

Planning Commission,
Community Development Department,
Planning Division,
110 E. Main Street,
Los Gatos, CA 95030.

Date: April 30, 2021

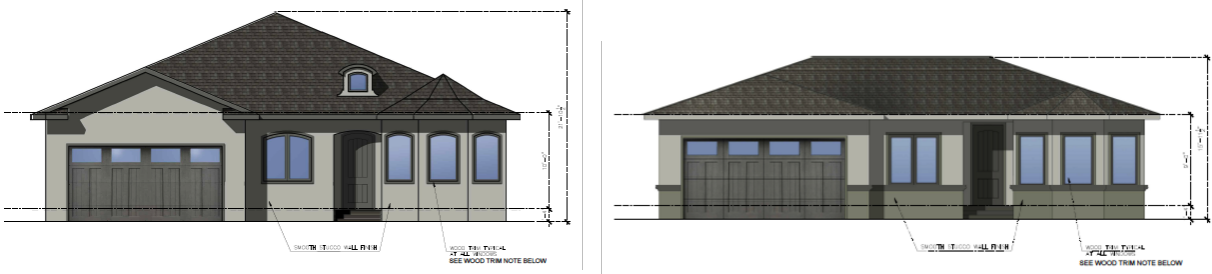
RE: Plan Updates – 140 Arroyo Grande Way (S-20-013)

Dear Planning Commissioners:

We appreciate your comments and suggestions on our project that were provided during the review meeting on March 24, 2021. We have made significant changes to the plans to address your concerns and incorporate your suggestions. We have also conscientiously worked with our neighbors to address their concerns.

1. Reduce Mass and Bulk of New Home

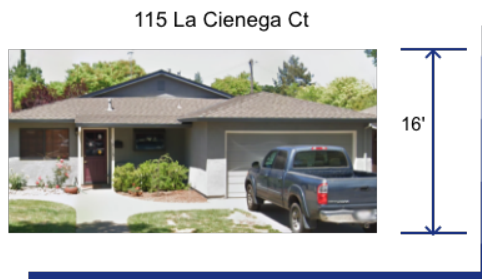
We have changed the design and pitch of the roof to achieve a 6’ reduction in the height of the home. The height of the home has been reduced from 21’-10.5 to 15’-11.5”. The comparison between the design originally submitted and the latest design is depicted in the image below.



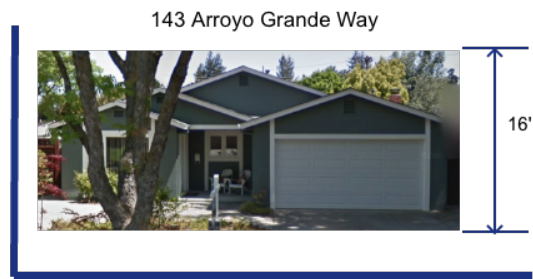
In addition to reducing the height of the new home, we have also done the following:

- Simplified the roof forms by replacing the garage gable roof with a hip roof.
- Incorporated consistent window forms of all elevations.
- Removed the roof dormer.
- Lowered the roof eaves by 1’.

We have met all the recommendations of the town’s consultant architect, and these changes are consistent with other homes in the immediate neighborhood. As shown in the image below, the height of our new home is a little less than two homes in the immediate neighborhood that are just across the street.



