



May 15, 2023

Town of Los Gatos  
Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, California 95031

Re: Architecture and Site Application **S-22-041**  
Pham/Vo Residence  
232 Danville Drive, Los Gatos, CA

The following items are in response to Town's Peer Architect review #2 dated May 5, 2023.

**Proposed Project is large in size with the second floor exceeding neighboring properties:**

While there will always be a largest home in the neighborhood, we have worked to reduce the size height and massing of the proposed home per the Peer Architect's comments as well as the Planning Staff's concerns. We have reduced the height by 36" to 24'-8" by reducing the roof slope (more than 5'-0" below the maximum height allowed of 30'). At the 24'-8" height, we are approximately just 36" taller than the split-level Homes (about 33% of the homes) in the neighborhood. We have also reduced the Upper Level floor area, and more importantly we reduced the Upper Level massing by 289 sq.ft. (18%) by removing the 2 story massing over the Great Room. This change also reduced the length at the Upper Level rear wall from 48'-6" to 29'-4". Shortening the length of the rear wall also reduces the Upper Level massing at the front elevation. In reviewing the exterior elevations after the noted reductions we were able to simplify the geometry of roof planes to be more consistent with the neighborhood and the "Ranch Style" architecture. Lastly, we have reduced the upper level exterior wall heights by 6" to further reduce the overall building height.

**Issues and Concerns:**

***1. The home design is consistent with the main form and details of its selected Mediterranean Style, but is very much different from the surrounding Ranch Style homes which would not be consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.2.1.***

***3.2.1 Select an architectural style with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood***

Along with the noted revisions above, we have now removed the "formal entry" at the front of the home and ran a continuous gutter line across the front elevation, typical of the "Ranch Style" architecture and the existing homes of the neighborhood per the Peer Architect's suggestion.

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EXHIBIT 8



***2. The large second floor building mass is out of scale with other homes in the immediate neighborhood, and not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.3.2.***

As mentioned above, we have reduced the overall width of the upper level by bringing the Upper Level left side exterior wall in by 52" and reducing the length of the Upper Level rear exterior wall by almost 20'. The upper level is set back is now approximately 17'-0" on the left side and 11'-0" on the right side. The upper level is set back from the front property line 29'-0". These increased setbacks give us a "transition-in-scale" and further lessen the impact to the neighbors on either side of this property by breaking up the upper level massing (The neighbors to either side appreciated this we it was discussed in the neighborhood meeting at the project site).

***3. The proposed metal roofing would be out of character with the neighborhood and not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.8.2.***

***3.8.2 Select materials that are sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood***

We have revised the roofing material from the originally proposed metal roofing to a "Life Time" Architectural Composition Shingle roof which is to match the typical roofing material used throughout the neighborhood.

***4. The formal entry is not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.6.3.***

***3.6.3 Design entries with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood***

The formal entry has been removed from the plan creating an "under-eave" entry porch with the gutter line continuing across the front elevation. This now gives us a strong horizontal line for the entry level to match the existing homes in the neighborhood.

***5. The second floor front facade windows are quite large related to the scale of windows on other homes in the immediate neighborhood and not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.7.2.***

***3.7.2 Match window types and proportions to the architectural style and to the surrounding neighborhood***

We have reduced the sizes of all of the front elevation windows and have also removed the arch shaped windows at the lower level to be more consistent with the neighborhood homes and the Ranch Style Architecture.

***6. More information is needed for window materials and window trim.***

Windows are to be black wood frame aluminum clad type from Andersen (or equal). We have revised the foam window headers to a limestone finish and are providing a limestone header trim at the garage door.

***7. The two-story wall on the left facade is not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.3.3.***

***3.3.3 Provide visual relief for two story walls.***

We have revised the left side of the home by pulling back the Upper Level side wall by 52". This now gives us a roof form along the entire left side of the home, breaking up the "2 story" wall plane at that side giving us an almost 17' side setback at the Upper Level.

***8. The rear second floor terrace and large bank of windows poses potential privacy intrusions on the neighbors' yard to the rear.***

***3.11.2 Minimize privacy intrusions on adjacent residences***

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After meeting with the immediate neighbors to the left, right and rear, the originally proposed upper level terrace and spiral stairs were removed completely from the design to maintain the neighbor's privacy. We are now only proposing a patio cover for the lower level patio (the Neighbors were Happy!).

The home has also been designed without any bedroom windows facing the neighboring properties.

The windows that are facing the direction of the side neighbors are designed as "high" windows with sill heights above 5'-0" minimizing any privacy issues.

#### **Responses to Recommendations from the Peer Architect:**

1. We have modified the two front bedroom facades per the Peer Architect by thickening the exterior wall to create a "bay window" affect. This gives us a vertical wall line at each side of each of the front facing bedroom windows helping to break up the wall plane massing at the Upper Level.

2. We have removed the "formal entry" element and ran the eave (fascia board and gutter) across the front elevation creating a strong horizontal line that is in keeping with the "Ranch Style" Architecture.

3. Regarding the roof plane over the Great Room, it was suggested to continue the upper level gutter / fascia line across the rear elevation of the house. This would adding "massing" back to the Upper Level which we are trying to avoid. Instead, we have changed the direction of the roof plane over the Great Room which further reduces the rear facing wall massing and is more in character with the architecture.

#### **Neighbor's Privacy Concerns**

- Landscape plans now show tall landscaping along the rear property line. The owners plan to add several trees and landscaping to both the front and rear yard areas as well as privacy trees along both property lines as shown in the Preliminary Landscaping Design.
- We have completely removed the Upper Level Terrace Balcony, the spiral stair and the railing at the rear elevation. We are providing a roof patio cover at the rear elevation.

**With the changes noted above, along with the previous revisions, we feel that this home is more consistent with the neighborhood while still having a little bit of individuality. While the Home will be the largest in the neighborhood, it is only by approximately 12%. And by reducing the overall height as noted above, the building height of this home is over 60" below what is allowed and is now only 36" (approx.) taller than the existing split-level homes of the neighborhood.**

Sincerely,

*Michael Davis*

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