

DATE: December 3, 2014

AGENDA ITEM # 2

TO: Design Review Commission
FROM: Zachary Dahl, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: 14-SC-18 – 1524 Fremont Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve design review application 14-SC-18 subject to the findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will demolish the existing two-story house and construct a new two-story house. The new two-story house includes 2,425 square feet on the first floor and 1,385 square feet on the second floor. The following table summarizes the project's technical details:

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Single-Family, Residential
ZONING: R1-10
PARCEL SIZE: 11,195 square feet
MATERIALS: Clay tile roof, stucco siding, aluminum clad wood windows, wrought iron railing, wood trim and details, and stone veneer

	Existing	Proposed	Allowed/Required
COVERAGE:	1,564 square feet	2,751 square feet	3,358 square feet
FLOOR AREA:			
First floor	1,564 square feet	2,425 square feet	
Second floor	198 square feet	1,385 square feet	
Total	1,762 square feet	3,810 square feet	3,869 square feet
SETBACKS:			
Front	40.5 feet	31 feet	25 feet
Rear	63 feet	56 feet	25 feet
Right side (1 st /2 nd)	12 feet/N-A	11 feet/22 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side (1 st /2 nd)	12 feet/N-A	11.5 feet/24.5 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
HEIGHT:	18 feet	25 feet	27 feet

BACKGROUND

Neighborhood Context

The subject property is located in an area that does not meet the definition of any of the neighborhood contexts as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines. Fremont Avenue is a busy collector street with a wide right-of-way and a landscaped median. Many of the properties with frontage along the Fremont Avenue have their front yards facing adjoining streets, so their side and rear yards along Fremont Avenue are developed with taller walls and fences. For the properties that do have a front yard facing the Fremont Avenue, the houses are generally set back further on the lot with mature landscaping and trees screening them from the street.

Previous Consideration

A new two-story house of a similar design by the same architecture firm was reviewed and approved by the Architecture and Site Review Committee (now the Design Review Commission) on April 24, 2008. This project was never built and the approval expired. As such, the new application should be considered on its own merits.

DISCUSSION

Design Review

Since this property is not located within an identifiable neighborhood context, compliance with the Design Review Findings will focus on design integrity, privacy and landscaping.

The proposed two-story house uses a Spanish/Mediterranean inspired architectural design. The project has a front elevation that incorporates simple massing, hipped roof forms and an understated entry. The project uses high quality materials, such as clay barrel tiles, wood trim details, aluminum clad wood windows and stone veneer, which are integral to the architectural design of the house. Overall, the house design does not create the perception of excessive bulk or mass, has individual design integrity and meets the intent of the Residential Design Guidelines.

Privacy

The Residential Design Guidelines recommend that the finished floor be no more than 22 inches above grade. The subject lot is relatively flat, with a gentle slope from back to front. The house has been designed with a finish floor that ranges from 18 inches above grade in the rear to 22 inches above grade in the front. This proposed finish floor height is consistent with the Guidelines. However, since there are larger windows on the first floor side elevations, the fencing along both sides of the house should be six feet tall with at least one-foot of lattice to ensure that there are not any unreasonable privacy issues (Condition No. 2).

The proposed design includes six second-story windows on the right (west) side elevation. Four of these windows are located above showers or bath tubs in bathrooms and the other two are located in Bedroom 4. The two bedroom windows have a sill height of three feet, nine inches above the

finish floor. Based on their relatively small size and passive use, the bathroom windows do not create any significant or unreasonable privacy issues. However, since the two bedroom windows face the functional rear yard of the adjacent property, the sill height of these windows should be raised to at least four feet, six inches to reduce their size and ensure that they are more passive in use and maintain a reasonable level of privacy (Condition No. 3).

The left (east) side elevation includes three medium sized second-story windows; two bedroom windows and one bathroom window. Due to the property orientation, this side also faces the functional rear yard of the adjacent property. Therefore, to ensure that they are more passive in use and maintain a reasonable level of privacy, the sill height of these two windows should be raised to at least four feet, six inches (Condition No. 3).

The design also includes three second story balconies; one off of each bedroom. Two of the balconies are face toward the front of the property and the third faces the rear yard. Due to their placement facing toward Fremont Avenue, the two front facing balconies do not create any privacy issues. The rear facing balcony, which is 13 feet wide by six feet deep, has a rear yard setback of 56 feet. While there are two mature Ash trees along the left side property line, there is relatively little screening to the rear and right side and the balcony could have views toward the adjacent yard spaces in these directions. To ensure that a reasonable level of privacy is maintained, staff has added a condition (No. 4) that requires additional evergreen screening trees be planted along the rear and right side property lines.

