

Town of Los Gatos
110E Main St,
Los Gatos CA 95030
Attn: Planning

September 4th, 2024

16500 Marchmont Drive, Parcel #2
Project Description & Justification

Plancheck Comment 1(i) - Added to Description & Justification:

The home is a **single story residence**, complying with FAR, with an attached ADU Compliant with the Zoning Code and Guidelines (except as previously noted in this Justification). We have additionally responded to the Consulting Architect's comments and made some minor changes.

The rear-facing Balcony is 35 ft from the property line and, at a 5ft elevation above finished grade, is not a privacy issue. Neighbors have been supportive of the plans.

Planning:

The owners purchased the property six months ago and have completed an ULS under SB-9 rules.

The plan is for two of the co-owners to move into the existing home and raise their family there while developing the vacant lot for sale, so that they can afford Los Gatos house prices.

The original proposal was that the new home would comprise 2 separate dwelling units to comply with the Town Ordinance for SB-9 and be submitted for ministerial approval, to accelerate the process. We proceeded down that path, with a primary floor and a lower level basement and incorporated a forward-facing second story bonus room over the garage as the only "upstairs" room.

The SB-9 "objective design standards" posed one headache – a 25 ft front setback, which did not follow the neighborhood pattern of 15 ft setbacks along this section of Hilow as it transitions to Cardinal – which we decided to live with for expediency.

Once we completed the design concepts, we spoke to several neighbors – most significantly Todd and Kristin Harris next door at 159 Cardinal – and visited their home. To my surprise, the orientation of their rear yard entertaining area faces Hilow and their views would be interrupted by the planned second story bonus room over the garage.

Because this house will be for sale and the owners will be living next door, they were not wedded to the second story bonus room even though they like it as a feature. So we asked several neighbors whether they would prefer to see a second story window on the front

façade (with the house set back), or a single story façade (with the house shifted forward to match the neighborhood). The answer was a resounding “**Build a lower profile house with a setback matching the neighborhood pattern**”.

So we re-designed the home as a single story with a lower profile roof, giving a height reduction of 4ft, and were able to maintain the neighbors’ open field of view. We are now submitting for A&S approval of this project – requesting a reduced Hilow front-setback (of 16ft rather than 25ft) – conforming to the neighborhood pattern. The side setbacks for this narrow lot are proposed at 6 ft (rather than the standard 8ft), but this would be more than the 4 ft permissible setbacks for an SB-9 project. [Please look at Sheets SC1.0 and SC1.1 to consider Neighborhood Compatibility in terms of front and Side Setbacks. We believe that this home is compatible with the neighborhood as proposed.](#)

As this is a full A&S application, we recognize that we will have to extend frontage improvements across the property, which in an SB-9 application would not be required. But we really believe that this is a good compromise for all concerned (the Town, neighbors and the owners) – with the owners taking a significant gamble (both financial and in terms of time) that the Town will support their and the neighbors’ wishes.

We will show, in our presentation to the DRC, the SB-9 design that we had originally developed, and is our back-up plan if the Town does not like the plans we have submitted. We do believe that we have neighbor support for this approach and will be communicating with them more as we continue through the process.

The end result is that this project requests a single story, low profile single family home, with a basement. In addition it asks for what can be considered an ADU (or a small SB-9 second unit – to comply with the aspirations of the Town SB-9 Ordinance). As this is presented as an A&S Application, some street frontage improvements are proposed – although neighborhood opinions vary on this because some neighbors would prefer no street widening, so as to keep the street less conducive to speeding.

If there are any questions, please call me at (408)354-1833

Thank you



Tony Jeans