



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 03/24/2021

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: March 19, 2021
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Requesting Approval for Demolition of an Existing Single-Family Residence and Construction of a New Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8 Located at 140 Arroyo Grande Way. APN 424-23-048. Architecture and Site Application S-20-013. Property Owner/Applicant: Yogesh Jhamb. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

RECOMMENDATION:

Denial.

PROJECT DATA:

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential
Zoning Designation: R-1:8 – Single-Family Residential, 8,000-square foot lot minimum
Applicable Plans & Standards: General Plan; Residential Design Guidelines
Parcel Size: 6,425 square feet
Surrounding Area:

	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning
North	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:8
South	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:8
East	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:8
West	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:8

PREPARED BY: Sean Mullin, AICP
Associate Planner

Reviewed by: Planning Manager and Community Development Director

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SUBJECT: 140 Arroyo Grande Way/S-20-013

DATE: March 19, 2021

CEQA:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction.

FINDINGS:

- As required, the project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction.
- As required by Section 29.10.09030(e) of the Town Code for the demolition of existing structures.
- The project meets the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations).
- As required by the Residential Design Guidelines that the project complies with the Residential Design Guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- As required by Section 29.20.150 of the Town Code for granting approval of an Architecture and Site application.

ACTION:

The decision of the Planning Commission is final unless appealed within ten days.

BACKGROUND:

The project site is located on the southwest side of Arroyo Grande Way approximately 435 feet southwest of Lark Avenue (Exhibit 1). The subject property is approximately 0.15 acres (6,425 square feet) and developed with a single-story, 1,150-square foot single-family residence with a 428-square foot garage. This Architecture and Site application has been referred to the Planning Commission because the residence would be the largest in terms of square footage and floor area ratio (FAR) within the immediate neighborhood.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A. Location and Surrounding Neighborhood

The subject property is 6,425 square feet, located on the southwest side of Arroyo Grande Way approximately 435 feet southwest of Lark Avenue. The property is developed with a single-family residence and an attached garage. Single-family residential development surrounds the property.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (continued):

B. Project Summary

The applicant proposes demolition of the existing residence and construction of a single-story residence with an attached two-car garage (Exhibit 12).

C. Zoning Compliance

A single-family residence is permitted in the R-1:8 zone. The proposed residence is in compliance with the allowable floor area, height, setbacks, and on-site parking requirements for the property.

DISCUSSION:

A. Architecture and Site Analysis

The applicant proposes demolition of the existing single-family residence and attached garage and construction of a new 2,123-square foot single-story residence with a 428-square foot attached garage (Exhibit 12). The proposed residence would be sited in the middle of the property, utilizing the area of existing development. The height of the proposed residence is 21 feet, 10 ½ inches, where a maximum of 30 feet is allowed.

The proposed project materials include painted stucco with a smooth finish, wood windows, wood garage doors, wood trim, and an asphalt shingle roof. A color rendering is included on Sheet A3.4 of the Development Plans (Exhibit 12). The applicant has provided a Project Description and a Letter of Justification summarizing the project and discussing the size of the proposed residence (Exhibits 4 and 5).

Building Design

The applicant proposes construction of a single-story residence with an attached garage. The proposed residence would utilize the area of existing development in the center of the property. The main portion of the residence would feature a five-in-12 hipped roof with an eyebrow dormer over the front entry. Five-in-12 gable-end roofs are proposed above the garage on the front elevation as well as the right and left portions of the rear elevation. A bay window at the right side of the front elevation is proposed with a seven and one-half-in-twelve roof pitch. Windows and doors on the front and rear elevations would feature an arched top, while those on the side elevations would have a flat top.

The Town's Consulting Architect reviewed the proposed residence and noted that design of the residence was overly complex and inconsistent with several Residential Design Guidelines (Exhibit 6). The Consulting Architect discussed the inconsistencies with the

DISCUSSION (continued):

Residential Design Guidelines related to eave height, roof forms, window forms, materials, and garage door design. The Consulting Architect made six recommendations to address consistency of the project with the Residential Design Guidelines, which are summarized below. The applicant responded, but did not incorporate the recommended design changes to the roof forms to address consistency with the Residential Design Guidelines. The applicant's response to each recommendation follows in *italics* and is included in Exhibit 7.

