



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 15-0306, Version: 1

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT

File #: 2015-7048

Location: 1601 Longspur Avenue (APN: 309-49-017)

Zoning: R-0 (Low-Density Residential)

Proposed Project: Related applications on a 6,634 square-foot site:

DESIGN REVIEW for a first-story addition of 551 square feet and new second story of 1,007 square feet to an existing one -story single-family home, resulting in 3,256 square feet (2,820 square feet living area and 436 square feet garage) and 49% floor area ratio.

Applicant / Owner: Ali's Construction and Remodeling (applicant) / Bijish Raveendran (owner)

Environmental Review: Class 1 Categorical Exemption

Project Planner: Timothy Maier, (408) 730-7257, tmaier@sunnyvale.ca.gov

REPORT IN BRIEF

General Plan: Residential Low Density

Zoning: R-0 (Low-Density Residential)

Existing Site Conditions: Single-Family Residence

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Single-Family Residence

South: Single-Family Residence

East: Single-Family Residence

West: Single-Family Residence

Issues: Neighborhood/architectural compatibility, including design, massing, and bulk

Staff Recommendation: Approve with conditions

Vicinity and noticing map-See Attachment 1

BACKGROUND

The existing single-story home was constructed in 1959 and is approximately 1,764 square feet in size (including a 487.5 square-foot garage) with a 26.6% Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

Description of Proposed Project

The applicant is requesting Design Review application approval to allow first and second floor additions, resulting in a home of approximately 3,256 square feet (with garage) and 49.1% floor area ratio (FAR). The existing living area of the home without garage is 1,284 square feet and the proposed living area without garage is 2,820 square feet.

The proposal includes interior and exterior modifications at the front and sides of the home. On the first story, the project would allow for a new entry; new living room; new bath and closet; remodeled dining room; and reconfigured two-car garage.

The project would also include the addition of a second story to include three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and laundry room.

Please see Attachment 2 for the Project Data Table.

Previous Actions on the Site

No record of previous actions exists for the site.

Design Review

This Design Review application is subject to Planning Commission review due to a requested FAR exceeding 45%. The Planning Commission may take into account the proposed architecture, existing neighborhood context, and adopted Single Family Home Design Techniques. The following analysis provides information for the Planning Commission's consideration.

ANALYSIS

Neighborhood Context

The existing streetscape and surrounding neighborhood is comprised predominantly of one-story homes, with ranch style architecture. Surrounding homes are primarily single-story, although a few homes feature second-story additions. Two single-story additions have recently been constructed in the neighborhood; the most recent second-story addition was permitted over ten years ago.

Architecture

The current architecture of the site is characterized as a ranch-style home, similar to that of other homes in the neighborhood. The home features large windows, but the front is dominated by a two-car garage. The façade is covered by stucco and paneling and includes wainscoting in a small portion near the entry.

Proposed modifications would result in a new covered entry, modified façade to include many large windows, and a new second story. The proposed alterations would replace existing wood siding with stucco, and would introduce a stone veneer wainscoting element extending across the width of the home at its base.

The first floor would increase by 551 square feet. The addition would bring the existing face of the home 15 feet closer to the curb, but it would still meet required setbacks (Attachment 5). Left and rear setbacks would remain unchanged. An unpermitted sunroom/patio cover would be removed

(Attachment 5).

The home's roof design would change significantly. A new gable roof would be constructed atop the proposed entry, and both the left- and right-side elevations would feature multiple hip roof elements to replace the existing gable design. A row of large windows and new transom windows would be placed on the front façade. Roof slopes would match the pitch of the existing home at 4:12.

Privacy

Proposed second-story windows located on the southerly and westerly side of the home present potential privacy impacts to adjacent properties. Staff finds the proposed design and arrangement of windows to be generally balanced and proportional, but recommends modification of south-facing second-story windows not required for egress be high-sill windows placed minimally 5 feet above finished floor. Staff has included a condition (PS-3) requiring these high-sill windows (Attachment 4).

