



ARCHITECTURE PLANNING URBAN DESIGN

June 17, 2019

M. Sean Mullin  
Community Development Department  
Town of Los Gatos  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95031

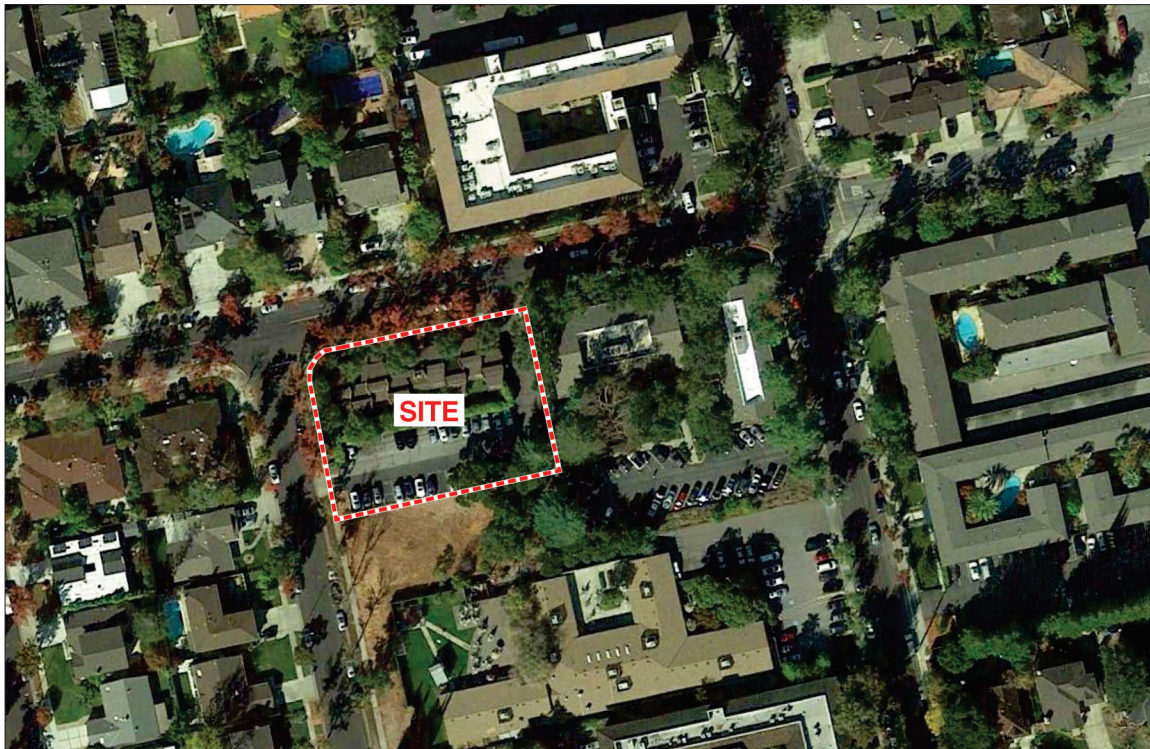
**RE: 400 Carlton Avenue**

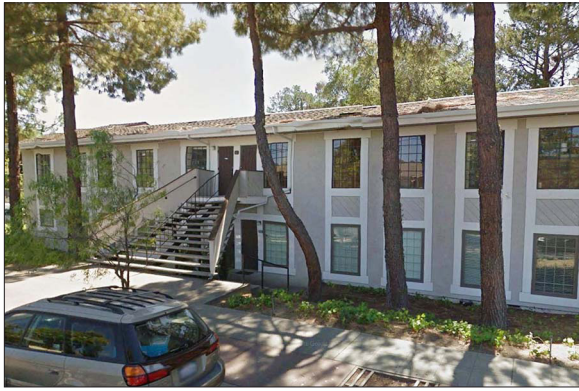
Dear Sean:

I reviewed the drawings, evaluated the site context, and prepared a review letter for a similar project design in 2017. My comments and recommendations are as follows:

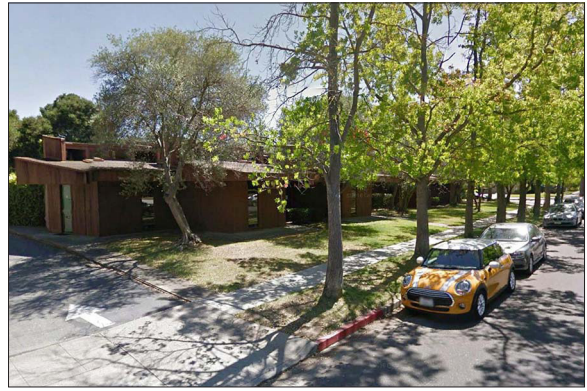
### **Neighborhood Context**

The site is located at the corner of Carlton Avenue and Jo Drive. It currently is occupied by a one-story structure. The adjacent context is eclectic with larger office structures to the east and one and two-story homes immediately across both Carlton Avenue and Jo Drive. Photographs of the neighborhood are shown on the following page.





