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SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS REVIEW

and

SUNNYVALE TAAFFE-FRANCES DISTRICT POLICY REVIEW

for the

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL ALTERATION & REHABILITATION PROJECT

IN THE TAAFFE-FRANCES HERITAGE NEIGHBORHOOD

Samudra and Gupta Residence

559 S. Taaffe Street
(Parcel Number 209-29-043)
Sunnyvale (Santa Clara County) California

For:

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INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

This rehabilitation project proposes to alter a contributing property within a listed historic district. The design is compatible with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Rehabilitation Standards* (Standards) and with the *Taaffe-Frances Heritage Neighborhood Design Guidelines* (Guidelines). Because the project generally meets the Standards and Guidelines, the project can be found to be mitigated to a less-than-significant impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The analysis is described more fully in the report that follows.

Report Intent

Archives & Architecture was retained by the applicants to conduct an historic preservation design review of the proposed alterations to the exterior of the contributing historic resource, a one-story residence at 559 S. Taaffe St., Sunnyvale, California. Archives & Architecture was asked to review the exterior elevations, plans, and site plan of the project to determine if the proposed design is compatible with the *Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (Standards) and the City's *Taaffe-Frances Heritage Neighborhood Design Guidelines* (Guidelines). The Standards are understood to be a common set of guidelines for the review of historic buildings and are used by many communities during the environmental review process to determine the potential impact of a project on an identified resource. We understand that the goal of the applicant and the City is for the project to be compatible with the Standards and Guidelines, and, therefore, be mitigated to a "less than significant impact" on the environment under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and to be compliant with City policy. The City of Sunnyvale has a planning review process that is embodied in the Heritage Preservation Ordinance. For a project in a listed district, a project must be found to be compatible with the historic district resource standards.

It is understood that this report is intended to be submitted to the City of Sunnyvale with the project design as part of its Resource Alteration Permit process. An applicant is required to provide an historical evaluation report of the existing and proposed design. This is that report.

Qualifications

Leslie A. G. Dill, Partner of the firm Archives & Architecture, has a Master of Architecture with a certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Virginia. She is licensed in California as an architect. Ms. Dill is listed with the California Office of Historic Preservation as meeting the requirements to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the professions of Historic Architect and Architectural Historian in compliance with state and federal environmental laws. The state utilizes the criteria of the National Park Service as outlined in 36 CFR Part 61.

Review Methodology

For this report, Leslie Dill referred to the review process of the City of Sunnyvale Heritage Preservation Ordinance and the CEQA evaluation process.

The review starts by identifying the historical and architectural significance of the property. The property is within an historic resource district, the Taaffe-Frances neighborhood, in the City of Sunnyvale. The property is listed in City's Heritage Resource Inventory (Inventory) as a contributor to the district. During a previous application (2006-0996), the property was determined to be an Historic Resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). To understand the significance of the property, some additional basic evaluation services were performed, to clarify the role of the property within the larger neighborhood.

The second step is to understand the potential impact of the project on the property and the historic district. A set of proposed plans was forwarded to initiate the review process in mid-March 2018. Ms. Dill used photographs, online sources, and the previous project staff report, along with historic photos and other visual documentation to understand the character-defining features of the property and neighborhood. A&A provided initial minor design recommendations for revisions in the form of an email message to the owners and their architect. The design was subsequently revised and electronically forwarded for review April 9, 2018. A report was prepared, and the project was submitted. Comments were provided by the City, and the design was updated. This report is the final review of the revised project.

The report analyses the project's compatibility with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Sunnyvale Guidelines. For this report, A&A evaluated according to the Standards a revised set of drawing sheets A1 through A4 from the architect, Robert Mayer, dated 05/25/18, in pdf format.

Disclaimers

This report addresses the project plans in terms of historically compatible design of the exterior of the residence and its setting. The consultant has not undertaken and will not undertake an evaluation or report on the structural conditions or other related safety hazards that might or might not exist at the site and building, and will not review the proposed project for structural soundness or other safety concerns. The Consultant has not undertaken analysis of the site to evaluate the potential for subsurface resources.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY/HISTORIC RESOURCE

Character of the Existing Resource District

To review the design of the proposed rehabilitation and addition project, Archives & Architecture, LLC worked from the description of the historic district in the Inventory and from an in-house list of character-defining features, as well as from maps, aerials, and streetscapes of the neighborhood. There are eight characteristics of the neighborhood that are described in the Council Policy Statement on the Taaffe-Frances neighborhood. These include: Architectural style; Garages; Entries; Height; Streetscape; Fences; Building colors, and Setbacks. These are elaborated in the analysis section below. The general character of the district is described in the Inventory as follows:

Taaffe Street is lined with old magnolia trees, the only street of its kind in Sunnyvale. The small homes, all uniform in scale and setback, tend to date from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival and ranch houses are the predominant styles.

