



DATE: February 22, 2016

AGENDA ITEM # 2

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Historical Commission
FROM: Zachary Dahl, Planning Services Manager
SUBJECT: 15-SC-48 and 14-H-03 – 980 Covington Road

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of applications 15-SC-48 and 14-H-03 to the Design Review Commission subject to the findings and conditions

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a historic review application for alterations and additions to the historic main house and tank house (water tower) located at 980 Covington Road. The historic main house will be rotated 90 degrees and moved from its current location toward Miramonte Avenue in order to be located on Parcel B. An addition of 518 square feet on the first story and 119 square feet on the second story of the main house is also proposed. The water tower will be moved closer to the exterior side property line along Miramonte Avenue and a new two-car garage will be constructed next to it in order to provide covered parking for the main house. The application will require design review approval from the Design Review Commission.

BACKGROUND

The main house on the property was designed with the Shingle Style of architecture and was originally constructed between 1902 and 1905. At the time of construction, the house was located on a 70-acre fruit ranch owned by Edwin and Annie Emerson. The tank house was constructed around the same period as the main house, but the exact date is not known. In the 1970s, the tank house was moved from elsewhere on the ranch to its current location near Miramonte Avenue on the rear of the property. The larger detached garage that is built around the base of the tank house was constructed after the move and is not considered historic or part of the original structure. The property's historic property evaluation is included in Attachment E.

On September 22, 2014, the Historical Commission reviewed and recommended approval of a tentative map that subdivided the subject property into two lots. The tentative map included the relocation of the main house and water tower, and variances to allow the main house to encroach into the daylight plane and second story side yard setback, exceed the main structure height limit of 27 feet, and the water tower to exceed the accessory structure height limit of 12 feet. On March 24, 2015, the City Council approved the tentative map and variances. As part of the approval, the following condition was included:

1. The applicant shall relocate the existing historic structures to Parcel B. This includes providing architectural details and exterior specifications for the main house and water tower for review by the Historical Commission, receiving design review approval and obtaining a building permit.

DISCUSSION

In order to complete the subdivision and record the final map, the relocations of the main house and water tower need to be approved. Since the main house includes an addition to the second story, approval from the Design Review Commission is also required. For this historic review and recommendation, the Historical Commission should focus on the proposed architectural details and alterations to the main house and water tower. The project's historical consultant, Bonnie Bamburg with Urban Programmers, provided a Secretary of the Interior's Standards review letter to ensure that the project is maintaining the physical integrity and historical significance of both structures (Attachment C). As outlined in the report, the project will comply with the Standards provided that the design for the reconstructed porch is updated to incorporate wood flooring and wood steps with bull-nosing, and a simple wood style railing (Condition No. 2).

Additional information has also been provided relating to how the historic structures will be moved from their current locations (Attachment D). As outlined in the scope of work, relocation of both structures can be accomplished while maintaining their physical integrity.

Overall, based on the project plans and attached documentation, the project is in compliance with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and will be maintaining the physical integrity and historical significance of the historic structures. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the project.

Cc: Chapman Design Associates, Applicant and Designer
John Walker, Property Owner

Attachments:

- A. Application
- B. Area and Vicinity Maps
- C. Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review Letter
- D. House Movers Scope of Work
- E. Historic Property Evaluation – 980 Covington Road

FINDINGS

15-SC-48 and 14-H-03 – 980 Covington Road

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.

CONDITIONS

15-SC-48 and 14-H-03 – 980 Covington Road

1. The recommendation is based on the plans received on February 8, 2016 and the written application materials provided by the applicant, except as may be modified by these conditions.
2. Update the project design as follows:
 - a. Reconstruct the porch using wood flooring and wood steps with bull-nosing; and
 - b. The reconstructed porch/deck should use a simple wood style railing.

ATTACHMENT A



CITY OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL APPLICATION

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

Permit # 1106950

<input type="checkbox"/>	One-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial/Multi-Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Review
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Two-Story Design Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rezoning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Variance	<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"/>	Sidewalk Display Permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appeal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historical Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Project Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Project Address/Location: 980 COVINGTON

Project Proposal/Use: RESIDENTIAL Current Use of Property: RESIDENTIAL

Assessor Parcel Number(s): 189-11-068 Site Area: .48

New Sq. Ft.: 636.85 Altered/Rebuilt Sq. Ft.: 601.25 Existing Sq. Ft. to Remain: 3011.5

Total Existing Sq. Ft.: 3240.75 Total Proposed Sq. Ft. (including basement): 3648.35

Applicant's Name: CHAPMAN DESIGN

Telephone No.: (650) 941-6890

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: 620 S. EL MONTE

INFO@WJCDA.COM

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, 94022

Property Owner's Name: JOHN WALKER

Telephone No.: (650) 906-8490

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: 980 COVINGTON

john.walker@vistage.com

City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, 94022

Architect/Designer's Name: WALTER CHAPMAN

Telephone No.: (650) 941-6890

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: 620 S. EL MONTE

INFO@WJCDA.COM

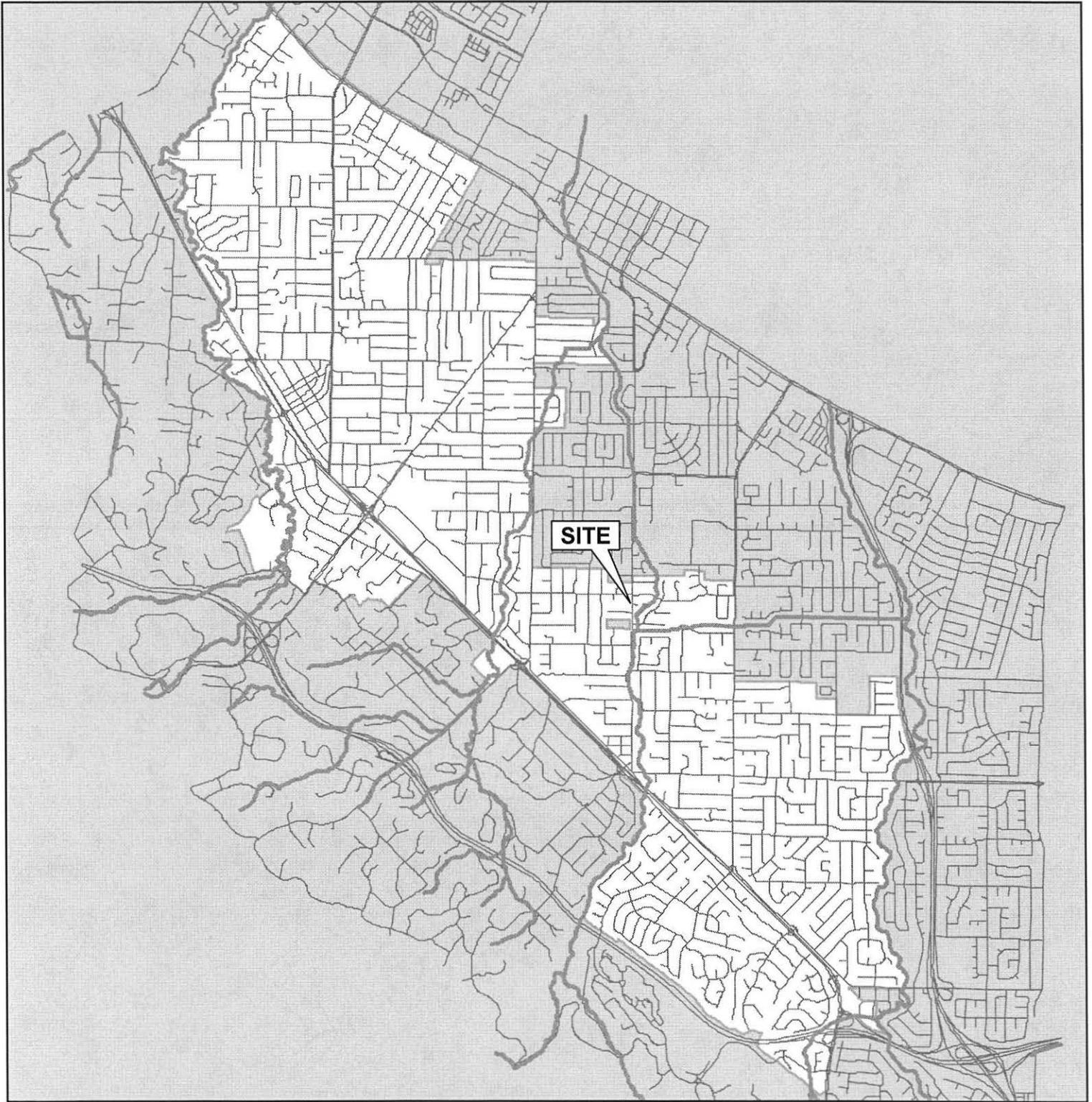
City/State/Zip Code: LOS ALTOS, 94022

*** 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)

15-SC-48 and 14-H-03

AREA MAP



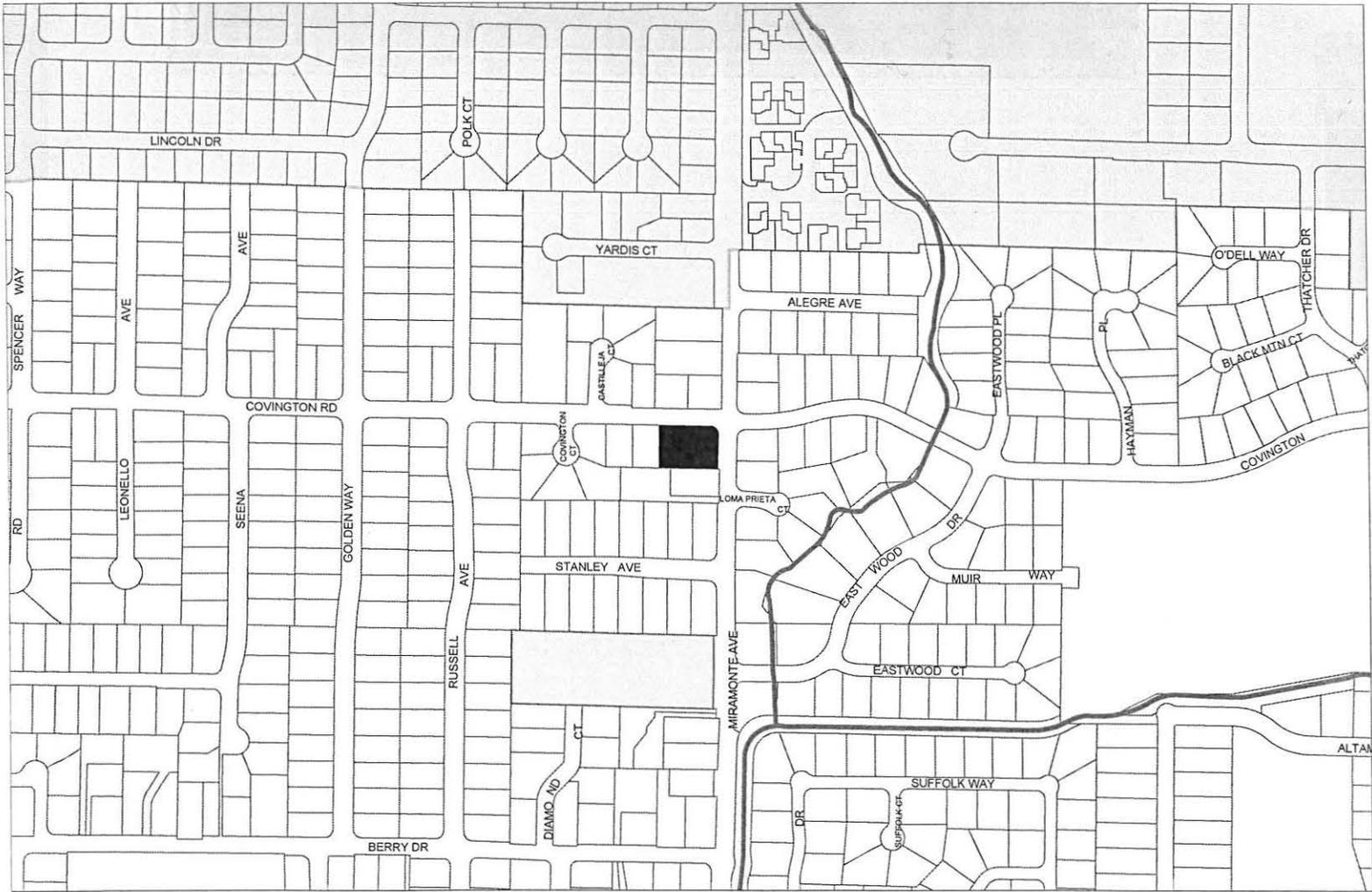
CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 15-SC-48 and 14-H-03
APPLICANT: Chapman Design Associates/ J. Walker
SITE ADDRESS: 980 Covington Road

