



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMITTEE REPORT**

**MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 26, 2025**

The Historic Preservation Committee of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a regular meeting on March 26, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Lee Quintana, Planning Commissioner Susan Burnett, Planning Commissioner Emily Thomas, and Committee Member Alan Feinberg.

Absent: Vice Chair Martha Queiroz stuck in traffic.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes – February 26, 2025

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Burnett** to approve the consent calendar.
 Seconded by Committee Member Feinberg.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously 3-0-1.** Commissioner Thomas abstained and Vice Chair Queiroz was absent.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. 222 University Avenue
Minor Development in a Historic District Application HS-24-055

Consider a Request for Approval for Construction of an Addition and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Non-Contributing Single-Family Residence Located in the University-Edelen Historic District on Property Zoned R-1D:LHP. APN 529-04-004. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities.
Property Owner/Applicant: Tuyet Pham
Project Planner: Sean Mullin

The project planner presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

The applicant was not present.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Sean Mullin, Project Planner

Clear directions were given to the applicant. In response they submitted revised plans. Advise the Committee to conduct the review without the applicant present and make a recommendation. The original siding has been enclosed by additions. The current visible siding was installed post-1941 and is not original.

Closed Public Comment.

Committee members discussed the matter.

The structure was originally described in the Historic Inventory as a barn. The barn siding from that period was board and batten and not shingles. The proposed project blends in much better with the district. The changes followed all the Committee's recommendations. The proposal is a huge improvement and reads as a single-family residence.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Thomas** to Forward a Recommendation of Approval to Construct an Addition and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Non-Contributing Single-Family Residence Located in the University-Edelen Historic District on Property Zoned R-1D:LHP. Located at 222 University Avenue. APN 529-04-004. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities. With the Plans and Findings as Presented. **Seconded by Commissioner Burnett.**

Committee members provided comments.

Disappointed that the applicant was not present. Board and batten would be a better choice.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously, (4-0).** Vice Chair Queiroz was absent.

3. 31 University Avenue
Planned Development Modification PD-25-001, Architecture and Site Application S-25-004, and Conditional Use Permit U-25-001

Consider a Request for Approval to Modify Planned Development Ordinance 2025 to Allow Modifications to Building E, an Architecture and Site Application for Exterior Modifications to an Existing Commercial Building in the University/Edelen Historic District, and a Conditional Use Permit for Formula Retail over 10,000 square feet and for a Restaurant with Alcohol Service on a Property Zoned C-2:LHP:PD. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities.

Property Owner: SRI Old Town, LLC

Applicant: Rick Nelson, MBH Architects

Project Planner: Erin Walters

The project planner presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Stuart Waggoner, HR Architects, Applicant

They presented the Committee's comments to their senior management. They decided not to make any changes. They looked at Google Earth to see the styles of nearby buildings and felt it fit in. Symmetry, balance and proportion are important to RH.

The Committee asked questions of the Applicant.

Stuart Waggoner, HR Architects, Applicant

The Committee's comments were relayed to their CEO, but the CEO has a vision and decided not to make any changes.

Carol Pluster, Resident

Carol lives in Town and loves Los Gatos. They have seen the renderings and think it will be a beautiful addition to the Town. The building is in character of the Town. They are in support of the project.

Chair Lee Quintana

The Committee also received a Desk Item letter from Demetra Jennings who is in support of the project.

The applicant had nothing to add.

Closed Public Comment.

Committee members discussed the matter.

What are the Commercial Design guidelines regarding corporate architecture? There are two choices: either send to the Planning Commission with a recommendation for denial or continue the item with further direction. There are two policies: LU 6.5 and LU 1.4. 3.7.1 Village scale and character. The proposed design is not consistent with the neighborhood. It should be denied. There should be an Individual feeling and different from each other. It should reflect the Old Town across the street. It is a disappointment that the applicant decided not to work with the Committee. The development mimics the streetscape of a village. The role of the HPC is to maintain the small-town character. Not in favor of the project. I appreciate some of the architectural features such as the arched windows and natural lighting. It is pedestrian oriented. There was no attempt to consider the Committee's concerns. The proposed design is a very nice building that would fit on Los Gatos Boulevard, where it would be an individual building amongst other buildings with a more modern design. It is not read as part of Old Town. Not in support. The design reads as a large individual building. In the Old Town, the style is consistent while each store is different. Even if use is all one.

Note: Vice Chair Martha Queiroz has arrived.

