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TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PLANNING DIVISION

**Justification of Design (248 Jared Lane)**

**Based upon Planning Commission Meeting on 09/26/2018**

The latest Planning Commission Meeting had a general consensus that this site is hard to build on and a number of exceptions are required.

The driveway from Jared up to the house is required to safely access the site and has been approved by the Fire Department. At the September 26, 2018 meeting, the Planning Commission requested that we consider the following concerns:

- A. Footprint beyond the LRDA
- B. Overall massing
- C. West façade appears 3-story
- D. Front staircase appears prominent
- E. Cut, fill, and excavation
- F. Driveway retaining wall appearance
- G. Clarify tree inventory
- H. Larry Cannon's peer review concerns

Each topic listed above is discussed below.

- A. Footprint beyond the LRDA
- B. Overall massing
- C. West façade appears 3-story
- D. Front staircase appears prominent

In view of these listed above topics A, B, & C the Architect feels the importance to mitigate the massing and 3-story façade lies in the location of footprint whether it is within the LRDA or not. The revised project is designed in such way that the entire footprint is respectively within the LRDA with the exception of the garage, which slides beyond the LRDA by 875 square feet. This was done at the direction of the Planning Commission during the last meeting. Pulling the garage out from below the house helps to distribute the overall massing, which results in one story element in front with two levels behind it. The setting now is far away from the look of 3-story façade, particular the elevation facing the neighbors to the east. The West façade, garage entry, is mitigated in response to the massing consideration.

The staircase entry to the house at the mid-level and hi-level has been changed to rely on the garage roof as a walkway as delineated on A-2, A-3, and A-5. The staircase is better integrated

into the house as compared to the previously proposed curved one, which is in response to topic D.

Although the garage in the revised design is located outside of the LRDA, it was done in response to the direction received from the Planning Commission and results in the bulk of house being reduced architecturally. Sheet AS-2, shows about 28% house footprint (the garage) outside the LRDA compared with 11% found in the previous design. It is a tradeoff that 17% more area goes outside the LRDA on this design yet it achieves the goal of reduced massing & lower height to better blend into the site. When comparing the amenities (deck and porch) outside of the LRDA, the new design has 532 square feet (about 18%) outside of the LRDA where the previous design had about 27% outside of the LRDA. This will likely result in less disturbance of earth.

#### **E. Cut, fill, and excavation**

The new design reduces excavation by pulling the garage beyond the LRDA & eliminating crawl spaces under living areas, as shown below:

<u>Previous Design</u>	<u>Current Design</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Earth cut: 3276 CY	Earth cut: 2301 CY	Less cut: (3276)-(2301) = 975 CY
Earth Fills: 332 CY	Earth fills: 332 CY	Unchanged

#### **F. Driveway retaining wall appearance**

At the Planning Commission's request, we considered alternative materials to the proposed Allan block retaining wall at the driveway. Owner, engineer, and landscape designer now propose to pour concrete walls in-place and clad the above ground faces of the wall with a veneered durable man-made stone. The stone will be selected to blend with the surrounding environment for generations to come.

#### **G. Clarify tree inventory**

The Planning Commission noted that the proposed tree removal was difficult to understand. Several sheets in regard to tree conditions have been simplified for easy identification on engineering and landscape plans. Of particularly important, larger tabulated information on C4 & C5 each contains tagged trees with distinctive notations regarding conditions of each tree life that 81% oaks are to remain with proper protection during construction and merely 19% trees are to be removed. Graphically, sheets of L-1A & L1-B present roughly a scenario between trees canopies before & post construction; the skyline would be changed slightly.

#### **H. Larry Cannon's peer review concerns**

The previous house design indeed has greatly won the Larry Cannon's complimentary marks respectively in wall setbacks, cantilevers, materials changes, and articulated details that the

overall design objective has adhered to the HDS&G. A picture of the side view of a hillside house shown on page 37 of the HDS&G have features that are mimicked on our design, as pointed out by Mr. Cannon. It is my interpretation after pondering that Mr. Cannon reckons the design is well-taken care of except the garage entry view having the cascading appearance, a taboo in the HDS&G, which also reflected one of the concerns from Commissioners.

I would emphasize that Mr. Cannon's recent comments on our revised design show that the review of previous design is positive in terms of architectural style, substantial articulation, and visual richness. Mr. Cannon's review of the revised design concludes that it is less successful than the original design, having a boxy-look with applied attachments. Mr. Cannon makes several recommendations which have been incorporated into our design as shown in the revised elevations. What really leaves on the tables at present perhaps is dilemmas for all involved between previous design & current one that both have merits could be new topic discussed during the forthcoming meeting.

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