

September 18, 2025

Ms. Suray Nathan
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

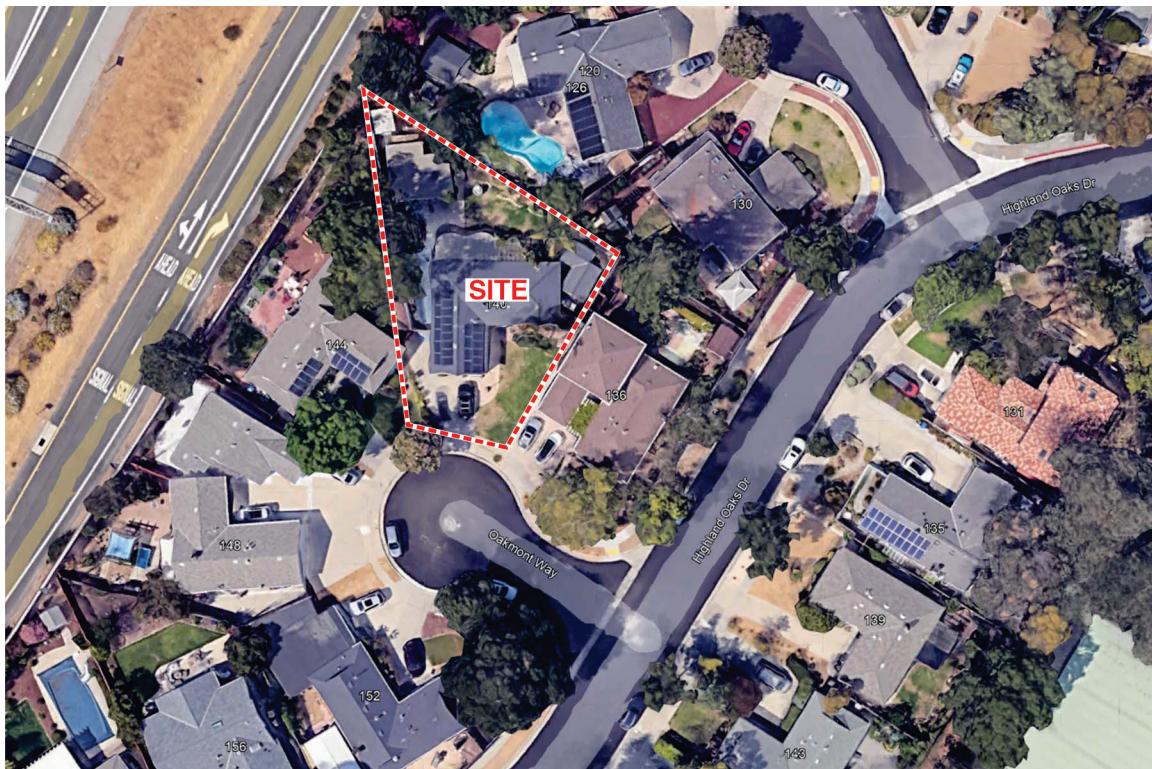
RE: 140 Oakmont Way

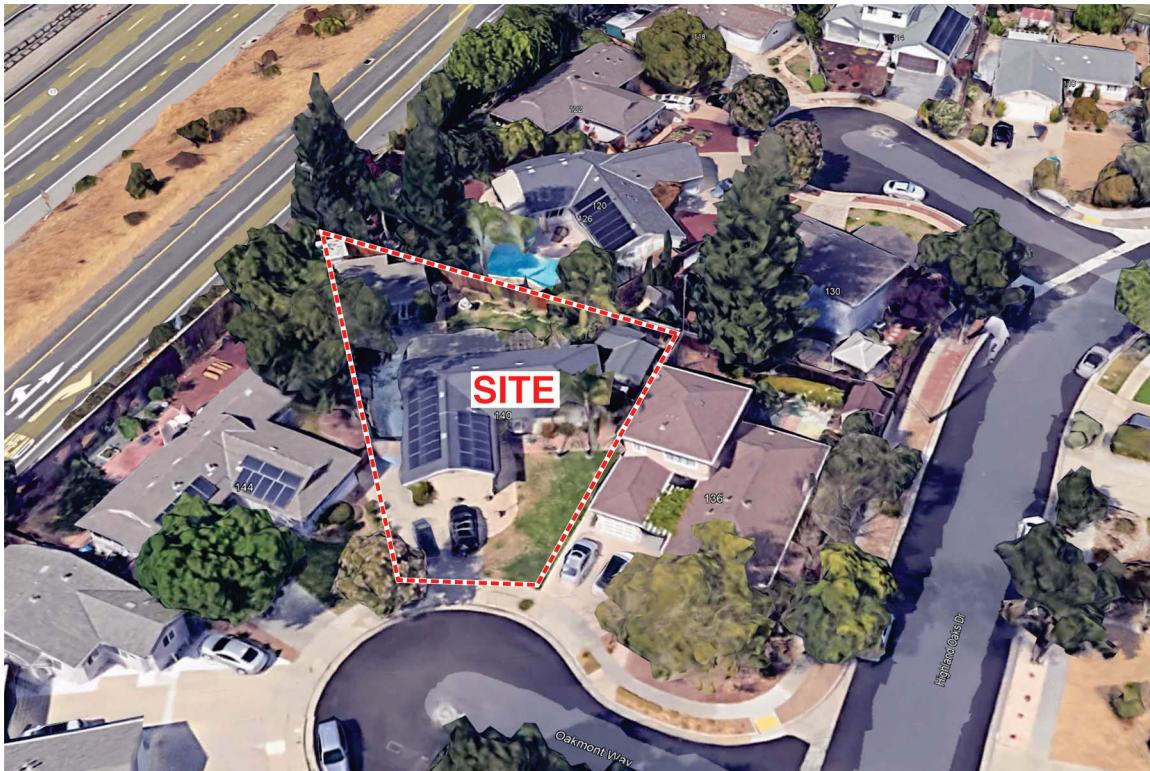
Dear Suray:

I reviewed the previous drawings, evaluated the neighborhood context and prepared a review letter in January. My comments and recommendations on the revised design are as follows:

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The site is located on a short cul-de-sac in an older neighborhood of traditional Ranch Style homes. Most nearby homes are one story in height but there are a couple of homes with partial second floors. Photos of the site and its surrounding neighborhood are shown on the following page.

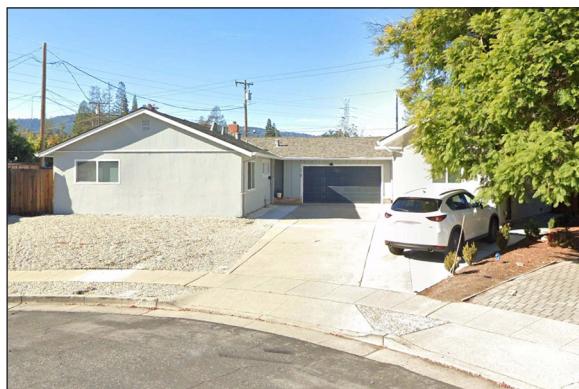




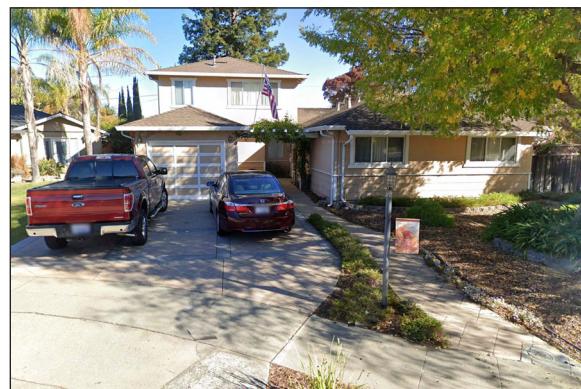
The site and existing house



Nearby home across Oakmont Way



House immediately to the left

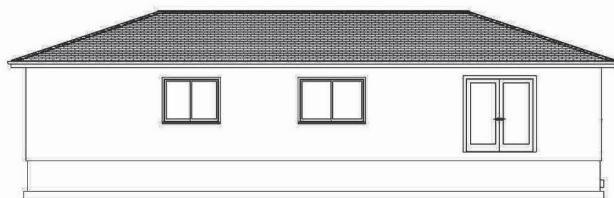


House immediately to the right

EXISTING HOUSE



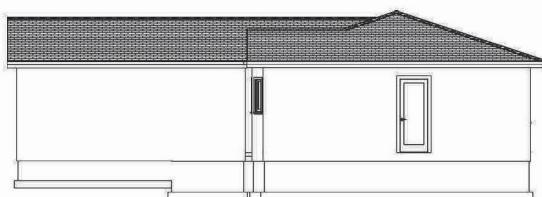
Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