La Cienega Ct

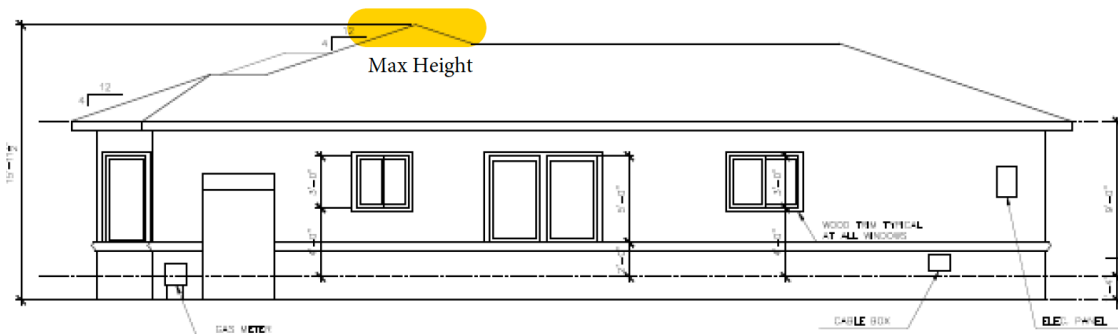


Arroyo Grande Way



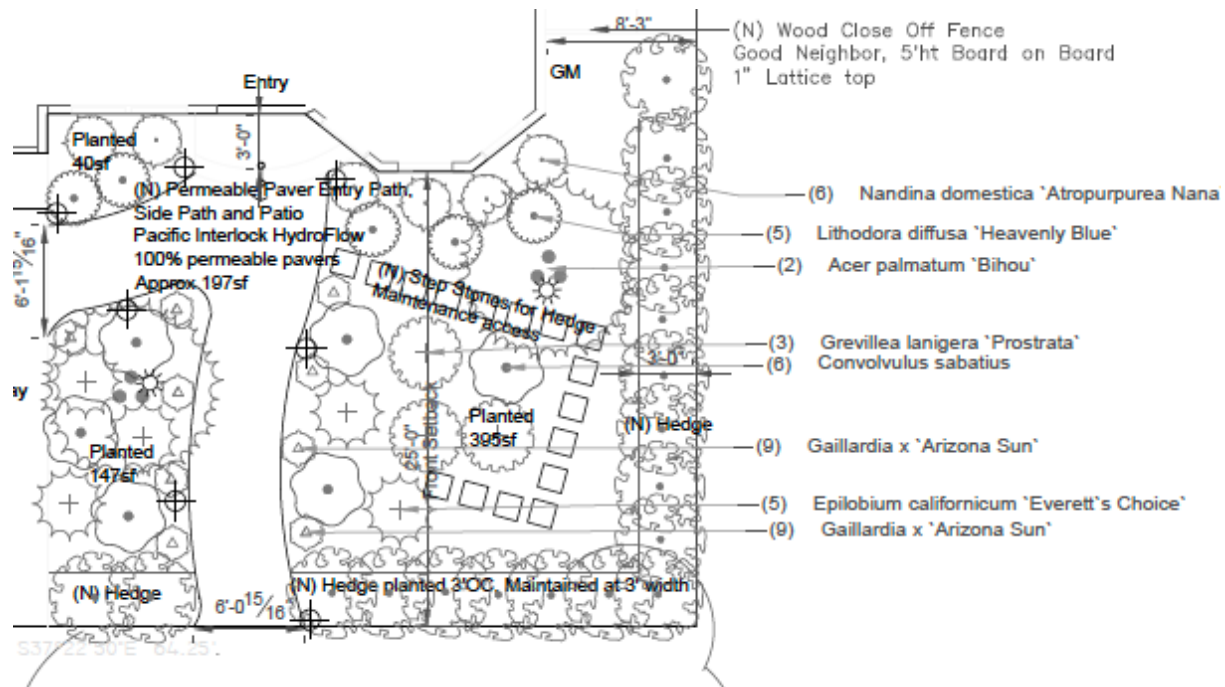
140 Arroyo Grande Way

While the new home is 3' taller than the original home, the side elevation given below shows that this maximum height is only reached at a certain point and the majority of the roof is at 14' or less from grade level. This was done primarily to address the sky-view concerns of our neighbors to the right at 124 Arroyo Grande Way.



2. Landscape

We are working with a landscape architect to design a garden in the front of our home. The garden in our front-yard will have drought-resistant and low-water usage plants and shrubs with a view towards water conservation. An image of the plan showing the front-yard is given below.



3. Working with Neighbors

We have reached out to all our neighbors in the immediate neighborhood, and also the neighbors at the back who expressed some concerns during the last review meeting. Most of our immediate neighbors have expressed support for our project and some of their comments are given below.

“Dear Hema and Yogi,

My name is Michael Palaniuk and I am the son of your neighbor, Eva and Sylvester Palaniuk at 120 Arroyo Grande Way. Thank you so much for dropping off your revised building plans. Our family fully supports you building your dream home for your family.

Sincerely

Michael Palaniuk”

“Hello Yogesh,

Thanks for sharing the updated plan of your house. Many LG neighborhoods have gone through similar transitions already. Therefore, I support any project that will improve the curb appeal of the neighborhood. Good luck!

Ayhan Mutlu

Your neighbor from 147 Arroyo Grande Way”

“Hi Hema and Yogi,

Thank you very much for showing me your site plan for your upcoming remodel.

This was a very nice courtesy I haven't ever received from my other neighbors prior to their remodels.

I love the turret. It will add a touch of class to the neighborhood! Even though you had to make it lower, it will still be very nice. I studied your plan, and it looks very nice.

Best regards,

Jane Loomis

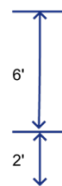
109 Arroyo Grande Way"

We have worked diligently to address the concerns of our neighbors who did not support the project based on the original design. Our attempt to resolve their concerns is outlined below.

- a. Sky-view / Sunlight: We have reduced the height of the home by 6', which addresses the sky-view and sunlight concerns. Even though the new home is 3' taller than our current home, it should have minimal impact on the neighbors at the back as their home is at a 2' higher grade level compared to our home.

The neighbors to the right at 124 Arroyo Grande Way have asked that the height of the house be 14' above grade level to get a good sky-view from their side windows. We have explained to them that, as show in the side elevation provided above, only a small fraction of the roof is above 14' and the vast majority of the roof is 14' or lower from grade level. We have also explained that lowering the roof any more makes the house-to-roof ratio disproportionate and increases the prominence of the garage, which is not desirable per the Los Gatos design guidelines.