Further Description is found in the Guidelines introduction as follows:

The Taaffe-Frances neighborhood is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Sunnyvale. The neighborhood has a concentration of older homes in a rich and rare variety of interesting architectural styles which have generally retained their original architectural features...

The Taaffe-Frances neighborhood has a strong historic identity which is distinct from newer subdivisions in Sunnyvale. This neighborhood is oriented to the pedestrian rather than the automobile with generous parkway strips for shade trees buffering pedestrians from street traffic. Garages and cars are in back of the lot instead of

predominating the front yard area, and entries to the homes are oriented to the sidewalks rather than garage driveways. These characteristics create a pedestrian orientation which helps make this neighborhood unique.

The significance of the neighborhood is described as follows in the Inventory:

Taafe Street is quiet, shaded, and lined with small unpretentious homes. The large magnolia trees add a picturesque quality to the street and promote cohesiveness. In a growing town such as Sunnyvale, streets such as this have been over-run with traffic or engulfed by new development. The rarity of streets such as Taafe makes this streetscape important to Sunnyvale.

And in the Guidelines:

The Taafe-Frances neighborhood exemplifies a part of Sunnyvale's cultural, social, political and architectural history. The architectural styles and building scale of the neighborhood are a valuable reminder of the City's heritage.

Character of the Contributing Property

The primary character of the historic house is obtained from its early-twentieth-century design. A small mid-twentieth-century wing was added to the northeast. The house is a low, irregular volume with a central gable roof, a side buttress and rear archway, and multi-lite and 1-lite replacement windows. The texture of the stucco is a distinctive feature of the house. The property contributes to the neighborhood with its low, one-story main house, wide planting areas, side driveway, and rear detached garage.

Character-Defining Features:

The list of character-defining features of the house at 559 Taafe St., as it contributes to the heritage district, includes, but may not be limited to:

- Low one-story massing at a consistent setback in the neighborhood;
- Relatively steep central front gable and cross-gabled side gables;
- Front arched garden buttress;
- Rear arched buttress (added by suggestion of the City);
- Hipped-roof, angled bay window;
- Simple gutters and shallow eaves
- Heavyweight gable-end outlookers set behind flat-board bargeboards;
- Textured stucco siding with a "fan" pattern
- Detached rear garage;
- Ribbon driveway.

Alterations or added elements, appropriate for removal or further alteration, include:

- The northeast front wing with its steel casement focal windows and shed roof (it is possible that this wing altered a Mission-style side wing);
- The multi-lite-over-one-lite double-hung windows (it is assumed that the windows replaced original ones with a similar design);
- The front porch (was likely altered with the wing was added)
- The roofing material is not original or a character-defining feature.

Architectural Significance

Part of the design analysis process is to be sure that the standards are applied in keeping with the significance of the historic resource. The goal is to assure that the historic integrity of the property, the authentic associations with the past, are preserved.

The City of Sunnyvale indicates that the significance of a contributing property within a heritage district is of the third level of significance (19.96.065 (a) (3)). This suggests to Archives & Architecture that the impact of the project on the property and its individual features is subordinate to its impact on the district as a whole.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**Summary of the Proposed Project**

The proposed design consists of the general rehabilitation of the house, including interior alterations that are expressed on the exterior as minor modifications to the windows of the non-original wing and as modifications to the side exterior doors. The garage is proposed to be replaced on its existing footprint, possibly reusing some of the framing but none of the exterior materials.

The following is the Scope of Work as listed on the Cover Sheet of the project design as received:

1. Convert (E) office (unconditioned) into master bath and closet.
2. Replace large steel windows at office with two Marvin clad-wood hung windows to match (E).
3. Demolish existing legally non-conforming detached 2-car garage with flat roof and build a new detached 2-car garage in the same location and with the same floor plan dimensions but with a gable roof (variance required to replace existing flat roof) to match (E) residence.
4. Relocate door at master bedroom.
5. Relocate refrigerator and convert existing niche to counter with upper storage.
6. New pantry closet.
7. Replace vinyl window at dining room with Marvin clad wood single French door and concrete landing to driveway.
8. Replace vinyl window with Marvin clad wood single French door and concrete landing to rear yard.
9. Paint all wood fascia, window/door trim, dog-ear siding, etc. Sherwin-Williams SW 9018 honey bees or equal.
10. New concrete ribbon driveway up to new 6' tall x 11' wide wood privacy gate (10'-0" min. Clear opening) with concrete driveway beyond to garage.
11. Install CertainTeed Landmark TL asphalt composition roofing (color: aged bark) at both main residence and garage.

