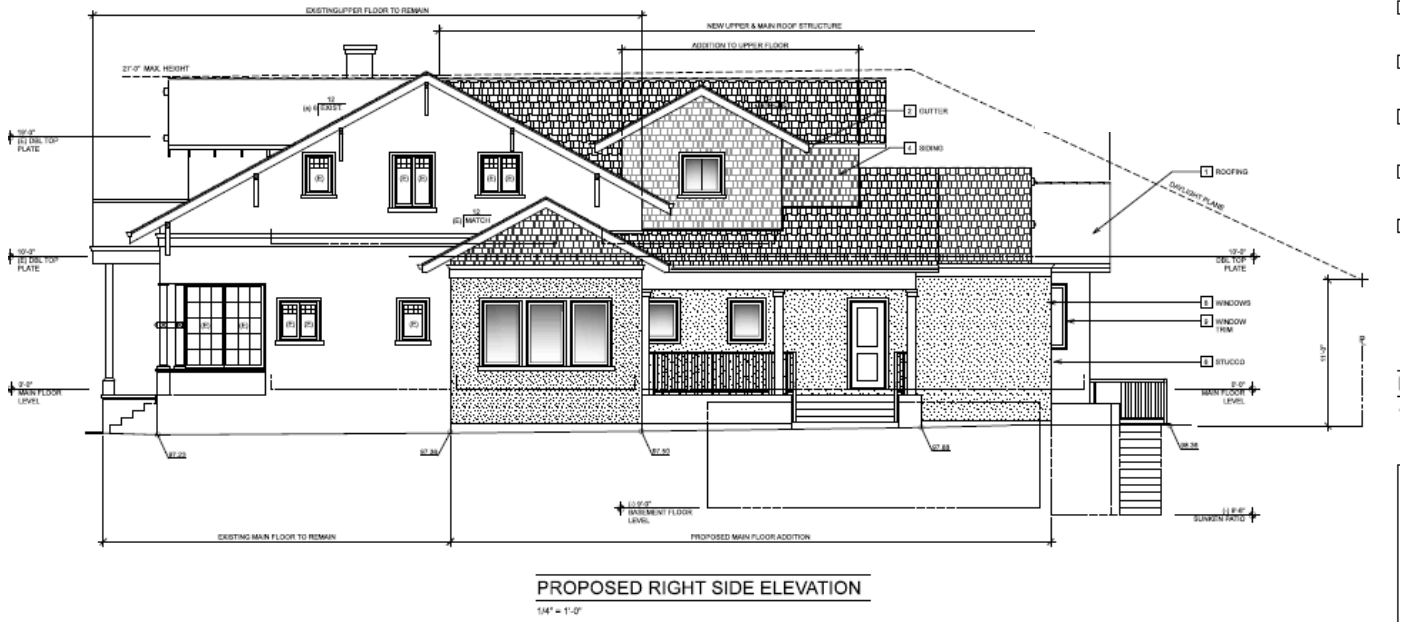


Figure 4 236 Eleanor Avenue- Rehabilitation Plan

View: North (right) Side Façade showing the side of the proposed rear addition and where the roof of the addition meets the historic roof structure. The roof intersection maintains the existing height of the historic building. A simple gable roof (without brackets or braces) is added to the rear as part of the new roof structure. Shingles will be offset in pattern to distinguish the new from the old. The stucco will be similarly slightly different to distinguish the different sections.

Northside façade historic material and features. The side exhibits character-defining features in the roof slope, fenestration with casement windows exhibiting small panes above a larger pane, and siding. There is a loss of historic material on the side and rear roof framing where the addition connects to the main building; composition roofing materials are not historic and are not character-defining elements. There is also a loss of siding and two plain windows. The loss of historic materials is unfortunate, yet placing the addition to the rear and connecting the roof frame and rear side façades appears to provide the addition with the least loss of historic fabric and features.

Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A4.0

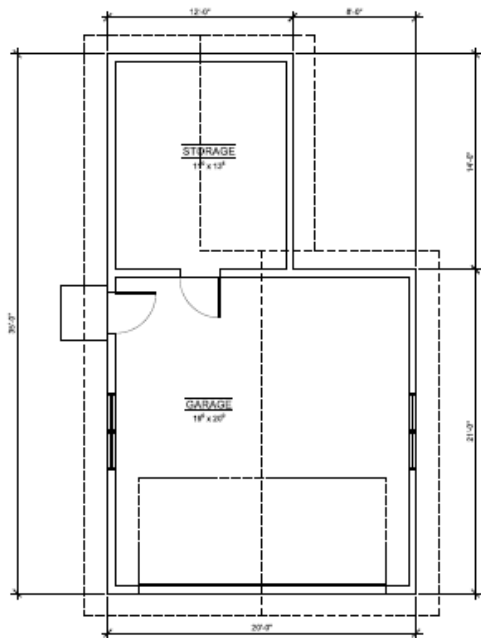


Figure 5-A 236 Eleanor Rehabilitation Plan

View: Existing Historic Building, Left or South elevation.

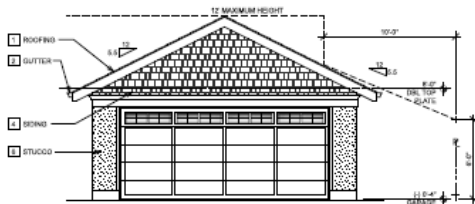


Figure 5 -B 236 Eleanor Avenue- Rehabilitation Plan
 View: Left (South) Façade showing the proposed connection of the new wing. The historic house and front roof structure are shown to remain at a height above the proposed addition. The roof structure is intersected with the new roof structure to create a cross gable in the second story. The plan results in the loss of historic siding materials.
 Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A4.0

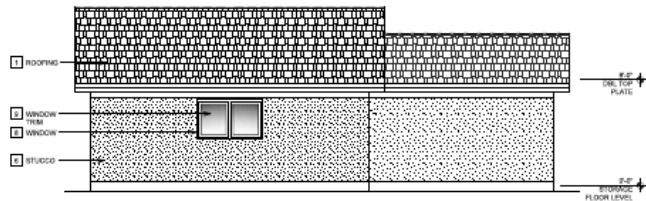


DETACHED GARAGE FLOOR PLAN
1/4" = 1'-0"

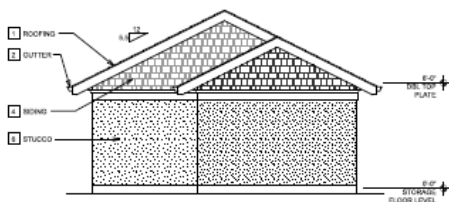
Figure 6-A 236 Eleanor Avenue -Rehabilitation Plan
View: Floor plan for a new detached garage.



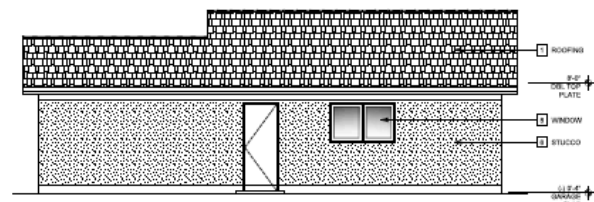
FRONT ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



REAR ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



LEFT SIDE ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

Figure 6-B 236 Eleanor Avenue- Rehabilitation Plan
View: Proposed new detached garage. The form is basic to garage structures that are wood-frame with a pitched (gable) roof. No stylistic or decorative embellishments have been added.
Source: Chapman Design Associates, Jacobsen/Parmacek Residence Sheet A4.1

Character-defining features of the Craftsman Style and Craftsman Bungalow

Although not a classic version of the Craftsman style, most of the distinctive design elements are present in the house at 236 Eleanor Avenue.

Coming from the Arts and Crafts Movement, the style features a natural use of materials and exposes the design, structure, and construction skill with exposed beams, rafters, and a mix of shingles, stucco, and timbers for the front paired posts of the porch.

