



DATE: November 24, 2014

AGENDA ITEM # 3

TO: Historical Commission
FROM: Zachary Dahl, Staff Liaison
SUBJECT: 13-H-03 – 10 Yerba Buena Avenue

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval the architectural details and specifications for the main house

BACKGROUND

On October 28, 2013, the Historical Commission reviewed a project on a Historic Resource property that included an addition and remodel to the main house, conversion of the water tower into a second living unit and conversion of the barn (aka carriage house) into a two-car garage. The Commission recommended approval of the project with following condition:

1. Prior to issuance of the building permit, the applicant shall provide architectural details and specifications for the proposed exterior modifications to the main house and accessory buildings for review by the Historical Commission.

Following the Commission's recommendation, the project was reviewed and approved by the Design Review Commission on November 20, 2013 with the above referenced condition.

On April 28, 2014, the Historical Commission reviewed and approved the architectural details and specifications for the first phase of the project; the remodel and rehabilitation of the water tower and barn. A building permit for this work was issued on July 16, 2014 and the project is currently under construction.

DISCUSSION

The architectural details and specifications for second phase of the project, which includes the reorientation, addition/remodel and rehabilitation of the main house, have been prepared per the condition of approval as noted above. As outlined in the letter from the historic architect (Attachment C), the project has been designed to comply with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The letter includes three modifications to the plans: 1) show that the new bargeboard ends will be differentiated from the existing bargeboards; 2) include a note that says deteriorated features will be repaired rather than replaced; and 3) update the elevations to correctly show the historic shingle pattern at the original porch gables. As noted in the letter from the project architect (Attachment B), the plans have been updated to address all three of these comments.

As a designated Historic Resource, the property is required to comply with the standards outlined in the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, but not the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, which require higher thresholds for rehabilitation, restoration and preservation. This higher threshold is only required for designated Historic Landmark properties, so the project is exceeding the City's requirements for historic preservation and restoration of a Historic Resource property. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission approve architectural details and specifications for the main house.

Cc: Greg Evard, Applicant and Architect
Duco and Laurie Pasmooij, Owners

Attachments:

- A. Project Plans
- B. Applicant Letter
- C. Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Letter

FINDINGS

13-H-03 – 10 Yerba Buena Avenue

With regard to the Advisory Review, the Historical Commission finds the following in accordance with Section 12.44.140 of the Municipal Code:

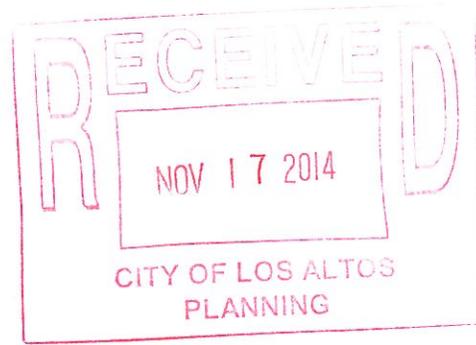
1. The project complies with all provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 12.44);
and
2. The project does not adversely affect the physical integrity or the historic significance of the subject property.

GREGORY P. EVARD, ARCHITECT.

ATTACHMENT A

November 17, 2014

Mr. Zach Dahl, Planner
Los Altos Planning Department
1 North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022



Dear Zach,

I am writing this letter to request a Historical Commission review of the architectural details and specifications for the proposed exterior modifications to the Main House located at 10 Yerba Buena Avenue in Los Altos. Both the Historical Commission and the DRC requested this review as a condition of approval when they previously approved this project. We have been working closely with Archives and Architecture, our historic preservation consultant, and are please to present these detailed drawings for your review. Archives and Architecture has reviewed the plans for compliance with the *Secretary of the Interiors's Standards for Rehabilitation*, exceeding the requirements of review for this local historic resource. Three slight modifications / clarifications were requested by Archives and Architecture, these revisions have been included in the current drawing set and can be found in the following locations:

1. The bargeboard end detail has been clarified with the addition of detail 6/A6.0. Additionally the exterior elevations found on sheets A4.2 through A4.4 have been updated to more accurately depict these bargeboards. Leslie Dill of Archives and Architecture reviewed this detail and approved of the design.
2. A note has been added to the cover sheet and to the exterior elevation sheets referencing standard 6 – direction to repair rather than replace deteriorated features.
3. The shingle pattern found on the front gables and the shingle pattern in general has been updated to reflect the original pattern as requested. The new side porch shingles are differentiated with horizontal coursing as requested.