*Office structure to immediate left on Carlton Avenue*



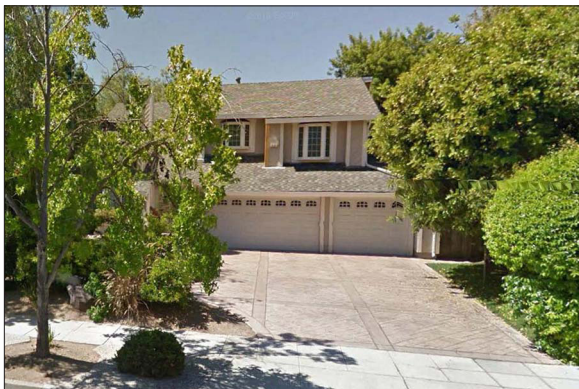
*The Site and existing building*



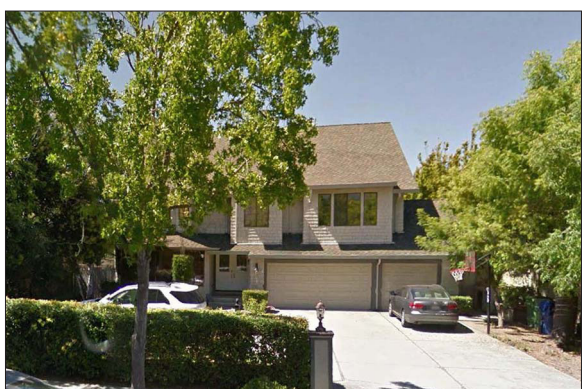
*Homes immediately across Jo Drive*



*Home immediately across Jo Drive*



*Home immediately across Carlton Drive*



*Home immediately across Carlton Drive*



*Nearby office complex across Carlton Drive*

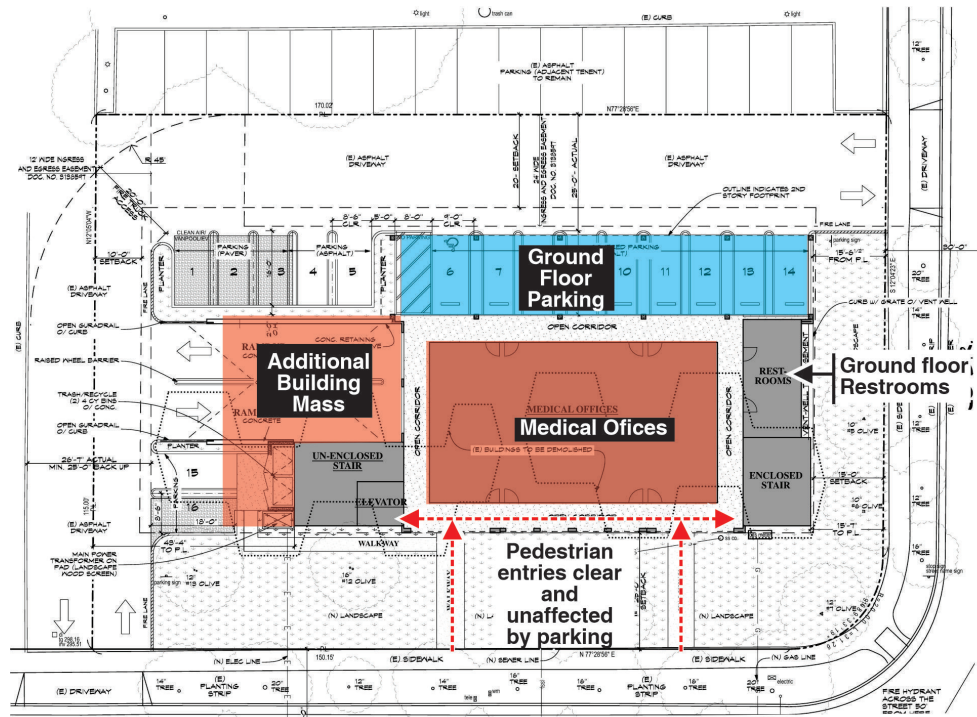


*Nearby multifamily complex on National Avenue*

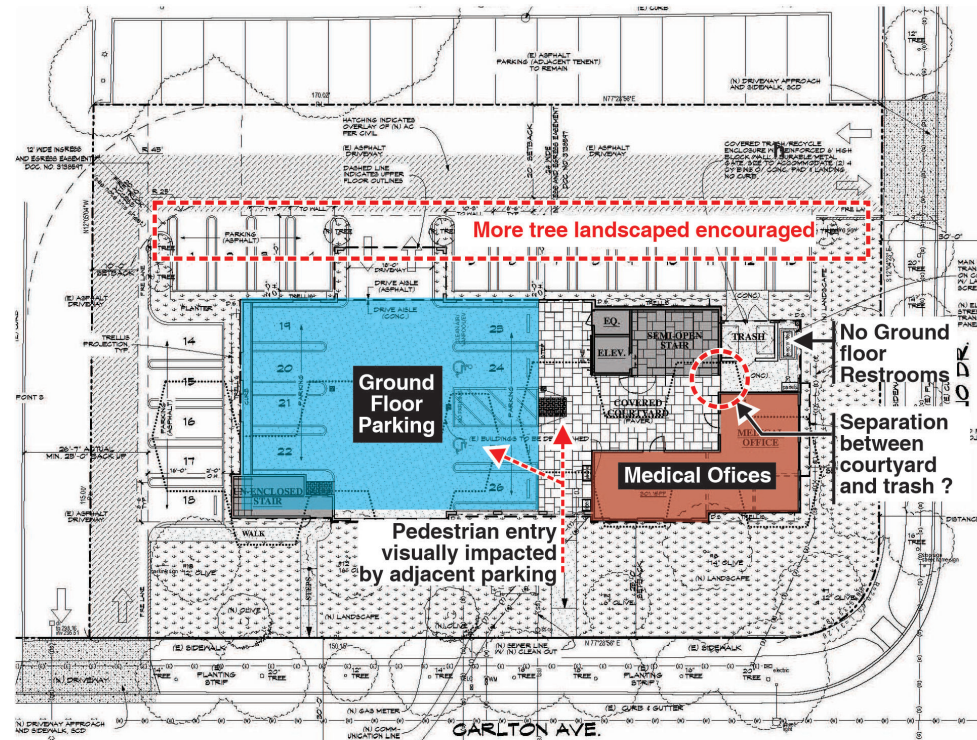
Issues and Concerns

The project has been redesigned to eliminate the underground parking and to move it within the framework of the building's first floor envelope- see site plan and first floor comparison diagrams below. Notable features of this change include the following:

