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A P P E A R A N C E S:

Los Gatos Planning Commissioners:	Kendra Burch, Vice Chair Jeffrey Barnett Susan Burnett Steve Raspe Joseph Sordi Rob Stump
Town Manager:	Chris Constantin
Community Development Director:	Joel Paulson
Town Attorney:	Gabrielle Whelan
Transcribed by:	Vicki L. Blandin (619) 541-3405

1
2 P R O C E E D I N G S:

3
4 VICE CHAIR BURCH: We'll now move on to our
5 Public Hearings portion, Item #2. This item is to consider
6 a request for approval to demolish an existing single-
7 family residence, construct a new single-family residence,
8 site improvements requiring a Grading Permit, and a Zone
9 Change from O (Office) to R-1:8 (Single-Family Residential)
10 with a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet.

11 The property is located at 14331 Capri Drive. APN
12 406-32-004, Architecture and Site Application S-24-043, and
13 Zone Change Application Z-23-005. The is categorically
14 exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303: New
15 Construction, and Section 15061(b)(3): Common Sense
16 Exemption.

17
18 The property owner is Ravi Kiran Vallamdas,
19 Applicant is Gordon K. Wong, and the project planner is
20 Ryan Safty.

21 Before we have a Staff Report, did everybody get
22 a chance to visit the site? Are there any disclosures?
23 Okay, great. Mr. Safty, you'll be giving the report?

24 RYAN SAFTY: Yes, thank you. Good evening,
25 Commissioners.

1 The Applicant tonight is requesting approval of a
2 Zone Change from Office to Single-Family Residential,
3 demolition of the existing residence, and construction of a
4 new two-story residence with site work requiring a Grading
5 Permit.

6 Zone changes require Town Council approval, and
7 therefore both applications are going before Planning
8 Commission tonight for a recommendation to the Town
9 Council, who will be rendering the final decision.

10 The property is located at the corner of Capri
11 Drive and Vasona Avenue and is in a transitional
12 neighborhood with a mixture of commercial and residential
13 uses in the surrounding area. The property is currently
14 zoned Office but has a General Plan designation of Low-
15 Density Residential. The surrounding properties of the west
16 side of Capri Drive all have a Low-Density Residential land
17 use designation and are all zoned R:1-8, except for this
18 property.

19 As Residential is not a permitted use in the
20 Office zone, the application for a new residence
21 necessitates this Zone Change. As noted in the Staff
22 Report, Staff recommends approval of the Zone Change as it
23 would be consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and
24 the General Plan land use designation.

1 The existing residence was built in 1940 and was
2 removed from the Historic Inventory by the HPC in 2023.
3 There is an existing two-story structure with two ADUs on
4 the site that were approved in 1989 and are allowed to
5 remain; they're not being reviewed with the application
6 pursuant to State law.

7 The proposed two-story residence would be of
8 Spanish Mediterranean style and would be approximately 27'
9 tall, stucco siding, and clay tile roof. Although the
10 proposed residence would comply with all applicable Town
11 standards, the proposed residence would be the tallest and
12 largest in the immediate neighborhood.

13 The Town's consulting architect reviewed the
14 proposal and noted that the property is located in an older
15 neighborhood of mostly one-story traditional homes, and the
16 proposed house would be considerably larger than the other
17 homes in the immediate neighborhood as defined by the
18 Town's Residential Design Guidelines.

19 Additionally, the consultant recommended nine
20 design changes to simplify the design and improve the
21 project's compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.
22 The Applicant incorporated seven of the nine
23 recommendations and provided justification for the other
24 two within Exhibit 7 of the Staff Report.
25

1 In terms of neighborhood compatibility, the
2 Residential Design Guidelines state that the greatest
3 attention will be given to the immediate neighborhood where
4 nearby homeowners are most likely to be confronted with the
5 new house on a daily basis, and where other residents
6 driving by are most likely to see the new structure in the
7 context of nearby homes.

8 The Design Guidelines contain a diagram to
9 illustrate standard immediate neighborhood definition which
10 Staff uses when creating the neighborhood analysis that you
11 see in tonight's Staff Report. When looking at the strict
12 definition of the immediate neighborhood, the proposal
13 results in the first two-story home, the largest home by
14 over 1,000 square feet, and the largest FAR in the
15 immediate neighborhood. However, as also noted in the
16 Residential Design Guidelines, lesser consideration can be
17 given for homes located at a great distance from the
18 project site, and there are several factors in determining
19 an immediate neighborhood when illustrative diagram might
20 not be applicable, including location and visibility of the
21 buildings.
22

23 As noted in the Exhibit 7, the Applicant notes
24 that the immediate neighborhood, if expanded by one
25 property on both sides on Vasona Avenue, the proposed home

1 would no longer be the first two-story, and would not be
2 the largest in terms of floor area or FAR. Additionally,
3 there is already an existing two-story structure on the
4 site.

5 If the Planning Commission feels it is
6 appropriate, they can expand the immediate neighborhood
7 farther than Staff did, however, since Staff uses the
8 example diagram for determining the immediate neighborhood
9 and which properties to include, that does recommend denial
10 of the Architecture and Site Application due to this
11 neighborhood compatibility.
12

13 One public comment was received, and that was
14 distributed in yesterday's Addendum Report. As there are
15 two different recommendations within the Staff Report for
16 both different application types, you will see two sets of
17 findings prepared for each of those applications.

18 This concludes Staff's presentation and we are
19 happy to answer any questions.

20 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Thank you. Any questions of
21 Staff? Commissioner Stump.

