



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 10/23/2024

ITEM NO: 8

DATE: October 18, 2024
TO: Historic Preservation Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Requesting Approval for Modification (Siding Replacement) of a Previously Approved Project on an Existing Pre-1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8. **Located at 50 Hernandez Avenue.** APN 510-20-003. Request for Review Application PHST-24-021. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Property Owner: Richard Archuleta and Chrissy Klander. Applicant: Jay Plett, Architect. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

RECOMMENDATION:

Requesting approval for modification (siding replacement) of a previously approved project on an existing pre-1941 single-family residence on property zoned R-1:8, located at 50 Hernandez Avenue.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1903 (effective year built 1920) per County Assessor's Database
2. Town of Los Gatos Historic Status Code: Unknown
3. Does property have an LHP Overlay? No
4. Is structure in a historic district? No
5. If yes, is it a contributor? N/A
6. Findings required? No
7. Considerations required? Yes

BACKGROUND:

On May 19, 2023, the Committee conducted a preliminary review of a proposal to demolish portions of the residence behind the front façade and construct additions to the residence, including a new second story and a basement and provided recommendations to the applicant for project revisions.

PREPARED BY: Sean Mullin, AICP
Planning Manager

BACKGROUND (continued):

A Minor Residential Development application for the project was submitted to the Town on February 23, 2022. The development plans provided with the application were consistent with those presented during the preliminary review and the applicant responded to all recommendations of the Committee. On March 23, 2022, the Committee recommended approval of the Minor Residential Development application, which was subsequently approved by the Community Development Director on June 27, 2022. Building Permits for the project were issued on October 31, 2023, and the project is currently under construction.

On October 25, 2023, the Committee reviewed and approved a request for modification to the approved project for changes to the front porch and trellis, as well as window materials.

On March 13, 2024, the Committee reviewed and approved a request to enlarge a window on the front elevation.

DISCUSSION:

The applicant has returned to the Committee requesting approval for replacement of the existing siding. The applicant provided a Letter of Justification noting that the existing siding consists of three different profiles and that prior remodels resulted in a patchwork of siding that is not cohesive (Attachment 1). The applicant also indicates that areas of siding have been damaged by water and prior repair work was carried out in an unsightly manner. The applicant provided a letter from the builder indicating that the existing siding lacks proper waterproofing and the walls have no insulation (Attachment 2). The builder notes that if insulation is installed behind the existing siding without a vapor barrier, any water intrusion into the new insulation would be difficult to dry out and detrimental to the building's health due to the lack of waterproofing underlayment. The builder recommends removing the non-matching siding, installing plywood shear with a vapor barrier and installing new cedar siding. The new three-inch lap siding would match what was approved for the addition to the residence.

Town Code Section 29.10.020 clarifies that demolition of a historic structure means removal of more than twenty-five percent of the wall(s) facing a public street or fifty percent of all exterior walls. When approved by the deciding body, the following is exempt from the demolition definition:

- a. *Replacement.* The exterior wall covering may be removed if the covering is not original to the structure.
- b. *Repair.* The removal and replacement of in kind non-repairable exterior wall covering (siding) resulting in no change to its exterior appearance or historic character if approved by the deciding body.

DISCUSSION (continued):

- c. *Removal.* The removal of an addition(s) that is not part of the original structure and which has no historic significance, as determined by the Historic Preservation Committee. Demolition shall be determined by subsections (1) and (2) above for the original structure, where walls enclosed by additions shall be considered as exterior walls.

Based on the applicant's description of the existing condition of the residence, it is likely that each exemption is applicable to portions of the siding.

The applicant is seeking a determination from the Committee that the removal and replacement of the siding is appropriate and therefore exempt from the demolition definition. Should the Committee find merit in the request, a recommendation would be forwarded to the Community Development Director. Once approved, Building Permit revisions could be approved by the Town and the project would not return to the Committee.

CONCLUSION:

Should the Committee find merit in the request, the Committee should forward a recommendation of approval for the request to the Community Development Director.

FINDINGS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

A. Findings

Sec. 29.10.020. Demolition (historic structures)

All remaining exterior walls must be contiguous and must retain the existing exterior wall covering. No new exterior wall covering shall be permitted over the existing exterior wall covering. The following are exempt from this definition:

- X a. *Replacement.* The exterior wall covering may be removed if the covering is not original to the structure.
- X b. *Repair.* The removal and replacement of in kind non-repairable exterior wall covering (siding) resulting in no change to its exterior appearance or historic character if approved by the deciding body.
- X c. *Removal.* The removal of an addition(s) that is not part of the original structure and which has no historic significance, as determined by the Historic Preservation Committee. Demolition shall be determined by subsections (1) and (2) above for the original structure, where walls enclosed by additions shall be considered as exterior walls.

FINDINGS AND CONSIDERATIONS (continued):

B. Considerations

Sec. 29.80.290. Standards for review.

In evaluating applications, the deciding body shall consider the architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors. Applications shall not be granted unless:

- X For pre-1941 structures, the proposed work will neither adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or other features of the property which is the subject of the application.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Request from Applicant
2. Letter from Mehus Construction