



TO: Nick Zornes, Zoning Administrator

FROM: Jia Liu, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: SC23-0016 – 1358 Montclair Way

RECOMMENDATION

Approve design review application SC23-0016 for the construction of first and second-story additions to an existing one-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 15301 (“Existing Facilities”).

BACKGROUND

Project Description

- Project Location: 1358 Montclair Way, on the south side of Montclair Way
- Lot Size: 15,246 square feet
- General Plan Designation: Single-Family, Medium Lot (SF4)
- Zoning Designation: R1-10
- Current Site Conditions: One-story house

The proposed project includes construction of a 30 square-foot first story and 700 square-foot second-story addition to an existing one-story house (see Attachment A – Project Plans). The existing house has a traditional Ranch architectural style with low-scaled building forms, gable and hipped roofs, and simple details. The design of the addition will maintain the elements of a ranch house, with its simplistic massing and practical aesthetic.

The subject property is an interior lot in a proximate trapezoid shape, measuring approximately 108 feet wide and 146 feet deep. The proposed addition will keep the existing house’s footprint and driveway circulation.

The project plans to retain all six Redwood trees located in the rear yard, classified as protected trees under the City's Tree Protection Regulations. Additionally, a new Chinese Pistache tree will be planted in the front yard, and 36 evergreen screening plants will be planted along the rear and left property lines. 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.

ANALYSIS

Design Review

The proposed house complies with the R1-10 district development standards found in Los Altos Municipal Code (LAMC) Chapter 14.06, as demonstrated by the following table:

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
COVERAGE:	2,826 square feet	2,750 square feet	4,574 square feet
FLOOR AREA:			
1st Floor	2,363 square feet	2,393 square feet	
2nd Floor	-	700 square feet	
Total	2,363 square feet	3,093 square feet	4,285 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	41 feet	41 feet	25 feet
Rear	32 feet	32 feet	25 feet
Right side (1 st /2 nd)	10 feet/-	10 feet/29 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side (1 st /2 nd)	10 feet/-	10 feet/38 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
HEIGHT:	17 feet	24.08 feet	27 feet

Pursuant to Chapter 14.76 of the LAMC, new second-story additions shall be consistent with policies and implementation techniques described in the Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines. The proposed home 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 Diverse Character Neighborhood according to the Design Guidelines. The immediate neighborhood is comprised of one-story and two-story houses. Homes in the neighborhood exhibit similar massing, a combination of simple and complex roof forms, and distinctive front setback patterns. The horizontal eave lines typically range from approximately eight to nine feet and six inches in height at the first story and from approximately seven feet six inches to eight feet six inches. Most of the homes in the neighborhood feature attached garages in the front yard facing the street while a few properties deviate from this pattern with detached two-car garages from the main residences.

The design of the addition will maintain the existing Ranch architectural style and seeks to preserve the existing wood siding while replacing the existing brick wainscoting with stone veneer to give a refreshed architectural appearance. The design materials include asphalt shingle roof, wood siding finish with stone veneer wainscoting, as well as vinyl famed windows and doors to match the existing house. Collectively, the design considerations and materials selections achieve a harmonious architectural composition within the neighborhood.

The proposed addition's massing is compatible with the neighborhood, maintaining an eight-foot plate height at the first floor facing the street while increasing the Great Room's plate height to eleven feet

and two inches facing the rear and side yards. The second story maintains a uniform plate height of eight feet, ensuring a cohesive appearance within the neighborhood streetscape.

The proposed project complies with the R1-10 zoning district's development standards and Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines. The addition's design harmoniously integrates with the existing home's composition, and is compatible with neighboring structures and neighborhood by reducing perceived bulk and prioritizing the preservation of existing trees.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15301 ("Existing Facilities") of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it involves an addition to an existing single-family residence.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

A public meeting notice was posted on the property, mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject site, 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 sent out letters to eight neighbors in the immediate area. No comments from neighbors have been received by staff as of the writing of this report.

Attachment:

A. Project Plans

Cc: Marta Andersson, Applicant/Designer
Jaya Kawale and Aditya Pal, Owners

FINDINGS

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With regard to the addition to the existing one-story residence, the Zoning Administrator finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.060 of the Municipal Code:

- A. The project complies with all provision of this chapter because the proposed residential addition 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 addition, 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 residential addition maintains a similar finished floor elevation and orientation on the lot as the existing house 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 trees on the property protected by city ordinance are proposed to remain and there will not be any substantial grade changes nor soil removal to construct the addition. The proposed landscaping including new trees, shrubs, and ground cover will be in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood.
- D. The orientation of the proposed addition in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize excessive bulk because the proposed structure incorporates consistent architectural design features such as low scale, horizontal eave lines, and gable roof forms that integrate with the existing house 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 addition complies with the allowable floor area, lot coverage, height maximums, and daylight plane limitations specified in LAMC Chapter 14.06 and the design of the home incorporates consistent and compatible features including asphalt shingle roofing, wood siding finish with stone veneer wainscoting, as well as vinyl famed windows and doors to match the existing house.
- 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 April 3, 2026 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 March 12, 2024, except as may be modified by these conditions.

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

Six Redwood trees, clustered at the southwest corner of the subject site as shown on Sheet A-1, shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Development Services Director.

5. 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.

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 and provide a letter which explains how each condition of approval has been satisfied and/or which sheet of the plans the information can be found.

10. 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."

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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.

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 driplines of all protected trees unless approved by the project arborist and the Planning Division.

16. Mechanical Equipment

The plans shall show the location of any mechanical equipment (including air conditioning units) on the site plan. All equipment must comply with the City's Noise Control Ordinance (Chapter 6.16) and Mechanical Equipment Ordinance (Chapter 11.14).

17. 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

18. Tree Protection

Tree protection fencing shall be installed around the driplines of the six clustered Redwood trees as shown on Sheet A-1. 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.

19. 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 with 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

20. 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.

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).