Landscaping

The project will be preserving all of the existing mature trees on the property. A new circular driveway and landscaping will be installed in the front yard around the mature trees. A circular driveway is appropriate for a property that fronts on a busy collector street in order to improve safety when entering and exiting the site. As shown on the plans, the 58% of the front yard will be landscaped, which meets the R1-10 District requirement. With the preservation of the existing trees, planting of new trees and landscaping, staff finds that the project meets the City's landscaping and street tree guidelines.

Miscellaneous

The topographic survey (Sheet C-1) shows a large 24-inch diameter tree located in front of the house to the left side. However, this survey was completed several years ago and there is no longer a tree in this location.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15303 of the California Environmental Quality Act because it involves the construction of a single-family dwelling in a residential zone.

Cc: Teofilo "Percy" Landa, Owner
Tony Rowe, Architect

Attachments

- A. Application
- B. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
- C. Area and Vicinity Maps

FINDINGS

14-SC-18 – 1524 Fremont Avenue

With regard to the new two-story house, the Design Review Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 14.76.050 of the Municipal Code:

- a. The proposed project complies with all provision of this chapter;
- b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the proposed project, when considered with reference to the nature and location of residential structures on adjacent lots, will avoid unreasonable interference with views and privacy and will consider the topographic and geologic constraints imposed by particular building site conditions;
- c. The natural landscape will be preserved insofar as practicable by minimizing tree and soil removal; grade changes shall be minimized and will be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas;
- d. The orientation of the proposed project in relation to the immediate neighborhood will minimize the perception of excessive bulk and mass;
- e. General architectural considerations, including the character, size, scale, and quality of the design, the architectural relationship with the site and other buildings, building materials, and similar elements have been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings; and
- f. The proposed project has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection.

CONDITIONS

14-SC-18 – 1524 Fremont Avenue

1. The approval is based on the plans received on October 30, 2014 and the written application materials provided by the applicant, except as may be modified by these conditions.
2. The fences along both sides of the house shall be six feet tall with at least one-foot of lattice.
3. Increase the sill height of the side facing windows in bedroom 2, bedroom 4 and the master bedroom to be at least four feet, six inches above the finish floor.
4. Update the site/landscape plan to show additional evergreen screening trees along the rear property line and right side property line to the rear of the house. The trees shall be a minimum 15-gallon or 24-inch box in size. These new evergreen screening trees shall be protected under this application and cannot be removed without a tree removal permit from the Community Development Director.
5. Obtain an encroach permit issued from the Engineering Division prior to doing any work within the public street right-of-way.
6. Only gas fireplaces, pellet fueled wood heaters or EPA certified wood-burning appliances may be installed in all new construction pursuant to Chapter 12.64 of the Municipal Code.
7. The applicant/owner agrees to indemnify, defend, protect, and hold City harmless from all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, incurred by the City or held to be the liability of City in connection with City's defense of its actions in any proceeding brought in any State or Federal Court, challenging any of the City's action with respect to the applicant's project.
8. **Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit**, install tree protection fencing around the dripline of all existing trees to remain, as shown on the site plan. Tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground.
9. **Prior to building permit submittal, the plans shall contain/show:**
 - a. The conditions of approval shall be incorporated into the title page of the plans;
 - b. On the grading plan and/or the site plan, show all tree protection fencing and add the following note: "All tree protection fencing shall be chain link and a minimum of five feet in height with posts driven into the ground. The tree protection fencing shall be installed prior to issuance of the demolition permit and shall not be removed until all building construction has been completed;"
 - c. Verification that the new house will comply with the California Green Building Standards pursuant to Section 12.26 of the Municipal Code and provide a signature from a Qualified Green Building Professional;

- d. Fire sprinklers to be installed pursuant to Section 12.10 of the Municipal Code;
- e. The location of underground utilities pursuant to Section 12.68 of the Municipal Code. Underground utility trenches should avoid the drip-lines of all protected trees;
- f. The location of any air conditioning units on the site plan and the manufacturer's sound rating for each unit; and
- g. The measures to comply with the New Development and Construction Best Management Practices and Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention program, as adopted by the City for the purposes of preventing storm water pollution (i.e. downspouts directed to landscaped areas, minimize directly connected impervious areas, etc.).

