



# City of Sunnyvale

## Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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File #: 18-0524, Version: 1

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### REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

#### SUBJECT

**Proposed Project:** Related applications on a 0.27-acre site:

**DESIGN REVIEW:** To allow construction of a new two-story house resulting in 4,342 sq. ft. (3,849 square feet living area and 493 square feet garage) and 37.5% floor area ratio (FAR).

The proposal also includes a new 694-square foot attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

**Location:** 1325 Elsona Court (APNs: 320-08-031)

**File #:** 2018-7139

**Zoning:** R-1 (Low Density Residential)

**Applicant / Owner:** Perspective Design Inc. (applicant) / Kiran S and Ritu Panesar (owner)

**Environmental Review:** A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions. Class 3(a) Categorical Exemptions includes construction of one-single family residence in a residential zoning district.

**Project Planner:** Kelly Cha, (408) 730-7408, kcha@sunnyvale.ca.gov

#### REPORT IN BRIEF

**General Plan:** Low Density Residential

**Existing Site Conditions:** Vacant

#### **Surrounding Land Uses**

**North:** Two-story Single-family Residence (across West Fremont Avenue)

**South:** One-story Single-family Residence

**East:** Two-story Single-family Residence

**West:** Two-story Single-family Residence

**Issues:** Neighborhood Compatibility, Compliance with Single Family Home Design Techniques

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve the Design Review with the Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.

#### BACKGROUND

**Description of Proposed Project:** The project site is 0.27 acres in size and is currently vacant. The previous two-story single-family residence on the project site was damaged due to a fire in April 2017, and the rest of the residence was completely demolished in January 2018 with a Demolition Building Permit 2017-5328.

The applicant requests to construct a new two-story single-family home resulting in 4,342 square feet and 37.5% floor area ratio (FAR). In addition, the applicant also requests a new 694-square foot attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) that is incorporated into the ground floor of the main residence.

This project requires Planning Commission review because the proposed gross floor area exceeds 3,600 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.

**Previous Actions on the Site:** The project site was created as part of a larger subdivision in 1976 (Planning Permit #1976-0609). This lot was created with a substandard lot width through a Variance. Other than a tree removal permit in October 2017 (Planning Permit #2017-7893), there are no other previous Planning applications or active neighborhood preservation complaints for this property.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) provisions. Class 3(a) Categorical Exemptions includes construction of one-single family residence in a residential zoning district.

### **DISCUSSION**

**Architecture and Site Layout:** The proposed project is a two-story single-family home, and has a modernized but similar architectural style as other homes in the immediate vicinity. The proposed project has a mix of hipped and flat roofs breaking up the mass of the two-story home, and intends to use charcoal grey metal roofing material. The proposed project includes light grey stucco walls with accented wood sidings, which help breaking up the height and mass of the home by adding texture.

The proposed front setback for the first floor is approximately 37.5 feet, where a minimum of 20 feet is required. The second floor is set back an additional 10 feet in the front. The greater setbacks help minimizing visual impacts from the scale and the mass proposed with the two-story home.

Additionally, the proposed two-story home has a straight, north-south orientation, whereas the proposed garage attached to the new home is angled to face the street and to utilize the existing curb cut on the project site. The garage facing the street is the prevailing pattern in the neighborhood and, therefore, makes the proposed project compatible with the neighborhood. The angled garage also breaks up the mass and adds articulations to the front façade, minimizing visual impacts.

**Floor Area and Floor Area Ratio:** A single-family home proposing a gross floor area greater than 3,600 square feet requires Planning Commission review. The proposed project has a gross floor of 4,342 square feet, not including the proposed accessory dwelling unit (ADU), and it would be the largest house in the immediate vicinity. The next largest home in the neighborhood would be 3,984 square feet at 1349 Elsona Court. The existing gross floor area in the neighborhood ranges from 2,311 square feet to 3,984 square feet, with an average of 3,129 square feet.

Although the proposed project exceeds 3,600 square feet, it is on the third largest lot in the area, and the proposed project's FAR is well below 45%. The mass and bulk of the home is consistent with other two-story homes found on the other large lots in the immediate vicinity. The proposed architectural style, larger setbacks, a well-articulated building façade and a combination of high quality materials help in minimizing the visual impact of the proposed project.

The proposed second floor to first floor ratio is 59%. However, the residential neighborhood in the immediate vicinity consists predominantly of two-story single-family homes, as shown in Attachment 6. Therefore, the 35% second floor to first floor ratio stated in the Single-Family Home Design Techniques does not apply for the proposed project.

**Height:** The proposed project has a 10-foot plate height for the first-story and 9-foot plate height for

the second story. The total height of the structure (measured from top of curb to top of ridge) is 29 feet and 2 inches. As shown in the Project Data Table in Attachment 2, the proposed project provides setbacks more than the required minimum. The front setback of approximately 37.5 feet, which is almost double the minimum required, alleviates impacts from the overall height and from the floor plate height. The articulation in the front façade, along with the different building materials proposed, would minimize the visual impacts and help reducing the scale of the proposed two-story home. Also, the proposed project's height is consistent with and not much taller than other two-story homes in the neighborhood.

**Development Standards:** The proposed project complies with the applicable development standards as set forth in Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC). The Project Data Table for the proposed project can be found in Attachment 2.

**Solar Access:** 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 solar analyses for the project illustrates that the proposed project covers approximately 2% of the neighboring property's roof, and it also does not interfere with the solar panels on the neighboring property from collecting solar energy.

**Landscaping Plan:** The proposed project includes landscape plan, which includes preservation of existing trees on the project site and adding planting and trees. As conditioned, the landscaping and irrigation plans need to comply with the City's Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance set forth in SMC Chapter 19.37.

**Applicable Design Guidelines:** The proposed home is consistent with the adopted Single-Family Home Design Techniques. The recommended Findings can be found in Attachment 3.

**Accessory Dwelling Unit:** The proposed project includes a new 694-square foot attached ADU on the east side of the new home. The proposed ADU complies with the requirements and regulations set forth in SMC Section 19.68.040.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **PUBLIC CONTACT**

As of the date of staff report preparation, staff has received no comments from the public.

### **Notice of Public Hearing:**

- Published in the *Sun* newspaper
- Posted on the site
- 37 notices mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the project site

### **Staff Report:**

- Posted on the City's website
- Provided at the Reference Section of the City's Public Library

### **Agenda:**

- Posted on the City's website
- Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Approve the Design Review with the Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.
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 to approve the Design Review in accordance with the Findings in Attachment 3 and Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4.

Prepared by: Kelly Cha, Associate Planner

Approved by: Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Site, Vicinity and Public Notice Mailing Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Recommended Findings
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Site and Architectural Plans
6. Neighborhood Comparison Table