- Ground floor medical office space has been substantially reduced in area.
- Additional building mass has been added to the interior side parking lot side of the structure and removed from the rear.
- The pedestrian entry experience has been changed.



PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SITE PLAN



CURRENTLY PROPOSED SITE PLAN

While the length of the structure facing Carlton Avenue has increased, the overall height of the building would remain the same as the approved design - see streetscape illustration below.



**Streetscape: Same Side**



**Streetscape: Opposite Side**



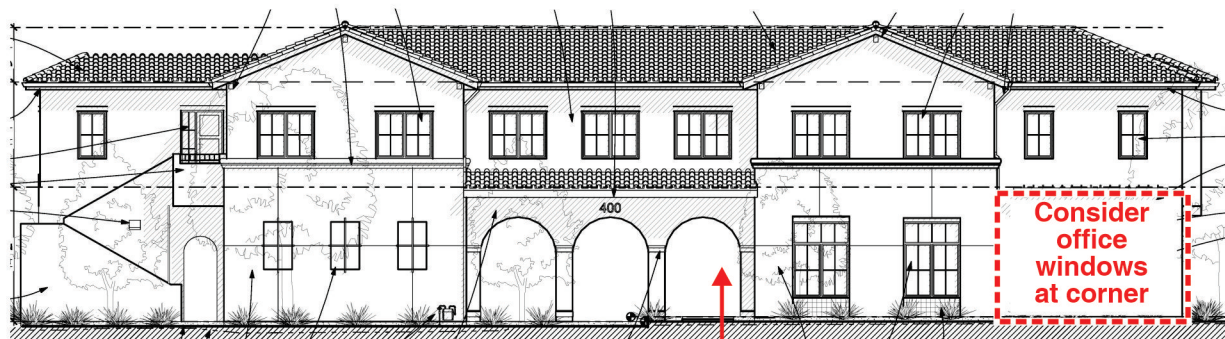
**Streetscape: Opposite Side Street**

All building elevations have been changed slightly. Elevation and sketch perspective sketch comparisons are shown below.