10. Prior to final inspection:

- a. All front yard landscaping and privacy screening trees shall be maintained and/or installed as required by the Planning Division; and
- b. Submit verification that the house was built in compliance with the City's Green Building Ordinance (Section 12.26 of the Municipal Code).



ATTACHMENT A

CSG-947-2750

CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

Type of Review Requested: *(Check all boxes that apply)*

Permit # 1106128

<input type="checkbox"/>	One-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple-Family Review
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Two-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sidewalk Display Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rezoning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Variance(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	R1-S Overlay
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lot Line Adjustment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenant Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Plan/Code Amendment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tentative Map/Division of Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Project Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subdivision Map Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Project Address/Location: 1524 Fremont Avenue, Los Altos CA 94024

Project Proposal/Use: Single Family Residence

Current Use of Property: Single Family Residence

Assessor Parcel Number(s) 318-08-030 Site Area: 11,195 SQ FT

New Sq. Ft.: _____ Remodeled Sq. Ft.: _____ Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: _____

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: _____ Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): _____

Applicant's Name: Teofilo "PERCY" Landa

Home Telephone #: 650-248-3295 Business Telephone #: _____

Mailing Address: 1524 Fremont Ave, Los Altos, CA 94024

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS CA 94024

Property Owner's Name: Teofilo "PERCY" Landa

Home Telephone #: 650-248-3295 Business Telephone #: _____

Mailing Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue

City/State/Zip Code: Los Altos CA 94024

Architect/Designer's Name: _____ Telephone #: _____

*** If your project includes complete or partial demolition of an existing residence or commercial building, a demolition permit must be issued and finalized prior to obtaining your building permit. Please contact the Building Division for a demolition package. ***

(continued on back)



NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY WORKSHEET

In order for your design review application for single-family residential remodel/addition or new construction to be successful, it is important that you consider your property, the neighborhood's special characteristics that surround that property and the compatibility of your proposal with that neighborhood. **The purpose is to help you understand your neighborhood before you begin the design process with your architect/designer/builder or begin any formal process with the City of Los Altos.** *Please note that this worksheet must be submitted with your 1st application.*

The Residential Design Guidelines encourage neighborhood compatibility without necessarily forsaking individual taste. Various factors contribute to a design that is considered compatible with a surrounding neighborhood. The factors that City officials will be considering in your design could include, but are not limited to: design theme, scale, bulk, size, roof line, lot coverage, slope of lot, setbacks, daylight plane, one or two-story, exterior materials, landscaping et cetera.

It will be helpful to have a site plan to use in conjunction with this worksheet. Your site plan should accurately depict your property boundaries. The best source for this is the legal description in your deed.

Photographs of your property and its relationship to your neighborhood (see below) will be a necessary part of your first submittal. Taking photographs before you start your project will allow you to see and appreciate that your property could be within an area that has a strong neighborhood pattern. The photographs should be taken from across the street with a standard 35mm camera and organized by address, one row for each side of the street. Photographs should also be taken of the properties on either side and behind your property from on your property.

This worksheet/check list is meant to help *you* as well as to help the City planners and Planning Commission understand your proposal. Reasonable guesses to your answers are acceptable. The City is not looking for precise measurements on this worksheet.

Project Address 1524 Fremont Avenue, Los Altos CA 94024

Scope of Project: Addition or Remodel _____ or New Home

Age of existing home if this project is to be an addition or remodel? N/A

Is the existing house listed on the City's Historic Resources Inventory? NO

Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue

Date: 3-29-14

What constitutes your neighborhood?

There is no clear answer to this question. For the purpose of this worksheet, consider first your street, the two contiguous homes on either side of, and directly behind, your property and the five to six homes directly across the street (eight to nine homes). At the minimum, these are the houses that you should photograph. If there is any question in your mind about your neighborhood boundaries, consider a radius of approximately 200 to 300 feet around your property and consider that your neighborhood.

Streetscape

1. Typical neighborhood lot size*:

Lot area: 11,195 square feet
Lot dimensions: Length 140 feet
Width 80 feet (Front)

If your lot is significantly different than those in your neighborhood, then note its: area N/A, length N/A, and width N/A.

