



ARCHITECTURE PLANNING URBAN DESIGN

July 25, 2022

Ms. Jocelyn Shoopman
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

RE: 94 Hernandez Avenue

Dear Jocelyn:

I reviewed the drawings and evaluated the site context. My comments and recommendations are as follows:

Neighborhood Context

The site is located in an older neighborhood with a mix of one and two-story homes designed in traditional styles recalling the homes in nearby Los Gatos Historic Districts. Photographs of the neighborhood are shown on the following page.



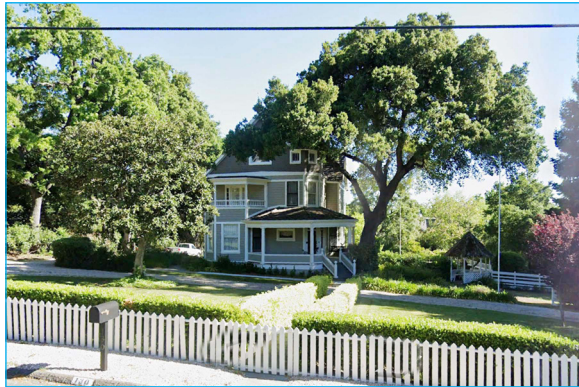
EXHIBIT 7



The Site and former structure facing Hernandez Avenue



Site and house to the immediate right on Ellinwood Avenue



House to the immediate left on Hernandez Avenue



House immediately across Hernandez Avenue



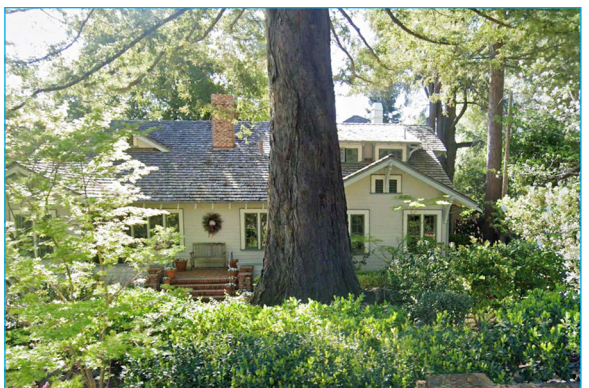
Nearby house



Nearby house



Nearby house



Nearby house

OVERVIEW

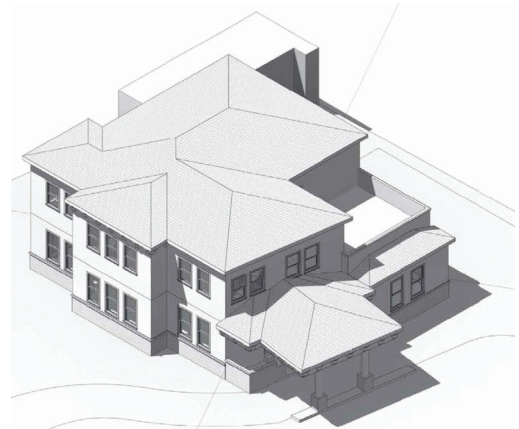
The proposed two-story house is designed in a Traditional Formal Mediterranean Style - see sketch and proposed elevation illustrations below.



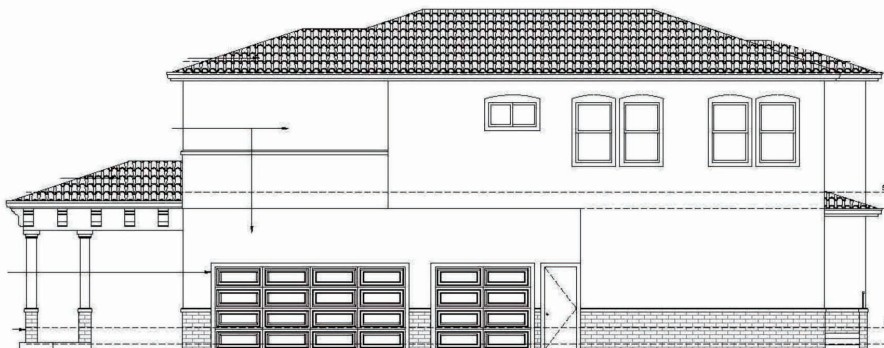
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED LEFT SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The proposed design appears to lean toward a Mediterranean Style home, but lacks the authenticity expected to be consistent with the Town's Residential Design Guidelines and sympathetic to the Immediate neighborhood.

