



DATE: December 3, 2014  
 AGENDA ITEM #3

**TO:** Design Review Commission  
**FROM:** Lily Lim, Assistant Planner  
**SUBJECT:** 14-SC-29 – 1251 S. Springer Road

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Continue design review application 14-SC-29 subject to the recommended direction

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project will construct a new second story and rebuild portions of the first story. The additions include 432 square feet on the first floor and 1,157 square feet on the second floor and will substantially appear as a new home. The following table summarizes the project’s technical details:

**GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:** Single-Family, Residential  
**ZONING:** R1-10  
**PARCEL SIZE:** 9,399 square feet  
**MATERIALS:** Concrete “S” tile roof, wood corbels, fiberglass columns, wood window trim, and wood garage door

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Allowed/Required</b>
<b>COVERAGE:</b>	1,699 square feet	2,783 square feet	2,820 square feet
<b>FLOOR AREA:</b>			
First floor	1,699 square feet	2,131 square feet	
Second floor	n/a	1,157 square feet	
Total	1,699 square feet	3,288 square feet	3,290 square feet
<b>SETBACKS:</b>			
Front	25 feet	25 feet	25 feet
Rear	25 feet	36 feet	25 feet
Right side (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	8 feet	12 feet/19 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
Left side (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> )	8 feet	11 feet/18 feet	10 feet/17.5 feet
<b>HEIGHT:</b>	16 feet	24 feet	27 feet

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Neighborhood Context**

The subject property is located in a Consistent Character Neighborhood, as defined in the City's Residential Design Guidelines. South Springer Road has smaller scale, one-story homes on the east side and a low profile commercial building on the west side. The topography in the immediate area is relatively flat and the one-story homes have low eave lines and wall plate heights. The homes have similar front yard setbacks and prominent front facing garages. South Springer Road has paved sidewalks and no distinct tree or landscape pattern.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Design Review**

In Consistent Character Neighborhoods, good neighbor design has design elements, materials, and scale found within the neighborhood. Proposed projects should "fit in" and lessen abrupt changes. Sizes of homes should not be significantly larger than other homes found in the neighborhood.

The proposed two-story structure uses a design approach that has some traditional elements, such as a two-car garage and covered entry; however, the design appears out-of-scale with the surrounding neighborhood primarily due to its massing. The immediately surrounding neighborhood has a smaller scale, with one-story structures with low eave lines and wall heights. Additionally, given the simplicity of the surrounding structures, the proposed structure is more complex in massing than the adjacent homes. The two-story high walls and scale of the proposed structure as well as the tall wall plates creates an abrupt change. Furthermore, the proposed second story massing does not appear as integral to the overall design concept. The exterior design appears to be based on the floor plan and appears "inside-out." The City's Residential Design Guidelines suggest designing a house from "outside-in" rather than the reverse as it tends to lack a clear overall design and often adds to the perception of excessive bulk. This approach produces a more complex massing and unusual wall and roof forms such as the transition between the roof and the second story shown on the south side elevation.

Another concern is the use of too many window shapes and sizes. The City's Residential Design Guidelines suggest avoiding the use of too many different window types and shapes.

The project is required to meet all findings as outlined by the Design Guidelines, specifically, designing a structure that will be compatible within the immediate context and reduce the perception of excessive bulk and mass. To meet the findings, staff recommends that the Design Review Commission provide the following direction:

- Reduce the two-story wall elements;
- Simplify the window shapes and types; and
- Simplify the massing and design the house "inside-out" to create a more cohesive exterior design

## **Privacy and Landscape**

The Design Guidelines suggest placing windows, decks and doors in such a way to minimize the privacy impacts to neighboring properties. The proposed second story has done a good job of minimizing side-facing windows. The side-facing window is small and passive in use as it leads to the master bathroom. However, staff is concerned with the rear facing window in bedroom number three as it creates a potential privacy concern for the neighbor to the right (south). A condition has been added to provide privacy screening along the south property line, west of the ten inch tree (condition number 5). The first floor is low and the windows do not create unreasonable privacy concerns.

This project preserves existing landscaping in the rear yard and proposes new landscaping in the front yard. Based on staff's site visit, the existing rear yard landscaping provides adequate screening from the rear facing second story windows. However, per the City's Design Guidelines, staff recommends two street trees in the front yard to soften the impact and view of the two-story addition. Staff also recommends that the landscape plan categorize and identify the existing trees on the property. The new landscape plan should include accurate driplines of trees and all existing landscaping, including shrubs and other screening plants. The applicant was not asked to provide this information initially as the focus was on the compatibility of the overall design.

## **Correspondence**

The applicant has provided a letter of signatures from neighboring property owners indicating their support of the proposed project (attachment D).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project is categorically exempt from environmental review under Section 15301 of the Environmental Quality Act because it involves an addition to an existing single-family dwelling in a residential zone.

CC: Steve Benzing, Architect/Designer  
Amir & Homa Tekiyeh, Property Owners

### Attachments

- A. Application
- B. Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
- C. Maps
- D. Correspondence

## FINDINGS

14-SC-29 – 1251 S. Springer Road

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

- a. The proposed structure complies with all provisions of this chapter;
- b. The height, elevations, and placement on the site of the propose structure, 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 structure in relation to the immediate neighborhood will *not* 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 *not* been incorporated in order to insure the compatibility of the development with its design concept and the character of adjacent buildings;
- f. The proposed structure has been designed to follow the natural contours of the site with minimal grading, minimum impervious cover, and maximum erosion protection.

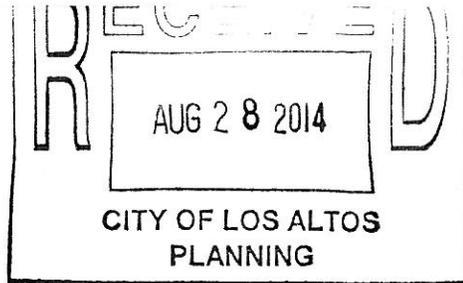
### Recommended Direction

14-SC-29 – 1251 S. Springer Road

- Reduce the two-story wall elements;
- Simplify the window shapes and types;
- Simplify the massing and design the house “inside-out” to create a more cohesive exterior design;
- Provide two category I or II street trees to be located in the front yard;
- Provide privacy screening along the south property line, west of the existing ten inch tree to mitigate privacy concerns from bedroom number three; and
- Revise the landscape plan to categorize and identify existing trees, include all existing landscaping, including shrubs and screening plants, and provide accurate driplines for existing trees



# ATTACHMENT A



## CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

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

Permit # 1106285

<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"/>	RI-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: 1251 S. SPRINGER AVE. ROAD

Project Proposal/Use: RESIDENTIAL

Current Use of Property: RESIDENTIAL

Assessor Parcel Number(s) 189-17-005 Site Area: 9399 SF

New Sq. Ft.: 2268 Remodeled Sq. Ft.: \_\_\_\_\_ Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: 1699 Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name: STEVE BENZING - ARCHITECT (BENZING@COMCAST.NET)

Home Telephone #: 408 805 1328 Business Telephone #: N/A

Mailing Address: 12403 FREDERICKSBURG

City/State/Zip Code: SARASOTA, CA 95070

Property Owner's Name: AMIR TEKIVEH atekiv@marvell.com ①

Home Telephone #: (408) 420-0897 Business Telephone #: (408) 222-2500

Mailing Address: 1251 S. Springer Rd. ② homa.maleki@hotmail.com

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS CA 94024

Architect/Designer's Name: STEVE BENZING Telephone #: 408 805 1328

\*\*\* 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)

14-SC-29





# ATTACHMENT B

City of Los Altos

Planning Division

(650) 947-2750

[Planning@losaltosca.gov](mailto:Planning@losaltosca.gov)



## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1251 S. SPRINGER  
Scope of Project: Addition or Remodel \_\_\_\_\_ or New Home   
Age of existing home if this project is to be an addition or remodel? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is the existing house listed on the City's Historic Resources Inventory? No

Address: 1251 S. 2nd St  
Date: 8/28/14

### 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: 9600 square feet  
Lot dimensions: Length 100 - 120 feet  
Width 80 feet

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

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

Existing front setback if home is a remodel? \_\_\_\_\_  
What % of the front facing walls of the neighborhood homes are at the front setback 90 %  
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) (2400S EAST ST)  
Garage facing front projecting from front of house face 4  
Garage facing front recessed from front of house face 0  
Garage in back yard 0  
Garage facing the side 0  
Number of 1-car garages 0; 2-car garages 2; 3-car garages 0

Address: 1251 S SPRING 'HIP  
Date: 8/18/14

4. **Single or Two-Story Homes:**

What % of the homes in your neighborhood\* are:

One-story ~~25~~ 75%

Two-story 25%

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 ✓?

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?

ASPHALT

If no consistency then explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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: 1251 S. SPI GLEA  
Date: 6/28/14

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)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is your slope higher \_\_\_\_\_ lower \_\_\_\_\_ same \_\_\_\_\_ 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.)?

TYPICAL SUBURBAN STYLE - LAWN & SHRUBS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

4-5' SHRUBS, PROJECT PROPERTY SCREEN AT BACK

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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)?

NO

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Width of Street:

What is the width of the roadway paving on your street in feet? 60'

Is there a parking area on the street or in the shoulder area? YES

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: 1251 S. SPRING 'ER  
Date: 8/28/11

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.:

GIVEN THAT SPRING IS AT THIS LOCATION HAS COMMERCIAL  
ACROSS THE STREET, THE BUNCH (SMALL) STYLE IS IN TRANSITION  
I WOULD BELIEVE THAT THE MAJORITY OF HOUSES WILL CHANGE  
IN THE FUTURE

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: 1251 S. SPRINKLER  
 Date: 8/28/14

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)
1251 SPRINKLER	25'	25'	FRONT	ONE	18-20'	WOOD SHINGLES BRICK GARAGE	SIMPLE
1255 SPRINKLER	"	25'	"	"	"	"	"
1261 SPRINKLER	"	40'	"	"	"	WOOD SHINGLES GARAGE	"
1271 SPRINKLER	"	20'	"	"	"	"	"
120 PRESIDENTIAL	"	20'	"	TWO	20-20'	STUCCO ROOF	"
122 PRESIDENTIAL	20'	20'	"	ONE	20'	WOOD SHINGLES GARAGE	"
1221 PRESIDENTIAL	20'	20'	"	TWO	20-20'	STUCCO TILE ROOF	COMPLEX

COMMERCIAL

S Springer Rd

SGP  
STORY.

SGL  
STORY.