We appreciate the strong support we have received for the project and look forward to starting construction and bringing this structure back to life.

Very truly yours,

Gregory P. Evard, AIA

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

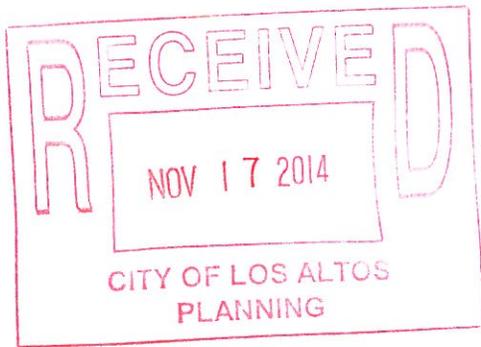
PROPOSED REORIENTATION, REHABILITATION, AND ADDITION PROJECT

of the

HISTORIC WIDEMAN HOUSE

Duco and Laurie Pasmooij Residence

10 Yerba Buena Avenue
(Parcel Number 167-29-059)
Los Altos, Santa Clara County
California



For:

Duco and Laurie Pasmooij
10 Yerba Buena Avenue
(Parcel Number 167-29-059)
Los Altos, CA 94022

Prepared by:

ARCHIVES & ARCHITECTURE LLC
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Leslie A. G. Dill, Partner and Historic Architect

November 3, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Summary

With the incorporation of three slight modifications/clarifications to the final design, the currently proposed project would meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Rehabilitation Standards* (Standards). It is understood that the revisions are very minor, and it is recommended that the revisions should be addressed in the form of “conditions for approval” appended to the City of Los Altos’s planning approval process, and that the revisions be required for inclusion as part of the Building Department submittal. The analysis is summarized here in list form and described more fully in the report below:

It is recommended that the new bargeboard ends be notched slightly differently than the historic bargeboards, to provide additional differentiation within the new addition. (Standards 3 and 9)

The project plans, as planning submittals rather than building documents, do not specifically address the replacement of deteriorated features. It is recommended that language referring to Standard 6 (e.g., “Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced...”) shall be included in the construction permit drawings in the general notes, and that all specific repairs be identified prior to submittal of the building permit drawing set. (Standard 6)

There also appears to be a minor drafting error on the drawings. The historic shingle pattern at the original porch gables is shown horizontal; however, the original pattern at these gables is angled, following the gabled form. For this review, it is assumed that the original pattern will be preserved at the historic gables, and that the new side porch will have horizontal shingles, as a differentiation. (Standard 9)

Note that this house rehabilitation project was previously approved by the City of Los Altos with regard to the proposed reorientation and overall form of the proposed massing. This report provides additional review of the project with regard to the proposed treatment of detailing and materials.

Report Intent

Archives & Architecture, LLC was retained by Duco and Laurie Pasmooij to conduct a Secretary of the Interior’s Standards Review of the proposed reorientation, rehabilitation and addition project proposed for a historic house and associated outbuildings at 10 Yerba Buena Avenue, Los Altos, California. For this report, Archives & Architecture was asked to review the plans, exterior elevations, and site plan of the house rehabilitation phase to determine if the work is compatible with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* (Standards). The Standards are understood to be a common set of guidelines for the review of historic buildings and are used by many communities during the environmental review process to determine the potential impact of a project on an identified resource.

The project has been divided into two phases of construction. First reviewed was an overall conceptual design of the form of the proposed massing and spatial relationships of all three buildings on the site, as well as a proposed reorientation of the house. The work was determined to be compatible with the Standards and approved with regard to potential zoning concerns. The barn and water tower project was then reviewed for its compatibility with the Standards, and that phase of work is currently under construction. The intent of the current report is to provide additional review of the house rehabilitation phase of construction, to determine that the materials and detailing of the design meet the Secretary’s Standards, and to confirm that the previously reviewed massing and site plan has remained consistent with the Standards.

Qualifications

Leslie A. G. Dill, Partner of the firm Archives & Architecture, has a Master of Architecture with a certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Virginia. She is licensed in California as an architect. Ms. Dill is listed with the California Office of Historic Preservation as meeting the requirements to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the professions of Historic Architect and Architectural Historian in compliance with state and federal environmental laws. The Northwest Information Center utilizes the criteria of the National Park Service as outlined in 36 CFR Part 61.

Review Methodology

For this series of reports, Leslie Dill viewed the exterior of the residence in its current configuration, the accessory buildings in their current configuration and condition, and reviewed the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Form 523 (DPR523 Form), written by Archives & Architecture, LLC (A&A), San José, California, dated May 7, 2013. Ms. Dill, the architect, Gregory P. Evard, Architect, AIA, and the owner, Duco Pasmooij, had a series of written and verbal discussions of the property, its significance, the character-defining features of the resources, and the proposed design. Some clarifications and revisions were made prior to each submittal and review.

In an initial report dated September 6, 2013, Ms. Dill evaluated, according to the Standards, the reorientation and massing of the proposed design that was electronically forwarded as progress prints from the architect, dated August 26, 2013. The overall project was presented as an early stage of design, and was not reviewed for full compatibility with the Standards. The project was determined by the City of Los Altos to be compatible with the Standards with regard to massing and spatial relationships of the buildings, and zoning findings were established.

A second report from A&A, dated April 21, 2014, presented a review of the rehabilitation of the detached water tower and garage/barn. Ms. Dill evaluated, according to the Standards, the proposed design that was electronically forwarded as submittal prints from the architect, dated April 17, 2014. The project was determined by the City of Los Altos to be compatible with the Standards, and the project is currently under construction.

In October, 2014, Leslie Dill and Greg Evard met in person to discuss the proposed materials and detailing of the house rehabilitation project. The design was subsequently finalized and forwarded electronically to A&A. This report is an evaluation of the set of drawings sheets dated October 27, 2014. The sheets include the cover sheet, A1.1, A2.3-2.5, A3.1, A4.2-4.4, A5.1-5.2, A6.0, S0.1-0.2, S2.0-2.3, S5.1-5.2, and S8.1-8.2. Where it adds to clarity and consolidates the analysis, this report includes some of the previous report language with regard to massing and orientation, as well as providing new analysis of the materials and detailing of the current submittal.

Disclaimers

This report addresses the project plans in terms of historically compatible design of the exterior of the reoriented residence. The consultant has not undertaken and will not undertake an evaluation or report on the structural conditions or other related safety hazards that might or might not exist at the site and building, and will not review the proposed project for structural soundness or other safety concerns. The Consultant has not undertaken analysis of the site to evaluate the potential for subsurface resources.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Character of the Existing Resource

Archives & Architecture, LLC (A&A) evaluated the architectural significance of the historic house at 10 Yerba Buena Avenue, in the DPR 523, dated May 7, 2013. A&A described the house as

...presently listed on the City's Inventory as a Historic Resource under Municipal Code Section 12.44.060. It was identified in the City's first survey in the 1980s by Patricia Leach, and later recorded by Glory Anne Laffey in 1997, and reviewed by the Historical Commission placed the property on the Inventory on September 28, 1997.

Leach had first noted the special qualities of the site due to the extant tankhouse, and Sheila McElroy, as a part of a 2010-2011 Inventory Update for the City of Los Altos indicated that the property had local significance for its distinctive architecture, giving the property a California Historical Resource Status Code of 5S1.