1. Lower the roof eave height as much as possible. The recommendation illustrations show a one-foot decrease in height.

We have reduced the slope of the roof to 5:12, so instead of lowering the roof eave height by 1', we have lowered the height of the whole house by 2'. We believe that this change will be more visible as it creates a smaller impression of the house in the neighborhood. We would like to keep 10' exterior walls and 10' ceilings in the house, so that we can have taller windows that provide more natural light.

2. Utilize a hip roof on the garage in lieu of the proposed gable.

We believe that this recommendation was primarily to reduce the prominence of the garage. We have reduced the roof slope of the garage to 5:12, and we have also removed the brick work from the garage walls, which will significantly reduce the prominence of the garage. The gable garage roof is consistent with the selected architectural style and many other homes in our neighborhood have gable garage roofs.

3. Simplify the window forms and styles and provide wood trim on all facades.

We have simplified the window forms and have provided wood trim on all facades. We have used slightly arch windows in the front and rear elevation, and we have consistent window styles for each elevation.

4. Eliminate the brick in favor of a uniform stucco treatment and add a moulding trim strip.

We have eliminated the brick in all elevations and have provided uniform stucco treatment as suggested.

5. Substantially recess the garage door and select a garage door color to blend with the main body of the home rather than contrasting with it.

DISCUSSION (continued):

The garage door has been recessed as suggested and changes are depicted in the floor plan. The color has also been updated to blend with the main body of the home.

6. Remove the roof dormer to simplify the roof.

We have significantly reduced the size of the dormer; however, we require it as it is the only source to provide natural light in the entry hallway. We hope that the city will allow us to keep the roof dormer.

B. Neighborhood Compatibility

The subject property is 6,425 square feet and the maximum allowable floor area is 2,176 square feet for the residence and any accessory structures, and 617 square feet for the garage. The maximum allowable FAR for the residence and any accessory structure is 0.34. The table below reflects the current conditions of the residences in the immediate area based on County records and the proposed project.

FAR Comparison - Neighborhood Analysis							
Address	Zoning	Residential SF*	Garage SF	Total SF**	Lot Area SF	Residential FAR	No. of Stories
115 La Cienega Ct	R-1:8	1,568	428	1,996	7,000	0.22	1
109 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,195	428	1,623	9,000	0.13	1
120 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,549	428	1,977	5,823	0.27	1
124 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,657	428	2,085	6,402	0.26	1
143 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,520	428	1,948	7,263	0.21	1
144 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,150	428	1,578	6,000	0.19	1
147 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,578	0	1,578	7,200	0.22	1
148 Arroyo Grande Wy	R-1:8	1,508	428	1,936	6,800	0.22	1
140 Arroyo Grande Wy (E)	R-1:8	1,150	428	1,578	6,425	0.18	1
140 Arroyo Grande Wy (P)	R-1:8	2,123	428	2,551	6,425	0.33	1
* Residential square footage does not include garages.							
** The total square footage numbers do not include below grade square footage.							

The eight properties in the immediate neighborhood are developed with one-story residences and are examples of late 1950s suburban ranch architecture. The property sizes within the immediate neighborhood range from 5,823 to 9,000 square feet. Based on Town and County records, the square footage of the residences located in the immediate neighborhood range from 1,150 square feet to 1,657 square feet. The FAR of the residences in the immediate neighborhood range from 0.13 to 0.27. The applicant is proposing a 2,123-square foot residence and a FAR of 0.33 on a 6,425 square foot parcel. The proposed project would be the largest residence in terms of square footage by 466 square feet and the largest in terms of FAR by 0.06.

DISCUSSION (continued):

The applicant has provided a Letter of Justification for the size of the residence indicating that the proposed residence size is intended to accommodate their needs (Exhibit 5). The applicant indicates that a single-story countryside ranch design was selected to maintain consistency with the neighborhood. The applicant highlights that, while the residences in the immediate neighborhood are smaller than the proposed residence, they believe additions or new residences will eventually occur to increase the size of these residences.