2. Setback of homes to front property line: (Pgs. 8-11 Design Guidelines)

Existing front setback if home is a remodel? N/A
What % of the front facing walls of the neighborhood homes are at the front setback 75 %
Existing front setback for house on left 25 ft./on right 25 ft.
Do the front setbacks of adjacent houses line up? Yes

3. Garage Location Pattern: (Pg. 19 Design Guidelines)

Indicate the relationship of garage locations in your neighborhood* only on your street (count for each type)

Garage facing front projecting from front of house face 5
Garage facing front recessed from front of house face 1
Garage in back yard N/A
Garage facing the side N/A
Number of 1-car garages 0; 2-car garages 6; 3-car garages 0

Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue
Date: 3-29-14

4. Single or Two-Story Homes:

What % of the homes in your neighborhood* are:

One-story 30%

Two-story 10%

5. Roof heights and shapes:

Is the overall height of house ridgelines generally the same in your neighborhood*? YES

Are there mostly hip ____, gable style , or other style ____ roofs*?

Do the roof forms appear simple or complex ____?

Do the houses share generally the same eave height yes?

6. Exterior Materials: (Pg. 22 Design Guidelines)

What siding materials are frequently used in your neighborhood*?

wood shingle stucco board & batten clapboard
 tile stone brick combination of one or more materials
(if so, describe) _____

What roofing materials (wood shake shingle, asphalt shingle, flat tile, rounded tile, cement tile, slate) are consistently (about 80%) used?

Shingle
If no consistency then explain: N/A

7. Architectural Style: (Appendix C, Design Guidelines)

Does your neighborhood* have a consistent identifiable architectural style?
 YES NO

Type? Ranch Shingle Tudor Mediterranean/Spanish
 Contemporary Colonial Bungalow Other

Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue

Date: 3-29-14

8. Lot Slope: (Pg. 25 Design Guidelines)

Does your property have a noticeable slope? NO

What is the direction of your slope? (relative to the street)

N/A

Is your slope higher N/A lower N/A same N/A in relationship to the neighboring properties? Is there a noticeable difference in grade between your property/house and the one across the street or directly behind?

9. Landscaping:

Are there any frequently used or typical landscaping features on your street (i.e. big trees, front lawns, sidewalks, curbs, landscape to street edge, etc.)?

Big trees, curbs and some curved Driveways.

How visible are your house and other houses from the street or back neighbor's property?

NOT very visible

Are there any major existing landscaping features on your property and how is the unimproved public right-of-way developed in front of your property (gravel, dirt, asphalt, landscape)?

Big trees, ~~curbs~~ and curved Driveway. Curb and dirt Public Right of way.

10. Width of Street:

What is the width of the roadway paving on your street in feet? 70 ft.

Is there a parking area on the street or in the shoulder area? NO

Is the shoulder area (unimproved public right-of-way) paved, unpaved, gravel, landscaped, and/or defined with a curb/gutter? unpaved dirt

Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue
Date: 3-29-14

11. What characteristics make this neighborhood* cohesive?

Such as roof material and type (hip, gable, flat), siding (board and batten, cement plaster, horizontal wood, brick), deep front yard setbacks, horizontal feel, landscape approach etc.:

Combination of roof types and siding materials as circled above. Horizontal feel and lots of landscape coverage.

General Study

- A. Have major visible streetscape changes occurred in your neighborhood?
 YES NO
- B. Do you think that most (~ 80%) of the homes were originally built at the same time?
 YES NO
- C. Do the lots in your neighborhood appear to be the same size?
 YES NO
- D. Do the lot widths appear to be consistent in the neighborhood?
 YES NO
- E. Are the front setbacks of homes on your street consistent (~80% within 5 feet)?
 YES NO
- F. Do you have active CCR's in your neighborhood? (p.36 Building Guide)
 YES NO
- G. Do the houses appear to be of similar size as viewed from the street?
 YES NO
- H. Does the new exterior remodel or new construction design you are planning relate in most ways to the prevailing style(s) in your existing neighborhood?
 YES NO