1.4 Community Expectations

- *Homes will respect the scale and character of their immediate neighborhoods.*
- *Homes will maintain a friendly presence to the street.*
- *Structures will be designed with architectural integrity with design and material consistency on all facades.*
- *Structures will be constructed with high quality materials and craftsmanship.*
- *Attention will be given to architectural details consistent with the individual architectural style.*
- *All aspects of the project will respect the natural setting and features of a site.*

Some specific issues include the following:

1. The two-story mass and bulk at the front of the house is out of character with the immediate neighborhood, and is not consistent with Residential Design Guidelines 3.1.1 and 3.3.2.

3.2.1 Select an architectural style with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood

- *Styles with front facade eaves at the first floor level will be easier to adapt to predominantly one story neighborhoods than styles with two story, unbroken front facades.*

3.3.2 Height and bulk at front and side setbacks

- *Give special attention to adapting to the height and massing of adjacent homes. Avoid tall, unbroken front facades when other nearby homes have more articulated front facades with horizontal wall plane changes*
- *The design of two story homes constructed adjacent to one story houses should include techniques to minimize their visual impact and provide transitions in scale.*



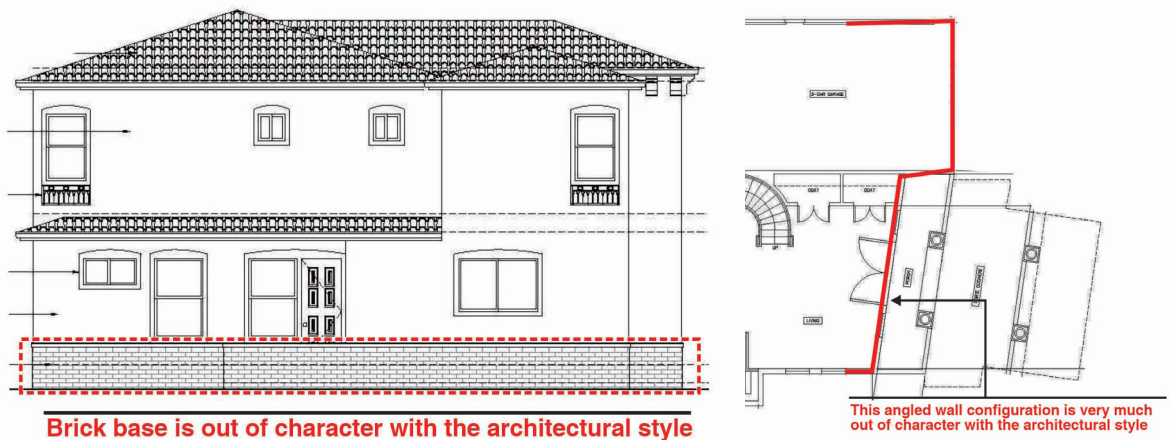
Bulky building form for this neighborhood

2. The design articulation and details of the house are not carried consistently around all four facades which is not consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.3.2. Specific issue include the limited use of the corbels at the roof overhang and the use of a formal Mediterranean Style on the Hernandez Road facade and an informal version of the style on the other three facades. Also, the angled wall at and above the entry is an abrupt departure from the regular geometry of the proposed architectural style.