ANALYSIS**SECRETARY'S STANDARD'S REVIEW**

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Standards), originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990, include ten standards that present a recommended approach to repair, while preserving those portions or features that convey a resource's historical, cultural, or architectural values. Accordingly, Standards states that, "Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." Following is a summary of the review with a list of the Standards and associated analysis for this project:

1. **“A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.”**

Analysis: There is no change of use proposed for this residential property and, therefore, no change in the larger neighborhood.

2. **“The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.”**

Analysis: The forms and footprints of the main historic residence will be preserved. The main rooflines, low entrance stoop, and historic stucco siding and detailing will remain. The spatial relationship of the house with the streetscape—the setbacks, the entrance path, and the landscaped spaces—will be preserved.

Although the existing garage is proposed for replacement, the proposed design preserves the historic spatial relationship of the property and the rhythm of the placement of the neighborhood garages. The replacement garage preserves the side driveway and rear garage pattern in the area. The garage appears on Sanborn maps, has textured stucco siding, and features a central post within the garage door configuration, so it apparently includes original historic fabric; however, the significance of these specific features within the overall design of the property and neighborhood is minimal. The form and location of the garage can be included as character-defining features within the significance of the district, not its mixed siding or flat roof. The removal of the garage fabric, because it is proposed for a compatible replacement, is consistent with this Standard. See also Standard 9.

The removal of the two front steel casement windows does not seem to have an adverse impact at the level of significance of the property within the heritage district. The northeast wing of the house was not original to the property, and the large steel focal windows, although reasonably compatible with the historic design, are not original character-defining features of the overall composition, and not a feature common in the neighborhood. Their removal is compatible with this standard. See also Standard 9.

The horizontal slider window facing north is not original and not a character-defining feature, so its removal and replacement with a new door is compatible with this Standard. The proportion of window-to-wall is consistent with the overall composition of the design and the consistency of the design with the heritage district.

3. **“Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.”**

Analysis: No proposed elements are conjectural in association or would be mistaken for historic features. The design is adequately differentiated and does not include conjectural features or elements from other historic properties (See Standard 9).

4. **“Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.”**

Analysis: The small northeast wing (on the front) has not clearly acquired historic significance in its own right for its design; however, it may have been built during the identified period of development of the neighborhood. The small office wing was built after the 1943 Sanborn map was published and before about 1955, in the era of multi-lite steel focal windows. The period of significance of the heritage district is indicated to be “...in the 1920’s, 1930’s, and 1940’s...” It is the opinion of the consultant that the wing does not fit with significance into the overall design of the house or neighborhood, which is considerably more traditional residential in scale and materials. This analysis assumes that the alterations to the house at the front wing are not a significant character-defining feature of the property, and, as such, it is acceptable to propose compatible alterations, including the removal of the secondary front door and the replacement of the windows.

5. **“Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.”**

Analysis: Distinctive features and finishes that identify the property within the heritage district are generally shown as preserved on the proposed drawings. Specifically, this includes: the low one-story form; the footprint of the house and detached garage; the gabled rooflines, the shallow eaves, the fan-pattern stucco siding; the front arched buttress; the rear archway; the front bay window; the ribbon driveway; the wide planting strip, etc. (See also Standard 4)

6. **“Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.”**

Analysis: The current physical condition of the house appears visually to be very good, and the historic features are shown as generally preserved in the project drawings (see also Standards 2 and 5).

7. **“Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.”**

Analysis: No chemical or physical treatments are shown as proposed, or expected, in this project, other than preparation for painting.

8. **“Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.”**

Analysis: Archeological resources are not evaluated in this report.

9. **“New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the**

historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.”

Analysis: Most of the current exterior design is proposed for preservation. There are two proposed replacement windows, two proposed new doors, the removal of an existing, non-original front door, and a proposed replacement garage, as well as associated fencing and driveway gates.

The proposed detached garage is compatible yet differentiated from the historic main house. The garage is compatible in gabled roof form, overall size/footprint (it remains offset behind the main house); the stucco siding, and the window size and operation (double-hung and square accents). The detailing is differentiated by the lower roof pitch, creating a subordinate roof form behind the main house; the simpler 1-lite windows are differentiated from the multi-lite upper sash on the main house, but similar to the 1-lite lower sash. The garage doors are differentiated by their modern manufacturing and operation. The French door that opens into the back yard is differentiated from the historic house design and with its modern manufacturing and single lite.

The removal of the non-original slider windows on the north and south elevations, with proposed replacement French door, would not alter the overall proportions and scale of the historic main house. The French door style is differentiated from the historic detailing of the house, and consistent with the use of the glazed door on the new replacement garage. Because of the doors' sizes and locations, the overall proportions and composition of the altered façades would be compatible with the original design. The stoops are designed to be modest and subordinate to the historic forms and detailing of the house and neighborhood.

