



Planning Department
Community Development Department, Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

September 14, 2021

**Re: The Brown Residence, 16010 Winterbrook Road
Project Description/ Letter of Justification**

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of Drew and Kari Brown and their growing family, I am pleased to present this new Architecture and Site application to the Town of Los Gatos. The proposed project includes the demolition of an existing two story house, attached garage and cottage along with the construction of a new two story home with an attached three car garage. This letter accompanies the submitted building plans and additional exhibits for the above referenced project, and contains descriptions of the property, the neighborhood, and how it complies with the Residential Development Standards.

EXISTING PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property is flag lot at the end of Winterbrook Road, and is currently in the unincorporated section of the County. The 0.95 acre property is currently accessed from a shared driveway that serves one other residence (16016 Winterbrook). The main residence is located at the top of the property, and there is a cottage/ADU below on the sloped portion. Both structures will be relocated* and/or demolished as part of this application, which triggers annexation into the Town.

The average slope of the site is 13%, half of which is relatively flat. The existing 2,856 sf home and 462 sf garage, built in 1995-1996, is located on the NE corner where the site is most level. The existing residence, which measures 29.5 ft in height, and the one story cottage are barely visible from Winterbrook Road. While there are several homes nearby, the property is relatively private and isolated. There are several mature trees on the property, including several coast live oaks.

*The Browns are speaking with one neighbor about moving the existing home onto their property. We have done some preliminary measurements to assure the house and verandas (minus the garage) will fit on the property, including height, FAR and setbacks.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The proposed 2 story residence will have 2,873 sq. ft. on the main floor and 2,590 on the second floor, for a total of 5,463 sq. ft. of living area. The 3 car attached garage is located on the north side and is 795 sq. ft in area. The total above ground area is 6,258 sq. ft. When the 400 sf garage allowance is factored in, the official Floor Area is 5,858 square feet. Additionally, there will be a 2,873 sq. ft. basement.

Since the property size exceeds 30,000 sf, the Hillside FAR is used. With the slope reduction, the net area is 34,760 sf, which equates to 6,000 sf. allowable floor area. This property is unique as it is

the only one in the immediate vicinity that falls under the Hillside rules. While the largest home on Winterbrook (16021) is slightly under 3,951 sf (4,400 when adding the garage). It is on a half acre lot and is completely visible from the street. Given the terrain, and with all of the proposed trees to be added, the subject property and proposed home will be barely visible from Winterbrook. This uniqueness needs to be taken into consideration when evaluating the size discrepancy with the neighboring homes. All of those homes are on standard urban lots, where this property was one of the original lots in the area. The actual FAR (13%) would be the lowest in the area.

The new home is located in the same general vicinity of the existing residence where the ground is most level. Upon entering through the gates, visitors will park below the house in one of 4 off-street spaces. A hammerhead-shaped firetruck turnaround has been provided onsite since the structure is more than 150 feet from the street. The driveway then continues around to the house and garage.

The exterior style is traditional farmhouse, with white horizontal siding, dark sashed windows and stone accents. A graceful entry porch, with large square columns, extends the width of the house and wraps around the right side, turning into a larger loggia for exterior entertaining. The lower roof is clad in a standing seam metal roof, evoking older country farmhouses, while the upper roof has composition shingles in a dark gray color.

The proposed house will be 28.5 feet tall. When compared to the existing home, which was not only one foot taller but also set two feet higher on the grade, the proposed house will actually be a full 3 feet lower overall. The upper most portions of the roof will be flattened off so that the pitched roofs can have reasonable slope- one that is appropriate for this style. The flat roof areas will provide an excellent location to mount PV solar panels- both great exposure and out of site.

LANDSCAPING AND SITE WORK

Preliminary Grading and Drainage plans were prepared by the civil engineering firm Hanna Brunetti. Earthwork quantities are as follows: 504 cubic yards of cut and fill are required for the driveway, parking and firetruck turnaround; 506 cubic yards are slated for landscape areas. The home is situated on a slight knoll, some grading is happening to lower the pad and reduce the impact of the home. Some of the landscape grading is at the backside of the house for access around the house, as well as for the pad of the future ADU. Site retaining walls at the driveway and parking areas have been terraced as a way to limit the heights to be less than 4 feet.

Preliminary landscape plans were prepared by Jason Bowman, LA, of California Horticulture. The plan shows the site layout with the entry walk and stairs, swimming pool, outdoor terraces, existing and new trees as well as planted areas. Ten protected trees are proposed to be removed, and include two Olive trees (#40,43), one Arbutus tree (#42), three Coast Live Oaks (#47,50,&57), two Valley Oaks (#46,50), a cherry tree (#37) and an Ash tree (#45). The Ash tree is being removed to make room for the future ADU.

A total of 49 new trees are shown to be planted as well as several hedges. The new trees are spaced along all of the property lines to provide privacy screening between neighbors. Ornamental varieties are planted near the house as well as the parking areas. Drought and deer tolerant plants are proposed- please refer to the landscape plans for more detail.

A future Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) has been shown on the site plans for future planning and reference purposes only and is not included in this application.

COMPLIANCE WITH RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

In addition to what was identified above, the proposed home specifically addresses the Residential Design Guidelines as follows:

SITE/ PLANNING:

- The new home has been sited exactly where the current house stands, so any changes to maintaining privacy with neighboring properties will be minimal (II.C.G2)
- The siting of the house reduces overall grading by utilizing the most level area
- Several existing trees have been preserved.
- The siting of the house reduces impact on visibility from the street. The house is set back from Winterbrook well over 100 feet.

HARMONY/COMPATIBILITY:

- Given the rural setting, this farmhouse style will be right at home. The all white home recalls many homes found locally, including the historic Thrash House on Los Gatos Blvd.

SCALE AND MASS:

- The two-story home using very simple forms, allowing the plentiful and deep verandas to be the real stars of the show. The two gables on the upper floor help frame the entry and break up the upper roof form. The majority of two story walls have been set back behind the lower floor rooms and/or covered porches.

EXTERIOR MATERIALS:

- All exterior materials will be chosen based on quality, durability, fire resistant and appropriateness in style.

ENERGY CONSERVATION:

- The house will employ high quality dual glazed, low E wood windows, ultra-high performance insulation packages and high efficiency mechanical systems for heating, cooling and domestic hot water.
- Covered porches will shade the major doors from the sun.
- The house is oriented to take full advantage of cross ventilation practices.
- Substantial amount of roof areas provide plenty of space for solar collectors
- The home will comply with the new 2019 REACH Codes

PRIVACY:

- The existing and new homes are in the same areas, so the changes will be minor. The existing home has three bedroom windows that face the rear. The new home has the same number of bedroom sized windows with the same orientation.
- The perimeter of the property will be lined with many trees and hedges that screen the house and exterior entertainment areas, providing privacy for all.

LANDSCAPING:

- All proposed landscaping shall comply with the Town's Landscaping Policies.
- Proposed drought tolerant plants and landscape materials have been chosen to enhance both the architecture and the natural setting of the property.
- While only a few trees will be removed under this permit, several trees have been added to the site. Many of these will provide privacy screening between neighbors.

GEOLOGICAL:

- There are no significant geological hazards that exist to prevent a safe and secure structure to be constructed on this site.

CONCLUSION

This house has been conceived from the beginning to be compatible with the rural setting. The size, mass, color and exterior style are in keeping with the intent of the Residential Design Guidelines, and more importantly this home fits in with the immediate neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary Kohlsaat", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Kohlsaat
Architect C19245