Floor Area Ratio

The neighborhood is generally comprised of one-story homes with FARs of comparable properties ranging between approximately 26% and 43%.

Design Principle 2.2 of the City of Sunnyvale Single Family Home Design Techniques states, "Buildings should be sympathetic to the predominant building forms and scale of their neighborhoods, including but not limited to height, bulk, character, [and] building form." The Design Guidelines define "neighborhood" as "both block faces within the same and immediately adjacent block." As proposed, the Floor Area Ratio of the home would be 49.1%, similar to that of homes recently approved by the Planning Commission. Staff finds the requested Floor Area Ratio reasonable and not out of character with the neighborhood of the project site due to architectural techniques used.

The home was designed to expand living area while including architectural features to enhance the streetscape, and incorporating modest plate heights, shallow roof planes, and a floor plan which minimizes the appearance of increased scale. Although the proposed design incorporates an interior ceiling height of 10 feet on both the first and second floors, the home's maximum ridge height would be approximately 26 feet, 10 inches, compliant with City code..

Although there are few two story homes in the immediate neighborhood, the design is consistent with established recent precedent for similar neighborhoods and uses similar architectural forms, varied setbacks, and increased second floor setbacks, which reduce apparent bulk and mass. These features combine to offset impacts which may result from the increased size of the home and assist in providing greater compatibility with surrounding residences.

Second-Story to First-Story Size Ratio

The proposed second-story addition of approximately 1,007 square feet would be equivalent to 44.8% of the proposed first floor size. City of Sunnyvale Single Family Home Design Techniques recommend that, for new second stories in predominantly one-story neighborhoods, the second floor area not exceed 35% of the first floor area. Five homes within the neighborhood of the subject property feature second-story additions completed prior to adoption of the City's Design Review requirements; each consists of living space located above the garage, with each addition approximately 37% of the home's first floor.

With the home design proposed, second-floor setbacks exceed the required minimums, reducing the perception of bulk in the second floor, while articulation of wall planes, arrangement of roof elements,

and variation of materials help to minimize visible massing. The proposed second floor would be oriented toward the rear of the home and would be stepped back on all elevations, reducing its apparent bulk and maintaining aesthetic balance with the first story (Attachment 7).

Staff considers the proposed second-to-first-story ratio to be compatible with the design of the existing home and surrounding neighborhood. As conditioned, the proposed design would result in no significant privacy impacts to surrounding properties. The proposed second-story to first-story ratio is similar to that of homes recently approved by the Planning Commission (Attachment 7).

Solar Access

The applicant has submitted a solar access and shadow analysis (Attachment 5). The analysis indicates that the proposed second story does not shade more than 10% of the roof of either adjacent home and is therefore in compliance with solar access standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Class 1 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines. Class 1 Categorical Exemptions include minor modifications and additions to existing structures.

CONCLUSION

Findings and General Plan Goals: Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Design Review. Recommended Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment 3.

Conditions of Approval: Recommended Conditions of Approval are located in Attachment 4.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

PUBLIC CONTACT

As of the time of preparation of this staff report, staff has received one e-mail message of support regarding the proposed project. Staff has received no correspondence indicating concern or opposition to the proposed project.

Notice of Public Hearing:

- Posted on the site
- 65 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site
- Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board

Staff Report/Agenda:

- Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Web site
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Design Review with the Conditions in Attachment 4.
2. Approve the Design Review with modified conditions.
3. Deny the Design Review and provide direction to staff and the applicant wherein changes should be made.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend Alternative 1 to the Planning Commission: Approve the Design Review with the attached conditions.

Prepared by: Timothy Maier, Project Planner
Reviewed by: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner
Approved by: Trudi Ryan, Planning Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Recommended Findings
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Site and Architectural Plans
6. Correspondence of Support
7. Data Table of Approved Additions with High Second- to First-Story Ratios