1. Wood construction and partial wood siding, including shingles
2. Low-pitched gable (triangular) roofs
3. Overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and beams
4. Knee braces under the eaves, at the corners and along the eave line (This is a carryover from barn construction and often appears in farmhouses of the period)
5. Heavy timber, paired columns at the front porch
6. Patterned windowpanes on the upper sections of the sash
7. Full-width covered front porch with a low or half lower wall.
8. Horizontal banding between levels.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidance for Changes to historic buildings that preserve the character of the historic buildings while allowing modernization and additions that enhance the longevity of the historic resource.

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings were created by the National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division in 1978 to provide a framework to guide rehabilitation work for projects that were Certified Historic Structures and applied to use investment tax credits. Since that time, the “Standards” have been expanded by introducing element-specific recommendations in the “Guidelines.” These standards and guidelines have been adopted by many governmental agencies to promote the same level of preservation to projects that are determined to be local landmarks and/or historic resource properties. For buildings that are eligible for or are listed in the California Register of Historical Resources, compliance to the “Standards” is generally accepted to reduce the impact of a project to less than a significant adverse impact.⁶

*The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.*⁷

1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

The property retains its historic use as a single-family residence.

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

⁶ <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>

⁷ *ibid*

The historic character of the Craftsman design and most of the workmanship is retained in the proposed rehabilitation plan. There is no loss of character-defining features on the primary façade and minor loss of historic materials on the lesser side façades.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

No conjectural features were added to the building. The addition uses compatible forms without stylistic decoration. The architect will provide specifications showing the differentiation between similar materials.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

The historic building does not represent artistic or significant changes over time, and the alterations, particularly to the rear, are not historically important.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

The original design, workmanship, and materials are mostly preserved by locating the addition onto the rear, already altered, façade.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Specifications are not available currently. However, the historic house appears to be in very good condition, requiring little repair.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Specifications are not available at this time. However, there is no need for harsh chemicals or treatments, and these should not be permitted.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

An archeological survey was not conducted as part of this review. However, it appears from the past uses and rather dense development around the property that it is unlikely to yield important information about prehistory or history. Should archeological material be uncovered, State and local laws must be followed.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The proposed rear addition requires a small amount of historic siding and roof structure to be removed for the addition. The area is not a character-defining feature of the historic house. It is unfortunately necessary to lose some siding and roof framing, eave, and fascia to connect the addition to the main body of the house. There are materials and workmanship represented in large areas as part of the historic building. While the materials are characteristic of the Craftsman style, they are not individually character-defining features.

The proposed design for the addition is compatible with the historic building, using wood construction, shingles of a different off-set pattern as well as stucco siding that is a slightly different texture and differentiates the new from the historic materials. The architect shall provide specifications to show the differentiation.

The addition is not taller than the historic building and is located on the secondary rear façade, which has been remodeled, destroying much of the historic materials and workmanship. The proposed addition is compatible with the massing, size, and scale of the historic building, and by being located on the back of the historic house, it protects the integrity of the Craftsman style house.

The proposed detached garage is a simple gabled roof design without historicist ornamentation. The materials will follow those of the addition, and it will not appear to be a historic structure.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.⁸

Although highly unlikely, if the new addition were to be removed, the historic building could be repaired without significant damage to the historic envelope of the building. The historic building is wood construction, as is the proposed addition. Removing the addition would require repairing the original framing in wood and replacing the siding, knee brackets, and shingles.

The proposed new garage is a separate structure. The design is wood construction with a pitched roof and no ornamentation. The design is compatible with the character of the historic house. The location and construction do not change any aspects of the historic house.

Conclusion: Urban Programmers determined that the rehabilitation plan provided by Chapman Design Associates, Inc., for 236 Eleanor Avenue, including the addition to the historic house and the location and

⁸ <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>

design of a new garage, complies with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. The property retains eligibility to be listed in the Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory.

General Comments on the rehabilitation plans prepared by Chapman Design Associates.