22 COMMISSIONER STUMP: Ryan, sorry to come back and
23 ask this question again after you've talked about
24 neighborhood compatibility and the immediate neighborhood.
25 As we refer to our Residential Guidelines, and I'm now

1 referring to a specific page, page 11, that shows a couple
2 of diagrams in there, one with sort of a very just straight
3 line neighborhood and another one with a house on a corner,
4 and with the house on the corner it literally shows the
5 immediate neighborhood in a different way than I thought
6 was being presented here, because it sort of does allow
7 that wraparound and allows that kind of view onto Vasona
8 Avenue, although it's obviously not identified that way in
9 the Residential Design Guidelines. So, how are we defining
10 the immediate neighborhood here?

11
12 RYAN SAFTY: Thank you for the question. Staff
13 does have an Exhibit prepared, if Mr. Mullin can pull that
14 up. Essentially, it's going to show what Staff did
15 determine to be the immediate neighborhood in this case,
16 and as mentioned previously, this is a very unique
17 neighborhood in that there are Commercial and Residential
18 across Capri Drive and the actual neighborhood itself seems
19 to start at Vasona Avenue heading west.

20 The properties highlighted in red are what Staff
21 used for the immediate neighborhood. We did wrap along
22 Vasona Avenue to the west, but essentially Staff's
23 determination ended right before the two properties that
24 the Applicant used for their immediate neighborhood
25 definition, and that would be 589 and 594.

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Are there any further
2 questions of Staff? Commissioner Raspe.

3 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, Chair. Thank you,
4 Mr. Safty, for that presentation. Quick question. I know
5 the ADU is not subject to our review tonight, but can you
6 tell us, if you know, how tall is the ADU?

7 RYAN SAFTY: Thank you for the question. I
8 believe it's listed in the plans as roughly 20', but if you
9 give me a minute, I can confirm that.

10 COMMISSIONER RASPE: And if you don't have it, I
11 can ask the Applicant as well, I imagine. Out of curiosity
12 then, part B to that question, even though it's on the same
13 lot, would that be part of our analysis of the neighborhood
14 and compatibility?

15 RYAN SAFTY: It's Staff's understanding that,
16 yes, that does contribute to the neighborhood.

17 COMMISSIONER RASPE: I appreciate that answer.
18 Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, are there any other
20 questions of Staff? If there are no other questions of
21 Staff, then we'll now open the public portion of the public
22 hearing on this item and give the Applicant an opportunity
23 to address the Commission for up to five minutes. I have
24 Gordon Wong and Kevin Yu. Please make sure you adjust the
25

1 microphone as needed so that we can hear you, and you have
2 five minutes, and since you're both speaking for the
3 Applicant, that's a total.

4 GORDON WONG: I'm the Applicant, Gordon Wong, and
5 the architect.

6 KEVIN YU: My name is Kevin Yu, and I am here as
7 the partial representative on behalf of the owner and GKW
8 Architects. We are a local firm residing in the City of
9 Campbell and have been proudly serving the community for
10 the past 16 years.

11
12 Our intent is to design a home that not only
13 blends beautifully into the existing neighborhood, but also
14 enhances the overall aesthetic and contributes to the long-
15 term value in the area. We believe this project is a
16 positive step forward and eagerly anticipate working with
17 the Town members and neighbors to ensure it benefits the
18 community as a whole.

19 We have taken into consideration the
20 recommendations and I would like to provide these findings
21 on these slides.

22 On the first slide we have the front façade of
23 the house facing towards Capri Drive. This project is also
24 intended to acquire three permits. We have Zone Change,
25 Grading Permit, and the demolition of the existing single-

1 family home for the new construction. Below, you see is a
2 directory of the professionals that have been working on
3 this project.

4 This slide outlines the compliance with the
5 Residential Design Guidelines. To begin, the building is
6 complying with the rear setback requirements. Next, we have
7 existing trees that were preserved for privacy screening
8 and natural shade. In addition, this project proposes high-
9 quality materials and craftsmanship. For example, we are
10 providing three arches on both floors, solid wood doors,
11 and decorated corbels. Furthermore, this project is
12 compliant with the height, FAR, and the General Plan.
13

14 We are taking thoughtful consideration of the
15 community feedback and made a few adjustments to the plans.
16 On this slide we have before and after elevations and
17 sections showing these changes. On the elevations we
18 reduced the window size and flushed the wall of the master
19 bedroom. This was to increase the distance from the
20 building to the property line as described under sections.
21 We also added privacy planting to alleviate the direct line
22 of sight into the neighboring property. Furthermore, the
23 floor area is reduced from 3,511 square feet to 3,375
24 square feet.
25

1 There we have a map which outlines the
2 neighboring properties within a 400' radius. With
3 comparison, this project is the third tallest and the
4 fourth largest in terms of FAR.

5 We hope we have addressed some of the concerns,
6 and we're more than happy to work with everyone here to
7 make this project work.

8 GORDON WONG: Any questions or comments, we are
9 here to help out and understand what we need to do. Thank
10 you.

11 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, thank you. Any
12 questions for the Applicant? Commissioner Stump, then
13 Commissioner Raspe.

14 COMMISSIONER STUMP: One of the concerns that was
15 brought up by a neighbor—I assume it's at 14333 Capri
16 Drive—was that "This house will block our view of the
17 treetops to the north and will shadow our property." Can
18 you briefly review the shadow study that's been completed?
19 I know you did in your drawings, sheet G-005 did a shadow
20 study. It's pretty geometric, and if you could just give an
21 idea of how the shadows affect the property at 14333 Capri
22 Drive.

23 GORDON WONG: To bring that sheet on the screen,
24 it's sheet G-005, and we can probably focus on maybe the
25

1 winter solstice. A little small and hard to see, but on the
2 lower left-hand corner is probably the one that we need to
3 look at.

