



TOWN OF LOS GATOS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 28, 2025

The Historic Preservation Committee of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a regular meeting on May 28, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Lee Quintana, Vice Chair Martha Queiroz. Planning Commissioner Susan Burnett, Committee Member Alan Feinberg, and (Planning Commissioner Emily Thomas late due to traffic).

Absent: None.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Wayne Heimsoth, Vietnam Veteran, California State Guard Staff Sergeant, Los Gatos Veteran Memorial Support Foundation Board Member, and American Legion Post 99 Adjutant.

Their mission is to save the old fire station at 4 Tait Avenue as a historical landmark and use it as a meeting place and office for their two organizations. They are asking Planning what needs to be done to rent the building and the approximate cost. The American Legion has a 501c Charity organization which can help with the cost. They are asking that it be called a Veterans Center. Other towns have spaces for veteran organizations. They are not moving in but by calling it a Veterans Center, other veteran organizations can use, help fix and fund the building. Please save the building and advise the Planning Commission to turn it into a Town resource.

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

1. Approval of Minutes – March 26, 2025
2. Approval of Minutes – April 23, 2025

Correction on April 23 Minutes - Discussion on the criteria for the State and Federal significance and the Town's significance. There are 5 different categories usually spoken of. For the State and Federal the first four criteria are "or" the last one is "and." The Town's all five criteria are followed by "or". There is no "and".

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Burnett to approve the Consent Calendar.
Seconded by Vice Chair Queiroz.**

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. 446 San Benito Avenue

Consider a Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1D. APN 410-16-051. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15061(b)(3). Request for Review PHST-25-005. Property Owner/Applicant: Devendra Deshwal. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

Erin Walters, Senior Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Applicant presented the project.

Devendra Deshwal, Owner/Applicant

At the last meeting there were four conditions required to remove from the property from inventory. Of the five conditions to remove from the inventory, four have been satisfied. The fifth condition is if the structure has lost its integrity.

They spoke with neighbors regarding the history of the property. The neighbor at 441 has lived there for fifty years and said that the front and rear of the house have been totally changed. A garage and an auxiliary structure used to be in the middle of the lot, but they burned in a fire three or four years ago. The neighbors at 447 and 437 confirmed that there was a fire, and that the auxiliary structure was damaged. They contacted the prior owners, who provided old photos of the front and rear of the house. Current photos are provided for comparison.

Committee members asked questions of the applicant.

Devendra Deshwal, Owner/Applicant

The applicant did a lot of work. They took photos of the subject structures windows and their neighbors windows for comparison. The windows have been altered. They don't know when the windows were changed.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Erin Walters, Project Planner

If the structure stays in the Historic Inventory, it will need to meet the requirement of no more than twenty-five percent demolition of the siding/wall covering for the front facing elevation and no more than fifty percent removal of the covering/siding for all elevations. The

application will return to the Committee for formal review after submittal of an Architecture and Site Application.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

The lattice is not a wall covering and not included in that twenty-five percent demolition calculation.

Erin Walters, Project Planner

The garage is an accessory structure and not included.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

Historic houses typically have structural issues and that is not typically a basis for removal from the inventory. Restoration and rehabilitation include structural issues.

Closed Public Comment.

Planning Commissioner Thomas arrived at 4:20.

Committee members discussed the matter.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Appreciate all the work done by the homeowner. The house represents a simple California bungalow style. It is shown through the front covered porch, wood shingled exterior, and low-pitched gabled roof. The structure could be expanded and kept in the inventory and restored to its former glory.

Member Feinberg

Satisfied that the technical criteria have been met and is willing to grant the request for removal.

Commissioner Burnett

It is a perfect example of a California bungalow. The houses on San Benito are unique to Los Gatos. The exterior tells a story about a time in Los Gatos. The owner can still build a larger home but keep the same feeling. I want to keep it in the inventory.

Commissioner Thomas

I agree that it is a nice representation but there have been modifications. Does it meet the criteria?

Chair Quintana

If taken off the inventory it could come back as a two-story house. That block has a cohesiveness. Other homes there have additions, but they are towards the back. The major change on this home is the lattice work but that can be removed. The porch floor changed from

wood to cement which is not significant. The foundation is fixable but costly. What cost does the Committee put on maintaining its inventory?

Vice Chair Queiroz

The photos reinforce that the house looks unchanged even with the window change. The windows can be replaced with the look of the former windows. What is the cost difference between fixing what is there and tearing down to build new.

