



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JULY 12, 2023**

The Planning Commission of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Jeffrey Barnett, Vice Chair Steve Raspe, Commissioner Susan Burnett, Commissioner Melanie Hanssen, and Commissioner Kathryn Janoff

Absent: Commissioner Kylie Clark, Commissioner Emily Thomas

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Albert Lustre, Northern California Carpenters Local 405

- It is great to see new development come to Los Gatos, but it would be great to see some area standards in these new projects, such as livable wage, apprenticeship, local hire, and healthcare. A living wage ensures construction workers can afford rent in Los Gatos and support their families. Having a responsible contractor to provide healthcare ensures that construction workers have healthcare for their families and will not become a burden to the system. Apprenticeship promotes training and education for youth, minorities, and women. Local hire promotes quality of life for construction workers. I urge Los Gatos elected officials to adopt these area standards of labor.

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

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. 15810 Los Gatos Boulevard

Zone Change Application Z-23-001

General Plan Amendment Application GP-23-001

APN 523-01-001

Property Owner/Applicant: Jesus Ching and Kathleen Ban

Project Planner: Jocelyn Shoopman

Consider a Request for Approval of a Zone Change from R-1:8 Prezone (Single-Family Residential, Minimum Lot Size of 8,000 square feet) to CH (Restricted Commercial Highway) and a General Plan Amendment to Change the Land Use Designation from Low Density Residential to Mixed Use Commercial. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared and certified for the 2040 General Plan Update on June 30, 2022, which included the proposed General Plan Amendment. No further environmental analysis is required.

Jocelyn Shoopman, Associate Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Roger Shanks

- I am a land use consultant working with the applicant on this project. This project has already been changed to this designation with the 2040 General Plan, which has now been suspended, so we are asking that this go back to the same designation. This property is about the only commercial parcel fronting on Los Gatos Boulevard that is not in this designation; it is currently designated Low Density Residential. The applicant wants to keep this a single-story building and the existing access to Los Gatos Boulevard. We feel this zone change conforms to the overall goal and objective of the General Plan and is in keeping with the theme of maintaining the residential character of the surrounding area.

Jesus Ching, Applicant

- I'm the property owner. We are trying to get the property incorporated into the Town of Los Gatos and continue to provide services for the community.

Closed Public Comment.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Hanssen** to approve a General Plan Amendment Application and a Zone Change Application for 15810 Los Gatos Boulevard. **Seconded by Commissioner Janoff.**

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

2. 620 Blossom Hill Road

Architecture and Site Application: S-22-050

Conditional Use Permit Application: U-22-012

APN 529-16-041

Applicant: Derek Frahmman, Integrity Design and Construction

Property Owner: John Thomas, Trustee

Project Planner: Sean Mullin

Requesting Approval for Renovation of an Existing Commercial Building and Modification of an Existing Conditional Use Permit for an Automotive Dealership (Los Gatos Luxury Cars) on Property Zoned CH. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities.

Sean Mullin, Senior Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Christian Oaks, TWM Architects

- There are currently four small, boutique showrooms for luxury and exotic cars. The building in the back is the one we'd like to tear down due to its age and poor construction. We've looked at every way to salvage and renovate this building. We have two new brands, McLaren and Lotus, which want to come to Los Gatos and be part of this dealership and we want to build some small showrooms for them. We wouldn't be increasing the amount of traffic or impact very much, and in tearing the building down we benefit by having some state-of-the-art service bays that can service these modern cars. That building would look like part of the whole complex of buildings; we're not adding a lot of square footage, it would just extend it to look more like a true, high-quality shopping center. We would not remove any trees from the site, would improve fire access, improve utilities to the building, balance the parking out, not increase the number of cars on display, not increase lighting, and no large signs would be introduced. Mario, the general manager of the site has stated they have no problems with the neighbors. We are in compliance with the General Plan to renovate and preserve the auto dealerships, which generates tax revenue.