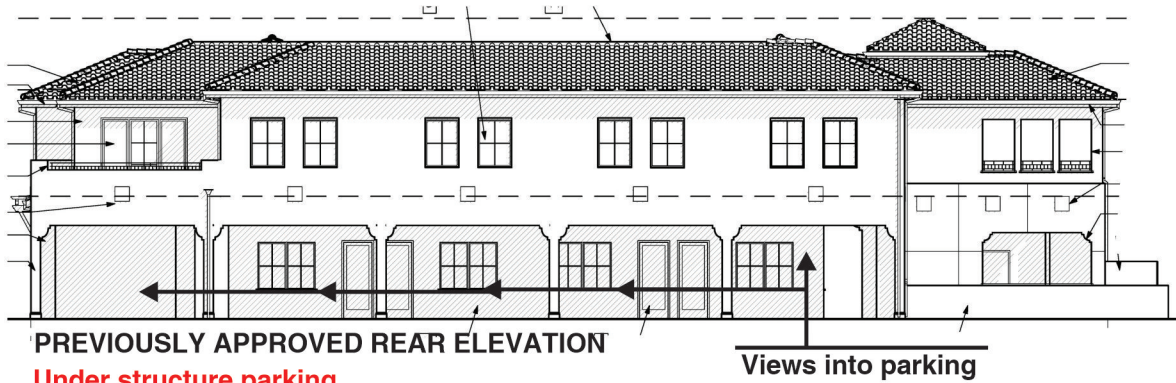
**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED FRONT ELEVATION**

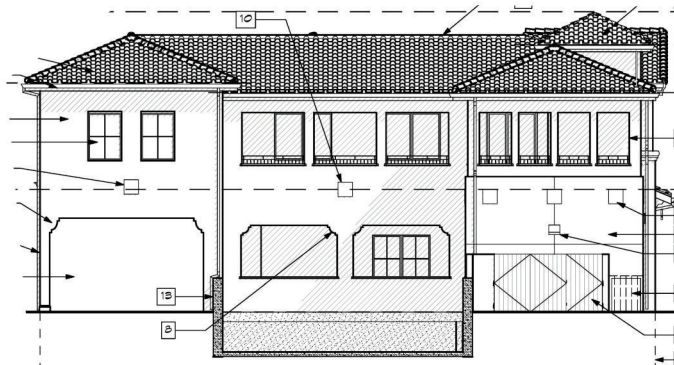
**Covered ground floor walkway created substantial facade depth**  
**Enclosed stairway and elevator to left is rather blank**



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION**

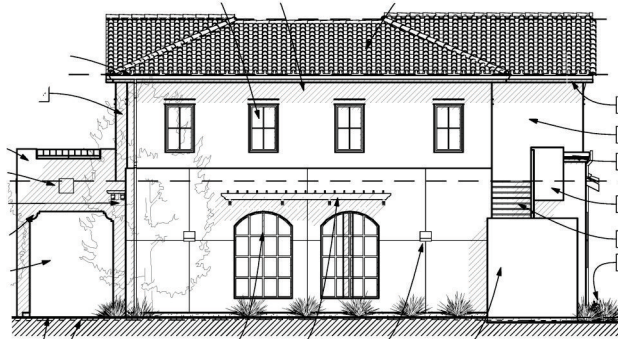
**Covered ground floor walkway creates substantial facade depth but view is to parking**  
**Street-facing gable forms are similar, but scale is bigger**  
**Articulated exterior stair to left is more visually interesting**  
**Smaller scale second floor windows**





**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PARKING LOT SIDE ELEVATION**

Ground floor largely auto and trash-oriented  
Second floor windows express corridor



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED PARKING LOT SIDE ELEVATION**

Ground floor openings with decorative grills in lieu of windows  
Exterior stair adds articulation and visual interest  
Second floor windows express offices



**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SKETCH: FRONT**



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED SKETCH: FRONT**



**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SKETCH: REAR**



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED SKETCH: REAR**



**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SKETCH: SIDE JO DRIVE**



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED SKETCH: SIDE JO DRIVE**



**PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SKETCH: SIDE PARKING LOT**



**CURRENTLY PROPOSED SKETCH: SIDE PARKING LOT**

### **Evaluation and Recommendations**

I would in almost all cases discourage office buildings of this size and scale with parking embedded within the first floor envelope rather than underground as a bad precedent. However, in evaluating the visual appearance of the revised design to the approved design, I believe that the change could be a beneficial change over the approved design in this case. Overall, the elevations seem to have a more cohesive design, and while some parking is still provided within the first floor building footprint, its visual intrusion appears to be less.

The areas which appear to need further refinement include the following:

1. Ground floor plan organization of lobby and parking.
2. Better ground floor visual separation of the under structure parking area from the lobby courtyard and the pedestrian entries from the street and rear parking lot including more screening at the arched opening into the parking area.
3. Adding additional landscaping, if possible along the rear parking lot facade. Possibilities include trees in the interface between parking spaces and climbing vine planting against the rear of the structure.
4. Adding additional medical office windows at the building corner facing the Carlton Avenue/Jo Drive intersection.
5. Improved delineation of the building's sense of entry at the entry arches on the front and rear facades.

Sean, please let me know if you have any questions, or if there are other issues that I did not address.

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP