



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 03/25/2026

ITEM NO: 7

DATE: March 20, 2026
TO: Historic Preservation Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Consider a Request for Preliminary Review to Construct an Addition and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Pre-1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8. **Located at 25 Hernandez Avenue.** APN: 510-42-071. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Request for Review Application PHST-26-007. Property Owner: Chiara Zuniga and Karl Petre. Applicant: Davide Giannella. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

RECOMMENDATION:

Requesting preliminary review for construction of an addition and exterior alterations to an existing pre-1941 single-family residence on property zoned R-1:8 located at 25 Hernandez Avenue.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1915 per County Assessor's Database
2. Town of Los Gatos Historic Status Code: N/A
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:

The Santa Clara County's Accessors Database indicates that the residence was constructed in 1915. The 1990 Anne Bloomfield Survey provides an estimated construction date of 1910's and provides a preliminary rating of historic and intact or worthy of special note (Attachment 1). The 1928, 1944, and 1956 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show the residence with a consistent footprint matching the existing structure and indicates that the property once included a second detached dwelling unit (Attachment 2). In 1993, the property was subdivided, resulting

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in separate parcels, each containing one dwelling unit. The single-family residence is not located in a Historic District.

The applicant provided a request letter (Attachment 3) and development plans (Attachment 4).

DISCUSSION:

The subject property at 25 Hernandez Avenue is located on the southwest corner of Hernandez Avenue and Peralta Avenue. The applicant is requesting a preliminary review by the Committee to provide feedback on a proposed first-floor addition and exterior alterations to the existing one-story house.

Existing Conditions

The existing one-story Prairie School style residence is approximately 19 feet in height and features a gently sloped hipped roof with wide eave overhangs. The building is clad in rough-textured stucco, contributing to its cohesive and horizontal appearance.

A covered one-story porch extends along the elevation facing Hernandez Avenue and is supported by substantial square piers with decorative columns featuring ornamental shell capitals. The porch is defined by a deep overhang, reinforcing the strong horizontal emphasis characteristic of the Prairie School style.

The existing front elevation includes decorative plaster trim and stucco-clad square pillar ornamentation. Single-hung wood windows on the front façade feature decorative lites that enhance the architectural detailing.

The existing rear elevation is comparatively simple, presenting a flat plane with single-hung wood windows, a wood door, and two small wood-trimmed decorative stained-glass windows featuring geometric patterns.

Proposed Project

The project proposes a 252-square foot, one-story addition to the rear of the existing 2,070-square foot single-family residence. In addition, the project includes a 527-square foot expansion of the existing 534-square foot basement. Of the proposed basement addition, approximately 44 square feet will daylight along the rear elevation. Upon completion, the primary dwelling unit will total 2,365 square feet, including 1,061 square feet of below-grade space. The applicant's request letter is included in Attachment 3.

The proposed rear addition will not be visible from Peralta Avenue. On the first floor, the 252-square foot addition includes new wood windows with decorative lites designed to match the

existing windows. The proposed roofline for the addition is lower than that of the existing structure, maintaining a subordinate relationship to the original building mass.

The project also includes enlargement of the basement, featuring a new stairwell and a rear lightwell that provides walk-out access from the below-grade level. The lightwell incorporates decorative metal guardrails and stairs leading to the basement and new wood windows with decorative lites designed to match the existing windows.

Town's Residential Design Guidelines

The Committee should consider Section 3.9 of the Town's Residential Design Guidelines, which provides recommendations for construction of additions to existing residences (Attachment 5). Including but not limited to the following recommendations:

- The existing built forms, components and materials should be reinforced. Heights and proportions of additions and alterations should be consistent with and continue the original architectural style and design.
- Additions should be subordinate, and compatible in scale and proportion to the historically significant portions of the existing structure.
- When an addition or remodel requires the use of newly constructed exterior elements, they should be identical in size, dimension, shape, and location as the original, and should utilize the same materials as the existing protected exterior elements.

CONCLUSION:

The applicant is requesting a preliminary review by the Committee to provide feedback on a proposed first-floor addition and exterior alterations to the existing one-story pre-1941 residence located at 25 Hernandez Avenue.

This project will require approval of a Minor Residential Application, which would return to the Committee under for a formal recommendation to be forwarded to the Community Development Director.

CONSIDERATIONS:

A. 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:

___ In historic districts, the proposed work will neither adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or other features of the property which is the subject of the application, nor adversely affect its relationship, in terms of harmony and appropriateness, with its surroundings, including neighboring structures, nor adversely affect the character, or the historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value of the district.

B. Residential Design Guidelines

Section 3.9 of the Town's Residential Design Guidelines offers recommendations for construction of additions to existing residences (Attachment 5).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Anne Bloomfield Survey
2. Sanborn Maps
3. Request Letter from Applicant
4. Development Plans
5. Section 3.9, Residential Design Guidelines