4 Winter solstice at 3:00pm, I think the shadows
5 are cast the other way towards actually Capri Drive. I
6 don't see too much effect there. 9:00am, also, it's going
7 to be cast towards the street and towards the ADU, which is
8 on our site.

9
10 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Does that answer your
11 question, Commissioner Stump?

12 COMMISSIONER STUMP: What about the final time
13 period there?

14 GORDON WONG: Are you talking about which one,
15 the upper left?

16 COMMISSIONER STUMP: Far right.

17 GORDON WONG: Far right is summer solstice
18 9:00am. The shadows would be cast towards the ADU on our
19 site.

20 COMMISSIONER STUMP: Okay, thank you.

21 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Raspe.

22 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, Chair. Thank you
23 for your presentation. I think you probably heard my
24 question to Staff. The height of the ADU, do you know off
25 the top of your head?

1 GORDON WONG: It should be about 20'-3".

2 COMMISSIONER RASPE: And a second question, if I
3 may, Chair.

4 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Of course.

5 COMMISSIONER RASPE: We've heard from one
6 neighbor in their response. I'm curious, can you describe
7 your neighborhood outreach, and any other responses you
8 might have heard from other neighbors?

9
10 GORDON WONG: We had three neighborhood
11 outreaches. We had one comment that came in recently; we
12 were able to address that comment literally yesterday when
13 we got it. We reduced a window and we recessed a wall to
14 decrease any impact it has to the direct neighbor. We've
15 also provided screening with a bush and a plant to avoid
16 any visual intrusion.

17 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, and are those
18 incorporated into either your plans or your Condition of
19 Approval?

20 GORDON WONG: Correct, the plans and the
21 presentation, yes.

22 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you so much.

23 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Burnett.

24 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Thank you, and thank you
25 your coming tonight. A couple of questions. First of all,

1 did you do anything to reduce the bulk and the mass, which
2 our Town Architect did address that? Of course, as you
3 know, it is the largest house in the area.

4 GORDON WONG: We did reduce quite a bit of it. We
5 reduced the plate heights of both first and second floor.
6 We complied with seven of the nine comments. We didn't
7 comply with one of them, because complying with that one
8 actually increased the size of the house, so we opted to go
9 another direction which actually reduced the square
10 footage. The final one, I think, was more of an arbitrary..
11 The last one was to avoid a cricket in the roof, and then
12 we sent it back, so that's how that happened.

14 KEVIN YU: We actually tried multiple design
15 scenarios, and adding a hip roof per the consulting
16 architect's suggestion actually makes the house even
17 taller; that's why we (inaudible) back into the (inaudible)
18 to keep everything as minimal as possible.

19 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Could you tell me how much
20 of a reduction in square feet you accomplished, because
21 you're the largest by far at 1,237 square feet of other
22 homes in the area. How much did you reduce that by?

24 GORDON WONG: I think the square footage was
25 reduced about, including the window...

1 KEVIN YU: The changes of the windows in the
2 master bedroom, we actually reduced about 15 square feet.
3 However, on the calculation when I look into it, the stairs
4 were actually double counted, so the actual square footage
5 and FAR is actually much lower.

6 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: I see. May I continue? I
7 have a few. So, going over our architect's suggestions for
8 you, and you said you had responded to seven of them,
9 however, number four I was a little... You said it was
10 detailing the windows to be more consistent with the
11 proposed architectural style, and then there were a couple
12 of options here, and your response was softening the window
13 trim color, so you didn't do any recessing on the windows
14 then? You only changed color on number four?

16 GORDON WONG: I believe we did a lot of research
17 on the windows. We did check the...

18 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: You did some recessing?

19 GORDON WONG: Yes. Yes, we have. You can't see it
20 on the elevation, but in our model, it does show.

21 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Okay, because the answer
22 was you just changed the color there, so I was wondering
23 about that one.

24 GORDON WONG: Oh, I see.
25

1 KEVIN YU: I understand we are trying to comply
2 with the consulting architect's consideration; however, it
3 was suggested to be recessed. We would happily do that. Not
4 a problem.

5 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Okay, great. Then one
6 more. On number six, add trim at the bottom of the
7 projecting bay. Oh, the rafter tails, that's what... Did you
8 bring them around, or did you just only do them under the
9 window and make them larger?

10 KEVIN YU: We decided to eliminate the rafter
11 tails of the second floor, but I think this discussion was
12 more about the supporting corbels, which we have enhanced
13 the size of it on the front of the entry and the garage.

14 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Thank you.

15 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Sordi.

16 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Thank you, Chair. Just a
17 couple of questions. I guess I'm a little confused in the
18 sense that it sounds like we got a packet with the design.
19 We saw that the letter came in relatively recently and you
20 made some changes to address the letter, but I don't think
21 you summarized it in your presentation, and I don't think
22 we have it in our packet.

23 GORDON WONG: It's on slide 3 of presentation.

1 COMMISSIONER SORDI: What I heard was reduced
2 window sizes facing the neighbor. I heard recessed a wall.
3 I'm interested to know how much you recessed the wall. And
4 then you talked about screening. So, if you could just
5 summarize what you changed in the last couple of days.

6 GORDON WONG: On the second floor on the left
7 side, you see the top diagram has three windows, and the
8 one on the bottom has two. The one that has three actually
9 had a pop-out. We actually made it flush afterwards to
10 recess it back in to make a little more distance from the
11 neighbor.
12

13 Then the slides on the right show a cross-section
14 with the...there's a line-of-sight view. Here's the direct
15 line-of-sight view, so this window is reduced, and then we
16 added screen right here, and see, here is a line right
17 here; this one is flush. So, we reduced this window and
18 made this smaller.

19 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Okay, thank you. So, a wall
20 was recessed inward.

