



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 14, 2021**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was conducted utilizing teleconferencing and electronic means consistent with State of California Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020, regarding the COVID19 pandemic and was conducted via Zoom. All planning commissioners and staff participated from remote locations and all voting was conducted via roll call vote.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Kathryn Janoff , Vice Chair Kendra Burch, Commissioner Jeffrey Barnett, Commissioner Melanie Hanssen, Commissioner Jeffrey Suzuki, Commissioner Reza Tavana, and Commissioner Emily Thomas

Absent: None.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES EREKSON

Chair Janoff

- Chair Janoff expressed the Planning Commission's sorrow at the passing of former Planning Commissioner Charles Erikson and extended condolences to his loved ones. Vice chair Burch and Commissioner Hanssen paid tribute to Mr. Erikson.

Tom O'Donnell, Former Planning Commissioner

- It was a pleasure to have known Charles Erikson and serve on the Planning Commission with him for seven years. He was among one of the best Planning Commissioners because he had the rare gift of wisdom. Mr. Erikson did a lot of good in his life and he will be missed.

Amy Erikson Varga (Mr. Erikson's daughter) and Sue Ellen Erikson (Mr. Erikson's wife)

- They deeply appreciate the Commission's tribute to their husband and father. Commissioner Erikson took great pleasure in serving the community as a Planning Commissioner and considered it a great honor.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT ITEMS (TO BE ACTED UPON BY A SINGLE MOTION)

1. Approval of Minutes – March 10, 2021

2. 16666 Topping Way

Architecture and Site Application S-19-044

APN 532-09-018

Property Owner/Applicant: Arthur Lin

Project Planner: Sean Mullin

Requesting approval for demolition of an existing single-family residence, construction of a new single-family residence, and site improvements requiring a Grading Permit on property zoned R-1:8. Continued from February 24, 2021.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Hanssen to approve adoption of the Consent Calendar. Seconded by Commissioner Barnett.**

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. 14300 Lora Drive

Architecture and Site Application S-20-019

APN 409-15-028

Applicant: Krislani Mulia

Property Owner: Amrito Chaube

Project Planner: Sally Zarnowitz

Requesting approval for demolition of an existing detached garage and construction of a new single-family residence on property zoned R-1:8.

Sally Zarnowitz, Planning Manager, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Amrito Chaube, Owner:

- The proposed project is designed to meet the needs of his multi-generational household. They began the process in late 2019 and have gone through reviews with Planning staff and the consulting architect. They shared project plans with the neighbors in 2020. A number of

improvements have been made per requests from the Commission and neighbors: overall height reduced by almost 4 feet; foundation reduced by 2 feet; reduced roof pitch; second floor stepbacks introduced; projecting roof element introduced; rear elevation stepback; interior volumes reduced; roof introduced to break the mass around the entire house; second floor redesign; change to the balcony railing; siting the house far from neighboring houses; architectural style changed from formal to informal; and increased tree screening.

Bahi Oreizy:

- She is an architect hired by neighbors of the project to review the project plans. The first issue is the ADU would now be in front of the main house, against the rules. Based on the owner's promise to convert the existing house into an ADU he is being allowed to build a second house on the same property. This is not fair to the neighbors who purchased their homes years ago believing they would move into a single-family residential neighborhood. This sets a bad precedent for future projects.

Hooman Bolandi, 14332 Mulberry Drive:

- They had thought when the subject site was developed someday that the house would be in the front of the lot and perhaps an ADU in the back, but not this reversed configuration with the main house towering over their back yard. The width of the proposed house is wider than his lot. There are many opportunities for the house to be moved forward, which would reduce the overall mass. They ask that the house be moved forward with the introduction of setbacks and stepbacks. The height reduction already made did not do enough to reduce the mass because the overall mass is so large.

Mike Martin, 17515 Wedgewood Avenue:

- He lives around the corner from the project site. The size of the proposed site is overwhelming even with the height reduction already done. The face of the home is what is so large and installing screening trees may help. There is ample opportunity to park cars on the property, but in his experience parking expands to fill up any space and then spills out onto the street, and Lora Drive is already bumper-to-bumper parking.