The listing was reviewed as a part of this investigation and evaluation, and it was found that the property continues to meet the criteria for designation as a Historic Resource according the Municipal Code Section 12.44.040:

- A. Age: the house on the subject property is over 101 years old and meets the age criteria.*
- B. Integrity: the property, as noted on the previous page, retains most, but not all of its, historical integrity over time as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity; particularly, the setting has changed a great deal over time. However, the majority of the original character-defining materials and the workmanship of this house have been preserved, and the property reflects the original design and feeling from its period of significance, which is 1911.*
- C. Significance: the property is clearly significant for its architecture/design, as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Arts and Crafts era in its Craftsman design. None of the associated persons, as explained in the two previous pages, are important to history, and no events or patterns are associated with the property that can be said to have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of local or regional history, or cultural heritage of California or the United States. The property also is unlikely to yield important information about prehistory or history that is unknown at this time.*

The property therefore appears eligible for the California Register under Criterion (3), as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of Craftsman design related to the Craftsman era in residential architecture of about 1905–1925.

Summary of the Proposed Project

The proposed project, as presented in the set of architectural drawings noted above, includes the 90-degree reorientation of the historic house, the rehabilitation of the house including a new floor plan, new foundation and basement living area, some reconfiguring of windows, entrances, and trim, and the addition of a new wing at the proposed southeast corner.

SECRETARY'S STANDARD'S REVIEW:

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Standards), originally published in 1977 and revised in 1990, include ten standards that present a recommended approach to repair, while preserving those portions or features that convey a resource's historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Accordingly, Standards states that, "Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values". Following is a summary of the review with a list of the Standards and associated analysis for this project:

1. **"A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships."**

Analysis: There is no change of current use proposed for this residential property.

2. **"The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided."**

Analysis: As previously reviewed, and confirmed in this review, the overall form of the main house will retain its character-defining massing and form during the reorientation project: the symmetrical front gabled porch wings will be prominently maintained, the main gabled roof will retain its overall dimensions and form, the rear shed dormers and inset balcony (although altered) will retain the relative form and size. The size and location of the side bump-outs (the dining room bay window and the reportedly non-historic east-side French door bay) will be preserved. The reorientation of the house will somewhat alter the spatial relationships of the three extant structures on the property, but the resultant configuration is compatible with the original house design, and the open space will be preserved.

The curved front masonry patio will have to be demolished and reconstructed as part of the reorientation. Because this element is proposed for reconstruction, the impact is negligible. The proposed removal of the rear entrance (currently used as the front entrance) does not affect historic material, as the porch was added by the previous owners.

3. **"Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken."**

Analysis: There is only one proposed change that might be mistaken for an original feature; the rear gable-end bargeboards are shown to match the original historic design. Because this is such a prominent historic feature, and the proposed new bargeboards are a prominent part of the new additions, it is recommended that the notch detail of the new bargeboards be revised to provide additional differentiation.

All other new elements have adequate differentiation. See also Standard 9.

4. **"Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved."**

Analysis: It is understood that no existing changes to the building have acquired historic

significance in their own right. Specifically, the rear porch addition (currently used as the front entrance) is not historically significant and can be removed or maintained with no impact on the Standards.

5. **“Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.”**

Analysis: The features and finishes that characterize the main house are proposed to be preserved in this project. Specifically, the house will continue to have shingles on the upper walls and lap-siding on the lower walls, and include a watertable trim band at its historic location. The front focal windows will be preserved, as will a majority representation of the pattern of historic windows around the remainder of the house. The leaded-glass front door remains, as well. The window and door trim is shown preserved. The gabled roofs are maintained, with their bell-cast form, exposed rafter tails and notched and splayed, heavy bargeboards. The shed dormers have been altered, so the new design retains these features and repairs and incorporates their forms into the new design. The bay windows are also preserved. The tapered porch pedestals are shown preserved, and the tapered pony wall has been preserved and the design detail where the tapered wall is supported above a light well has been well-considered. The angled shingle pattern at the front gable ends will be preserved. The steel I-beam that spans the front-porch, originally wrapped in wood trim, is shown preserved in its current painted/exposed condition, an appropriate preservation technique, as long as the physical condition of the metal can be protected in this form. The distinctive curved brick wall, with its clinker brick accents and heavy pedestal corners, will be disassembled and rebuilt as part of the reorientation process.