21 GORDON WONG: Correct. Or it used to pop out, and
22 we made it flush in the end, and that reduced the square
23 footage.
24

25 COMMISSIONER SORDI: And so, it was recessed by a
foot or two? Can you say how much?

1 KEVIN YU: About a foot.

2 GORDON WONG: One foot.

3 COMMISSIONER SORDI: And this was done to address
4 the neighbor's concerns?

5 GORDON WONG: Correct, yes.

6 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Did you meet with the
7 neighbor to talk through it?

8 GORDON WONG: We got the letter from Planning. We
9 just met with the neighbor, and we executed it as fast as
10 we could before the hearing.

11 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Okay, got it. That's it for
12 now, I guess.

13 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any other questions?
14 Commissioner Barnett.

15 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: A couple, if I might.
16 According to the Staff Report, in terms of your outreach to
17 the neighbors there were five where you put not applicable.
18 No one was home, no one was home, no one was home, no one
19 was home. So, I guess the question is did you make any
20 effort subsequently to reach to these neighbors?

21 GORDON WONG: We did, yes. We went out there. We
22 got out there three times, and one of the times was when
23 the story poles were up, so we kept trying.
24
25

1 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: And so, one, two, three,
2 four, five, you were still unable to reach five of the
3 neighbors?

4 GORDON WONG: Yes, that's true. We had four Staff
5 members go out, two with Kevin Yu.

6 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I appreciate that. Then,
7 if I may?

8 GORDON WONG: And on the property, our signs
9 there, my contact is there with my office's number, and our
10 website is on the site.

11 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Good. So, you began your
12 presentation saying that the home fits in the neighborhood,
13 but the Staff's concern is with the largest square footage;
14 the largest FAR, although not by much; and the height. What
15 is your response to Staff on that?

16 GORDON WONG: My response is quite a few of those
17 homes were built in the 1940s and it's been quite some
18 time. We do have quite a few properties that need to be
19 rebuilt, I believe, and we are in a transient zoning area.
20 Right across from our house on Capri Drive is the
21 Commercial Office zoning. When we expand the map just a
22 little further we do notice that there are quite a few two-
23 story homes, and on the lot that we're on we have a pre-
24 existing two-story we're trying to match; we're trying to
25

1 match the style. We see a lot of houses with tile roofs, a
2 lot of Spanish stucco style homes, so we did walk the
3 neighborhood to take a look at that.

4 We are trying to also put enough variation on the
5 façade so that there are insets, there is some kind of
6 characteristic that ties it down, and I feel that we've
7 reworked this design both front, inside, outside to try to
8 make that happen, to try to put a good example of a new
9 home in this area.

10
11 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: If I may, Chair? Can you
12 say how many two-story homes were in the expanded
13 neighborhood that you researched?

14 GORDON WONG: Yes, would you put up slide #4? We
15 are located here, Capri Drive/Vasona Avenue. Over here on
16 Knowles Drive our number is actually lower than 25.7. On
17 Knowles Drive there's another one, the height is 26', 24.6
18 is FAR. This one is 3,111. Over here on Knowles Drive is
19 30.2%. We have Vasona down here, 30%, so that's only a
20 couple of houses down. And here we have 26.7. So, our
21 immediate neighborhood is kind of...the way that we're
22 chopped up is because we're in a transient spot, but there
23 are quite a few two-story and large homes here.

24 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Thank you for those
25 responses.

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Raspe.

2 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, Chair. You
3 indicated, I think, during your presentation that at least
4 with respect to one of the floors you lowered your plate
5 height from 10' to 9', is that correct?

6 GORDON WONG: That's correct.

7 COMMISSIONER RASPE: And is that the second
8 floor?

9 GORDON WONG: Yes, second floor.

10 COMMISSIONER RASPE: So, is your first floor
11 still 10'? I'm asking what is your plate height on floor
12 one, and if it's 10', is there a way to reduce that to 9'?

13 KEVIN YU: First of all, it is 10'. We would take
14 into consideration reducing...

15 GORDON WONG: Well, we would like to keep the
16 10', because there are a lot of good things you can do with
17 that in terms of windows and doors. One of the best things
18 is when you do those true light divider windows the optics
19 are far better with the header and the taller windows. So,
20 if we could keep that, it would be really good for the
21 Spanish Mediterranean style. Now, if we reduce it to 9',
22 then the windows won't be as high-end, and that's kind of
23 the thing I notice in a lot of good homes in Los Gatos. I
24 always look at the good brands, Kolbe, true light divider
25

1 windows, and we have two street-facing facades, so I think
2 it would really enhance the look of the house in the
3 neighborhood.

4 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Okay, I appreciate that
5 response. Thank you.

6 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Burnett.

7 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes, thank you. I went
8 around the neighborhood twice. On the other side of
9 Knowles, yes, there are a few, very few, larger homes. When
10 you come down onto Capri, you go all the way down Capri to
11 the end, or you go down to the middle of Capri and you turn
12 right on Vasona; I did not see second story homes. The only
13 thing I did see was the taller ADU in the back, and then a
14 partial second story on the right-hand side of Vasona, so
15 that neighborhood, your home would definitely stand out as
16 quite a large structure, because there are no other two-
17 story homes in that immediate neighborhood. I know you
18 described on your...but it wasn't in that immediate
19 neighborhood that you have a large home like that.

20 GORDON WONG: I understand what you're saying.
21 Very difficult to say, because when I walked down Vasona
22 Avenue, 589 Vasona is 27.5' high, and that's three houses
23 down. On Knowles Drive there is a house that's 27.3', and
24 that is two houses down, but you've got to walk down Vasona
25

1 and that's where they show up: they're two stories. One
2 more on Knowles Drive is 26' tall. That is an adjacent
3 road, but it's quite close.

4 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: But that's on Knowles
5 Drive.

