



ARCHITECTURE PLANNING URBAN DESIGN

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TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING DIVISION

V-18-002
U-17-077
S-17-042

November 14, 2017

Ms. Erin Walters
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

RE: 400 - 402 Blossom Hill Road

Dear Erin:

I reviewed the drawings and evaluated the site context. My comments and recommendations are as follows:

Neighborhood Context

The site is located immediately adjacent to Highway 17, and substantially below the level of Blossom Hill Road. A multi-family residential complex is adjacent to the north at the same level as this site, and a smaller multifamily complex is located to the east at a higher elevation. Photographs of the site and its surrounding context are shown on the following page.





The Site and existing office buildings



View down to existing office building on the site



Existing office building and adjacent multifamily structure



View from site up to multifamily residential structure above



View to EVA at adjacent multifamily site



View to adjacent multifamily site



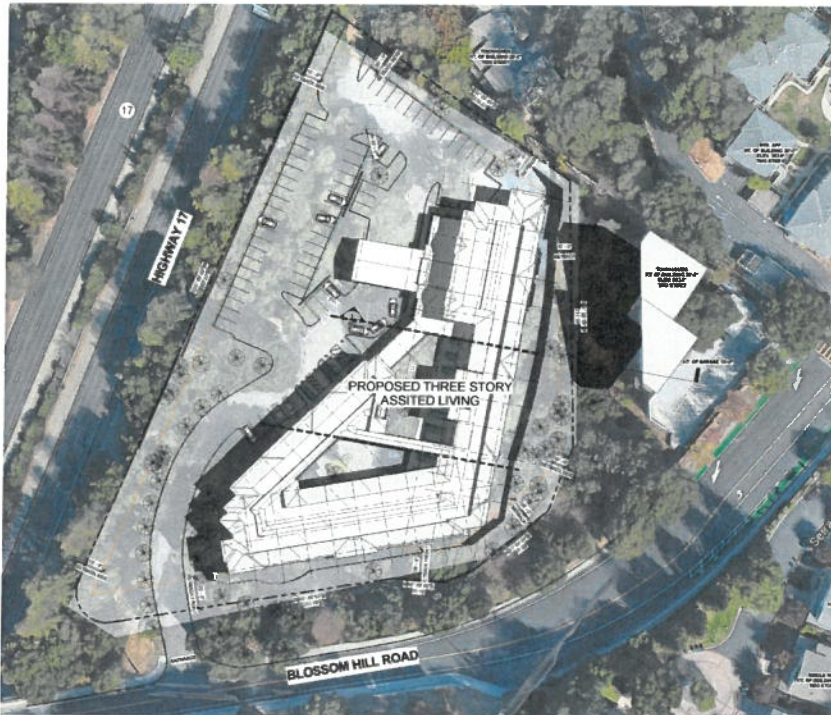
Highway 17 edge of the site



View between existing office building up to multifamily residential structure above

Concerns and Recommendations

The proposed new building would be sited at the eastern edge of the site a little closer to the property line than the existing buildings on the site - see the applicant-provided aerial photo site plan below.

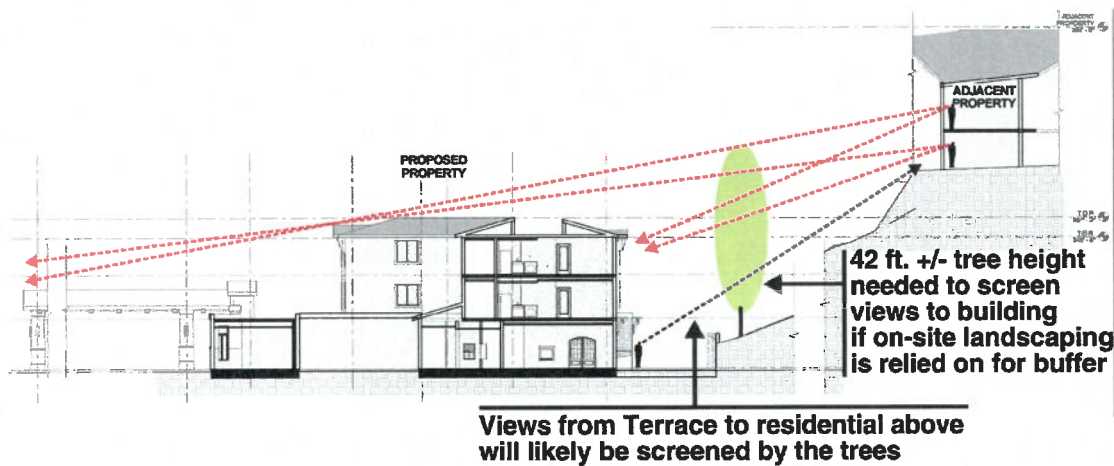


The proposed project would consist of one single structure to replace the two existing buildings, and it would be three-stories in height instead of the current two-stories. The issues that I would identify for staff's consideration are the following:

1. The construction of the new building would necessitate the removal of several large trees along the eastern boundary of the site - see illustration below.



