



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2024**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Steve Raspe, Commissioner Susan Burnett, Commissioner Melanie Hanssen, Commissioner Kathryn Janoff, Commissioner Adam Mayer, and Commissioner Emily Thomas.
Absent: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT ITEMS (TO BE ACTED UPON BY A SINGLE MOTION)

1. **Approval of Minutes** – November 15, 2023
2. **Approval of Minutes** – November 29, 2023

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Hanssen** to approve adoption of the Consent Calendar. **Seconded by Commissioner Thomas.**

VOTE: **Motion passed 5-0, with Commissioner Mayer abstaining.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. **212 Thurston Street**
APN 410-15-039
Property Owner/Applicant: Meleah Guillard
Project Planner: Maria Chavarin

Requesting Approval for Demolition of an Existing Single-Family Residence and Construction of a New Single-Family Residence with Reduced Setbacks on Property Zoned R-1D. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act

(CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15303(a): New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

Maria Chavarin, Assistant Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Meleah Guillard, Property Owner/Applicant

- I am requesting approval to build a new home, as the current structure is very out of date and an eyesore in the neighborhood. I also plan to repair the garage. I look forward to being a good and accommodating neighbor.

Chris Spaulding, Architect

- This is a very small lot adjacent to the commercial zone. We designed the proposed home with the anticipation that something large or unattractive might be built on the adjacent commercial property, and also to meet the applicant's needs and to the extent possible protect the neighbors' privacy, light, and views. We made revisions to the second floor windows with the exception of the master bedroom windows, but propose a hedge to accommodate the rear neighbors' privacy concerns. We seek reduced setbacks because they would reduce the shadows onto the rear neighbors a little bit and allow space for the applicant to have a small porch on the front, as requested by the Town's consulting architect. Even with the reduced setbacks the proposed house is still farther back than the existing house, and it allows for a little larger back yard for the applicant.

Bill Hopps

- I reside on Olive Street behind the property. My biggest concern is the scale of the project, being much larger than any other home, especially the homes behind it, and it would impact our light visibility out of the back. The hedge the applicant suggests is great, but the master bedroom windows were not changed in size and they have a good view of our back entryway and bedroom and I'm not sure the hedge would sufficiently block it. The Town's consulting architect has said the size and scale of the proposed home is out of character for the neighborhood, and that seems to have been ignored.

Marta Iglesias

- My husband and I own 105 Olive Street, which shares the garage and a little bit of fence with the subject site. I thank the applicant for taking some measures to respect our privacy. My concern that has not been addressed is that the house next door to the subject site is also a two-story house, but it is much lower and I can barely see it, but the applicant's proposed house is much taller. Can the applicant's two-story home be lowered by five feet to be like the house next to it? I'm happy privacy measures would be taken, but I don't know that the proposed hedge would protect our privacy, because the proposed house is very prominent.

Carolyn Bechtel

- I live at 103 Olive Street and this is directly in my back yard over the fence. I will miss my sky view and trees, but I appreciate progress and people building their homes in this Town. I'm not clear on what is happening with the master bedroom windows, which would look directly into my bedroom.

Lee Quintana

- If the garage is going to have a separate application, should a condition of approval be added that the occupancy permit not be finalized until the garage has also been repaired? If the house is moved back, it would probably have more impact on the rear yard neighbors, and if it is moved forward it would have more impact on the street, so the question is not whether it should be moved back or forward but whether it should be modified to be not so massive and imposing.

Moses Guillard

- The applicant is my daughter. My brother and I have run a landscape construction company for a long time. I hear the neighbors behind my daughter's property and what they ask in terms of the house height. I would bring in English Laurel between eight to nine feet tall, and if necessary I would bring in 14 to 16 foot camphor trees to screen the back, and we're going to build a brand new fence, so there would be privacy, although the neighbors would still see the mountains. We looked at fixing up the current house, but it is not fixable and is a tear down. We would like to make a change and build something nice for Los Gatos.

Meleah Guillard, Property Owner/Applicant

- While I respect my neighbors' privacy concerns, I want to acknowledge that I have my own privacy concerns. I won't be looking into my neighbors' yards all day, and I want to have my own privacy protected as much as possible, which is why we are making these changes. I do want to be a good neighbor, but I also want to better the neighborhood and community.

Closed Public Comment.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Janoff** to approve demolition of an existing single-family residence and construction of a new single-family residence with reduced setbacks on property zoned R-1D with an additional condition requiring repair of the detached garage prior to certificate of occupancy for the house. **Seconded by Commissioner Hanssen.**

The maker of the motion amended the motion to include privacy screening and the window changes in Exhibit 11.

The seconder of the motion accepted the amendment to the motion.

VOTE: Motion passed 5-1 with Commissioner Burnett dissenting.

Appeal rights were recited.

OTHER BUSINESS

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Hanssen to nominate Vice Chair Raspe as Chair of the Planning Commission 2024 session. **Seconded** by Commissioner Burnett.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Motion by Chair Raspe to nominate Commissioner Thomas as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission 2024 session. **Seconded** by Commissioner Janoff.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Jennifer Armer, Planning Manager

- The Town Council met on December 19, 2023:
 - Denied an appeal of the proposed lot line adjustment at 17200 Los Robles Way and upholding the Planning Commission's decision.
 - Discussed the Draft Housing Element. There will be additional discussion of the Housing Element at the Council's January 16, 2024 meeting. Town staff and the consultant will prepare revisions in response to the State's December 1, 2023 letter.
 - A meeting of the Housing Element Advisory Board is scheduled for January 18, 2024.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMISSION MATTERS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the January 10, 2024 meeting as approved by the Planning Commission.

/s/ Vicki Blandin