6 GORDON WONG: Knowles, but we are also on Vasona,
7 and I see one, two, and Knowles is literally back-to-back
8 with Vasona when I see it. I would be able to see it from
9 Vasona Avenue.

10 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: That's interesting,
11 because (inaudible).

12 GORDON WONG: And I have it on the map, on the
13 presentation.

14 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any other questions? All
15 right, thank you. You'll have a chance after we listen to
16 the other public to come back and speak again.

17 GORDON WONG: Thank you.

18 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, I have one speaker
19 card for Michelle McCormick.

20 MICHELLE MCCORMICK: Good evening, I am Michelle
21 McCormick and I am the neighbor at 14333 Capri Drive. I
22 appreciate the architects trying to make some adjustments.
23 I just heard about it tonight, so we never met with them.
24 We had an opportunity to have some people come through very
25

1 quickly a couple of weeks ago, and then just met them
2 today.

3 I had brought up the concerns to the homeowner
4 and also to the gentleman from the architecture firm when
5 they swung by, and I think they are all the things that
6 you've been talking about, the size of the building for our
7 direct neighborhood.

8 Yes, Knowles is down the road, it's on a main
9 street, but you think about our neighborhood, you walk
10 around there. I've been there for almost 40 years in that
11 house. I live in a historic house right next door, there
12 are other little historic houses around, and it may not
13 feel like they are in great shape and need to be redone,
14 but we're renovating our house, everybody in that
15 neighborhood is trying to keep their houses looking really
16 nice.

17 This structure, it's beautiful, it's huge, it's a
18 gorgeous home; it just feels like out of place for the
19 neighborhood, and I had thought it's such a deep lot. It
20 has that garage conversion, and then even more space, and
21 you could do a beautiful one-story home there.

22 I'm not understanding why you would tear down the
23 old home that was maybe not renovatable, but the old garage
24 is the same vintage, it's a very old original structure,
25

1 and the two sitting next to each other, really close to
2 each other as you saw on the map, the home and the garage,
3 just seem out of place, like they not going to match at all
4 if you're concerned about the look of the neighborhood.

5 I do appreciate, again, the architect and
6 homeowners thinking about how we can make this be not
7 intrusive on the rest of the neighborhood, so I want to
8 give them kudos for doing that, and immediately after
9 getting a response thinking about how they could tweak it,
10 but it feels kind of obtrusive.

11 I'm also concerned of course about the huge
12 development that's planned across the street and don't want
13 to have anything be like well look, we already built this
14 big building, so why not build a 13-story apartment
15 building across the street? It changes the whole effect of
16 that neighborhood. We were there when the old farmhouse was
17 still there, before 85, and all of the old homes in that
18 neighborhood. Having some of those quaint neighborhoods in
19 Los Gatos really keep the character of the community.

20 I appreciate you hearing me out and listening to
21 the concerns, and hopefully we can move forward and be
22 agreeable to everything.
23
24
25

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Thank you. Let's see, does
2 anybody have any questions for the speaker? Commissioner
3 Barnett. Can you come back up? Thank you.

4 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: My question to you is with
5 respect to the modifications that have been explained to
6 you by the owner and architect. Have those somewhat
7 ameliorated your concerns?

8 MICHELLE McCORMICK: Well, I just heard them now
9 in the presentation; that's the first I've heard of them.
10 Changing the windows, that's a great thing so they're not
11 looking down on the property, and putting up some more
12 vegetation screening, that's great; I do appreciate that. I
13 haven't had a chance to see that design at all. I did look
14 through all of the plans when they were originally put
15 online, but I haven't seen this one.

16 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: So, you have reservations
17 until you see more?

18 MICHELLE McCORMICK: Yes, I'd like to just look
19 at that in detail, but again, I do appreciate them
20 immediately trying to look at ways to change that; it's
21 just it is still a large structure.

22 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: Thank you for that.

23 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, thank you. Mr.
24 Paulson, do we have anybody on Zoom?

1 DIRECTOR PAULSON: Thank you, Chair. I do not see
2 any hands raised on Zoom.

3 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, so then the
4 Applicant can come back, if you would like. You have three
5 more minutes if there is anything else that you would like
6 to discuss. Do you guys have any further questions for the
7 Applicant? Okay, go ahead and come back up, and I think
8 there might be a question for you. Commissioner Sordi.

9 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Is it possible to put the
10 site plan up? There was one in the packet that actually
11 showed the setbacks pretty well. That's it right there.
12 Yeah, I'm thinking of another one that had kind of a color
13 coding on the setbacks on the front and side. There we go.
14 If we could enhance that a little bit.

15 My question is, it's kind of a bigger picture
16 question, when you chose to plot the house, and backing up
17 a little bit, what I did do is I took my handy Google
18 measurement and I measured the distance of this house from
19 all the houses in the neighborhood, and the proximity to
20 the one at 14333 Capri in the post-development condition is
21 pretty close. I think you're actually right at the setback
22 with the lower level, and then you're 5' setback to the
23 second level, and maybe it's a little different now with
24 the recess in the wall. I believe you're right at the
25

1 setback, and then on the other side, if I'm reading this
2 right, you've got a lot of room. I see a 10' setback from a
3 properly line and then a 15' setback, I guess, from the
4 street.

5 Because it doesn't look to me like the house is
6 centered on the lot, and I don't know whether there was a
7 method to your design, or maybe you can walk us through
8 that, because I guess what I'm seeing here is a potential
9 to maybe in the direction where you don't impact the one
10 neighbor who is within 20', because I think everybody else
11 is in like 80' or more in the neighborhood, so just a
12 longwinded question.

13
14 GORDON WONG: I understand the weight of the
15 question, and also the weight of the results, and if we
16 were to move the house, because the issue is the distance
17 from the street on Vasona to get the driveway to work, so
18 that's why the house ended up where it was, and also the
19 existing trees and not impacting the roots.