3.2.2 Design for architectural integrity

- *In general, it is best to select a clear and distinctive architectural style rather than utilizing generic design elements or mixing elements from different architectural styles.*
- *Building massing, roof pitches, materials, window types and proportions, design features (e.g., roof dormers), and other architectural features should be consistent with the traditions of the selected style.*
- *Carry wall materials, window types and architectural details around all sides of the house. Avoid side and rear elevations that are markedly different from the front elevation.*

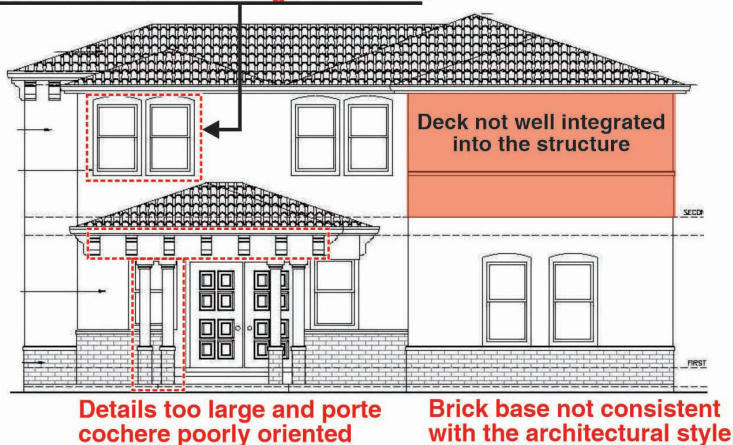
3. The brick base is out of character with the proposed architectural style.



4. There are several issues with the proposed windows which appear to be inconsistent with the Residential Design Guidelines.

- The windows appear to be double hung which would not be consistent with the architectural style.
- The proposed foam window trim would not be consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines.
- Window sashes appear quite narrow which would not be consistent with the architectural style and would be inconsistent with the Residential Design Guidelines.

Windows are not consistent with several Residential Design Guidelines



3.7.1 Arrange windows in patterns and groupings consistent with the architectural style and surrounding neighborhood

- *Many architectural styles have individual windows that are grouped into patterns of two, three or more windows. Be conscious of this fact, and organize the windows to complement the style.*

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

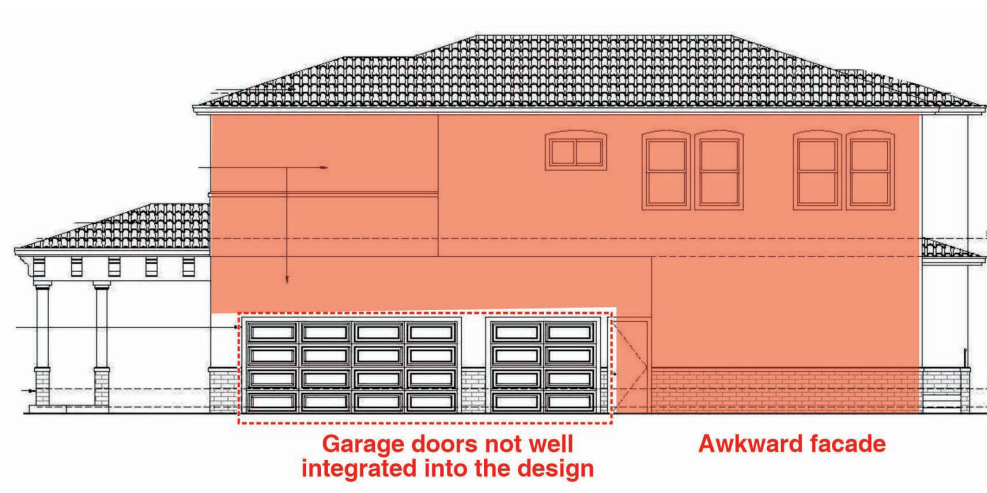
- *Select window types to complement the style of the house. Each architectural style generally has one or two window types that are traditional to the style. Double hung windows, for example, are common features of Victorian and Craftsman Styles while casement windows are seen frequently in Mission and Spanish Eclectic styles.*