2  
STORY

SGL  
STORY

S Springer Rd

SGL  
STORY

2  
STORY

Los Altos Bakery & Cafe



1251 S Springer Rd

Br

COMMERCIAL

SGL  
STORY

SGL  
STORY

SGL  
STORY

S Springer Rd

SGL  
STORY

S Springer Rd

Fremont A

Br



Berry Ave

Brentwood St

Berry Ave

Brentwood Ct

Brentwood Pl

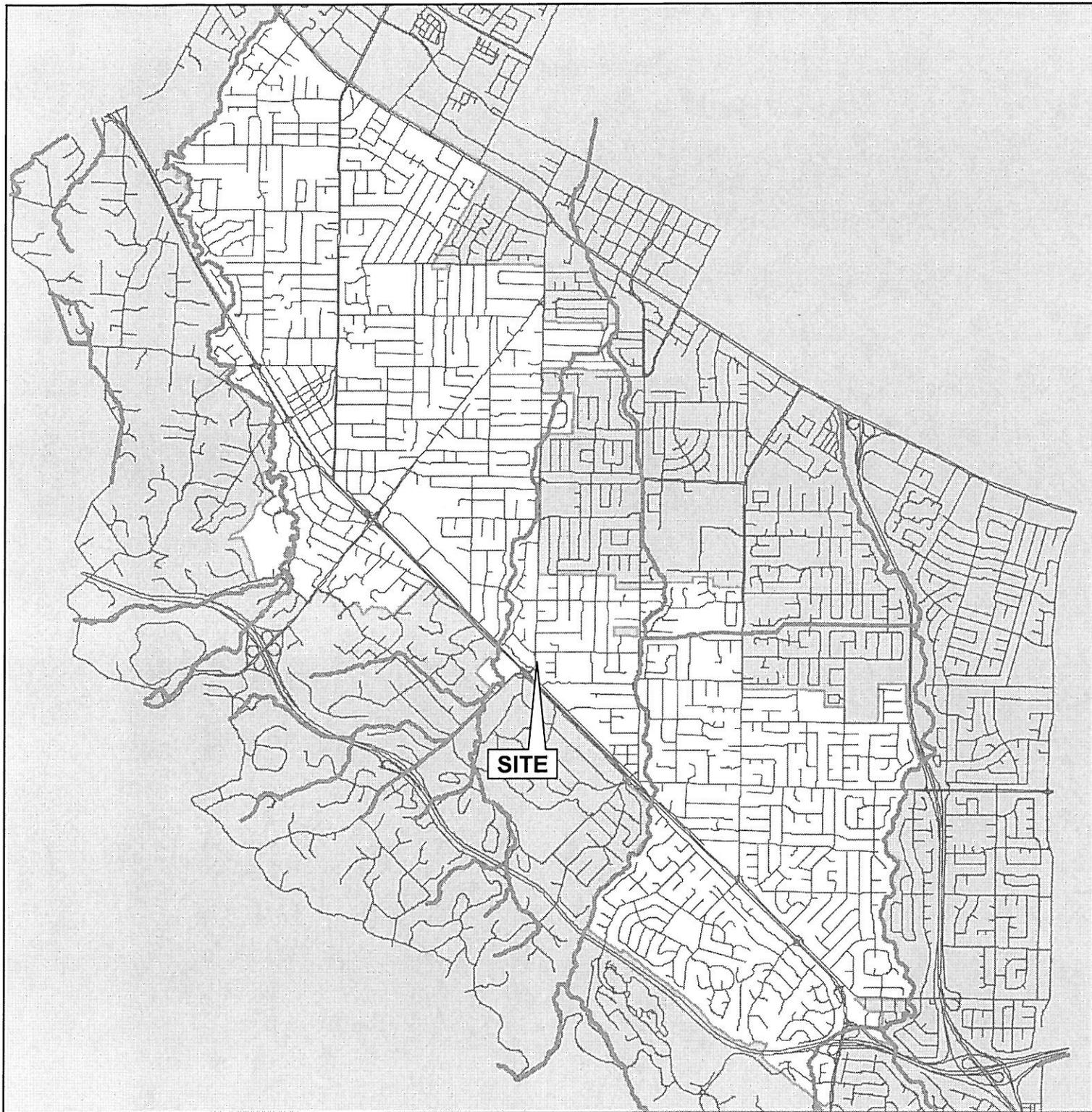
Berry Ave

1251 S Springer Rd

S Springer Rd

S Springer Rd

# AREA MAP



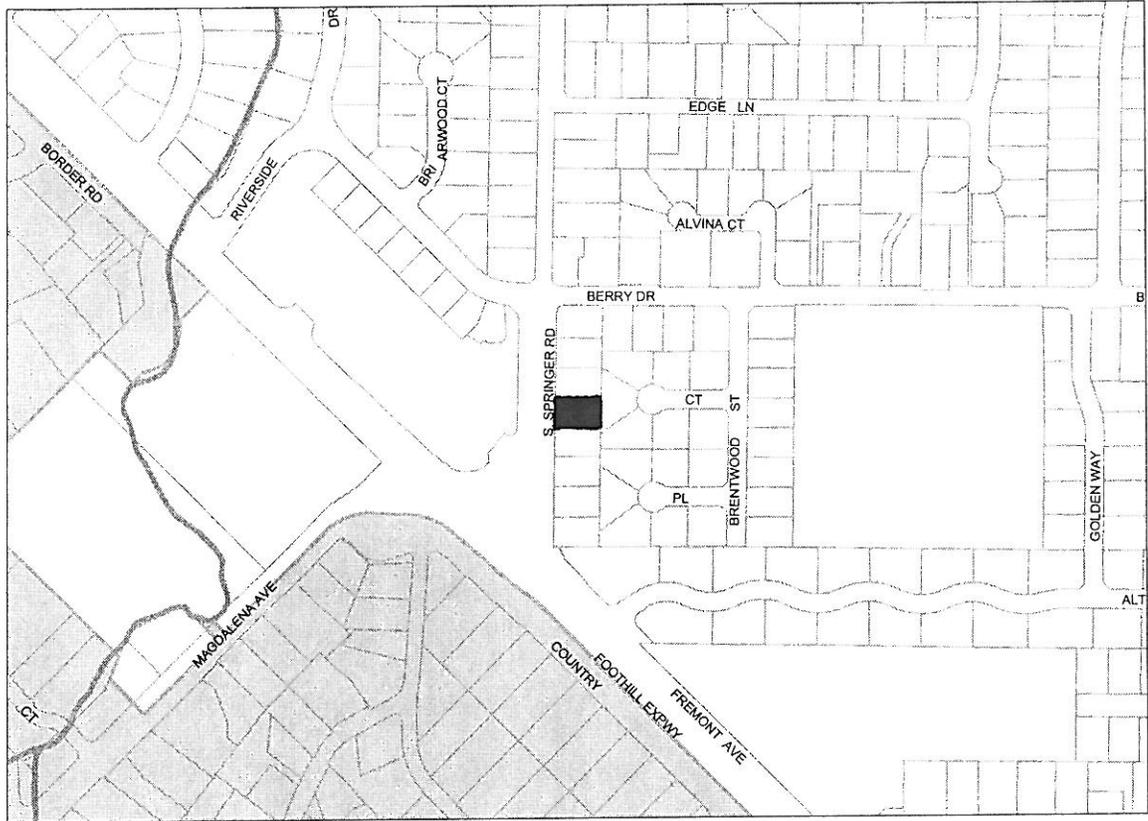
## CITY OF LOS ALTOS

**APPLICATION:** 14-SC-29  
**APPLICANT:** S. Benzing Architect/A. Tekiyeh  
**SITE ADDRESS:** 1251 S. Springer Road

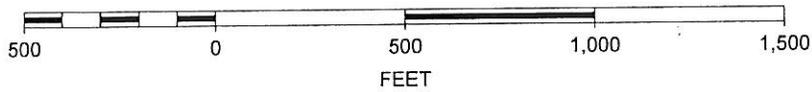


Not to Scale

# VICINITY MAP



SCALE 1 : 6,000



**CITY OF LOS ALTOS**

**APPLICATION:** 14-SC-29  
**APPLICANT:** S. Benzing Architect/A. Tekiyeh  
**SITE ADDRESS:** 1251 S. Springer Road

# ATTACHMENT D

## VIS/A NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING

I HAVE REVIEWED THE PLAN & HAVE  
NO OBJECTIONS:

NAME	ADDRESS
• Montal Resmussen	1281 S Springer Rd. Los Altos, CA 94024
• Wendy Keller	1261 S. Springer Rd. Los Altos, CA 94024
• David Astor Isma Astor	720 Brentwood Ct Los Altos CA 94024
• Bennett	1235 S. Springer Rd LOS ALTOS, CA 94024
• ARAYANGAR ARTHI ARYANGAR	723 BRENTWOOD CT. LOS ALTOS, CA 94024
• Richard Porticos Karin Porticos	1225 S. Springer Rd Los Altos, CA 94024
• Bonnie Richter	722 Brentwood Ct LOS ALTOS, CA 94024
• Wells Richter	722 Brentwood Ct LOS ALTOS 94024
• Barbara Homayun	1271 S. Springer Rd LOS ALTOS, CA 94024