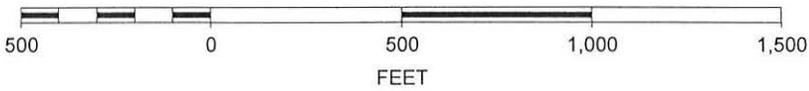


Not to Scale

VICINITY MAP



SCALE 1 : 6,000



CITY OF LOS ALTOS

APPLICATION: 15-SC-48 and 14-H-03
APPLICANT: Chapman Design Associates/ J. Walker
SITE ADDRESS: 980 Covington Road

January 7, 2016

Zach Dahl
Planning Services Manager
City of Los Altos
1 North San Antonio Street
Los Altos CA 94022

Via Email: [Zach Dahl \(ZDahl@losaltosca.gov\)](mailto:ZDahl@losaltosca.gov)

Subject: Edward L Emerson House, 980 Covington Way, Los Altos

Dear Mr. Dahl,

At the request of Mr. John Walker (owner of the Edward L. Emerson House), Urban Programmers has reviewed the revised proposed planes for the rehabilitation of the historic resource property. The review was requested to evaluate the changes to the previously reviewed plans that were found to be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, and to determine if the new proposed changes were in conformance with the "Standards"

The changes we noted to the plans previously reviewed:

1. A second story addition to the rear of the house to provide a new bathroom. This is above the addition to the rear of the building shown in the previous plans.
2. The basement has been eliminated
3. A railing has been added around the porch and deck.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings were created by the National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division in 1978 to provide a framework to guide rehabilitation work for projects that were Certified Historic Structures and applied to use investment tax credits. Since that time the "Standards" have been expanded by introducing element specific guidance in the "Guidelines" and these have been adopted by many governmental agencies to promote the same level of guidance to projects that are determined to be local landmarks and/or historic resource properties.

"Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."¹

The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.¹

¹ <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>

¹ ibid

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
- 3. Each property shall 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 buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
- 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*
- 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*
- 8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.³*

To evaluate the proposed changes it is necessary to identify the character defining elements of the historic resource (house). The features were first identified in the DPR 523 prepared by CIRCA Historic Property Development in July 2011 and expanded in the revised and updated DPR prepared by Urban Programmers in December 2013.

Character Defining Features are those elements that set the historic building apart from other resources and communicate the design, materials, period, and construction of the building. These include:

The size and massing in a one-and-a-half story form with an irregular footprint; steeply pitched front-facing gable roof with hipped dormers; deep eave overhangs with boxed eaves; slight flare at the base of each gable clad in diamond shaped shingles; steeply pitched gables on the side façade (these additions have gained significance over time); dentils at the cornice line; triangular vents beneath gable peaks; wood shingles at each gable face and dormer; wood drop lap siding;

³ <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm>

Palladian window with decorative wood balconette; one-over-one double-hung wood windows, and several square fixed bay windows with fixed rectangular transoms (with molded sills and a dentil-trimmed meeting rail).

Proposed modifications and revisions to the plans prepared by Chapman Design Associates, dated 11/20/2015.

1. On the rear facade, a previously shown addition to replace the existing (non –original) addition and a newly proposed second-story addition to house a bathroom.

Standard 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

The proposed change encourages the continued historic use as a single family residence

Standard 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The historic character of the building appears to be preserved in the revised plan. The area shown for the addition is a secondary façade and does not have the character defining elements that are so distinctive on the front and side facades. Previous additions and alterations have removed the original materials. The area is not one that characterizes the building.

Standard 3 Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

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

The proposed addition is attached to the lesser façade on the rear of the building where a previous addition had been constructed in the past. The proposed new additions are compatible in design and massing with the rear façade of the building. They design is plain with simple wood frame windows and no ornamentation. The height and massing is restrained and does not breach the roof line or sides of the building's rear façade. The plan does not show the additions have ornamentation or copy the architectural details of the historic resource. The addition is plain in style with simple wood frame windows. The additions could be further differentiated by the use of vertical board siding or with a different shade of paint.

Standard 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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.

However unlikely, should the proposed addition be removed in the future the essential forma and integrity of the historic building would not be impaired and repairs to the connecting areas of the historic building could be repaired to the original form.

