



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/28/2023

ITEM NO: 5

DATE: February 23, 2024

TO: Historic Preservation Committee

FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Requesting Approval for a Revision to the Approved Exterior Materials on an Existing Residence on Property Located in the University-Edelen Historic District Zoned R-1D:LHP. **Located at 202 University Avenue.** APN 529-04-001. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Minor Development in a Historic District Application HS-24-003. Property Owner: Tyler and Kristine Shewey. Applicant: Jay Plett, Architect. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider a request for a revision to the approved exterior materials on an existing single-family residence on property located in the University-Edelen Historic District zoned R-1D:LHP located at 202 University Avenue.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1898 (effective year built 1930) per County Assessor's Database; 1870s per Bloomfield Survey
2. Town of Los Gatos Historic Status Code: +, historic and intact, worthy of special note
3. Does property have an LHP Overlay? Yes
4. Is structure in a historic district? Yes, University-Edelen
5. If yes, is it a contributor? Yes
6. Findings required? No
7. Considerations required? Yes

BACKGROUND:

On April 28, 2021, the Committee conducted a preliminary review of a request for construction of a second-story addition to the residence to exceed floor area ratio standards and provided recommendations to the applicant for project revisions.

PREPARED BY: SEAN MULLIN, AICP
Senior Planner

BACKGROUND (continued):

An Architecture and Site application for the project was submitted to the Town on June 30, 2021. The development plans provided with the application were consistent with those presented during the preliminary review and the applicant responded to all recommendations of the Committee. The Committee recommended approval of the Architecture and Site application, which was subsequently approved by the Planning Commission on January 26, 2022. Building Permits for the project were issued on June 12, 2023, and the project is currently under construction.

DISCUSSION:

The applicant has returned to the Committee requesting approval for revisions to the approved exterior materials. Specifically, the applicant requests changing the new windows at the basement level from all wood windows to wood windows with an exterior fiberglass cladding (Attachment 1). No revisions are requested to the approved wood windows on the first and second floors. The applicant has indicated to staff that the fiberglass cladding material is paintable, will reduce the maintenance required for basement-level windows, and will match the approved windows on the first and second floors.

The applicant also requests approval for brick siding at the basement level as an alternative option to the approved horizontal wood siding (Attachment 2). The brick siding would be included only at the basement level and would be carried around all sides of the residence. The applicant indicates that installation of the brick siding is an option dependent on the project budget (Attachment 1).

The Residential Design Guidelines provides the following recommendations related to window materials:

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.

4.8.2 Building Materials

- Composite, synthetic, metal, vinyl, plastic or fabricated/ imitation wood products, painted brick or imitation used brick will generally not be approved. However, some exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis when the decision-making body

DISCUSSION (continued):

determines that the replacement is consistent with the appearance of the original material, and that a lay person would be unlikely to discern the difference. The burden of proof will reside with the applicant. Material samples, photographs, and specific locations where the material may be seen in use will all assist in the evaluation of alternative materials.

4.8.4 Windows and Glass in doors

- Windows should be constructed of real glass, and window frames should be constructed of real wood - not vinyl, metal, or plastic. Wood sashes may be vinyl or metal clad if the window frame and dressing is designed consistent with the historic context of the building.

The proposed fiberglass cladding material was not available when the Guidelines were written, and it is silent on its use. The Guidelines emphasize the use of wood windows but allows exceptions for alternative materials when they are not noticeably different from wood at a short distance, found to be consistent with the historic context, and consistent with the appearance of the original material where it would be unlikely to discern the difference. The applicant requests approval of the alternative window material and provided a Letter of Justification and photos of the proposed windows (Attachment 1).

CONCLUSION:

Should the Committee find merit in the proposed project, the Committee should approve the request, which can be accomplished with a revision to the pending Building Permits.

CONSIDERATIONS:

A. Considerations

Sec. 29.80.290. Standards for review.

In evaluating applications, the deciding body shall consider the architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color, and any other pertinent factors. Applications shall not be granted unless:

- _____ In historic districts, the proposed work will neither adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or other features of the property which is the subject of the application, nor adversely affect its relationship, in terms of harmony and appropriateness, with its surroundings, including neighboring structures, nor adversely

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CONSIDERATIONS (continued):

affect the character, or the historical, architectural or aesthetic interest or value of the district.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter of Justification
2. Development Plans