I am unable to evaluate whether the remaining trees on the adjacent slope would be adequate to screen views to the new three-story building from the multifamily homes above. It appears that some limited new planting of California Buckeye trees is proposed along the eastern edge of the property, but it looks like three of the four trees are located outside of the site boundary. California Buckeyes have the potential to grow up to 20-40 feet in height, but I don't know how long that might take and whether the sloped hillside environment would be conducive to reaching their maximum height potential. If the existing trees on the adjacent parcel to the east are insufficient to screen views to the new building, trees on the project site would likely need to be in the 40-foot range to provide screening of the roof and mechanical equipment well of the new structure- see illustration below.



An additional caution would be to explore with the applicant's design team whether the roof-mounted mechanical equipment would have the potential for noise intrusion on the residential units above the site.

Recommendation: Explore these issues and potential mitigation measures with the applicant.

2. The roof overhangs appear small for a building of this height and scale.

Recommendation: Increase the roof overhangs.

3. The depth of the bay elements faced with stone is quite small for a building of this scale.



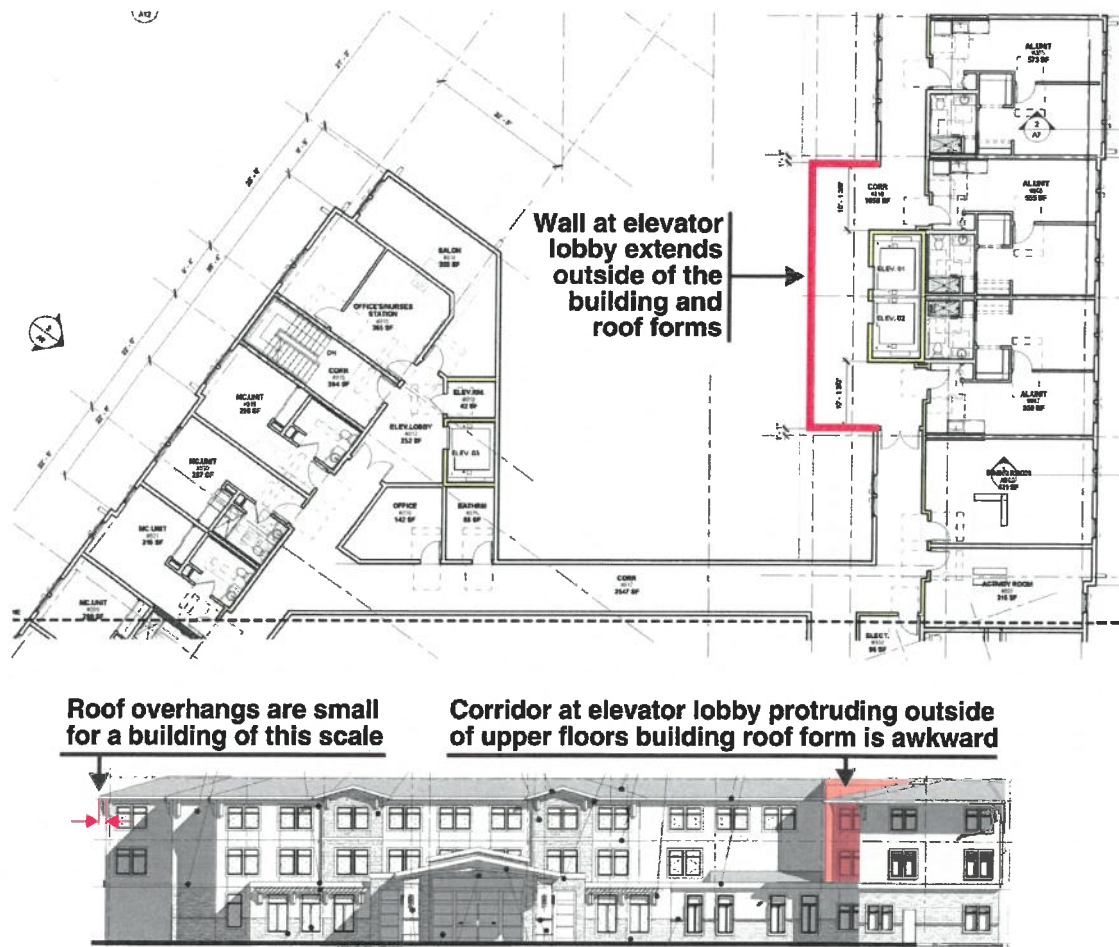
Recommendation: Substantially increase the depth of all of the bay pop outs.

4. The depth of the sidewalk and landscaping where guest rooms abut the sidewalk and parking lot does not appear deep enough to mitigate the privacy and headlight intrusions.

Note: The sketch on the previous page shows some minor landscaping below the windows, but the landscape plan does not show any landscaping along the sidewalk/parking lot edge.