Finding: The proposed additions appear to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings- Standards 1, 2, 3, 8, and 10

2. Eliminating the basement after the historic house is relocated on the property.

The basement is considered a secondary or tertiary space. The loss of the basement is unfortunate but it does not violate the "Standards."

Standard 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

Standard 3. Each property shall 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 buildings, shall not be undertaken.

Although there is not a basement, the height of the building is a character defining feature and must remain the same elevation as it has been historically. The height to the first level floor plate must remain at the historical elevation to preserve the proportions of the design. Retaining the same first floor plate elevation maintains the historic composition of five steps to the porch.

When the building is relocated and the porch and steps reconstructed, the porch should have wood board flooring and steps must be constructed of wood with the steps having bull-noising that creates a shadow line- a historically important stair detail.

Finding: Following the Standards and Guidelines to retain the height and proportions of the building and reconstruct the porch using wood flooring and wood steps with bull-noising complies with the "Standards" 2 and 3

3. A railing around the veranda porch/deck is required to meet the specifications prescribed in the current health and safety code.

Standard 3. Each property shall 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 buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The proposed railing around the reconstructed porch/deck is shown in decorative metal. Decorative metal is not appropriate to this era and style of building. Using decorative metal for the railing is not consistent with Standard 3 because it is conjectural and introduces elements from a different era and style. At this time, the style of the original railing, baluster and cap rail is not known. Therefore, the railing should follow the materials of the typical design style and be wood, in a simple design of posts, balusters and cap rail that does not try to imitate or copy railings from other eras or buildings.

Finding: The proposed plan to use a decorative metal railing does not comply with the "Standards" The railing should be redesigned to a simple wood style in order to meet the "Standards" by complying with Standard 3.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed relocation and rehabilitation of the historic Edward L Emerson House. Should there be other questions regarding the "Standard" I would be available to discuss the issue with you.

Best regards,



Bonnie Bamberg

Kelly Bros. House Movers

2269 Will Wool Drive
San Jose, CA 95125
Contractor's License: 661719
kellybrothers@mail.com
Phone: 408-287-9755
Fax: 408-999-0661

Chapman Design Associates
C/O John Walker@vista.com 650-941-6890
980 Covington Road Los Altos, CA

This letter hopefully will answer some of the information Zach Dahl will need for the City of Los Altos Planning Department.

1. Porches will not be removed. Cement steps will be removed.
2. Siding will be removed from plate-line to ground.
3. Possibility of a basement window being removed. House windows are fine.
4. Remove of heater ducts and plumbing where steel beams are located.

Scope of work

1. Steel beams will be installed in order to build a platform under the floor. Once a platform has been completed a unified jacking system will raise the house for the installment of either a dolly-system or a rolling system for the turning and relocating of house as per plan.
2. When the house has been relocated into new position, a cribbing system will be placed to secure the structure. The dolly system or rolling system will be removed at this time. The house will be left approximately 5 feet from floor joist to ground for the installment of the new foundation by others.
3. Kelly Brothers will install necessary cribbing in the interior of building for added security. (As needed)
4. Fireplace will have steel beams installed approximately 1 foot below fireplace hearth which will transfer load/weight to beams.
5. Kelly Brothers recommend that the fireplace be inspected for structural soundness prior to lifting. Kelly Brothers will not be responsible for any damage to the fireplace or chimney.
6. Kelly Brothers will furnish a detail plan showing location of steel beams and interior cribbing by a Structural Engineer.
7. Once a plan has been submitted Kelly Brothers will meet with city to explain in details what will be taking place.

Thank You Howard Kelly

ATTACHMENT E

State of California The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary # _____ HRI # _____ Trinomial _____ NRHP Status Code NA	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> AUG 28 2014 CITY OF LOS ALTOS PLANNING </div>
Other Listings _____ Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____		

Page 1 of 3 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 980 Covington Rd., Los Altos CA

P1. Other Identifier: Edward L. Emerson House (HRI #17)

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County Santa Clara and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad _____ Date 1980 T ; R ; 3 of 3 of Sec ; B.M.

c. Address 980 Covington Road City Los Altos Zip 94024

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10, 580804 mE/ 4135725 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)
APN 189-11-068

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Located in a residential area where most buildings are much newer, the 1.5 story house was constructed between 1902-1905 and sits on a double lot accessed from the street by a driveway. The site is relatively flat and was at one time surrounded by orchards.