Member Feinberg

Cost is not within our purview. It is not one of the criteria.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Burnett** to forward a recommendation of denial of the above request to the Community Development Director.
Seconded by Vice Chair Queiroz.

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

4. 37 Ellenwood Avenue

Consider a Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1:8. APN 510-19-015. Request for Review PHST-25-008. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061 (b)(3). Property Owner/Applicant: Arthur Chatoff. Project Planner: Samina Merchant.

Samina Merchant, Associate Planner, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Applicant presented the project.

Arthur Chatoff, Owner

He is the owner, showed photos of 41 and 37 Ellenwood. Cannot see the house from the street. 41 is the only house that looks at 37. Daughter, son, and grandkids live in 37. There's a permit for a shed attached to the garage. Nothing historic about it. Bought it from people who lived there for four generations. The photos show a hodge podge of styles. Went through the five points and none were met. Available for questions.

Closed Public Comment.

Committee members discussed the matter.

Commissioner Thomas

Appreciate the photos and Staff recommendation. In this case we don't see any original or significant architecture.

Commissioner Burnett

It has nice architectural features. But because it was built in 1956 it doesn't qualify.

Vice Chair Queiroz

If it wasn't on the map pre-1941, it should be removed.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Thomas** to recommend removal from the Historic Inventory. Does not meet the five criteria. **Seconded by Commissioner Burnett.**

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously, (5-0)

5. 109 Tait Avenue

Consider a Request for Approval to Construct Exterior Alterations to a Non-Contributing Single-Family Residence in the Almond Grove District on Property Zoned R-1D:LHP. Located at. APN 510-18-037. Minor Development in a Historic District Application HS-25-009. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Property Owners: Howard Labe and Jill Nakamura. Applicant: Terry J. Martin, AIA. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

Vice Chair Queiroz recused themselves due to owning property within 500 feet of the property.

Erin Walters, Senior Planner, presented the staff report.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Opened Public Comment.

Applicant presented the project.

Rebecca Pollard, Architect; Howard Labe and Jill Nakamura Owners

The project has two goals which include making a covered back porch for the owners to enjoy the backyard and replacing the current patchwork roof that is not weather sound. The project is not visible from the street.

Committee members asked questions of the applicant.

Howard Labe, Owner

The neighbor to the left did the same thing to their home.

Closed Public Comment.

Committee members discussed the matter.

Commissioner Burnett

It is an improvement. The design fits very well with the home.

Commissioner Thomas

It is a nice improvement and fits in with the district.

Member Feinberg

Main concern was that the left side is visible from the neighbor. But that was addressed.

MOTION: **Motion by Commissioner Burnett** to forward a recommendation of approval of the above request to the Community Development Director.
Seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

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

6. 16805 Loma Street

Consider a Request to Remove a Pre-1941 Property from the Historic Resources Inventory for Property Zoned R-1:8. APN 532-07-101. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Section 15061(b)(3). Request for Review PHST-25-007. Property Owner: William Wundram. Applicant: David Britt, Britt-Rowe. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager, presented the staff report.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Opened Public Comment.

Applicant presented the project.

Brenna Wundram, Co-owner

Brenna and Bill have lived in Los Gatos since 2008. Brenna is teacher at West Valley College. Bill works for Varian Medical Systems. They love Los Gatos. They bought this property and hired an architect. They have many neighbors here.

Bill Wundram, Co-owner

He will present the research and the proposal. No significant persons. It was a rental property for forty years. Wasn't in the Sanborn map or any other historic overlay. Listed as a bungalow. It wasn't annexed until 1999. The address was originally 16801 Loma Street. Split in 1971. Three of the six pre-1941 neighboring homes were approved for demolition. They had built dates from 1999 to 2010.

The property had three primary permits. Main permit in 1967 was for adding a bedroom and a laundry room. The structural engineer described an over span of floor framing, rafter framing without bracing, no sheer walls, and shims under the mudsills between the post and beam connections to level the house.

David Britt, Architect

They have been in the business for over 30 years. They had worked with HPC in the past on neighborhood projects. They did not find value. Work within an identifiable style. This property is the last parcel on Loma that has not been remodeled or rebuilt. They looked very carefully. There was nothing left of the bungalow structure to identify it as California or a Spanish bungalow. They propose removal and building something more consistent with the neighborhood while following the Design Guidelines.

Carrie Winhall, Neighbor

They bought the adjoining house in 1998 and built in 2000. They've been there for twenty-seven years. They are in support of the project. The owners have been proactive in reaching out to the neighbors. All the houses are now two-story homes built in the last 30 years. It'll be a huge improvement to the neighborhood. It had been a rental property and not very well maintained.

Cheryl Green, Neighbor

They are in support of the project. The owners have been very proactive in working with all the neighbors. The new design looks consistent with the neighborhood. They have lived there for 20 years and don't know of any significance at that house.

Dave Renner, Neighbor

Shady lane 2 blocks away. Know Bill for 15 years. Maintaining the aesthetics of the neighborhood and have done a lot of research and thorough research of the five criteria.

David Britt, Architect

At the start of any project they try to find some architectural value in the structure. This structure has been reduced to a bungalow shape. All the decorative surface treatments have been removed. To add value it would be purely speculative.

Closed Public Comment.

Committee members asked questions of Staff.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

The proposed design is not part of the decision process.

Committee members discussed the matter.

Commissioner Thomas

Encourage the communicating and connecting with the neighbors.

Grew up in that neighborhood. It is a generic bungalow. Doesn't have anything architecturally significant or historically significant.

Vice Chair Queiroz

We appreciate the applicant's work. The house is representative of an era. Even though other homes have been taken off, we prefer to keep it. The house looks the same as the original.

Commissioner Burnett

It is a typical California bungalow built in the 1920's, especially in that area. In the 1998 Bloomfield photos, it looks the same. It should stay on the inventory.

Chair Quintana

Of the three examples that were allowed demolition, two were not homes but barns, which are not included as historic structures. The third one indicated an incomplete application. While there are a lot of second-story additions in the area, they are mostly in the back. It is not an exact style but is a typical bungalow seen throughout Los Gatos.

Commissioner Thomas

The neighborhood is not to be considered. This house does not have enough significance. Not in support of a denial.

Chair Quintana

In the List of five criteria the "or" integrity has not been kept. Some of the committee says it retains enough of a bungalow style. Keeping it on the inventory does not mean they cannot make improvements.

MOTION:

Motion by Commissioner Burnett to forward a recommendation of denial of the above request to the Community Development Director. Finding that it still has integrity and typical California bungalow.
Seconded by Vice Chair Queiroz.

VOTE:

Motion passed passes (3-2), Commissioner Thomas and Member Feinberg opposed.

7. 119 Harding Avenue

Consider a Request for Approval to Construct an Addition and Exterior Modifications to an Existing Pre-1941 Single-Family Residence on Property Zoned R-1:8. APN 532-35-022. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Request for Review Application PHST-25-010. Property Owner: Brian Conlisk. Applicant: Jay Plett Architect, LLC. Project Planner: Sean Mullin.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager, presented the staff report.

Opened Public Comment.

Applicant presented the project.

Jay Plett, Architect; Brian Conlisk, Owner

Proposing a very small addition. According to the Bloomfield Survey, the windows were already changed. This will be the fourth change. The view from the front and roofline won't change. They are punching out in the back. Moving the door and removing only one window. The addition is no more than 500 square feet. All the new windows will be in keeping with the Spanish revival style.

Committee members asked questions of the applicant and staff.

Jay Plett, Architect; Brian Conlisk, Owner

The front door will be replaced with a similar nice door. They will match the stucco molding around the windows. There are no bay windows. The house will basically stay the same.

Chair Quintana

The house may have had more embellishment as a Spanish style home. Can the Committee make the recommendation to add lighting fixtures, to be more consistent with the Spanish Colonial style?

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

You can make the recommendation, but those items are not part of the project.

Chair Quintana

Concerned that the project will come back many times due to structural damage.

Jay Plett, Applicant

They are not adding a second story. They are not taking the structure apart. Here's a close-up image of the windowsill that is rotten and filled with Bondo. There is termite damage to the windows.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

It is typical to find structural damage in older homes. It is usually handled at staff level and does not return to the Committee. You don't know the structure's condition until you open a wall.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Can the Committee recommend that if they find damage that they replace in kind?

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

To replace in kind is covered in the Design Guidelines and Town Code.

Jay Plett

The crawl space looks good, and they have not found any termite damage. The windows were 1980's wood windows.