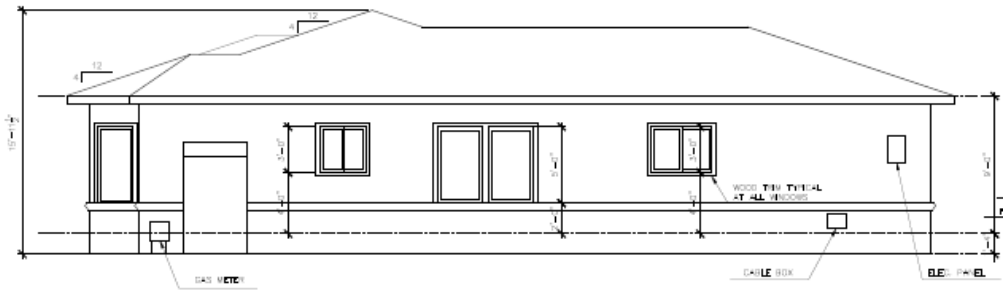
- b. Privacy: We value the privacy of our neighbors. We have lowered all windows by 1' to address the privacy concerns of our neighbors. The neighbors at our back are at a 2' higher grade level, which effectively makes the fence 8' tall (see image below). We have explained this to our neighbors at the back and they have not raised any more concerns.



We have highlighted to our side neighbors that there is no way for us to look over the 7' fence standing at the floor level, as shown below. We have a 6' fence on one side, and we are willing to share the cost of increasing the height to 7'.



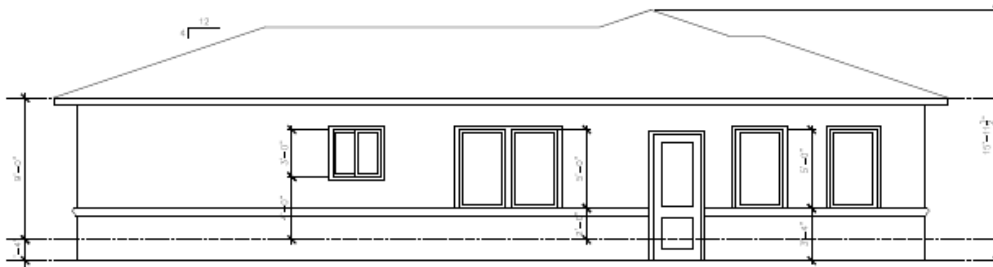
We have limited the number of windows on both the side elevations. The right elevation has only one bedroom window and the remaining two are bathroom windows.



RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"

The left elevation has 2 garage windows; however, they don't face a living area and our neighbor has no windows in their garage. There is one media room window and one bathroom window on the right-side elevation.



LEFT SIDE ELEVATION

1/4" = 1'-0"

We have also offered to mitigate the privacy concerns of our neighbors on both sides by having screening trees. Unfortunately, we have heard conflicting statements from our neighbors to the right (Charlene and Ian Land – 124 Arroyo Grande Way), which makes it

very difficult to reach a resolution. When we offered to lower the height of all windows by 1', Charlene and Ian responded that they have mitigated the problem at their end (see excerpt below).

Excerpt from email sent by Charlene and Ian Land on 03/21/2021

“Lower windows - we appreciate your reducing your windows, but the fence and our top-down/bottom-up blinds mitigate our privacy concerns if you would like to raise the windows back up.”

We still lowered the windows by 1', and then we got the following response, asking us to lower the windows below 7'.

Excerpt from email sent by Charlene and Ian Land on 04/17/2021

“Privacy – top of windows should be lower than top of 7' fence.”

These emails have been forwarded to the city to add to our project file.

- c. Health / Other Considerations: We have also worked with the neighbor at the back to assuage her health concerns by sharing our plans to begin construction during the winter when windows are closed, mitigating the effect of dust and noise to a large extent. We have also assured all our neighbors that we will keep them informed about the construction timelines and plans to avoid any disruption of their daily routines.

To summarize, we have revised the plans to address all comments and suggestions from the planning commission and the town's consultant architect. We have also worked diligently to address the concerns from a few neighbors. The rest of our immediate neighbors feel that our new home fits well into the neighborhood.

We would also like to reiterate our need for living space. We have two grown-up children, a 21-year-old son and a 15-year-old daughter, who live with us. In addition to that, we have visiting grandparents and family that stay with us for extended periods. Hema's father passed away last year, and her mother intends to visit and stay with us once the COVID situation improves.

We appreciate the time and effort that the planning commission and the Los Gatos planning department has spent on our project to help us build our dream home. We hope for a favorable response to our application.

Sincerely,

Hema and Yogesh Jhamb
140 Arroyo Grande Way,
Los Gatos, CA 95032.