20 The project was driven with other concerns, not
21 just looking at these concerns, not just looking at the
22 setback, because there are other things that make it work,
23 and we felt that abiding to the rear setback and insetting
24 the second floor would help bring some relief, but at the
25 same time retain the characteristic of the original house,

1 because that's where the front door was, originally facing
2 Capri, so we were trying to retain that, and retain the
3 garage where it is, because the driveway actually is
4 located in the right spot, but we want it here, because the
5 corner is here, and if we were to put it here, the garage...
6 It's very hard to explain on paper, but we looked at it
7 inside and out, and we were checking the width of the
8 garage, how to get two in there and how to get the driveway
9 in. A lot of moving pieces.

10
11 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Maybe I'm not quite
12 understanding it. So, you're saying shifting the house to
13 the north would affect the location of the driveway coming
14 off?

15 GORDON WONG: It would, yes.

16 COMMISSIONER SORDI: By moving it closer to the
17 intersection? I don't know what you mean by shifting it. It
18 just looks to me like the driveway might get a little
19 shorter, but it wouldn't necessarily move it east to west.

20 GORDON WONG: The point is to be able to park a
21 car on that driveway; that was the issue.

22 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Oh, okay. So, it's the depth
23 of the driveway?

24 GORDON WONG: Yes,

25 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Okay, got you.

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any other questions? All
2 right, no, then thank you very much. We're going to close
3 the public portion of the public hearing, and now I invite
4 my Commissioners to ask questions of Staff and have any
5 conversation. Questions of Staff or any comments?
6 Commissioner Barnett.

7 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I can break the ice here.
8 My concern is although the height, FAR, and square footage
9 are within the allowable limits, that we have to look at
10 the Residential Design Guidelines to see if those comply
11 given the limitations that are complied with.

12 In other words, I think the Residential Design
13 Guidelines trump the maximums, and the comments made by the
14 consulting architect, Mr. Cannon, that the property does
15 not blend with the smaller homes in the neighborhood, that
16 the height and bulk at the front and side are significantly
17 greater than those of adjacent homes, that the
18 architectural style is to be with sensitivity with the
19 surrounding neighborhood, and height and bulk and the front
20 and sides must be considered.

21 My concerns are this house just isn't a house
22 that complies with all those Residential Design Guidelines
23 requirements, and I look forward to comments from my fellow
24 commissioners. Thank you.
25

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Raspe.

2 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, Chair. Apologies
3 to my fellow commissioners, but I will take the opposite
4 side of that discussion. This home, it's not in dispute
5 that it complies with FAR, complies with height
6 limitations—in fact, it's 3' lower than the maximum height
7 they could have built—complies with setbacks, complies with
8 lot coverage, and complies with parking.

9
10 The issue seems to be that it's going to be the
11 first two-story in the neighborhood, and we've had this
12 discussion before; there is always going to be a first. I
13 think maybe a different way to think about it is if we
14 don't allow this two-story, are we then going to say that
15 you can only build one-stories in this neighborhood? That
16 seems to me to be a prohibitive limitation given what
17 properties and real estate costs in Los Gatos, and of
18 course we have a mandate to try to include our housing
19 inventory/housing stock. It seems to me that given that
20 they are in the proscriptions and the only violation seems
21 to be that it doesn't fit the neighborhood, I think, again,
22 this is probably one of those examples of a neighborhood
23 that will likely change as time goes on, and somebody has
24 to be first.
25

1 So, generally thinking, those are my thoughts.
2 Again, unless we're going to require only one-story homes
3 in this neighborhood, or require below-grade construction,
4 which is expensive, I don't see an alternative to allowing
5 the first two-story home to be built. Thank you, Chair.

6 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Thank you. Commissioner
7 Burnett.

8 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes, thank you. My
9 feelings are I really agree with Commissioner Barnett. When
10 you look at the Design Guidelines, you can go through,
11 there are many numbers starting with 2.1, neighborhood
12 patterns that this home does not fit in, and what
13 Commissioner Raspe is saying is that if we don't do this,
14 then there are no two-story homes. I don't think that's
15 what we're saying.

16 I think we're saying this is too large. You can
17 have a two-story home. You can have a one-and-a-half-story
18 home that would fit more with the neighborhood and be more
19 in line with the feeling of a neighborhood. The bulk and
20 mass of this is, I think, way out of scale; even our Staff
21 recommended a denial of this project because of that.

22 So, I don't think we're saying you can't have a
23 two-story home. There are two-story homes in the area, but
24 I think this one is way above. I mean, it's 1,237 square
25

1 feet larger than any other home in the area, so I think you
2 can do homes, but I think this is just too large of a home,
3 and I think the style is not congruent with the
4 neighborhood as well.

5 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any other comments?
6 Commissioner Stump.

7 COMMISSIONER STUMP: I think this is a project
8 that we're truly on the fence in some ways. I appreciate
9 Commissioner Raspe's position on this as well, and I think
10 it's got a lot of merit based on all the things that they
11 do conform with, and I can definitely see both sides to
12 this story, definitely, so I'm not sure even as I'm saying
13 this what direction I'm fully leaning, so I look forward to
14 hearing a few more comments made.

16 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Sordi.

17 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Happy to make a few more
18 comments. With respect to the two-story issue, I think I'm
19 aligned pretty well with Commissioner Raspe. I think that
20 you're dealing with a neighborhood with much older homes,
21 completely different era of architecture. You're also
22 dealing with a neighborhood that's really eclectic in terms
23 of styles, lot sizes, you've got a whole lot of different
24 stuff going on there and there's not a uniform pattern or
25 vision, even with respect to architectural styles, so the

1 line of questioning I was following was a little bit more
2 focused on the Design Guidelines and Development Standards
3 not affecting any one person unfairly, and so I'm focused a
4 lot on that immediate next door neighbor, but with respect
5 to the greater neighborhood, I'm not to hung up on having a
6 two-story house; I'll just say that.