Left Side Elevation



Right Side Elevation

PROPOSED PROJECT

PREVIOUS DESIGN



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



Left Side Elevation

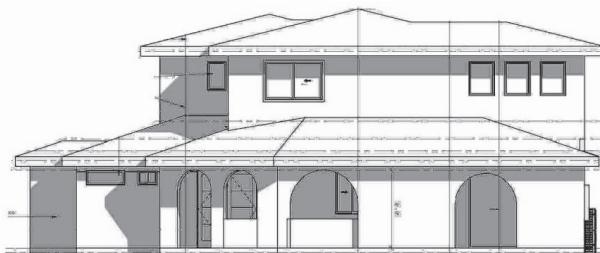


Right Side Elevation

CURRENT DESIGN



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



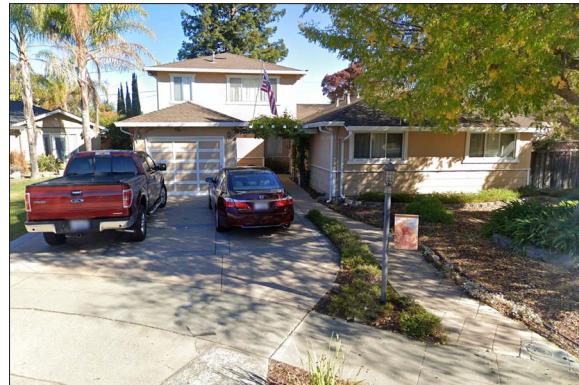
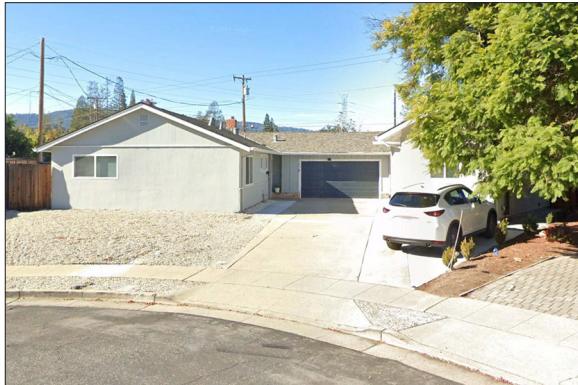
Left Side Elevation



Right Side Elevation

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

As noted the vast majority of nearby homes are one story in height. The proposed additions to this home would substantially increase its scale relative other homes in its immediate neighborhood and the extended neighborhood around it. The proposed front facade illustration and neighborhood photos below show the previous and current proposed design in comparison with nearby neighborhood homes.



In evaluating this proposed project in the context of the town's Residential Design Guidelines, it would be difficult to conclude that it fully meets the adopted design guidelines.

Noted below are some of the guidelines where this proposed design appears to not be consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines.

1.4 COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

- *Homes will respect the scale and character of their immediate neighborhoods.*

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following principles have been used in the development of these guidelines, and will be used by the Town to evaluate plans and designs that are not covered by a specific design guideline.

- *Design to blend into the neighborhood rather than stand out*
- *Reinforce prevailing neighborhood development patterns*
- *Relate a structure's size and bulk to those in the immediate neighborhood*

2.1 GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following principles have been used as touchstones for the development of individual Neighborhood Pattern Guidelines. In the event that the specific guidelines do not clearly address a given condition, these principles, along with the General Design Principles ... should be consulted for direction. The following principles will be used by the deciding body when evaluating projects, and when considering the acceptability of unique proposals that vary from the specific guidelines.

- *Residential development shall be similar in mass, bulk and scale to the immediate neighborhood. Consideration will be given to the existing FAR's, residential square footages and lot size in the neighborhood.*

2.3 FORM AND MASS

- 2.3.1 *Design two story houses in predominantly one story neighborhoods to blend with the smaller homes.*
- 2.3.2 *Avoid structures with height and bulk at front and side setback lines which are significantly greater than those of the adjacent homes.*

2.3.3 Design home entries that are sympathetic to others in the neighborhood

- *Avoid very formal entries in neighborhoods that are more informal (e.g., Ranch Style) in character.*
- *Avoid tall entries unless that is the predominant entry type in the neighborhood.*

3.3.2 Height and bulk at front and side setbacks

- *Two story houses may not be appropriate for every neighborhood. For neighborhoods dominated by one story homes, an effort should be made to limit the house to one story in height or to accommodate second floor space within the roof form as is common in the Craftsman Style.*
- *Avoid eave lines and roof ridge lines that are substantially taller than the adjacent houses.*
- *Avoid monumental scaled forms (e.g., towers or turrets) that contrast with the neighborhood architectural forms.*

3.6.3 Design entries with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood

- *Avoid large and formal entries unless that is the norm for nearby houses. It is often best to start the design consideration with an entry type (e.g., projecting or under eave porch) that is similar to nearby homes.*

3.7.2 match window types and proportions to the architectural style and to the surrounding neighborhood