Joe Clark, 14298 Lora Drive:

- His lingering concern is the house is massive and looks nothing like its neighbors, and the square footage has increased since the last review. The proposed home looks like a commercial building in a quaint Los Gatos neighborhood. He appreciated the stepbacks they had asked for and were given, but they had asked for 10-12 feet and were given four. With minor modifications the project would have no impact on his property. He asked the second floor square footage be reduced.

Jeannie DaQuino, 14330 Mulberry Drive:

- The home doesn't fit with the feel of the neighborhood, is too tall, and would impede the neighbors' view of the sunset. The proposed house does not need to be set so far back on the lot, and there are too many unknowns as to what could happen with the home

someday. The house height should be lowered to blend in with the neighborhood and be a more aesthetically pleasing home to go with what the Town typically likes.

Jim Rose, 14307 Mulberry Drive:

- He lives behind and a little north of the subject property. The project would not affect his direct view, but he encouraged the applicant and Commissioners to consider the neighbors' privacy. Many of the privacy concerns could be mitigated by larger setbacks and fewer windows. His other concern was parking for the ADU due to Lora Drive's already bad parking issues, because it would affect multiple streets.

Mark Kuiper, 14301 Lora Drive:

- He lives immediately across the street from the subject site. He is delighted improvement is coming to this lot, but he was taken aback when he saw the plans for such a large house that is not what he considers single-family and does not fit into the neighborhood. The project is multi-generational, but what happens down the road? He hoped the finished project would complement the neighborhood and be an asset to real estate values.

Jaime Munoz, 14270 Lora Drive

- He lives two houses away from the subject site. He echoed earlier concerns regarding parking on Lora Drive, which is already out of control. The proposed house is out of scale and not in accordance with houses on their block and on Lora Drive in general. Since the lot is quite large, he proposed the upstairs floor be reduced and more square footage be built on the first floor.

Amrito Chaube, Owner:

- The height of the house has been reduced and the lot is very large. He intends to keep the ADU to add to the housing stock and ensure the façade looks nice from the street. They have a four-car garage and there is a large driveway, so there should be adequate parking for residents within the property itself. He has tried to reach out to most neighbors but is seeing feedback coming in at the last moment. The impact to the neighborhood is not as drastic as it is made out to be because the house would be setback 37 feet inside the property line from the street. He has done all that has been asked in redesigning the house's second floor, setbacks, and roofs. All his proposals are within the allowed limits.

Closed Public Comment.

Commissioners discussed the matter and provided comments and suggested changes.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Barnett** to approve an Architecture and Site Application for 14300 Lora Drive . **Seconded by Vice Chair Burch.**

Vice Chair Burch requested the motion be amended to include a condition of approval regarding location of exterior HVAC mechanical equipment which the applicant agreed to.

The Maker of the Motion accepted the amendment to the motion.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

OTHER BUSINESS

4. Discuss and provide input to the Town Council regarding the Planning Commission.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

5. Review and discuss the Land Use 101 Paper provided by the Town Attorney.

Robert Schultz, Town Attorney, provided a presentation.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Joel Paulson, Director of Community Development

- Town Council met April 6, 2021; nothing specific to Planning Commission actions was discussed.
- Town Council will meet April 20, 2021; will discuss two zone changes that the Planning Commission has reviewed.
- Staff and consultants met on April 14, 2021 to begin objective standards development and plan to release a Request for Proposals for the Housing Element Update.
- The General Plan Update Advisory Committee is close to the end of its process, but the General Plan will come before the Planning Commission who will make a recommendation to Town Council.
- He worked with Commissioner Erikson during his time on the Commission. Mr. Erikson was a great Commissioner and splendid person who was respectful to staff.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMISSION MATTERS

General Plan Update Advisory Committee

Commissioner Hanssen

- GPAC met April 1, 2021; discussed the Racial, Social, and Environmental Justice Element and received public comment; reviewed Introduction that contains the Vision and Guiding Principles and recommended tweaks.
- GPAC will have its penultimate meeting on April 15, 2021; will review the revised drafts of the Land Use and Community Design Elements.
- GPAC will have its final meeting on May 6, 2021; will review the entire draft of the General Plan and hopefully recommend approval which will come to the Planning Commission and then the Town Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the April 14, 2021 meeting as approved by the Planning Commission.

/s/ Vicki Blandin