



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/12/2025

ITEM NO: 4

DATE: February 7, 2025  
TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director  
SUBJECT: Consider a Request for Approval to Demolish and Existing Single-Family Residence, Construct a New Single-Family Residence, and Site Improvements Requiring a Grading Permit on Property Zoned R-1:8. **Located at 14335 La Rinconada Drive, Parcel 1.** APN 409-14-046. Architecture and Site Application S-23-028. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303: New Construction. Property Owner/Applicant: MGKG Properties, LP. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider a request for approval to demolish an existing single-family residence, construct a new single-family residence, and site improvements requiring a grading permit on property zoned R-1:8, located at 14335 La Rinconada Drive, Parcel 1.

PROJECT DATA:

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential  
Zoning Designation: R-1:8, Single-Family Residential  
Applicable Plans and Standards: General Plan, Residential Design Guidelines  
Gross Parcel Size: 9,120 square feet

Surrounding Area:

	<b>Existing Land Use</b>	<b>General Plan</b>	<b>Zoning</b>
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: Erin M. Walters  
Senior Planner

Reviewed by: Planning Manager and Community Development Director

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SUBJECT: 14335 La Rinconada Drive – Parcel 1/S-23-028

DATE: February 7, 2025

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:

- The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, 15303: New Construction.
- As required by Section 29.10.09030 (e) of the Town Code for the demolition of an existing residence.
- The project meets the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations).
- The project complies with the Residential Design Guidelines for single-family residences not located in the hillside area.

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 subject 9,210-square foot lot is located on the west side of La Rinconada Drive approximately 260 feet from the intersection of Wedgewood Drive and La Rinconada Drive (Exhibit 1).

On September 13, 2022, the Development Review Committee approved a subdivision of one lot to two lots, a front lot and a rear flag lot. The subject lot is the front lot.

On February 28, 2024, the Los Gatos Historic Preservation Committee approved a request for the subject property to be removed from the Town's Historic Resources Inventory (Exhibit 4).

The applicant submitted an Architecture and Site application for the construction of a two-story single-family residence and associated site grading. The application has been forwarded to the Planning Commission based on concerns related to neighborhood compatibility, as the immediate neighborhood is predominately one-story.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A. Location and Surrounding Neighborhood

The subject property is 9,210 square feet, located on the west side of La Rinconada Drive approximately 260 feet from the intersection of Wedgewood Drive and La Rinconada Drive (Exhibit 1). The property has an existing 744-square foot one-story single-family residence with a detached 400-square foot garage. Single-family residential development surrounds the property with one- and two-story single-family residences.

B. Project Summary

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing residence, construct a two-story residence, and site improvements requiring a Grading Permit (Exhibit 5).

C. Zoning Compliance

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

DISCUSSION:

A. Architecture and Site Analysis

The applicant proposes construction of a new 2,805-square foot, two-story residence with an attached 703-square foot, two car garage with one tandem space. The height of the proposed residence is 25 feet, six inches, where a maximum of 30 feet is allowed.

A summary of the floor area for the proposed residence is included in the table below.

<b>Floor Area Summary</b>		
	<b>Proposed SF</b>	<b>Maximum Allowed SF</b>
<b>Main Residence</b>		
Second Floor	1,191	--
First Floor	1,614	--
<b>Total Countable</b>	<b>2,805</b>	<b>2,947</b>
Attached Garage	703	810

The applicant has provided a Project Description and a Letter of Justification summarizing the project (Exhibits 5 and 6), photographs of the existing site (Exhibit 7), a Materials and Color Board (Exhibit 8), and Development Plans (Exhibit 14).

B. Building Design

The proposed two-story farmhouse Craftsman style residence proposes the following materials: white horizontal Hardie board siding; white board and batten siding; black composition roof shingles; dark bronze metal standing seam roof at the front covered porch; wood window trim; wood porch posts; and a Craftsman style garage door (Exhibit 8). The upper floor of the residence includes the primary bedroom suite and two bedrooms. The lower floor of the residence includes a kitchen, dining room, living room, great room, additional bedroom suite, and the attached two-car garage with a tandem parking space. A covered patio is located off the rear elevation adjacent to the kitchen and great room.

