



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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File #: 15-0574, Version: 1

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### REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

#### **SUBJECT**

**File #:** 2015-7201

**Location:** 1336 Cordilleras Avenue (APN: 323-08-059)

**Zoning:** R1

**Proposed Project:**

**DESIGN REVIEW:** To allow a new two-story single-family residence resulting in 3,877 square feet (3,462 square feet of living area and a 415 square-foot garage) and 40% FAR. The existing 1,685 square-foot one-story single-family home will be demolished.

**Applicant / Owner:** GP Residential Designs (applicant)/ William Schmoranc (owner)

**Environmental Review:** Categorical Exemption, Class 3

**Project Planner:** George Schroeder, (408) 730-7443, [gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov](mailto:gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov)

**General Plan:** Low Density Residential (0-7 du/ac)

**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 Compatibility, Floor Area Ratio

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve the Design Review with conditions

#### **BACKGROUND**

**Description of Proposed Project:** The applicant proposes to demolish an existing 1,685 square-foot one-story, single-family residence built in 1950 on a 9,633 square-foot lot and construct a new two-story, single-family residence. The proposed building size would total 3,877 square feet including a 415 square foot garage with a resulting floor area ratio (FAR) of 40%. A Design Review permit is required for construction of a new residence to evaluate compliance with development standards and with the Single Family Home Design Techniques. Planning Commission review is required for homes that exceed 3,600 gross square feet.

See Attachment 1 for a map of the vicinity and mailing area for notices and Attachment 2 for the Data Table of the project.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the California Environmental Quality Act provisions. Class 3 Categorical Exemptions include new construction or conversion of small structures.

## **DISCUSSION**

**Architecture:** The existing neighborhood is comprised mostly of one-story, single-family residences, which are Postwar Minimal and Ranch-style with simple rectilinear forms. A newer subdivision at the northern end of the neighborhood is designed in the Craftsman style. The existing neighborhood was developed in the early 1950s and the majority of the homes on Cordilleras Avenue have two-car garages. The project site is located on the east side and partially mid-block of Cordilleras Avenue. The proposed design is Mediterranean in nature that includes a clay tile roof with moderate pitches, stucco walls with a stone veneer along the base of the house, stucco window trims, aligned windows, a focal front yard bay window, and consistency between arch and rectilinear forms. See Attachment 3 for a rendering of the proposed residence from Cordilleras Avenue. The architectural style is the same as four of the five other two-story homes in the neighborhood. The location of the new two-car garage is essentially the same as the existing.

The 2,550 square-foot first floor consists of a two-car garage, two bedrooms and bathrooms, a kitchen, and family and dining rooms. The 1,327 square-foot second floor consists of three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a laundry room.

**Gross Floor Area/Floor Area Ratio:** A residential project with a gross floor area greater than 3,600 square feet requires review by the Planning Commission. Although the proposed 3,877 square feet of gross floor area requires Planning Commission review, the FAR of 40% is lower than the Planning Commission threshold of 45%. The neighborhood contains mostly one-story homes with five other two-story homes on the block. The gross floor area of the neighboring residences range from 1,471 to 4,010 square feet (15% to 43% FAR) with an average of 2,408 square feet (27% FAR). See Attachment 4 for a gross floor area comparison. The proposed gross floor area would make the home the third-largest on the block, behind 4,010 and 3,975 s.f. two-story homes built in 2005. The design uses measures to reduce the bulk and mass of the home through increased and varied setbacks, second floor wall offsets, a lower second floor plate height of eight feet, a cantilevered design at the rear and roof forms to break up two-story tall walls, and a de-emphasized garage with a setback behind the living area and divided garage doors.

**Second Floor Area:** The City's Single Family Design Techniques suggest a second floor massing of up to 35% of the first floor when a neighborhood is predominantly single-story. The neighborhood (properties identified in Attachment 1) is composed mostly of one-story homes, with the exception of five other two-story homes. All other two-story homes in the neighborhood have second to first floor ratios greater than 35%.

