

RE: 465 N. Santa Cruz Ave.

Conditional Use Permit for Residential Conversion.

Written Description

The project is at 465 N. Santa Cruz Avenue, Los Gatos. The current site has a 2,430 sf building. It historically has been used for small storefront businesses, such as a vacuum cleaner repair shop and a nail salon. The new owners, Jamie and Dan Pfister are owners of a Real Estate business and plan to move their offices into the front portion of the existing building. They would like to convert the rear 489 sf into a studio apartment.

In addition to the residential conversion other work includes improvements of various aspects of the building, such as:

- Reconfigure interior non-bearing walls
- Replace all of the existing windows
- Upgrade HVAC system
- Upgrade electrical system
- Add accessible parking
- Add an accessible bathroom,
- Demolish the false eave around the back half of the building
- Remove the clay tile roof on the front portion of the building and replace it with new composition roofing
- Replace the roofing on the flat portion of the building
- Remove the carport and shed at the rear of the property
- Add stucco to the concrete block walls
- Add a Cornice to the top of the walls
- Add window flower boxes along the driveway side of the property
- Add a deep wood header trim above the windows
- Repaint all exterior finishes
- Refresh and add more landscape areas as the parking area allows.
- Add insulation as needed
- Remove paint from the existing brick

Justification

The proposed uses of the property are essential and desirable for the Los Gatos community. The new Real Estate offices and a studio apartment will not impair the integrity and the character of the zone. In fact, the improvements made will only reinforce the character desired in Los Gatos. Nor will the proposed uses be detrimental to public health, safety or general welfare.

Maintaining and improving existing commercial spaces are both essential and desirable. The current building is serviceable but does not add to the overall curb appeal that the community desires. The improvements that we will make to the site and building, such as covering existing concrete block with stucco, adding window planter boxes and additional trim work, will create a building that will reinforce the unique scale and character desired in Los Gatos. Please see the Design Justification Section for further visual improvements.

Although this portion of the street is primarily commercial, adding more housing to the area will help reduce the pressure on an overtaxed housing market. The idea of mixed-use projects has long been universally championed by urban planners. Mixed-use developments promote improvements in home affordability, walkability to homes, workplaces, and amenities, and strong neighborhoods. It reduces an individual's dependence on expensive and time-consuming transportation modes that syphon resources from better long-term investments. As Los Gatos's housing shortage deepens, innovative strategies for creating new housing are needed. The owners realize this and have cleverly decided that the extra space in the rear of their building would make an efficient, cost effective, studio residence. By utilizing this existing un-used space for a residence, the owners will be creating a new, desirable and essential housing unit that is within walking distance of downtown Los Gatos. Residents will have walking access to groceries, restaurants, etc. In addition, the VTA 27 route runs along Santa Cruz Avenue, which allows potential tenants easy access to Light Rail, Cal Train and other forms of public transportation.

Regardless of the use, the site is currently under parked (see below for calculations). Given the sites limitations, parking has been provided to the maximum extent possible. Even though the zoning parking rules make it appear as if our project is making the parking burden worse, we would argue that we are not increasing the burden. Because it is a mixed-use project there is potential for a Shared Parking Agreement between the residential and office uses on site. We would also argue that, given the neighborhood's walkability and the access to public transportation, two parking spaces for a 489-square foot studio apartment is likely sufficient without an additional visitor parking space. We formally request the reduction of one guest parking space for the studio apartment.

The proposed shared parking agreement hours are:

Office: 9am-5pm Monday -Friday

Residence: 5pm-9am Monday-Friday, all week-end

The various improvements to the property in conjunction with the change in use will only add value and character to the neighborhood and is in harmony with the objectives of the Los Gatos's General Plan.

Parking:

Existing Use:

Retail Downtown: 1 space per 300 sf

2,430 sf of space = 8.1 (9) spaces needed

Existing spaces provided = 6

No ADA space and access aisle provided

Deficit = - 3 spaces

Proposed Use:

Office: 1 space per 250 sf spaces

1941 sf of space: 7.8

Residential: 1.5

Guest Parking: 1

Request for less guest parking: -1

Shared Parking Agreement: -1.5

Total Required: 7.8

Total Provided: 5=6 (ADA Credit)

Deficit: -2 spaces

We agree to pay the parking in-lieu fee for office use, two deficient parking spaces x \$2,000 = \$4,000 per town code.

Design Guidelines Justification

Common Design Guidelines

1.5.1 -1.54

The building is of a size and scale that matches the surrounding buildings. The front and sides of the front portion of the building have a series of large windows that help break up the front to make it a comfortable scale. The front portion of the building is made of natural brick between posts and beams. These post and beams of the structure are and will remain evident and add to the character and the richness of the facade. New fiberglass black windows will be installed to add another layer of depth and interest. On the recessed wall near the entry new stained wood will be added with black business letters, further adding to the layering of the front portion of the building.

The rear portion of the building is currently exposed concrete block. The concrete block will be covered over with stucco. This stucco will be tied into the front portion of the building by painting it the same cream color that the post and beams will be painted. A cornice capping the top of the parapet will be added along the side and rear elevations. The side wall along the driveway currently has metal windows. These windows will be replaced with the black fiberglass windows to match the new front windows. The windows will help unify the two portions of the building. Under the windows along the driveway, new window plant boxes will be added to soften and to add interest to this long wall. Additionally, a wide header trim will be added above these windows.

1.5.5

The new trash enclosures will be in the back, well away from public view. However, the enclosure will be made of stucco to match the new stucco on the concrete block walls.

1.5.6

No rooftop equipment will be visible from the public way. Please see A2.1, Roof Plan and Site Line Diagram

1.5.7-1.5.8

The front parking area only has one regular space and one Van Accessible space. As space allows (about 4'), new landscaping will be added to the area between the first spot and sidewalk. There will also continue to be landscaping between the building and the parking area and the side property line and the parking area.

1.5.9

Paint will be removed from the existing brick exposing the rich natural colors of the brick. The heavy timbers and trim will be freshly painted. The exposed concrete block will be covered with stucco. The asphalt at all paved areas in the front portion of the property will be removed and permeable pavers will be used. Please see the color board.

1.5.10

Landscaping will be used to surround and soften the front parking area. Potted plants will be utilized near the front door under the covered entry.

1.5.11

Dark or reflective glazing will not be used

1.5.12

The colors will be muted and will consist of creams, grays and the natural colors of brick and stained wood. Window frames and lighting fixtures will be black.

C-1 District

2.2.1

The current entry does not face the street. However, the welcoming front porch, expansive windows on both the front and the sign, the new stained wood wall with black lettering will all serve to make the entrance easily found and to welcome pedestrians into the building.

2.2.2 and 2.2.3, 2.2.5, 2.2.8

Current parking is split between the rear and the front and that will remain the same. We have softened the parking area by adding a landscape buffer and changing the lot surface from asphalt to a permeable herringbone paver. Additional landscaping surrounding the parking area will be maintained and improved upon.

2.2.6

New planted pots will be added surrounding the front entry

2.2.7

No parking area lighting currently exists. If lighting in the parking area is required, the pole will be less than 15' high and will have luminaires with shielding to direct the light downward

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