Jay Plett, Applicant

The fireplace structure remains but will not be used. The awnings will also remain as protection from the heat.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Materials for windows. Normally we don't approve the aluminum clad. How about fiberglass clad?

Jay Plett, Applicant

They would look for the style. The aluminum clad windows can still have the stucco trim. It will be indistinguishable. The interior would be wood. It would be wood with fiberglass clad or painted metal clad windows. The window would have the same trim and sill.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

Before the availability of fiberglass clad windows, the Committee typically approved wood or metal clad windows.

Commissioner Thomas

Will you be re-stuccoing the similar color shade. What window style was original to the home?

Jay Plett, Applicant

We will re-stuccoing and have not yet decided on a paint color. The window styles are casement and provide circulation.

Closed Public Comment.

MOTION: **Motion** by **Vice Chair Queiroz** to forward a recommendation of approval of the above request to the Community Development Director. **Seconded** by **Member Feinberg**.

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

OTHER BUSINESS (*Up to three minutes may be allotted to each speaker on any of the following items.*)

8. 310 Tait Avenue

Consider a Request for Preliminary Review to Construct a New Second-Story Addition and Exterior Alterations to an Existing Non-Contributing Single-Family Residence Located in the Almond Grove Historic District on Property Zoned R-1D:LHP. APN 510-14-058. Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301: Existing Facilities. Request for Review Application PHST-24-026. Property Owner: Santiago Allende. Applicant: Donna Chivers. Project Planner: Erin Walters.

Erin Walters, Senior Planner, presented the staff report

Opened public comment.

Applicant presented the project.

Donna Chivers, Architect,

Architectural revisions were made based on the Committee's comments from the previous meeting. Based on their preliminary calculations and discussions with the project planner, they believe that it does not qualify as a technical demolition. They are saving the entire front, left side, and back of the house. Just taking off a portion. The front door, both windows and chimney all stay intact. They are adding a second story. They pushed back the upper story addition fifteen feet from the front property line. It now sits behind the ridge of the original roof. The ridge helps hide the massing from the front view. Windows are proposed to be single hung windows with wood trim. New windows will have the same trim. They will add a scalloped trim to match the existing. The existing siding was inspected by Planning, Building and Police. It was deemed sound. The foundation will not be demolished but will need to be reinforced.

Committee members asked questions of the applicant and staff and provided comments.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Is this the ADU bathroom? It seems like a wide building in a small lot.

Sean Mullin, Project Planner

The setbacks can be 4 feet.

Commissioner Thomas

The requested changes were addressed. Pushing back the addition lessens the massing.

Member Feinberg

In two dimensional drawings it is hard to see the setbacks. The landscaping helps a lot.

Donna Chivers, Applicant

The garage/shed is being removed. It is on the neighbor's property line. The ADU is attached to the house. There is no garage or off-street parking.

Chair Quintana

It is a much better design than previous one; however, it dominates the existing structure. Tait is its own neighborhood. There are no other two-story homes. Afraid that it'll open the door for other case-by-case, two-story structures.

Erin Walters, Project Planner

The parking and FAR would be reviewed when an Architecture and Site (A&S) application is submitted.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

When they receive the A&S application with details, staff will present it to the Planning Commission who can grant exceptions.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Recommend moving more of the mass to the back. The bathroom could be moved to the back to reduce the mass.

Erin Walters, Project Planner

The State allows a minimum 800 square foot ADU even if the main house is over the maximum allowed floor area.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

This attached ADU meets the Town Code. ADUs cannot be subject to discretionary review. The applicant is welcome to consider the recommendation, but it is not binding.

Member Feinberg

The back addition looks massive behind a tiny house.

Vice Chair Queiroz

Recommend that it should not go over FAR since it is in a historic district.

Sean Mullin, Planning Manager

In summary, the Committee agrees that it is a better design, but the lack of parking, the massing and the scale are concerns. It is a large home on a small lot. They ask that the architect consider working within the FAR.

Chair Quintana

Major concern is keeping the effect of that immediate neighborhood

Donna Chivers, Architect

There is a second-story house on Almendra right across the street and another two-story homes visible on that street.

Chair Quintana

That is typical of a corner house. This is a street of four cottage homes.

Commissioner Burnett

Ask that the architect to go back over the design guidelines.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the May 28, 2025 meeting as approved by the Historic Preservation Committee.

/s/ Sean Mullin, AICP, Planning Manager