3.7.3 Match window materials to the architectural style and to the surrounding neighborhood

- *Wood windows are common in Los Gatos. Wood is still the desired choice for styles that traditionally used wood. However, today there are some window materials, such as vinyl clad wood windows that are not noticeably different from wood at a short distance. They may be used if their visual appearance matches wood.*

3.7.4 Design the windows with attention to matching the traditional details of the architectural style

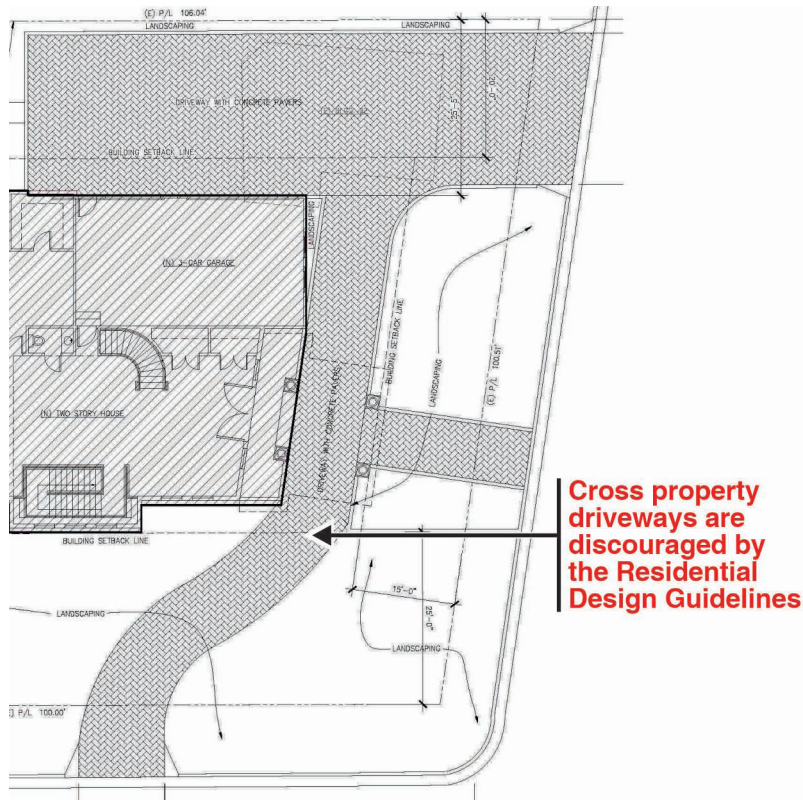
- *Most architectural styles - except Mission, Spanish Eclectic or Modern - should have wood trim around the windows. The trim width should be matched to the style, but in general, should not be less than 3 1/2 inches wide. Head trim depth should be equal to or wider than the jamb casing, but not less than one-sixth of the opening width.*
- *Projecting window sills and heads are strongly encouraged unless the architectural style would not normally have those features.*
- *Wood trim is also encouraged on stucco houses unless the window frames are recessed at least 6 inches from the outside face of the wall. **The use of stucco covered foam trim is strongly discouraged.***



5. While there are a couple of circular driveway nearby, they are discouraged by the Residential Design Guidelines. While this is not a circular driveway, it poses the same issue of more paving and less landscaping.

2.4.4 Limit the use of circular driveways

- Circular driveways are discouraged because they increase the amount of paving in front setbacks.
- Circular driveways may be considered for larger estate lots with wide street frontages where the width of the total driveway footprint is less than 50 percent of the parcel width.
- Where circular driveways are allowed, substantial landscaping should be provided along the street front, and special driveway paving materials and/or patterns should be provided.

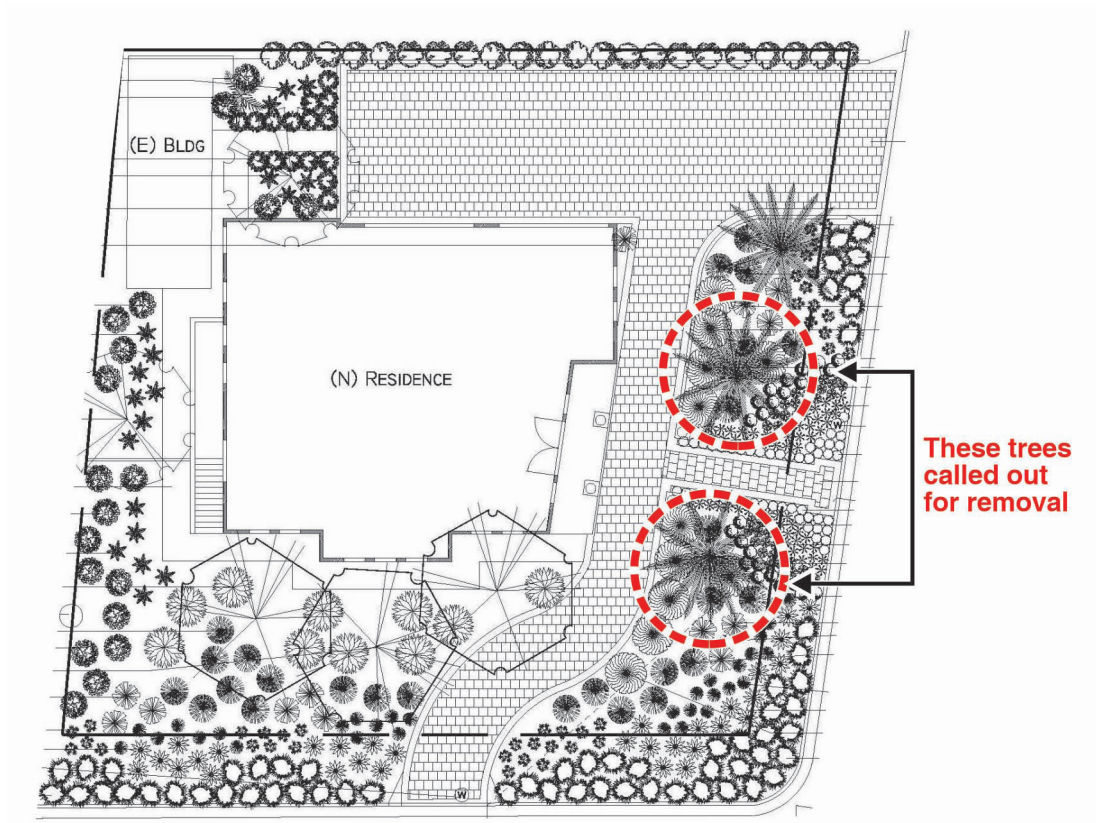


6. The second floor deck facing Ellinwood Avenue seems like a missed opportunity. It is quite isolated from the interior of the home and not well related to the overall home design or architectural style.
7. The beams and corbels on the port cochere are too large.
8. The three car garage is not well integrated into the overall design.

9. It appears that tall mature trees with large trunk diameters will be removed from the Ellinwood Avenue street frontage which would not be consistent with Residential Design Guideline 2.5.1.