3.7.5 Special window shapes and styles should be used sparingly

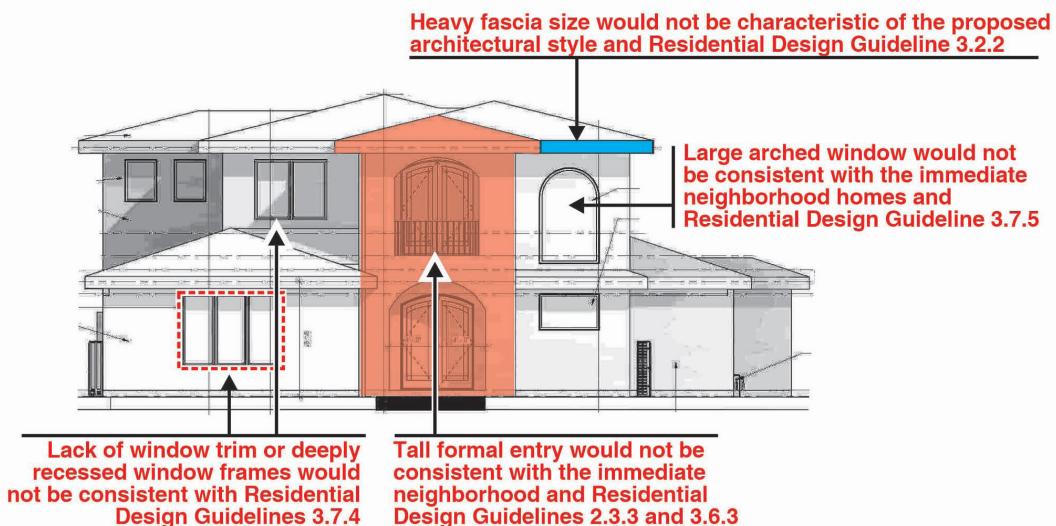
- Avoid Estate Home Style windows (e.g., tall arched windows) in neighborhoods where the homes are more modest and informal in character.

3.7.4 Design the windows with attention to matching the traditional details of the architectural style

- Most architectural styles - except Mission, Spanish Eclectic or Modern - should have wood trim around the windows. The trim width should be matched to the style, but in general, should not be less than 3 1/2 inches wide.
- Projecting window sills and heads are strongly encouraged unless the architectural style would not normally have those features.
- **Wood trim is also encouraged on stucco houses unless the window frames are recessed at least 6 inches from the outside face of the wall. The use of stucco covered foam trim is strongly discouraged. [Emphasis added].**

CHANGES MADE

Several positive changes have been made in response to the previous review letter and recommendations but there are a few specific design conditions which are still not consistent with the Town's Residential Design Guidelines.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Building design refinements should focus on reducing the scale of the tall entry to blend better with the other homes in its immediate neighborhood, addressing other inconsistencies with the Residential Design Guidelines and refining the design details. I looked at a variety of refinements with the goal of maintaining the current floor plans and minimizing exterior form changes. Three possible refinements are shown on the following pages. They are basically the same with variations on the home entry.

All three facade alternatives include the following features:

1. Elimination of the two story tall entry form by changing the second floor covered balcony to an open uncovered space.
2. Simplification and unification of the window forms with the addition of detail in the form of true or simulated divided panes on all windows - see illustration below.



3. A deep recess of all windows frames from the outside face of the walls to be consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.7.4.



Windows recess example

4. Refinement and clarification of the eave details. They currently appear appropriate on the included front facade sketch but overly bulky on the elevation drawings.

These suggested alternative approaches for review by the applicant and staff are as shown below.



Currently Proposed Facade

Alternative A

The second floor covered balcony portion of the entry is replaced by an open balcony as is common in this architectural style. It would retain the essence of the applicant's proposed entry while reducing its visual height and bulk.



A

Alternative B

The second alternative would be similar to Alternative A by maintaining the basic design of the facade while extending the eave and roof over the entry in conformance with Residential Design Guideline 3.6.3. It would still provide an emphasis on the entry while simplifying its form to be more compatible with other homes in the immediate neighborhood.



B

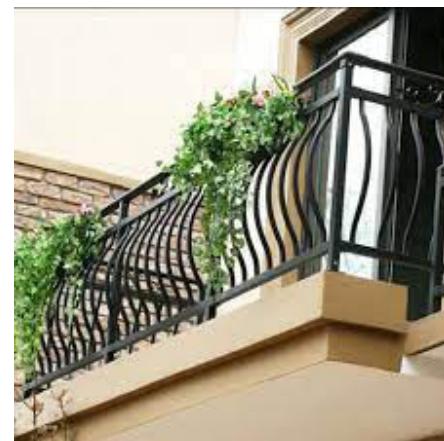
Alternative C

This alternative provides an entry-under-the-eave as shown in Alternative B but retains the applicant's originally proposed arched entry opening.



C

Should the applicant wish to enhance the originally proposed Spanish Architectural Style of the home, consideration should be given to enhancing the detail of the second level balcony railing as is common with that architectural style - some examples are shown below.



Suray, please let me know if you have any questions or if there are any issues that I did not address.

Sincerely,
CANNON DESIGN GROUP



Larry L. Cannon