Lastly, the applicant provides examples of residences in the neighborhood outside of the defined immediate neighborhood with sizes comparable to the proposed residence. Staff has prepared an exhibit showing the distribution of the examples provided by the applicant relative to the subject property and the immediate neighborhood (Exhibit 8).

C. Site Design

The proposed residence would utilize the area of existing development in the center of the property. The footprint of the residence would expand to the limitations of the required setbacks. A new driveway tying into the existing curb cut would provide access to the garage. Additional hardscape would provide pedestrian circulation around the residence. The development plans show that bark mulch would be spread throughout the remainder of the property. Details of any plans for landscaping are not required for single-family development outside of the hillside area.

D. Tree Impacts

The development plans were reviewed by the Town Arborist who noted that there are no trees on the site that conflict with the proposed development (Exhibit 9). The Town Arborist identified two Chinese Pistache street trees located in the parking strip in front of the residence. These two street trees require protection during construction activities per the requirements of the Town Code. Arborist recommendations for tree protection have been included in the Conditions of Approval (Exhibit 3).

CEQA DETERMINATION:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Story poles and project signage were installed on the site by March 8, 2021, in anticipation of the March 24, 2021 Planning Commission hearing. Public comments received by 11:00 a.m.,

PUBLIC COMMENTS (continued):

Friday, March 19, 2021, are included as Exhibit 10. All comments were forwarded to the applicant upon receipt. The applicant's response to public comments is included as Exhibit 11.

CONCLUSION:

A. Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of an Architecture and Site application for demolition of an existing single-family residence and construction of a new a single-family residence. The project is in compliance with the objective standards of the Town Code related to size, height, setbacks, and on-site parking requirements. The project was reviewed by the Town's Consulting Architect who provided recommendations to address the consistency of the project with the Residential Design Guidelines. The applicant responded but did not incorporate design changes to the roof forms to address consistency with the Residential Design Guidelines. The project is consistent with the Zoning and General Plan Land Use designation for the property. The application was referred to the Planning Commission because the residence would be the largest in terms of square footage and FAR in the immediate neighborhood. The applicant has provided a Letter of Justification for the size of the residence indicating that the proposed residence size is intended to accommodate their needs (Exhibit 5) and highlighted several examples of residences in the neighborhood outside of the defined immediate neighborhood with sizes comparable to the proposed residence.

B. Recommendation

Based on the analysis above, staff recommends denial of the Architecture and Site application based on concerns related to size, neighborhood compatibility, and consistency with the Residential Design Guidelines, as discussed in this report.

C. Alternatives

Alternatively, the Commission can:

1. Approve the application by taking the following actions:
 - a. Make the finding that the proposed project is categorically exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction (Exhibit 2);
 - b. Make the findings as required by Section 29.10.09030(e) of the Town Code for the demolition of existing structures (Exhibit 2);

CONCLUSION (continued):

- c. Make the finding that the project complies with the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations) (Exhibit 2);
 - d. Make the finding required by the Town's Residential Design Guidelines that the project complies with the Residential Design Guidelines (Exhibit 2);
 - e. Make the considerations as required by Section 29.20.150 of the Town Code for granting approval of an Architecture and Site application (Exhibit 2); and
 - f. Approve Architecture and Site Application S-20-013 with the conditions contained in Exhibit 3 and the development plans in Exhibit 12.
2. Approve the application with additional and/or modified conditions; or
 3. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction.

EXHIBITS:

1. Location Map
2. Required Findings and Considerations
3. Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Project Description
5. Letter of Justification
6. Consulting Architect's Report, dated June 29, 2020
7. Applicant's response to the recommendations of the Consulting Architect
8. Neighborhood exhibit by staff
9. Town Arborist's Report, dated November 2, 2020
10. Public comments received by 11:00 a.m., Friday, March 19, 2021
11. Applicant's response to public comments
12. Development Plans