



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 21-0862, Version: 1

REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT-

Proposed Project:

DESIGN REVIEW for a new two-story single-family residence with 4,257 square feet gross floor area (3,815 square feet living area and 442 square foot garage) and 43.6% Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

Location: 575 Crawford Drive (APN: 201-34-010)

File #: 2020-7579

Zoning: R-0

Applicant / Owner: Deng Design Studio (applicant) / Chaolin Chiang (owner)

Environmental Review: A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from the CEQA provisions.

Project Planner: Aastha Vashist, (408) 730-7458, avashist@sunnyvale.ca.gov

REPORT IN BRIEF

General Plan: Low Density Residential

Existing Site Conditions: One-story Single-Family Residence

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Two-story single-family residence

South: One and two-story single-family residences across Crawford Drive

East: One-story single-family residence

West: One-story single-family residence

Issues: Neighborhood compatibility and compliance with Single Family Home Design Techniques

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Design Review with recommended conditions in Attachment 4.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposed Project

The applicant proposes demolition of the existing one-story single-family residence and construction of a new two-story single-family residence with 4,257 square feet gross floor area and 43.6% FAR on a 9,750 square-foot interior lot.

A Design Review is required for new single-family residences for evaluating compliance with the development standards and the City's Single-Family Home Design Techniques. Planning Commission review is required for homes exceeding 3,600 square feet floor area or 45% FAR.

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

A Tree Removal Permit (2020-7139) was approved for the removal of two protected trees (a Fir and a Maple tree) on the site due to declining health and conflict with the proposed new house layout. The City Arborist verified that the trees had decayed roots and limbs. Two 24" box replacement trees will be planted after the demolition of the existing house (See Attachment 4, Condition GC-6). There are no other previous planning applications or active neighborhood preservation complaints for the property.

EXISTING POLICY

The City's Design Guidelines as noted in the Single-Family Home Design Techniques provide recommendations for site layout, architecture, and design. These guidelines are referenced in the discussion and analysis below. Refer to Attachment 3 for the required findings regarding Design Review.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

A Class 3 Categorical Exemption (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301) relieves this project from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act that covers construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures. A new single-family residence is covered by this exemption.

DISCUSSION

Architecture and Site Design

The subject property is located within a residential neighborhood, which is generally located between Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road and Hollenbeck Avenue, and south of El Camino Real. The immediate neighborhood has a mix of one and two-story single-family residences.

The proposed two-story home has characteristics associated with Modern-style architecture including an emphasis on rectangular forms and horizontal lines, low pitched roofs with overhangs, simple details, and strategic use of materials for visual interest and texture. The articulation of the building forms with a variety of finishes creates an attractive front elevation. The building materials will include a combination of stucco, stone veneer, and wood siding, asphalt shingled roofing, and composite windows that are recessed two inches from the wall face. All exterior material and finishes work together as a palette of grey and beige colors.

The design includes a two-story stone veneer-clad wall for the staircase adjacent to the entry porch. The applicant proposed two porch canopy options, including one with a wide, extended porch canopy (see page 2 of Attachment 5) and one with a narrow canopy (see page 3 of Attachment 5). Staff recommends the wider porch canopy. This will help in providing a visual break to the two-story wall and minimizing the visual building mass along the front façade (See Attachment 4, Condition PS-1 (b)).

As conditioned, staff finds the proposed design to be aesthetically pleasing and will enhance the existing streetscape of the neighborhood.

Refer to Attachment 5 for architectural and site plans. No protected trees are proposed to be removed as part of this application.

Floor Area and Floor Area Ratios

A single-family residential project with a gross floor area greater than 3,600 square feet requires review by the Planning Commission. The existing floor area in the neighborhood ranges from 1,440 square feet to 4,194 square feet (15% to 43% FAR) with an average of 2,601 square feet area (26% FAR). See Attachment 6 for a neighborhood comparison of gross floor area and floor area ratio.

The proposed 4,257 square feet gross floor area will be the largest in the neighborhood. However, the new home has mass and bulk similar to the existing two-story homes within the immediate neighborhood. The well-articulated building facade with offsets and high-quality decorative elements further helps in minimizing the potential visual impact. The proposed design also includes a 285 square foot double-height area with a ceiling height over 15 feet, which is counted twice in the floor area calculation.

Since this neighborhood consists of several two-story homes and is not predominately one-story, the 35% second floor to first-floor ratio design guideline is not applicable.

Solar Access

SMC 19.56.020 states that no permit may be issued for any construction that would interfere with solar access by shading more than 10% of the roof of any structure on a nearby property. The project plans demonstrate that the shading would comply with this requirement (shades 8.2% of the roof area of the adjacent home at 9:00 a.m. on December 21st).

Neighborhood Impacts and Compatibility

The surrounding neighborhood is an eclectic mix of densities and house styles. It contains single-family homes and duplexes, including one and two-story structures. The proposed project is consistent with the common site layout, density, and character of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood also has a mix of architectural styles. Staff finds the proposed Modern architecture to be compatible with the neighborhood and the existing streetscape. The proposed home, with an overall height of 28 feet, has compatible mass, scale, and heights as the surrounding two-story homes including 591 Crawford (29'-3" height), 595 Crawford (30' height), and 576 Crawford (29' height). The use of roof segments, wall offsets, and materials further helps in minimizing the visual bulk of the proposed house.

The proposed home exceeds the minimum required side and rear yard setbacks from the neighboring properties, which helps to reduce impacts to neighbors. The second-floor windows facing the neighboring properties (except those required for egress) will have high sills to minimize the privacy impacts of the neighbors (Attachment 4, Condition PS-1(c)). Based on the setback and location of the second-floor windows, staff does not find any privacy impacts to the neighbors.

The first and second-floor plate heights are 9 feet along the front elevation. The first floor has an additional two-feet-six-inch cavity space to accommodate HVAC, fire sprinklers, and electrical wires above the first-floor ceiling (Attachment 7). However, this space is not required for the garage. Staff recommends the removal of the cavity space over the garage. This will result in a two-feet-six-inches decrease in the wall height along the front elevation of the garage, which will help to minimize the visual prominence of the parking area (Attachment 4, Condition PS-1(a)).

As conditioned, staff finds that the proposed design generally complies with the Single-Family Home

Design Techniques. The project also complies with all development standards, such as setbacks, height, parking and lot coverage.

FISCAL IMPACT

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

PUBLIC CONTACT

Notice of Public Hearing

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

Staff Report

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

Public Contact: Staff has not received any correspondence or phone calls from neighbors at the time of writing of this report.

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.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative: Approve the Design Review with the Conditions of Approval in Attachment 4

Prepared by: Aastha Vashist, Associate Planner

Approved by: Noren Caliva-Lepe, Principal Planner

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity and Noticing Map
2. Project Data Table
3. Recommended Findings
4. Recommended Conditions of Approval
5. Architectural and Site Plans
6. Neighborhood Square Footage Comparison
7. Project Description Letter by the Applicant