Is the issue that the current building doesn't have a historic look that contributes to the historic district or that it doesn't fit the individual style of Old Town? The present building. did a better job in the rear than at the front of the building. The idea that there are three parts and not just one building. It should carry out the idea of breaking it up, it will stand out more of it doesn't fit with the scale of the district. Since the next step is to go to Planning Commission. Be very explicit that it is less the style but that it is one giant building. It looks like one continuous building while the intent was to have it feel like a collection of individual structures. The design by the Arhaus furniture store was approved. Their design kept the asymmetry, but they painted it all white which is a reasonable compromise. The Town would benefit economically by having a major tenant like RH to come to Los Gatos. But the Committee's job is historic preservation. The building looks good, and the fixes could be simple. They can use different subtle colors, light sconces, and materials like tiles, to distinguish the facades. They add landscaping like a fountain on the corner or more trees in front. The building style is between Italian Renaissance and Spanish revival. Decorative dentil to add along the roof line. It looks like the sleek Restoration brand. They could paint the roof red to resemble red clay tiles. They could make small changes that could keep their brand and blend in with the historic neighborhood. The skylight is still visible. Not bothered by the skylight. I would like to see the skylight tie in with the other roof tops next door and across the street.

The Committee asked questions of Staff.

Sean Mullin, Project Planner

There was no preliminary review. The applicant worked with staff. They decided to submit a formal application to start the process. An Architecture and Site (A&S) application was triggered because it was in a historic district. An A&S application would go before the Planning Commission. Because it's a planned development it would then go before the Town Council.

MOTION: **Motion by Committee Member Burnett** to Forward a Recommendation to Deny the Request to Modify Planned Development Ordinance 2025 to Allow Modifications to Building E, an Architecture and Site Application for Exterior Modifications to an Existing Commercial Building in the University/Edelen Historic District, and a Conditional Use Permit for Formula Retail over 10,000 square feet and for a Restaurant with Alcohol Service on a Property Zoned C-2:LHP:PD. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities. **Seconded by Vice Chair Queiroz.**

The Maker of the Motion amended the motion to include redesigning the skylight so that it is not visible.

The Seconder of the Motion did not accept the amendment to the motion.

The Maker of the Motion amended the motion to include the directions provided at the March 26, 2025 meeting and as summarized in the action letter. In addition, it includes the subtle changes outlined by Vice Chair Queiroz regarding paint, lighting, materials, trees, landscaping, roof painting, etc. to achieve the appearance of a collective of individual structures.

The Seconder of the Motion accepted the amendment to the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously, 4-1. Commissioner Thomas voting no.

4. 16488 Bonnie Lane

Minor Residential Development Application MR-24-007

Consider a Request for Approval to Construct a Second-Story Addition Exceeding 100 Square Feet and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Pre-1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8. Located at 16488 Bonnie Lane. APN 532-02-014. Minor Residential Development Application MR-24-007. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities.

Property Owner: Mai of Tran 2020 Trust

Applicant: Vu-Ngan Tran

Project Planner: Maria Chavarin

The project planner presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Mai Tran, Owner

The second-story project was approved as of May 2024. They have returned with a small change. The architect has made the dormer more even. The biggest change is to make the house more presentable.

The Committee asked questions of the Applicant.

Mai Tran, Owner

The second-bedroom design was changed. Instead of a bump out to make room for the bathtub there is now a straight wall. The roofline has not changed. They were asked to use fiberglass clad wood windows. Their architect provided names of manufacturers, but those vendors only offer full fiberglass windows. They are asking for vendor recommendations. They are hoping to be approved. The proposed master bedroom was intended to make room for their in-laws who are in their late 80's.

Closed Public Comment.

The Committee asked questions of Staff

Maria Chavarin, Project Planner

This is the second-floor proposal that was approved at the last meeting. The applicant has returned to modify the footprint of the second floor. They added three more windows because they expanded the footprint of the second floor.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

They widened the dormer and separated one window into 3 smaller windows. There is no change in the roof ridge. Staff can connect the applicant with resources for the windows.

Committee members discussed the matter.