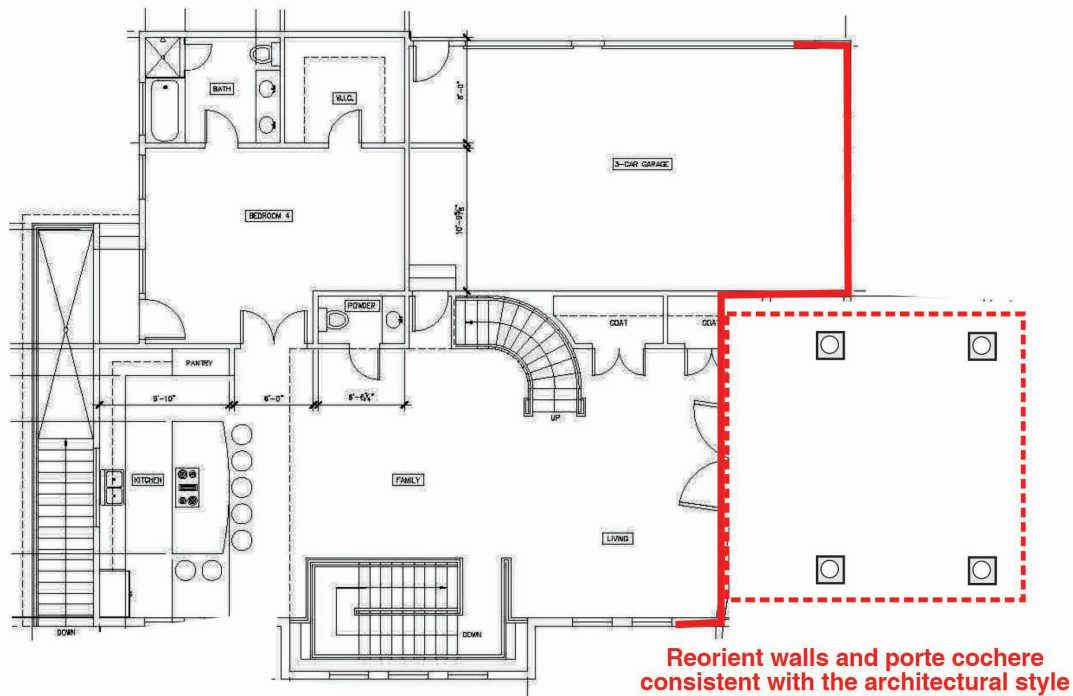
2.5.1 Save mature trees and landscaping whenever possible

- *Many trees are protected by the Town's Tree Ordinance (Section 29.10.0950 - 29.10.1045 of the Town Code) which sets forth criteria for protected tree size and species and the procedures for their removal and replacement. A summary is provided in the sidebar, but applicants should refer to the full ordinance which is available from Town staff or on-line at www.losgatosca.gov*