6. **“Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.”**

Analysis: In general, the historic features are shown as preserved in the project drawings. The project plans, as planning rather than building documents, do not specifically address the replacement of deteriorated features. It is recommended that language referring to this Standard shall be included in the construction permit drawings, and that all specific repairs be identified prior to submittal of the building permit drawing set.

7. **“Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.”**

Analysis: No chemical treatments are shown as proposed in this proposed phase of work. The project is proposed for painting, and the trim is noted to be sanded and primed; this is an appropriately gentle treatment for paint preparation for wood.

8. **“Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.”**

Analysis: Archeological resources are not evaluated in this report.

9. **“New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.”**

Analysis:

As previously analyzed, the proposed rear-corner addition and proposed small bay windows and side entrances are compatible with the original house design in form, size, massing, and location. Specifically, it was noted that the footprint of the two-story addition is adequately narrow with respect to the main footprint to create an appropriately sized roof form. The addition’s dormer roofs break up the expanse of the addition’s main roof in a similar and compatible form of the main historic house. The proposed bay windows and the small wings of the addition break up the wall planes, creating a scale of small bump-out forms and rooflets similar to the historic design.

The current design of the project includes additions and alterations that are both compatible and differentiated from the historic design. Specifically, the siding, window size, type and lite pattern, the various trims, handrails, and porch detailing meet this standard, with minor recommendations for revision/clarification as noted below.

The proposed new siding matches the historic siding, but is clearly and subtly differentiated by a change in height of the watertable. The historic shingle pattern at the new and original porch gables is shown horizontal; however, the original pattern at the historic gable ends is angled, following the gabled form. For this review, it is assumed that the original pattern will be preserved at the historic gables, and that the new side porch will have horizontal shingles, as an elegant differentiation. The stucco wall finish at the basement provides an appropriately differentiated base for the visually “heavy” house.

The proposed new windows are compatible in scale with the historic windows and are proportionately sized and placed with respect to the historic fenestration configuration. The proposed windows have appropriately scaled multi-lite upper sash, while having a differentiated 4/1 pattern in lieu of the historic 6/1 and other multi-lite patterned casements and accents. Some of the proposed windows at the proposed addition match the new detailing at the water tower; this creates a sense of unity within the larger property, and provides a consistency of differentiation that can be discerned. The leaf width of the rear porch doors is adequately narrow to provide a compatible scale with the overall size and scale of the house and fenestration. They are clearly differentiated by their modern style and overall opening size.

The rear gable-end bargeboards and proposed new side-porch bargeboards are shown to match the original historic design. Because this is such a prominent historic feature, and the proposed new bargeboards are a prominent part of the new additions, it is recommended that the flare and notch detail of the new bargeboards be revised to provide additional differentiation.

The proposed handrails at the light wells include brick posts that break up the horizontal lines of railings. The form and scale of these posts are compatible with the porch posts and other original features, but are differentiated by their material. The brick is compatible with the historic front brick patio, but will be differentiated by form and utility. The metal balusters are simple and modern, but the raised base provides a traditional scale, and the brick posts break up a design element that might otherwise seem too stark.

10. **“New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.”**

Analysis: The essential form and integrity of the historic property would be maintained in this phase of the project. The alterations would appear to be appropriately reversible through the removal of fenestration and the replacement of matching siding.

Conclusion

With the incorporation of slight modifications/clarifications to the final design, the currently proposed project would meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties – Rehabilitation Standards* (Standards). It is understood that the revisions are very minor, and it is recommended that the revisions should be addressed in the form of “conditions for approval” appended to the City of Los Altos’s planning approval process, and that the revisions be required for inclusion as part of the Building Department submittal.

These modifications/clarifications include the revision of the proposed bargeboard end design, the inclusion of language about the repair of historic fabric, the correction of the shingle pattern at the front porch gable ends, and the clarification of the new shingle pattern at the proposed side porch.