The historic house was listed in the Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory in 1997 on a flag lot where the house is not visible from the public right of way. The only way to see the house is to enter the property past the front house. History did not record the motivation for creating the flag lot- but they are not uncommon; often, it was to provide a modern house in the front (or back) for a younger generation while maintaining a very close relationship to the older generation, or simply as a source of income as agriculture became unprofitable. Some parcels were not legally divided, while others, when subdivided, created unusual shapes or "flag lots" where the entrance is often a long driveway from the side or rear. Some parcels include historic resources that should be preserved, but these lots and the location of historic buildings often do not comply with zoning or setback regulations, making the preservation of a historic resource more difficult.

When the parcel at 236 Eleanor Avenue was created, there was no consideration given to preserving the historic resource, providing a view corridor to the historic building, or even defining the new orientation of the parcel. After the parcel was recorded, zoning and setbacks were established. Functionally, the orientation of this parcel rotates to have the main entrance on the north and not the east. This does not conform with the Los Altos zoning regulations.

Historic preservation criteria generally do not provide guidance in a situation where zoning or setbacks have been adopted because the overarching philosophy is to protect the historic resource and, when necessary, use the best judgment to provide the most beneficial setting for the historic resource, thus contributing to the preservation of the historic resource. In some communities, historic buildings or properties are given a special overlay zone with different requirements to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings or sites.

Reuse of materials should always be a consideration. If it is not possible to reuse them in the rehabilitation, they could be recycled through a company or donated to a preservation organization such as Preservation Action Council San Jose or a history museum that recycles building materials. Characteristic elements are also exchanged on the internet.

Recommendation: An updated DPR should be prepared to identify the original owner and record changes that may be approved and completed as part of the current application.

Best regards,



Bonnie Bamberg

MEMO

To: Sean Gallegos, Los Altos Planning Department

From: Bonnie Bamburg, Urban Programmers

Subject: 236 Eleanor Avenue-Response to comments on the Historic Report DPR and Review of Rehabilitation Plans

Date: April 12, 2023

General Response to Methodology.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Property and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation require an analysis of the character-defining features of a historic resource prior to beginning the rehabilitation plan. When this house was analyzed, it was apparent there had been many alterations and changes. The alterations are a mix of including existing details and new elements that were based upon Craftsman styles. We believe the designer studied the building and the styles and was not just a contractor remodel. The SOIS further requires a ranking or consideration of the primary and lesser character-defining features. This house exhibited the primary character-defining features to be primarily on the front facade, some on the side and less on the rear due to previous alterations.

To allow the owners additional living space and modern conveniences while maintaining the character of the Craftsman style, the rear façade was identified for the addition because it had the least character-defining features and original and as it had been remodeled. This allows for continued use and preserves the dramatic (although somewhat altered) front facade) and character of the side facades, although there is a loss of some historic materials and the side roof line... The rehabilitation plan was designed to require the least removal of character-defining features and historic materials. These are proposed to be removed as part of the rehabilitation addition.

Character defining features and original materials of the rear and side facade.

Rear Façade Historic materials and Character-defining



The rear façade has been significantly altered from the original design of a farmhouse in a variation of the Craftsman style.

Alterations that previously removed historic material include the protruding section that has a multi-pane glass door and three wood windows that are not original to the location and probably not to the building. The rear facade of an orchard would have the utility porch with a wood back door that might have had a glass panel in the top. Stairs usually were to the side. This is the pattern of the existing foundation. Windows would be small and plain frames. All windows appear to be from a previous remodel. The rear of the house was not used for recreation but was utilitarian with, clotheslines, a barn and other ancillary buildings behind. Windows on the rear were also less formal, but operable.

Although this may be the original style roof framing it would be unusual. Typically the roof was straight across and a second shed roof covered the utility portion. The roof appears to have been extended over the protruding section carrying the design of exposed rafter tails.

