



TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
REPORT

MEETING DATE: 03/13/2024

ITEM NO: 1

DATE: March 8, 2024
TO: Historic Preservation Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Requesting Approval for Construction of Exterior Alterations to a Pre-1941 Commercial Building on Property Zoned C-2. **Located at 137 and 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue.** APN 510-17-061. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 Existing Facilities. Request for Review PHST-24-004. Property Owner: Casey Connelly, Seecon Partners. Applicant: Hannah Micallef. Project Planner: Maria Chavarin.

RECOMMENDATION:

Requesting approval for construction of exterior alterations (front façade changes) to an existing pre-1941 commercial building on property zoned C-2. Located at 137/139 N. Santa Cruz Ave.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1938 Per County Assessor's Database; 1938-1939 Anne Bloomfield Survey
2. Town of Los Gatos Preliminary Historic Status Code: '+' - Historic and intact, worthy of special note
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? N/A
7. Considerations required? Yes

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located on the northwest side of N. Santa Cruz Avenue and south of Los Gatos-Saratoga Road. The Santa Clara County Assessor's Database lists a construction date of 1938, and the 1990 Anne Bloomfield Survey indicates a construction date from 1938-1939

PREPARED BY: Maria Chavarin
Assistant Planner

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BACKGROUND (continued):

(Attachment 1). The Anne Bloomfield Survey indicates that the property was once the site of a commercial building that served as a bus depot including retail stores. Town records show that the bus depot function changed in 1977 along with storefront changes. Details of the alterations are not provided in the record; however, the records indicate that the exterior of the building has remain largely unchanged since 1977.

The Sanborn Maps show evidence of retail stores and a bus depot at the subject property between 1928-1944 and 1928-1956 (Attachment 2). The building records show tenant improvements of interior alterations for 137 and 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue including plumbing and electrical building permits (Attachment 3).

DISCUSSION:

The applicant is requesting approval of exterior modifications to an existing pre-1941 commercial building. The changes are proposed to unify the two storefront façades of 137 and 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue. The applicant indicates that the changes will provide a subtle nod to the building's Art Deco style.

An existing door at 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue is proposed to be removed and replaced with a wood framed fixed window. The new window will match the adjacent window's sill height. An existing awning is proposed to be removed at 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue and replaced with an awning to match the adjacent awning at 137 N. Santa Cruz Avenue. Portions of existing wall tile are proposed to be removed and replaced with gloss and satin ceramic tiles including a gold accent band. Additional improvements include new urbane paint to all existing window frames and entry door; and installation of two decorative wall sconces.

The Letter of Justification discusses the scope of work (Attachment 4); the research conducted by the applicant explains the history of the commercial building (Attachment 1); and the photos of the existing conditions of the building are incorporated in the development plans (Attachment 5).

The property is within the C-2A Subdistrict, as defined in the Commercial Design Guidelines. The Commercial Design Guidelines provides recommendations on building design for the C-2A Subdistrict on pages 25 through 28 (Attachment 6). Sections 3.3.3, 3.3.6, and 3.3.8 are most applicable to this project.

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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:

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.

CONCLUSION:

The applicant requests approval to remove an existing wood and glass entry door at 139 N. Santa Cruz Avenue and install one wood framed fixed window; remove an existing awning and replace it with a new awning to match an existing awning at 137 N. Santa Cruz Avenue; demolish existing wall tile on both storefronts and replace with a combination of a gloss black ceramic tile and satin black ceramic tile with gold accent band; new urbane bronze paint to all existing window frames and entry door; and install two outdoor wall sconces (Attachment 4). Should the Committee find merit in the request, the recommendation would be forwarded to the Community Development Director and the application would continue through the Building Permit process. The project would not return to the Committee.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Applicant Research including 1990 Anne Bloomfield Survey
2. Sanborn Maps
3. Building Permit History
4. Letter of Justification
5. Development Plans
6. Section 3.3, Commercial Design Guidelines

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