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Momoko Ishijima
City of Sunnyvale Planning Division
456 West Olive Avenue
Sunnyvale Ca 94088

Proposed project at 568 South Frances St.
Taaffe Frances Heritage Housing District

After reviewing the plans to alter the residence at 568 South Frances, I have a few concerns with their compatibility within the Taaffe-Frances Heritage Housing District.

The home's architectural style is representative of only a few in the district that have a "flat" roof. Eliminating or altering it would reduce the number of this style to about three.

The addition of clay Terracotta "barrel" or "s" shaped red tile capping a low-pitched roof is certainly within the character of the neighborhood. Large overhanging eaves are not a characteristic of the Spanish eclectic style of the 1930's. Any consideration of approving a tile roof should include matching the existing homes on the street.

Perhaps raising the front exterior stucco "bedroom" wall façade to a point above the new proposed roof ridge line and eliminating the hip section of this area of the roof could maintain a portion of the "square" existing style of the home.

The Spanish style of the home with large expanses of stucco should remain though out the project including the front porch. Veneering the front porch wall of the house with stone seems like a fresh upgrade but might change the character of the façade again by yet another factor.

I think the front half wall should remain the same with a less subtle change such as capping the top of the wall with terracotta pavers or brick to match the proposed roof materials. If the stone veneer is approved, a material of the time period should be chosen and a reduction of the amount applied should be considered.

If there is a strong desire to introduce additional materials such as stone, there are other opportunities to do so such as planter boxes, walkways, the front porch, and steps that could enhance the property without changing the façade of the structure.

Also I would like to see the front windows replaced with a wooden window having a grid pattern typical of the time period and to match the new addition. If the "shutters" were changed, solid wood not louvered would be my preference.

I am also pleased that large heritage tree in the rear is remaining.

I believe a greater consideration should be given with regards to the many withering “garages” within the district that are far from meeting several of today’s building codes. I think that many of the separate structures are continuing to deteriorate as the one located on this site and will continue to do so because of the current standards. A review of current policies toward these structures is long overdue.

The majority of the homes in the Taaffe-Frances Heritage Housing District have their garages located in the rear of the property thus allowing for the enhancement of the architecture while de-emphasizing the automobile. This is a primary attribute to the district's character and needs to be addressed in a way that allows for restoring the buildings even if they don't meet today's standards. If not they will continue to deteriorate.

As a 33 year resident on Taaffe Street I am happy to see someone take an interest in improving and upgrading a home in the Heritage Housing District. The overall plans are fine with me. The change to the roofline would be a substantial change and more needs to be done to maintain the original attributes viewed from the street.

Joseph Nadalet
532 South Taaffe Street