Mario, General Manager

- Our company and team love the Town of Los Gatos and are excited to add both McLaren and Lotus brands to our store. With the addition of these two brands we will be representing the most prestigious, exotic car brands in the world. I would like to emphasize that our entire operation is created for the convenience of our clients. Most of the cars we sell are sold online and most of the time we deliver them directly to clients. Regarding our service operation, we have two enclosed carriers that go to clients daily to pick up and deliver cars before and after repairs, so the impact of the vehicle traffic would be minimal.

Melinda Peacock

- I am a nearby homeowner I realize this is a commercial property, but I hope for a win/win situation where the properties behind the dealership along the south elevation can also enjoy their properties and retain the property values. I represent multiple homeowners and the big concern for all of us is that a very large section of the building along the south elevation, which I believe is currently at 18 feet, is being increased to a height of 22 feet. Because the building is so close to the property line this extra four feet has a dramatic impact on us. It fully blocks the sky and what is a current majestic view of the mountains from the second floor and impacts the enjoyment of our houses and back yards as well as our property values. We're asking to keep the height at the existing 18 feet.

Closed Public Comment.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Janoff** to approve an Architecture and Site Application and Conditional Use Permit for 620 Blossom Hill Road.
Seconded by Commissioner Hanssen.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Barnett indicated that he would recuse himself from participating in the public hearing for Item 3, 15977 Shannon Road, due to a conflict of interest.

3. 15977 Shannon Road

Architecture and Site Application: S-20-017

APN 529-01-002

Applicant: Tom Sloan

Property Owner: JART, LLC

Project Planner: Erin Walters

Requesting Approval to Exceed the Maximum Height of a Visible Home in the Hillside for an Addition to an Existing Single-Family Residence; to Construct an Accessory Building with a Combined Gross Floor Area Greater Than 450 Square Feet, but Less Than 600 Square Feet; and for Site Improvements Requiring a Grading Permit on Property Zoned HR-1. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities.

Erin Walters, Associate Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Tabea Thornton, Property Owner

- This has been a four-year process and I thank everyone who stuck with us through the process. We are trying to improve this home.

Tom Sloan, Architect/Applicant

- Town consulting architect Larry Canon has called this a “very well designed project,” which is a direct response to the homeowner’s objective and feedback from the Town staff and the fire department. The current height of the building was mitigated by lopping off the gabled roof, resulting in a flat roof design that reduces the overall height of the building by 5 feet, 6 inches, and the roof elements that exceed 18 feet are still below that. We are asking for an exception to the Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines to exceed 18 feet in height as a remodel and addition. The roof overhang helps with the energy efficiency of the project. The fire department requires that all exterior building materials have a two-hour fire rating, so what appears to be wood siding on the home is actually high-performance aluminum, which is a rain screen that cools the house down, and is a product called Longboard. The horizontal rooflines eliminate an otherwise bland and boxy building. The original pool and patio would be moved uphill to more stable ground. A small addition to the existing residence is positioned out of view from any viewing platforms and is unified within the overall design of this common roofline. The new driveway design meets the fire department’s standards for the turnaround for emergency vehicles. We meet all the findings on the project; approving it would provide a much safer home for the homeowners and the driveway would be improved for the six other neighbors.

Closed Public Comment.

Commissioners discussed the matter.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Hanssen** to approve an Architecture and Site Application for 15977 Shannon Road. **Seconded by Commissioner Janoff.**

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

OTHER BUSINESS

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Jennifer Armer, Planning Manager

- The General Plan Committee and Housing Element Advisory Board both have in-person meetings scheduled for July 20th, at 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. respectively.
 - The General Plan Committee will consider the initial draft language for changes and implementation of the Housing Element Overlay Zone as part of the implementation of the Housing Element.
 - The Housing Element Advisory Board will consider an initial working draft responding to some of the comments from HCD.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMISSION MATTERS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the July 12, 2023 meeting as approved by the Planning Commission.

/s/ Vicki Blandin