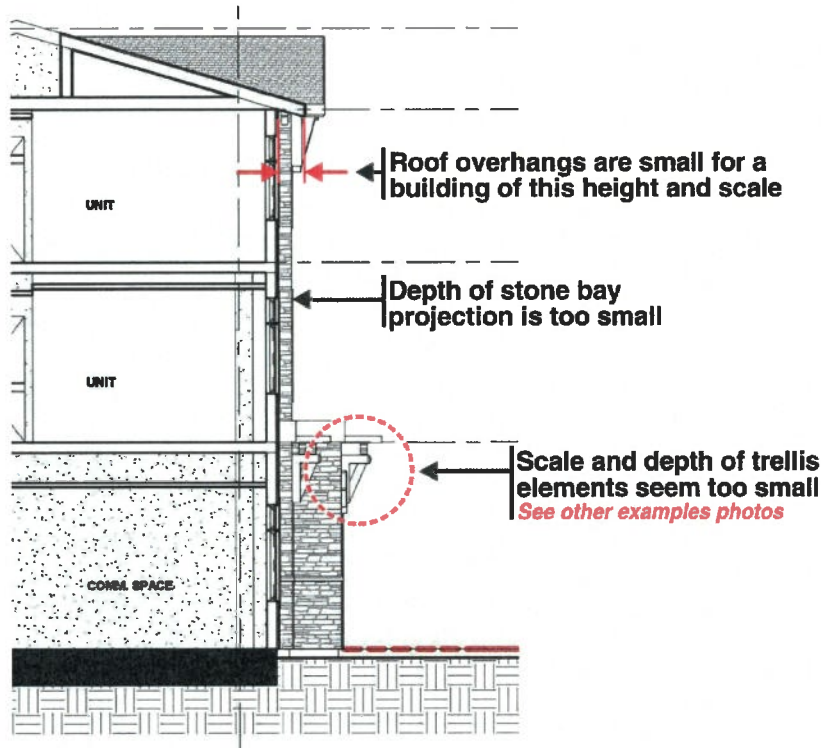
Recommendation: Explore alternatives to mitigate the privacy and light intrusion.

5. The location of the elevators necessitates a jog in the corridor on the upper levels which pushes a stucco box outside the building and roof forms. This condition is not consistent with the overall design of the building. The condition is created by the shallower building depth on upper floors from the east wall to the corridor than is provided on the first floor. Therefore, the corridors are not aligned vertically.



Recommendation: Revise the floor plans to keep the corridor within the overall building and roof forms. Alternatively, explore design alternatives to better integrate the corridor pop out into the character and design of the building.

6. The scale and depth of the applied trellis elements seem too small for a building of this scale.



Recommendation: Revise the design of the trellis elements - see two examples below



You specifically asked about the relationship of the new building to the two-story building on the adjacent property. The potential issues are views to the new three-story building and privacy intrusion views into the existing multifamily units windows and private open space. There is one set of bedroom windows and one single corridor window on the north facade at the second and third floors of the new building - see diagram on the next page.

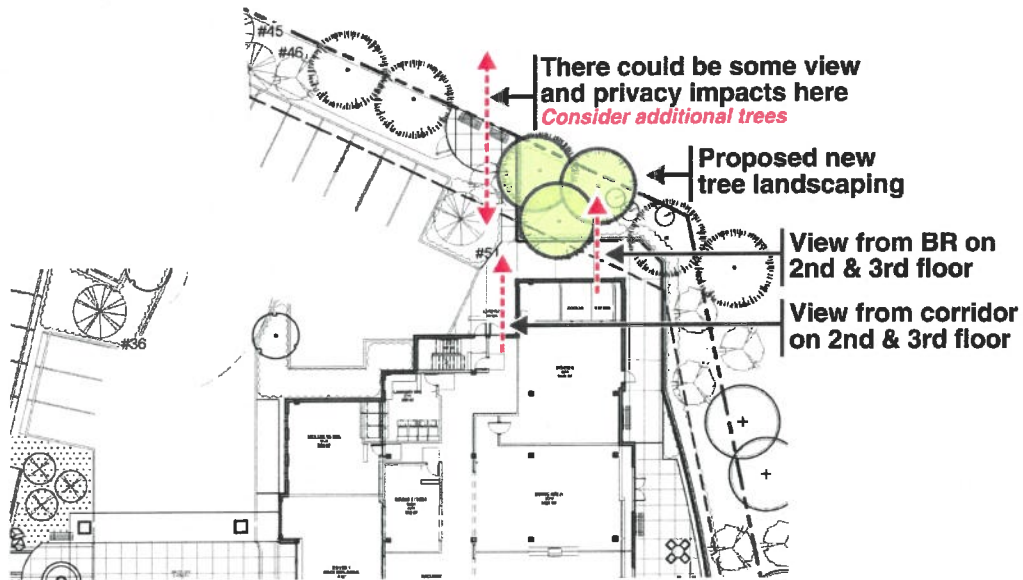
The landscape plan shows new trees at the north property line. The drawing key is not altogether clear, but it appears that there will be California Redwoods planted at the north end of the building. That should shield views to and from the new building at the bedroom windows. There appears, however, to be a gap in landscaping in the areas of the new outdoor seating area.



Adjacent residential at edge of parking lot



Adjacent residential at end of building



Recommendation: Consider adding additional trees.

Erin, please let me know if you have any questions, or if there are other issues that I did not address.

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP

Larry L. Cannon