7 VICE CHAIR BURCH: I'll add my own comments,
8 because I agree. I see it both sides, and I think through
9 many years we've seen a lot of homes that do feel like they
10 are at a point of transition, whether we're talking about a
11 neighborhood that newer people are moving in, remodeling
12 the homes, or going from a Commercial zone to a Residential
13 zone, and one of the things we've consistently talked about
14 during those types of meetings with a home at that kind of
15 transition point is how you help the homeowners blend in
16 with the overarching neighborhood, and that is one of the
17 things that is consistently said when you are looking at a
18 neighborhood or a zone that has predominantly single-story
19 homes. But we are realistic. You're right, it's expensive
20 to buy homes here. I think people should be able to have
21 room for their families, so you're not opposed to having a
22 second story.
23

24 There has been a lot of discussions about how you
25 make the second story a little bit less visible at the

1 front vertical plane, and usually that's by setting that
2 back from the front at a minimum of 5', having a lower
3 plate height on the second story, doing things that just
4 make that second floor more sensitive. I know that that's
5 been a comment through the years that we've discussed a lot
6 with neighborhoods in transition, because I am very much in
7 agreement that I am not opposed to this being a second
8 story.

9
10 My concern is when you visually look at the
11 compatibility in the neighborhood, how you have a second-
12 story home blend in with the immediate neighborhood, so to
13 me a second story is fine.

14 I also think the architectural styles through
15 this neighborhood run the gamut, so I don't have a problem
16 with the architectural style either.

17 I think the main thing is that the bulk and mass,
18 that the sidewalk, I guess, is the way I'll say that, and I
19 think that that could probably be resolved by making the
20 second-floor setback with a smaller floor plate.

21 That would be my comments. Commissioner Raspe.

22 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Thank you, Chair. Actually,
23 I'm going to join in the Chair's comments. Again, I voice
24 my opinion regarding two stories generally, and this home
25 specifically, stylistically I think it's a well done home,

1 but I think they're probably correct, there's probably a
2 way to break up the front massing at least without altering
3 too much the practical uses of the second floor of the
4 building, so I would enjoy exploring that a little bit,
5 although I think as a commission it's not our job to
6 redesign the building.

7 I also want to just float out there, I think
8 there are three considerations before us tonight, one of
9 which is the demolition and construction, but the zoning
10 and the grading, and in my view, as long as we should touch
11 on those. It seems to me that this house is kind of an
12 anomaly already in that it is a Residential zoned Office,
13 so cleaning that up, I would move to recommend to Town
14 Council that they approve that, and grading seems to me to
15 be not overly problematic on this particular site, so with
16 respect to those two issues.

18 VICE CHAIR BURCH: I think you were cheating off
19 my notes. So, yes, the exact thing I was going to say is
20 how about we address the zoning change? Do any
21 Commissioners have any concerns or issues with this zoning
22 change? Excellent.

23 And then the same thing, the Grading Permit. Does
24 anyone have any concerns about the Grading Permit? Okay, so
25 great. Two checkmarks against those.

1 Basically, now we're at the point with the
2 Architecture and Site. Does anyone want to venture a
3 motion? Is there any further discussion? Commissioner
4 Raspe.

5 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Chair, let me proffer a
6 solution, and based just on your discussion, and I think
7 you and I, Commissioner Stump, and I'm not sure where... I
8 think we're aligned; four of us would be amenable to
9 recommending to Town Council to approve a two-story
10 structure on this lot, including these plans, subject to
11 our provision of the front façade to break up the massing
12 at least on the Capri Drive of the property. If I were to
13 make a motion and recommendation, that would be it. So, if
14 you want to take a straw vote among the Commissioner to see
15 if that works, great.

17 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any comments? Commissioner
18 Stump.

19 COMMISSIONER STUMP: I was going to say I agree.

20 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Commissioner Burnett.

21 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Can you be more specific
22 about how much mass? What would that look like? We're not
23 going to see it again. Who would be in charge of...

24 VICE CHAIR BURCH: In the Residential Design
25 Guidelines 3.3.2 there is a note about the second floor

1 being set back a minimum of 5'. Would you be comfortable if
2 you added that comment to your motion?

3 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: I think they need more
4 direction from us.

5 COMMISSIONER RASPE: That would be perfect.

6 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Does that answer your
7 questions? If we included something that tied directly back
8 to the Residential Design Guidelines?

9 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Yes.

10 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Okay. Any other comments?
11 Commissioner Barnett.

12 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I'll clarify that. I'm
13 certainly okay with a two-story home. For me, the issue is
14 not the setback, although that would help the front façade
15 a lot, but the overall mass I think is still a problem in
16 relation to the neighborhood. Yes, neighborhoods
17 transition, they have to, and there shouldn't be a
18 restraint that certainly homes conform in size and mass to
19 the existing, but I think here it's out of scale, and so
20 I'm not comfortable saying that just dealing with the
21 façade is sufficient. Otherwise, I think I'm in agreement
22 with everyone else.
23

24 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Okay. Commissioner Burnett.
25

1 COMMISSIONER BURNETT: Actually, I still do agree
2 with Commissioner Barnett. Setting the second story back is
3 maybe a step, but I still have the same concerns he does on
4 this issue, so I wouldn't be supporting it.

5 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Okay. Commissioner Sordi.