In support of the new proposal. It is a good proposal. The changes are acceptable. Concerned about the window situation for sources. Concerned about the changes to the front of the house because: 1) the direct connection to the street is lost. 2) It adds to the bulk of the house. Want the steps to come off the porch onto the Bonnie Lane, which is the main face of the street. Familiar with the previous owners. We never entered through the front door, only through the side door. It is not a corner lot. What is the owner's reason for changing the entry? Is it because of landscaping? The side of the house is on Bonnie Lane. It's a wedge corner lot and faces a private road. In support of approving the new plans.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Thomas** to Recommend Approval for Construction of a Second-Story Addition Exceeding 100 Square Feet and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Pre-1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8. APN 532-02-014. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Minor Residential Development Application MR-24-007. Located at 16448 Bonnie Lane. With the requested changes, and the new consistency with the Architecture and Site proposed plans and the recommendation that staff help the applicant find a good source for appropriate windows to fit the historic nature of the structure.
Seconded by Committee Member Feinberg.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.**

5. 16401 Englewood Avenue
Architecture and Site Application S-25-004 and Conditional Use Permit U-25-001

Consider a Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1:20. APN 532-05-010. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15061(b)(3). Request for Review PHST-25-002.

Property Owner/Applicant: Christine Garwood
Project Planner: Ryan Safty

The project planner presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

They found no historic significance or information from their research at the library. No historic significance for the property, events or people. Record of a remodel in 1973 remodel. They did an extensive remodel in 2012. The footprint is the same. But they added a second story, front porch, and a brick façade. They changed the roof, all the windows, and the siding. There was no historic review process through the County. In 2019 it was part of a larger neighborhood annexation.

Christine Garwood, Owner

Closed Public Comment.

The Committee asked questions of Staff

Committee members discussed the matter.

Because of the detailed information and recent extensive remodel, we can approve removal. This remodel was done very well and looks historic. Given the records, it can be removed. It fits well with the neighborhood. It meets all the criteria to be removed. The existing house has nothing left of the true historic characteristic.

MOTION: **Motion** by **Commissioner Burnett** to Approve the Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1:20. Located at 16401 Englewood Avenue. APN 532-05-010. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15061(b)(3). Request for Review PHST-25-002. With the Required Findings. **Seconded** by **Commissioner Thomas**.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

6. 333 Los Gatos Boulevard

Request for Review Application PHST-25-004

Consider a Request for Preliminary Review to Construct an Addition to an Existing Pre1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1D. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15301: Existing Facilities.

Property Owner/Applicant: Nicholas Palmer

Project Planner: Sean Mullin

The project planner presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Nicholas Palmer, Owner

They moved in February 2021. They would like to add a bathroom. There is only one shower. They explored master addition in the back, but the cost was too high. They would like to put in in the front since the master bedroom is already there. It would help lessen the street noise. The goal is to make the front look the same. They have extra siding in the garage and found a vendor who can replicate the siding. They would reuse the existing window. They would reuse the glass but modify the frame. They want to see if their plan is even feasible before spending money on plans.

Committee members asked questions of the applicant

Nicholas Palmer, Owner

The width of the window would remain but shortened to fit above a vanity. They are flexible about the footprint of the bathroom footprint. They would like to retain the pillars of the existing porch instead of it being all one wall. There are two existing windows that would be removed because of a closet.

Committee members provided comments:

The removal of the two windows makes it look better and less cluttered. This is a good remodel. See if you can swap the vanity and tub to keep the window size. Okay with shortening the one window above the vanity. If you cannot reuse the 1912 window, you can save the windows on the porch as a back-up.

Closed Public Comment.

7. Committee Conduct and Procedures

The Chair would like the meeting to be more systematic and orderly by raising hands during discussion. Next month, the Chair would like to discuss what are the Residential Design Guidelines, zoning codes, etc. that deal with historic pre-1941 structures. How do we consider a structure as a historic landmark?

8. Annual Certified Local Government Report 2023-24

Asking for acceptance of the Report. Accepted by the Committee. The California Preservation Foundation (CPF) is offering training and a 2025 Conference in Sacramento.

Committee members discussed the matter.

What is the role of the Committee in recommending program items under Committee matters. Is there a formal way to update the records or programs? The Town Council needs to give directions before staff can take on the task. It could be put on the HPC agenda, and one Committee member could speak at the Town Council during verbal communications. The Mayor is considering putting pre-1971 structures on the Historic Inventory. Need direction from the Mayor. Look around Town for properties that should be considered for the inventory. An individual property owner can apply for historic designation.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR

All the Director's decisions aligned with the recommendations from the HPC.

COMMITTEE MATTERS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned 6:08 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the March 26, 2025, meeting as approved by the Historic Preservation Committee.

Prepared by:

/s/ Sean Mullin, AICP, Planning Manager