The Town's Consulting Architect reviewed the proposed residence in September 2023 and noted that the neighborhood contains a predominance of one-story homes with a linear cluster of two-story residences at the end of La Rinconada Drive (Exhibit 9). The Consulting Architect noted that the Town's Residential Design Guidelines encourages that new homes in predominately one-story neighborhoods emulate the one-story height of their neighbors or accommodate the second floor within the main roof form, as is common with Craftsman Style homes. Section 2.3 of the Town's Residential Design Guidelines includes guidance for the accommodation of larger homes, as noted in the Consulting Architect's report.

The Consulting Architect made seven recommendations to bring the design into greater compliance with the Town's Residential Design Guidelines. In response to these recommendations, the applicant made modifications to the design of the residence, summarizing the changes in a written response (Exhibit 10). The Consulting Architect's issues and recommendations are provided below, followed by the applicant's response in *italics*.

Issues and Recommendations:

1. Replace second floor metal roof with shingles to match the adjacent roofs.
  - *The upper-level roof has been revised to be the same composition shingles as the adjacent roof. See Sheet A3.1 of Exhibit 14.*
2. Increase the size of the entry porch columns.
  - *The entry porch columns have been increased in size. See Sheet A3.1 of Exhibit 14.*
3. Ensure that the fencing details shown on the front elevation are carried consistently around all the property boundaries.
  - *The fence detail shown at the front elevation is to be used consistently at property boundaries. See Sheet A1 of Exhibit 14.*
4. Provide a second story floor projection at Bath 2 or work with staff to find alternative means of breaking up the two-story wall on the right-side façade to be consistent with

Residential Design Guideline 3.3.3. Alternatively, staff could request the applicant to revise the second-floor plan layout to provide a setback along the right-side façade.

- *Refer to the right-side elevation that incorporates a 2x wood “belly band” to break up the two-story wall. The second-floor bathroom and stairwell project from the bedroom wall, breaking up the second floor. See Sheet A3.1 of Exhibit 14.*

5. Add a traditional chimney to the fireplace to be consistent with the Residential Design Guideline 3.10.4.

- *The Town of Los Gatos reach Code(s) do not allow for wood burning or gas fireplace. The revised plan uses an electric fireplace appliance that extends into the interior space. The proposed exterior results in a build-out bay that will have a shed roof with an eave. See Sheet A3.1 of Exhibit 14.*

6. Eliminate the applied second floor roof gable on the left side elevation.

- *Please refer to the revised exterior elevations that incorporate a simple roof design, which is more consistent with the proposed architectural style.*

7. Add the proposed first floor roof element on the rear elevation.

- *The shed roof at the rear elevation has been shown. A rear porch roof has been included to further break up any wall massing.*

The applicant responded to the Consulting Architect’s issues and recommendations through design revisions with the exception of meeting the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 5 - Add a traditional chimney to the fireplace to be consistent with the Residential Design Guideline 3.10.4.
- Recommendation 6 – Eliminate the applied second floor roof gable from the left side elevation.

C. Neighborhood Compatibility

The subject front flag lot has a lot size of 9,210 square feet and the maximum allowable floor area is 2,947 square feet for the residence and 810 square feet for the garage. The maximum allowable FAR for the residence is 0.32. The table on the following page reflects the current conditions of the residences in the immediate neighborhood based on County records.

FAR Comparison – Immediate Neighborhood Analysis							
Address	Zoning	Residential SF	Garage SF	Total SF	Lot Area SF	Residential FAR	No. of Stories
14317 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	3,228	768	3,996	10,721	0.30	2
14301 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	640	0	640	11,683	0.05	1
14333 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	1,216	0	1,216	19,407	0.06	1
14345 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	1,359	440	1,799	11,079	0.12	1
14355 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	2,044	576	2,620	9,416	0.22	1
14294 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	2,363	748	3,111	9,147	0.26	2
14300 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	2,495	484	2,979	8,276	0.30	2
14314 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	2,367	491	2,858	7,840	0.30	2
14330 La Rinconada Dr. Parcel 1 (Front)	R-1:8	1,320	0	1,320	8,225	0.16	1
14330 La Rinconada Dr. Parcel 2 (Rear) - vacant	R-1:8	--	--	--	13,484	--	--
14334 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	1,280	0	1,280	21,280	0.06	1
14350 La Rinconada Dr.	R-1:8	1,752	316	2,068	8,100	0.22	1
14335 La Rinconada Dr. Parcel 2 (Rear) - vacant	R-1:8	--	--	--	9,094	--	--
<b>14335 La Rinconada Dr. Parcel 1 (Front) (E)</b>	<b>R-1:8</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1,144</b>	<b>9,210</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>14335 La Rinconada Dr. Parcel 1 (Front) (P)</b>	<b>R-1:8</b>	<b>2,805</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>3,503</b>	<b>9,210</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>2</b>
* Residential square footage includes the residence and detached accessory structures, except garages.							
** The total square footage numbers do not include below grade square footage.							