The proposed project includes a second floor area of 1,327 square feet, which constitutes approximately 52% of the 2,550 square-foot first floor area, including the garage. The size of the proposed second floor is substantially consistent with the 1,214 square-foot average of other two-

story homes in the neighborhood as well as the neighborhood second to first floor ratio average of 50%. The larger lot size of the project site also helps to minimize visual impacts. Moreover, three other two-story homes in the neighborhood with second to first floor ratios greater than 35% were built after the Single-Family Design Techniques were adopted in 2003. See below for a data table on the existing two-story homes in the neighborhood:

Address	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor (s.f.)	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor (s.f.)	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Ratio	Year Built
1312 Cordilleras	1,014	2,306	44%	1998
1349 Cordilleras	1,307	2,699	48%	2005
1361 Cordilleras	890 (approx.)	2,180 (approx.)	41% (approx.)	1950 original; 2 <sup>nd</sup> st. unknown
1372 Cordilleras	1,253	2,357	53%	2010
1397 Cordilleras	1,606	2,434	66%	2005
<b>Averages</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>2,395</b>	<b>50%</b>	

Staff considers the proposed second to first floor ratio to be compatible with the pattern of other two-story homes in the neighborhood. The proposed second to first floor ratio is also similar to other recently approved two-story homes in the City.

**Privacy:** Second-story windows may present potential privacy impacts to adjacent properties. The project proposes four windows on the second floor rear elevation (master bedroom and bathroom), a window on the second floor left elevation (stairway landing), and two windows on the second floor right elevation (master bathroom and laundry room).

Staff finds privacy impacts to be negligible with the privacy tree plantings in the rear yard and significant second floor side yard setbacks with a minimal amount of windows in low-traffic rooms. The applicant is proposing to plant six Aleppo Pine trees in the rear yard to screen views from rear yard-facing second floor egress windows with low-window sill heights. The second floor window on the left side is at the stair landing and is setback more than double the required distance. The master bathroom and laundry room second floor windows on the right side are also setback more than the required distance. If the Planning Commission finds that privacy is an impact, the right and left side windows may be modified to have obscured glass and/or window sills at least five feet above the finish floor.

**Solar Access:** The Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Section 19.56.020 states that no permit may be issued for any construction which would interfere with solar access by shading more than 10% of the roof of any structure on a nearby property. The proposed second story is situated toward the rear and right side of the home to minimize shadowing on the adjacent north and south properties. The project plans demonstrate shading would not exceed the maximum level permitted, thereby complying with current solar access standards.

**Landscaping:** The project is subject to the City's water-efficient landscaping requirements (Chapter 19.37 of the SMC) if more than 1,000 square feet of landscaping is new or modified. At this time, the applicant does not propose to modify more than 1,000 square feet of existing landscaping, but will be

subject to the requirements if significant changes to landscaping are proposed (Condition BP-5). There is an existing protected 30-inch diameter tree in the front yard that will be retained. No trees are proposed for removal.

**Applicable Design Guidelines and Policy Documents:** The proposed home is consistent with the adopted Single-Family Design Techniques since the proposed design incorporates prevailing Mediterranean-style design elements from the other two-story homes in the neighborhood, is consistent with the size of other two-story homes in the neighborhood, uses measures to visually reduce mass and bulk, and positively adds to the streetscape. Staff has included findings for the Single-Family Design Techniques in Attachment 5.

**Development Standards:** The proposed project complies with the applicable Development Standards as set forth in the Sunnyvale Municipal Code, such as lot coverage, parking, height and setbacks.

**Fiscal Impact:** No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

#### **Notice of Public Hearing, Staff Report and Agenda**

- Published in the *Sun* newspaper
- Posted on the site
- 63 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site
- Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library
- Agenda Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board

**Public Contact:** Staff has not received any public correspondence at the time of writing of this report.

#### **Conclusion**

Findings and General Plan Goals: Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Design Review and the Recommended Conditions of Approval (Attachment 6). Recommended Findings are located in Attachment 5.

#### **Alternatives**

1. Approve the Design Review with the conditions in Attachment 6.
2. Approve the Design Review with modified conditions.
3. Deny the Design Review and provide direction to staff and the applicant where changes should be made.

#### **Recommendation**

Recommend Alternative 1 in accordance with the Findings in Attachment 5 and Conditions of Approval in Attachment 6.

Prepared by: George Schroeder, Associate Planner

Approved by: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Project Rendering
4. Gross Floor Area Comparison
5. Recommended Findings
6. Recommended Conditions of Approval
7. Site and Architectural Plans