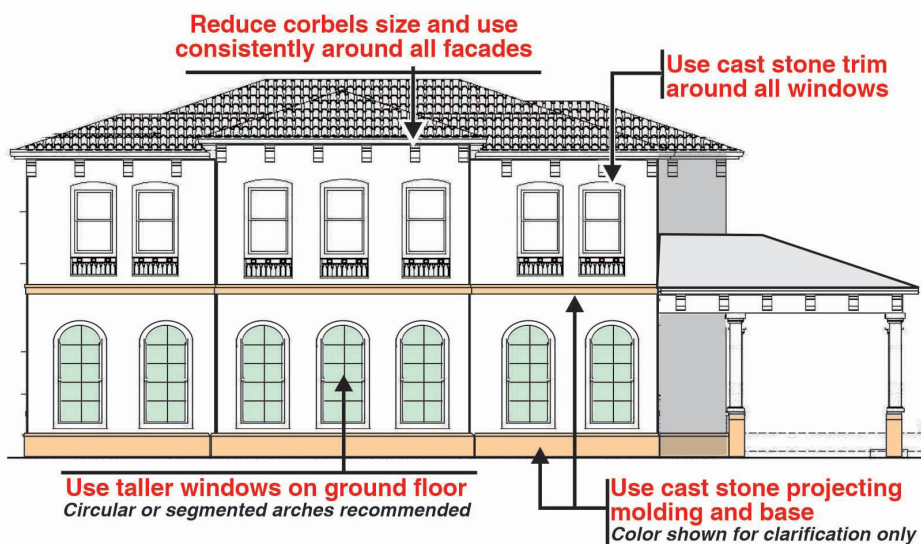


RECOMMENDATIONS

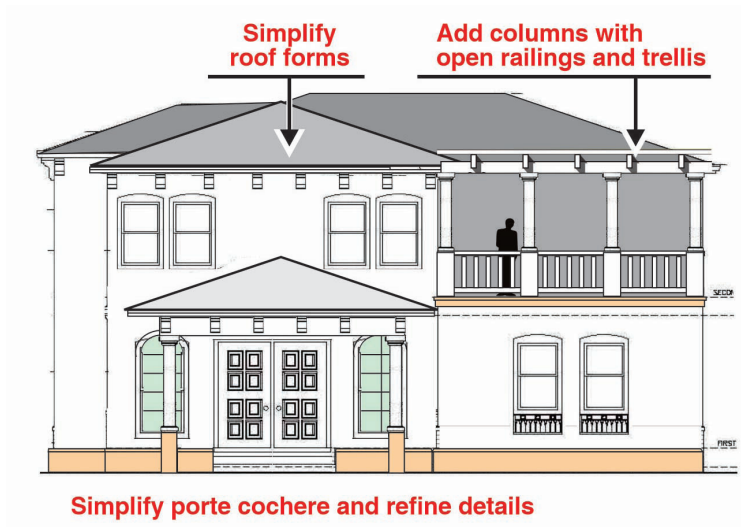
1. Reorient the Ellinwood Avenue facade walls and porte cochere consistent with the architectural style.



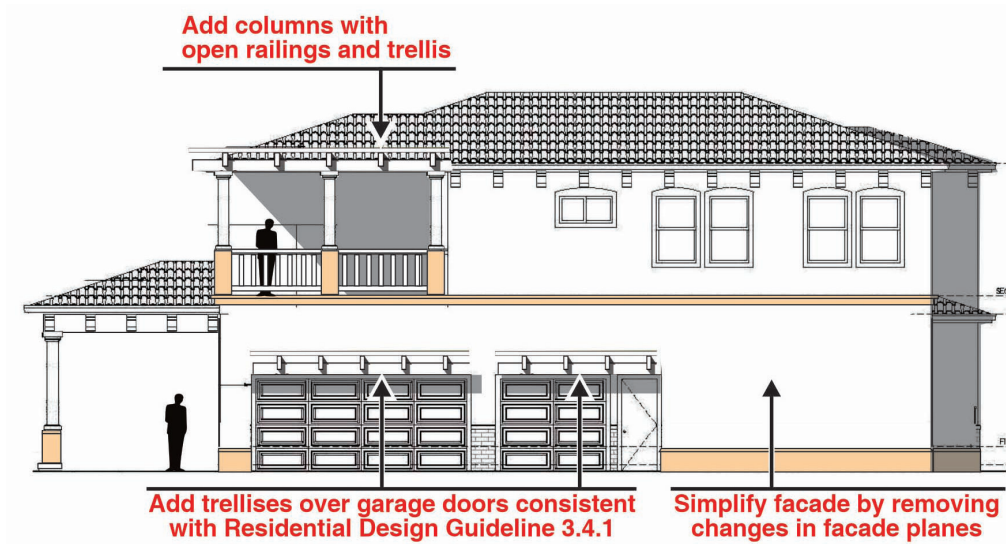
2. Reduce corbels size and use consistently around all facades.
3. Use taller ground floor windows - circular or segmented arches recommended.
4. Use cast stone around all windows in lieu of foam trim.
5. Use cast stone projecting belt molding and building base.



6. Simplify the porte cochere and refine details.
7. Simplify roof forms where possible.
8. Add round columns and open railings and trellis at second floor deck. Revise interior floor plan, if possible to take better advantage of the deck.



9. Add trellised over garages consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.4.1.
10. Simplify rear facade by removing changes in the facade planes.



11. Use casement windows rather than double hung winows.
12. Use aluminum or vinyl covered wood windows to provide sash sizes more appropriate to the style and scale of the house.
13. Discuss the proposed removal of the mature trees on the site.

The above recommendations have been based on retaining as many of the main elements of the applicant's design as possible, but would not, in my judgment, be fully compliant with Residential Design Guideline **4.10 New Construction**, which the Town Attorney has indicated should be applied to this application. A better approach would be to use a more informal approach the Mediterranean Style which has less formal and bulky forms with a greater emphasis on some first floor roof overhangs to better relate to the other homes in the immediate neighborhood. Some examples are shown on the following page.



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

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Larry L. Cannon".

Larry L. Cannon

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