Four of the thirteen properties in the immediate neighborhood are developed with two-story residences and nine are single story residences.

The property sizes within the immediate neighborhood range from 7,840 square feet to 21,280 square feet. Based on Town and County records, the residences in the immediate neighborhood range in size from 640 square feet to 3,228 square feet. The FAR of the residences in the immediate neighborhood range from 0.06 to 0.30. The applicant is proposing a 2,805-square foot residence and a FAR of 0.30 on a 9,210-square foot parcel. The proposed residence would be tied for first largest FAR with three other residences in the immediate neighborhood. The proposed project would have the second largest floor area in the immediate neighborhood.

The vacant rear flag lot property at 14335 La Rinconada Drive has a pending Architecture and Site application and is under review by staff for a new two-story residence with an attached garage.

D. Tree Impacts

The Town's Consulting Arborist prepared a report for the site and made recommendations for the project (Exhibit 11). The project site, Parcel 1, contains five protected trees. Three protected trees are proposed to be removed due to the proposed location of the house and to accommodate the new driveway. Arborist recommendations for tree protection have been included in the Conditions of Approval (Exhibit 3).

E. Grading

The project includes site improvements with grading quantities exceeding 50 cubic yards, which requires approval of a Grading Permit. The Town's Parks and Public Works Engineering staff have included a condition of approval requiring submittal and evaluation of a Grading Permit in parallel with the required Building Permits (Exhibit 3).

F. CEQA Determination

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Story poles and signage were installed on the site and written notice was sent to property owners and tenants located within 300 feet of the subject property. At the time of drafting the report, no public comments have been received.

CONCLUSION:

A. Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of an Architecture and Site application for the demolition of an existing residence, construction of a new two-story single-family residence, and site work requiring a grading permit.

The project is consistent with the Zoning and General Plan Land Use designation for the property. The project is in compliance with the objective standards of the Town Code related to allowable floor area, setbacks, lot coverage, height, and on-site parking requirements.

The proposed residence would be tied for first largest FAR with three other residences in the immediate neighborhood. The proposed project would be the second largest floor area in the immediate neighborhood.

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 to the Consulting Architect's issues and recommendations through design revisions with the exception of meeting two recommendations.

The application has been forwarded to the Planning Commission based on concerns related to neighborhood compatibility, as the immediate neighborhood is predominately one-story, and the applicant has not met two of the Consulting Architect's recommendations.

The applicant provided a summary of neighborhood outreach (Exhibits 13). The applicant provided a Project Description and a Letter of Justification for the proposed two-story residence (Exhibits 4 and 5).

B. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider the request and, if merit is found with the proposed project, take the following steps to approve the Architecture and Site application:

1. Find 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 or Conversion of Small Structures (Exhibit 2);
2. Make the findings as required by Section 29.10.09030(e) of the Town Code for the demolition of existing structures (Exhibit 2);
3. Make the finding that the project complies with the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations) (Exhibit 2);
4. Make the finding that the project complies with the Residential Design Guidelines (Exhibit 2);
5. 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
6. Approve Architecture and Site application S-23-028 with the conditions contained in Exhibit 3 and the development plans in Exhibit 14.

C. Alternatives

Alternatively, the Commission can:

1. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction; or
2. Approve the application with additional and/or modified conditions; or
3. Deny the application.



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SUBJECT: 14335 La Rinconada Drive – Parcel 1/S-23-028

DATE: February 7, 2025

EXHIBITS:

1. Location Map
2. Required Findings and Considerations
3. Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Historic Preservation Committee Action Letter, February 28, 2024
5. Project Description
6. Letter of Justification
7. Site Photographs
8. Materials and Color Board
9. Consulting Architect's Report
10. Applicant's Response to Consulting Architect
11. Consulting Arborist's Report
12. Applicant's Response to Consulting Arborist
13. Applicant's Summary of Neighborhood Outreach
14. Development Plans

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