The two proposed new windows within the non-original northeast front wing are compatible in size, scale, and configuration with the historic composition, with only a slightly differentiated proportion of wall-to-window at this wing. The 1/1 style is differentiated from the multi-lite/1 replacement windows that are extant but match the original 1-lite bottom sash. The removal of the secondary/office side door at the front porch is discussed in Standard 4. The resultant wall design at the porch is compatible with the overall composition because the focus of the entrance will be on the actual front door.

10. **“New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”**

Analysis: The proposed design would preserve the essential form and integrity of the historic property. As noted in Standards 2 and 5, above, the critical character-defining features of the exterior of the house would be unimpaired in this project.

TAAFFE-FRANCES HERITAGE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES REVIEW

3.0 Design Principles Analysis

Design Principle A: The project preserves the prevailing neighborhood development patterns, including setbacks, garage placement, entry types, and front yard landscaping sympathetic to those found in the Taaffe-Frances neighborhood. Specifically: the setbacks are preserved in the proposed project—the proposed replacement garage is in the footprint of the historic garage; the garage remains in its historic location, offset and behind the

historic main house; the front entry remains raised on a low stoop at the center of the front façade, and the landscaping is not proposed for major alterations. The narrow street, wide parking strip, and historically significant street trees are shown preserved in this project. No front fencing is proposed for this project. A side fence with driveway gate is shown set back from the front façade, at the rear of the northeast side wing.

Design Principle B: The proposed design respects the scale, bulk (massing) and character of homes in the neighborhood. The primary residence is not proposed for alteration in massing or scale of materials. The main house will be preserved with a single story, and the proposed replacement garage will also be one story. The proposed alterations to the garage wing are in keeping with the height, massing, character, building and roof form, orientation and materials as outlined in the Guidelines. The overall paint scheme appears consistent with the neighborhood.

Design Principle C: This principle refers to new construction, such as additions or infill construction, so does not apply to this project.

Design Principle D: The visual impact of parking is minimized in this project. The garage is at the rear of the property, at its original footprint, commensurate with its historic location and similar to other rear detached garages in the area. The roofline, although altered to be gabled rather than flat, is kept low.

Design Principle E: The proposed home will have architectural integrity. The alterations are in keeping with the scale and materials of the historic design, providing a balanced and harmonious overall composition. The design vocabulary of the new construction is internally consistent, providing subtle differentiation from the historic fabric, providing design integrity within the new work, and allowing an understanding of the design changes over time.

Design Principle F: The proposed altered elements of the design utilize consistent and appropriate materials with regard to historic preservation principles.

Design Principle G: The maturity of the landscaping is not reviewed in this report, but the project is not extended into the front setbacks.

Analysis of Applicable Design Guidelines:

3.1.4: The design of the proposed replacement garage is consistent with the design of the historic house on the parcel, and with the larger Taaffe-Frances neighborhood. The garage is compatible, with the scale of the house and neighborhood in roof form, in eave depth, in window design, and in siding, and subordinate in roof pitch and roof height. The architectural style of the property is Minimal Traditional with Spanish Eclectic influences, and the garage is in keeping with that theme, but subtly differentiated per the Standards Review (Standard 9).

3.1.5: The proposed garage is not bulky with regard to the neighborhood massing. The windows are smaller squares in size and shape, compatible with the size and shape of half of the double-hung windows in the area. This report does not comment on privacy issues.

3.3.1: The main front entry does is not proposed for alteration. The front door entry remains at the center of the front façade, and the relatively narrow, curving front walkway

and low tile-covered stoop are preserved. The existing stoop will remain. The secondary (office) door is proposed for removal; because this wing is not identified as a character-defining feature, the alteration to the entrance area is in keeping with the intent of this Guideline.

3.3.2 and 3.3.3: These Guidelines require that a proposed alteration identically match the original historic fabric of a contributing residence in the neighborhood. Unless these Guidelines refers only to replacement-in-kind of damaged or worn elements, this Guideline conflicts with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, which requires that new additions and alterations be differentiated from the historic fabric. The proposed garage materials match, but the texture is proposed to be slightly differentiated from the historic house, in keeping with the Standards. The new windows are proposed to be also compatible in size and scale and wall-to-window proportion with the historic windows of the property and neighborhood, but subtly differentiated to illustrate clearly their recent history. The new windows are proposed to be similar to the historic house windows, but their slight differences prevent false historicism.

3.3.5: The proposed materials are authentic in the neighborhood. The proposed siding is stucco, common in the neighborhood and consistent with the historic main house. The windows of the original house have been replaced previously, and the new windows are proposed to match their materials.

CONCLUSION

The proposed alteration and rehabilitation project meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and generally meet the understood intent of the Taaffe-Frances Heritage Neighborhood Design Guidelines of the City of Sunnyvale. Any materials changes proposed to the historic resource can be found to have been mitigated to a less-than significant impact under CEQA.