While the Craftsman style may include a shed dormer, the style seen on the front would have dictated a cross gable or gable dormer would have occurred on this house. The shed dormer is out of proportion with the rest of the house. It appears to have been installed to create a bedroom in the attic storage area. Although the shed roof incorporates exposed rafter tails and a knee brace - Craftsman elements- these are not original to the building. Looking to the front and sides of the house, a dormer would have had a gable and not a shed roof. The shed roofed dormer is not original and because of the scale it has not gained significance, and is not a character defining feature of this house.

The windows in the protruding section are not original to the location and not likely the house. Recycling windows during a remodel is not a new concept and may have happened although the frames do not appear early twentieth century. The small, almost square windows (rear of the house) may or may not be an original frame and lugsil. Prior to central heat and ventilation was important and kitchen windows particularly would have been operable to expell kitchen odors and circulate air into the kitchen. The fixed pane kitchen window may have been relocated to this area or is a feature of remodeling. It is not a character defining element.

The deck has also been added and is not a character defining feature of the house.

In summary, the rear of this house has been remodeled with original materials and style changed. The characteristic elements to be removed are; roof slope with exposed rafter tails is a defining element of the Craftsman style and siding on half the rear wall appears to be original and is typical of the Craftsman Style and this house.

The rehabilitation plan shows these elements will be removed. This will change the design and rear character of the house.

Side Façades Historic material and features. This is discussed in the report and expanded here. The side exhibits character-defining features in the roof slope, fenestration with windows exhibiting small panes above a larger pane in a casement style, and siding. There is a loss of historic material on the side and rear roof framing (composition roofing materials are not historic and are not character defining elements) where the addition connects to the main building and the loss of windows that are characteristic of the Craftsman style, and siding. The loss of characteristic windows on the first level is unfortunate yet placing the addition to the rear and connecting the roof frame and rear side facades appears to provide the addition with the least loss of historic fabric and features.

Responses to the questions and comments in the Summary of Comments on the Historic document Historic Report 236 Eleanor Ave.

Standard 2

Sean Gallegoas: There is no discussion of any potential character defining features, which are being removed/demolished due to the addition along the rear of the house.

At a minimum, the historian should be discussing the defining features along the rear elevation and whether the features or materials are relevant character defining features for the existing Craftsman style building.

In the report, the historian states: "the rear face with the pop-out addition to the original design. The view shows the shed dormer on the rear second level." If the historian does not believe the rear of the elevation is not historic due to addition not being historical significant or a character defining feature in its own right, it must discuss this issue in their response. While I agree the existing Craftsman design is retained along the front and the majority of the sides. This requires a more detailed discussion than the conclusory statements (without supporting analysis) which is provided in this response.

Finally, why is the applicant or the historian not utilizing the potentially historic windows or other features being removed from the rear of the house in the new house design. If a historic feature can be preserved, staff would expect the historian to require the preservation of any features, which could be preserved.

Urban Programmers Response. Above is the detailed description of the rear facade of 236 Eleanor Avenue.

Standard 3

Sean Gallegos. The historian states material textures will be offset or use different texture. Staff has identified stucco will be matching the existing house, and staff does not see the offset or the difference in texture. The historian should provide a greater discussion of the addition not creating a false sense of historic development.

Urban Programmers Response. Standard 3 and treatments were discussed with the architect Walter Chapman. Textures and colors would be included in the specifications. We did not see the color board. This would have been more appropriately stated that the architect will provide specifications and samples of color and textural differences to be approved by the Planning Staff.

Standard 4

Sean Gallegos. The historian states "the rear are not historically important." Why? If the rear elevation is not historic, the historian must provide a detailed explanation for the reasons under the City's historic preservation standards for the rear elevation not being historically important

Urban Programmers Response. This should have been explained in more detail as it is above.

Standard 5

Sean Gallegos. *While I understand an addition to the rear of a historic house is less impactful to the historical integrity and significance of the house, the historian is discussing the distinctive features being removed from the rear elevation. At a minimum this should be discussed by the historian, and the historian should outline the reasoning why the loss of the features are not significant under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.*

Urban Programmers Response. This is discussed in detail above.

