



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

MEETING DATE: 2/28/2024

ITEM NO: 3

DATE: February 23, 2024
TO: Historic Preservation Committee
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Consider a Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1D. **Located at 18 Oak Hill Way.** APN 529-34-052. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15061(b)(3). Request for Review PHST-23-020. Property Owner/Applicant: Vanessa Young. Project Planner: Ryan Safty.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider a request to remove a pre-1941 property from the Historic Resources Inventory for property zoned R-1:D located at 18 Oak Hill Way.

PROPERTY DETAILS:

1. Date primary structure was built: 1920 (effective year built 1950) per County Assessor's Database
2. Town of Los Gatos Historic Status Code: N/A
3. Does property have an LHP Overlay? No
4. Is structure in a historic district? No
5. If yes, is it a contributor? N/A
6. Findings required? Yes
7. Considerations required? No

DISCUSSION:

The applicant is requesting approval to remove the presumptive pre-1941 residence from the Historic Resources Inventory. The Santa Clara County Assessor's Database lists a construction date of 1920, with an effective year built date of 1950, indicating substantial construction occurred in around 1950. The property is not within a historic district or LHP overlay and is not included in either the 1990 Anne Bloomfield Survey.

PREPARED BY: Ryan Safty
Associate Planner

DISCUSSION (continued):

The property is included in the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, beginning in 1895 (Attachment 1). The area of the current subject property is shown vacant up until 1928. From 1928 through the 1928-1956 map edition, a single structure is shown on the parcel, which appears to have been modified slightly with side additions following the 1928 edition.

A request to remove this property from the Historic Resources Inventory came before the Committee on August 23, 2023. The Committee discussed the matter and noted that the windows look original, that the structure maintains the feeling of a typical Los Gatos cottage and early California bungalow, and that they were in favor of keeping it on the inventory due to the finding that the property is of a distinctive characteristic type, time period, and method of construction. The Committee denied the request.

The applicant has conducted additional research and has applied again to remove the property from the Historic Resources Inventory. The research conducted and summary of the request is provided as Attachment 2. Property pictures are included as Attachment 3. The applicant's research found that the attached deck at the rear (facing Villa Avenue) was added in 1973; that the rear entry was modified at some point in the past; and that the previous garage has been demolished. No information was provided about modifications to the elevation facing Oak Hill Way.

Specifically, regarding the rear entrance facing Villa Avenue, historical imagery shows that the previous structure had a partially enclosed porch in front of the rear entryway. This area has since been fully enclosed, with a double hung window added adjacent to the chimney and the door pushed out to the edge of the front steps, essentially adding roughly 10 square feet to the rear of the residence. Additionally, the wall to the left of the rear door as seen on page 4 of Attachment 2 has been modified, as the openings are now smaller and window styles have changed in this area.

The applicant also notes that the home address is shown by utility companies as 176-A Villa Avenue, leading to the assumption that this structure was once a part of the 176 Villa Avenue property to the north and was not built as a primary residence. The Sanborn Maps in Attachment 1 also lead to this assumption as the property used to run from Villa Avenue all the way through to Oak Hill Way. Although the property used to be considered a "through lot", running from Villa Avenue to Oak Hill Way, the development and subdivisions that have occurred following the 1956 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance map make it so that only the Oak Hill Way elevation faces a public street. Therefore, alteration or enclosure of more than 25 percent of the Oak Hill Way elevation would be considered a technical demolition of this historic structure.

DISCUSSION (continued):

In conclusion, the applicant states that, "the property has had significant exterior changes since being built in approximately 1920 and does not have any historical significance. Further, the property is not visible from the street and does not contribute to the appearance of the Town's aesthetics."

Town records are minimal and include a re-roof permit from 1995, electric service upgrade in 1996, and air conditioner installation in 2005 (Attachment 4).

CONCLUSION:

Should the Committee find that the structure no longer has historic significance or architectural merit due to the loss of integrity, the structure would be removed from the Historic Resources Inventory and any proposed alterations would not return to the Committee.

FINDINGS:

- A. Findings - related to a request for a determination that a pre-1941 primary structure has no historic significance or architectural merit.

In evaluating a request for a determination of historic significance or architectural merit, the Historic Preservation Committee shall consider the following:

1. The structure is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the Town;
2. No Significant persons are associated with the site;
3. There are no distinctive characteristics of type, period or method of construction or representation of work of a master;
4. The structure does not yield information to Town history; or
5. The integrity has been compromised such that the structure no longer has the potential to convey significance.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Sanborn Maps
2. Applicant's Submittal Packet
3. Property Pictures
4. Town Records

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