6 COMMISSIONER SORDI: One thing I kind of
7 overlooked since we're so focused on the structure, I did
8 want to make sure that we address screening, since it seems
9 like the Applicant has a pretty good reason to not move the
10 house farther to the north as I suggested, and I don't know
11 that we have seen sufficient detail or whether we should
12 just prescribe more specific detail associated with the
13 screening on the south side to protect the neighbor's
14 privacy.
15

16 I think that I saw in the packet that there were
17 like three 24-inch box trees in the front yard, new, to be
18 planted, and if we could at least match that on the side.
19 I'm not an expert on landscaping, but if we could have
20 something that's robust and significant enough that we do
21 address privacy issues on the south side. I just want to
22 make sure we get that in the motion.
23

24 VICE CHAIR BURCH: I think that's a good idea. I
25 think we could direct them to work with Staff on that
specific item. Commissioner Raspe.

1 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Just a point of mechanics.
2 Mr. Safty, do you need one motion for three
3 recommendations? Since my suspicion is that Commissioners
4 are not going to be aligned on all three points, how would
5 you like to see the recommendation to Town Council?

6 RYAN SAFTY: Thank you for the question. I'd
7 recommend following the findings in breaking it out into
8 two pieces, the zone change and the Architecture and Site
9 Application. Technically the Grading Permit is tied into
10 the Architecture and Site Application.
11

12 One other thing to note is that if the Planning
13 Commission wants to go with the proposed changes that were
14 shown in the slides, that we need to condition those. Staff
15 has not received those updated plans.

16 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Chair, let's try the zoning
17 motion first.

18 VICE CHAIR BURCH: That would be great.

19 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Then I move to recommend to
20 Town Council with respect to the property located at 14331
21 Capri Drive, APN 406-32-004, Architecture and Site
22 Application S-24-043, and Zone Change Application Z-23-005,
23 that Town Council approve the request for a Zone Change
24 from O, Office, to R-1:8, and I can make all the required
25 findings as set forth in our packet.

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Thank you. Is there a second?
2 Commissioner Stump.

3 COMMISSIONER STUMP: Second.

4 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Any discussion? All right, if
5 not, I'll call the question. All in favor? Passes
6 unanimously.

7 Now, who wants to venture a motion on the second
8 half of this application?

9 COMMISSIONER RASPE: I can try again.

10 VICE CHAIR BURCH: I appreciate you today.

11 COMMISSIONER RASPE: I would move to recommend
12 approval to Town Council with respect to the demolition of
13 an existing single-family residence and the construction of
14 a new single-family residence, and site improvements,
15 including a Grading Permit, to property located at 14331
16 Capri Drive, APN 406-32-004, Architecture and Site
17 Application S-24-043, and Zone Change Application Z-23-005.

18 I can make all required findings as set forth in
19 our packet, with the following further recommendations to
20 Town Council. First, that with respect to the second floor
21 there be a 5' setback incorporated as per our Design
22 Guidelines; that there be on the south side of the building
23 a screening such that privacy is ensured between the
24 adjoining property neighbors; the other conditions as set
25

1 forth in tonight's discussion, which the Applicant put
2 forth on the screen but were not necessarily included in
3 our packet, that those would be included as part of our
4 recommendations. I can make all required findings.

5 VICE CHAIR BURCH: I want to ask a quick question
6 of Mr. Safty. As far as the screening goes, when we are
7 doing something like this and prescribing it from up here,
8 but we want to make sure that the screening is meeting the
9 privacy needs of the neighbor, do we normally need to say
10 something like that is approved by the neighbor also? Do
11 you get something in writing? How do you typically go about
12 that?
13

14 DIRECTOR PAULSON: I'll jump in. I think here we
15 have a little bit of time, because this is going to be a
16 recommendation to Council, so that will give the
17 Applicant's team time to prepare potentially any revisions
18 they're going to propose to try to address the conditions
19 that are being added in addition to the screening that is
20 proposed. As I think the neighbor mentioned, that was the
21 first time she had seen it, so she would like to have the
22 chance to take a look at it, so I think there will be some
23 time for some back and forth there on that, so I think at
24 this point we're okay.
25

1 VICE CHAIR BURCH: Okay, thank you. All right
2 then, is there any discussion about the motion?
3 Commissioner Barnett.

4 COMMISSIONER BARNETT: I thought the maker of the
5 motion agreed with Commissioner Burnett with respect to a
6 reference to the Residential Design Guidelines. Maybe I
7 misunderstood. Can you clarify?

8 COMMISSIONER RASPE: Sure. I referenced in my
9 motion the second story 5' setbacks in accordance with the
10 Residential Design Guidelines. I believe that was the
11 extent of my reference to them.

12 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, is there a second?
13 Oh, sorry, Commissioner Sordi.

14 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Just a clarifying question.
15 At least the way I read the plans, right now there is a
16 setback of 5', I think, at least on the south side of the
17 second story as compared to the first story. I just wanted
18 to clarify.

19 COMMISSIONER RASPE: To clarify my motion, 5'
20 setback from the Capri Drive side.

21 COMMISSIONER SORDI: Oh, from the Capri side. Got
22 it, okay. Not the south side. It's additional from the
23 Capri side. Got it. Okay, thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER RASPE: My motion is so amended,
2 please.

3 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, do we have a
4 second? All right, Commissioner Sordi. Any further
5 discussion? All right, I will call the question. All in
6 favor. Opposed. It passes 4-2. Are there any appeal rights.
7 I mean, this is a recommendation.

8 DIRECTOR PAULSON: Thank you, Chair. No. Because
9 it's a recommendation, there are not appeal rights. It will
10 next go to the Town Council sometime probably in August or
11 September, and we will see what their action is at that
12 point.
13

14 VICE CHAIR BURCH: All right, then that closes
15 the public portion of our hearing.

16 (END)
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