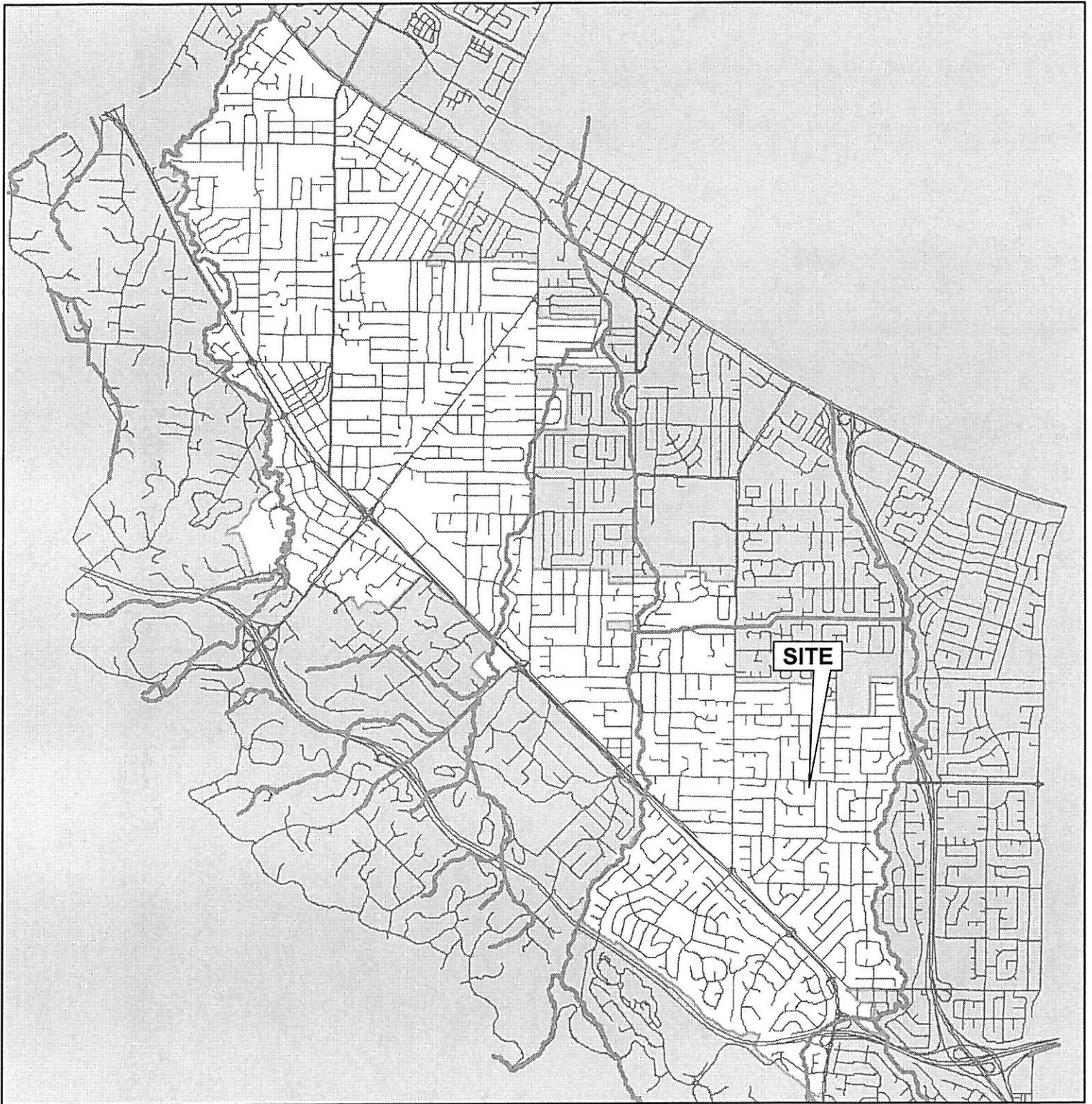
Address: 1524 Fremont Avenue
 Date: 3-29-14

Summary Table

Please use this table to summarize the characteristics of the houses in your immediate neighborhood (two homes on either side, directly behind and the five to six homes directly across the street).

