

Christopher Spaulding, Architect

801 Camelia Street, Suite E

Berkeley, CA 94710

Voice 510-527-5997

chris@csarchitect.net

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473 Wraight Avenue, Response to Appeal

My client, Vicky Le, and I have been keenly aware of that the additions to her home may have adverse effects upon the neighbors. The project was designed to minimize these effects, which I will outline later in this letter.

Firstly, this is a constrained site, in that there is a protected redwood tree that makes the front 10' of the building envelope unusable, save for the tree. Vicky also wanted to have 3 bedrooms upstairs for her family and a usable backyard for her 2 young sons.

When the Woods first notified us of their concerns, Vicky had me spend considerable time exploring whether she could fit all her needs into a one-story house, or a smaller 2-story with a detached garage. She concluded that the options all failed to meet her needs, so she elected to go forward with her original plan, with some privacy features added.

The project was designed to minimize the impact on the side neighbor's privacy (471 and 475 Wraight Avenue) by placing only secondary windows on the sides of the 2nd floor. These windows have been further altered for greater privacy:

- The front bedroom window on the 471 Wraight Avenue side has been shifted forward to not align with the windows of the existing house.
- The toilet room and stairway window sills have been raised to above 5' off the floor (and the stairway window is above the landing, so the sill is about 10' above the landing floor).
- The front bedroom and bathroom windows on the 475 Wraight side have been made obscure glass, and the primary bedroom window sill is 5'-4" above the floor.

- The rear balcony is shielded from looking down into 475 Wraight Avenue by the ridgeline of the adjacent first-floor roof, and a privacy screen has been added as additional screening.

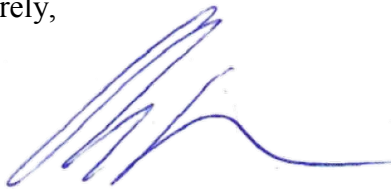
For light and air, the home most affected is the Woods home at 475 Wraight Avenue. To mitigate this effect, the design maintains a single-floor element along the entire depth of the house, with the 2nd floor having enlarged setbacks of 13'-4" for the front 21'-6" portion of the 2nd floor and 17'-8" setback for the rear 22'-6". These are much larger setbacks than is otherwise allowed.

I should also note that the shadow study on sheet A1.1 of our plans overstates the shadows, in that the shadows are shown as if cast onto a vacant lot. For instance, in the December 21 noon shadow, which looks like it would block all the sunlight from the Wood's home, the shadows cast by the rear portion of the 2nd floor would only climb up the vertical sidewall to about 42" above the floor level of the house.

Finally, in looking at the photos of the story poles from the Wood's windows, it is apparent that it is the one-story portion of the Le's house that will create the greatest blockage of light, especially at the gable roof of the new garage. It may be possible to mitigate this problem by turning the garage gable roof to face forward instead of sideways.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping, fluid strokes that form a stylized, somewhat abstract shape.



area removed