Standard 9

Sean Gallegos. *There is no discussion of any potential character defining features, which are being removed/demolished due to the addition along the rear of the house. At a minimum, the historian should be discussing the defining features along the rear elevation and whether the features or materials are relevant character defining features for the existing Craftsman style building.*

In the report, the historian states: "the rear face with the pop-out addition to the original design. The view shows the shed dormer on the rear second level." If the historian does not believe the rear of the elevation is not historic due to addition not being historical significant or a character defining feature in its own right, it must discuss this issue in their response.

While I agree the existing Craftsman design is retained along the front and the majority of the sides. This requires a more detailed discussion than the conclusionary statements (without supporting analysis) which is provided in this response. In your response, you state the stucco is slightly different and differentiates from the historic materials. However, the applicant's materials board shows the stucco will exactly match the existing stucco finish. Therefore, your original statement is not consistent with the proposed plans and materials. Staff requests a discussion of the proposed materials and their consistency under the SOISR.

Urban Programmers Response. The discussion and explanation of the affected facades is above.

Reuse of materials should always be a consideration. If it is not possible to reuse them in the rehabilitation, they could be recycled through a company or donated to a preservation organization such as Preservation Action Council San Jose or a history museum that recycles building materials. Characteristic elements are also exchanged on the internet.

ATTACHMENT C

236 Eleanor Notification list and notes

Address	Name	Notes
260 Eleanor Ave	Greg and Kendra Muscarello	In person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet 3/2 and have had add'l in-person discussions. Supports
192 Eleanor Ave	Ashish Patel, Neelam Goyal	Dropped packet 3/2 and have had positive email exchnages. Supports
246 Eleanor Ave	Steve and Celeste Hertzler	In-person discussions 2/17. Dropped packet in mb 3/2 and had in person discussions and positive text exchange. Supports
199/201 Elenor Ave	Ying Liu	Had in person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet off 3/2 personally and reviewed. Supports
241 Eleanor Ave	Rod Sugimoto	In person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet 3/2 and have had add'l in-person discussions. Supports
217 Eleanor Ave	Candice Maruyama	In-person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet 3/2 and had in person discussions and positive text exchange. Supports
161 Pepper Ct	Dee Gibson	In person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet 3/2 and have had add'l in-person discussions. Supports
166 Hawthorne Ave	Pia Camenzind	In person discussion 2/17. Dropped packet 3/2 and have had add'l in-person discussions. Supports
172 Hawthorne Ave	RENTAL / FOR SALE / NO OWNER LISTED AT CITY	
184 Hawthorne Ave	RENTAL / VACANT / NO OWNER LISTED AT CITY	
215 Hawthorne Ave	RENTAL / VACANT / Sent packet to listed owner in Cambell	
245 N Hawthorne	Western Title Guaranty Co Deane Furuichi	Name provided by city as additional notification APN: 170-26-046 : Sent Packet

ATTACHMENT D 235 ELEANOR AVENUE

NEWMATERIALS



ROOFING

40 YEAR COMPOSITION
SHINGLE



GUTTERS

OGEE & ROUND
DOWNSPOUTS



WINDOWS

DUAL GLAZED
ALUMINUM CLAD



WINDOW TRIM

2X2 WOOD TRIM
2X3 SILL & APRON



EXTERIOR

MATCH EXISTING
STUCCO

STAGGERED SHINGLES
AT GABLES



235 ELEANOR AVENUE

EXISTING MATERIALS



ROOFING
REMAIN AS EXISTING
40 YEAR
COMPOSITION



GUTTERS
REMAIN AS EXISTING
OGEE
ROUND DOWNSPOUT



WINDOWS
REMAIN AS EXISTING



WINDOW TRIM
REMAIN AS EXISTING
2X3 SILL & APRON
WITH CROWN



EXTERIOR
REMAIN AS EXISTING
STUCCO

GABLES
STRAIGHT LINED
SHINGLES