	Address	Front setback	Rear setback	Garage location	One or two stories	Height	Materials	Architecture (simple or complex)
①	1614 Parkhills Ave First house to the left	25ft	25ft	Front	2	24	Shingle Siding Comp roof	Simple
②	1613 Parkhills Ave Second house on the left	25ft	25ft	Front	2	18	Shingle Siding Comp roof	Simple
③	1615 Randolph Pkwy First house on the right	25ft	25ft	Front	2	18	horiz. lap siding Wood Shingle Roof	Simple
④	1616 Randolph Pkwy Second house on the right	25	25	Front	2	16	Stucco Siding Steel tile	Simple
⑤	1627 Randolph Pkwy House on the back - right	25	40	Front	2	16	horiz. Lap siding Comp roof	Simple
⑥	1626 Parkhills Ave house on the back - left	30	40	Front	2	25	Shingle Siding Comp roof	Simple
⑦	1595 Wesssex Ave Across the Street - Right	30	35	Front	1	15	horiz. Lap Siding Wood Shingle roof	Simple
⑧	1594 Wesssex Ave Across the street - Center	30	35	Front	1	14	Board & batt siding Round tile Roofing	Simple
⑨	1485 Fremont Ave Across the street - left	80	50	Front	2	26	Stucco Siding Round tile Roofing	Simple

AREA MAP



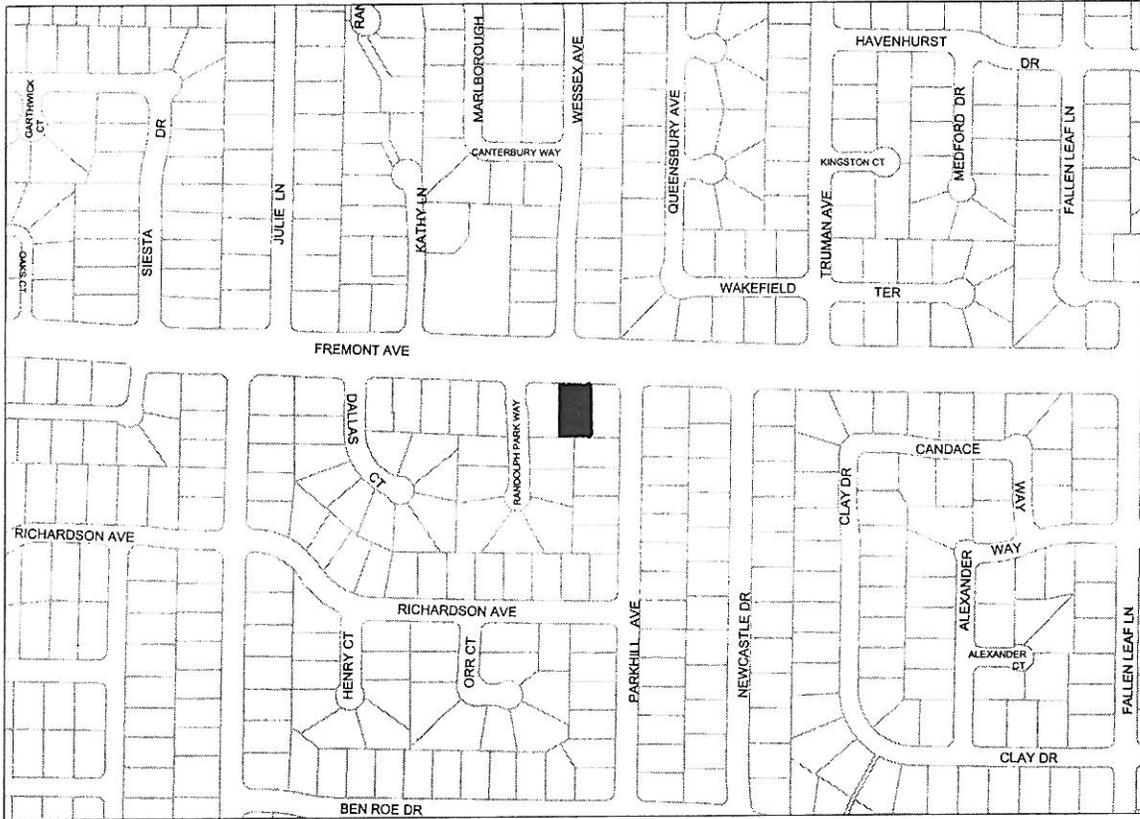
CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 14-SC-18
APPLICANT: T. Landa
SITE ADDRESS: 1524 Fremont Avenue

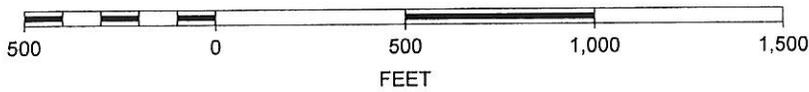


Not to Scale

VICINITY MAP



SCALE 1 : 6,000



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