The house was designed in the Shingle Style with the character defining front facing gable (steep pitched roof) with hipped gables on each side. The roof extends a broad eave overhanging the lower level. Boxed eaves and the base of each gable has a slight flare that is clad in diamond shaped shingles. Dentils decorate the cornice and triangular vents are set in each gable peak. The roof is clad with slate shingles. Typical of the style the gable and dormer surfaces are clad in wood shingles while the lower level is clad with lapped siding. The porch is set below and behind the upper overhang which is supported by square posts and open on the sides.

(Continued on page 3)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP 2 Single family detached house



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) View W

Front Facade. 9/09/ 2007

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:

Historic Prehistoric Both

Constructed: 1905 family records

*P7. Owner and Address:

John Walker
980 Covington Rd. Los Altos

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

Bonnie Bamburg
Urban Programmers
10710 Ridgeview Avenue
San Jose CA 95127

*P9. Date Recorded: 9/20/2013

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") Los Altos Historic Resource Inventory

*Attachments: NONE Location Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*NRHP Status Code 5S1/3CS

Page 2 of 3

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 980 Covington Road, Los Altos

B1. Historic Name: Edwin Emerson House

B2. Common Name: Emerson House

B3. Original Use: residence

B4. Present Use: residence

*B5. Architectural Style: Shingle Style

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown x Date: _____ Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

Tank house and mature trees

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: David Morey

*B10. Significance: Theme residential architecture Area City of Los Alto

Period of Significance 1906-1963

Property Type house Applicable Criteria NA

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The Emerson House is important in the architectural heritage of Los Altos because it is a very good example of the Shingle style interpreted for a rural fruit ranch setting. It retains a high degree of original design and materials from 1906, and appears to be the only Shingle style and one of the few remaining Los Altos fruit ranch houses from the early 1900s, that retains integrity. The house is eligible for Los Altos Landmark designation and for the California Register of Historic Resources based upon its architecture and association with the Edwin Emerson Family.

The style is very similar to the houses on the east coast designed by William Ralph Emerson (1833-1917) "The Father of the Shingle Style", an architect who practiced in the Boston area. Originally from Illinois, his first house in the true shingle style was constructed in Bar Harbor Main as were several country homes along the eastern coast, for which is best known. If not designed by William Ralph Emerson, it can be assumed that the designer of the house was familiar with Emerson's work.

Although not as individually unique as the architecture, the Emerson family history tells of an east coast family that settled in the Santa Clara Valley and became successful raising fruit. Through the adversity of their house burning they stayed in the area, rebuilt, and continued the hard work of operating a fruit ranch. (Continued on Page 3)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP

*B12. References: City & County public documents, Emerson, Ethel, *The Emerson Home on Mira Monte*, a paper written March 12, 1979

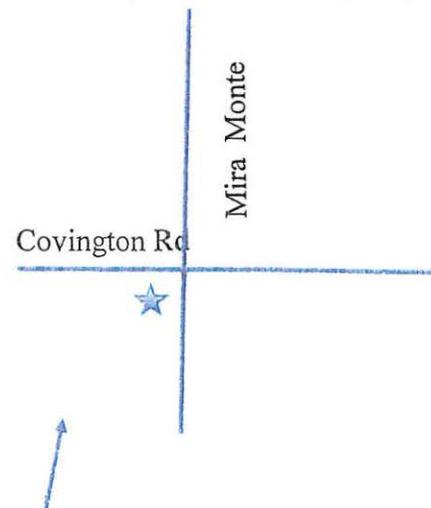
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Bonnie Bamburg

*Date of Evaluation: 9/10/2013

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



Page 3 of 3 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 980 Covington Rd, Los Altos

*Recorded by: Urban Programmers *Date _____ x Continuation Update

P3.Description continued

Fenestration includes a Palladian windows with decorative wood balconette in the center front gable (this is severely deteriorated and has been removed awaiting repair and reinstallation). Other windows include one-over-one double-hung wood frame windows and several square fixed bay windows with fixed rectangular transoms. Windows have a molded lung sill and dentil-trimmed meeting rail. The rear of the house exhibits an addition that encloses a former utility porch using contemporary materials, casement windows and brick. The house retains a high degree of original integrity, with only the rear addition a deviation, and this appears to follow the original foundation line.

The second building on the property is a tank house that has been relocated from the rear of the house to the front side- on the same parcel and altered. The basic structure of the tank house appears to be present within additions that created additional enclosed space for storage and a garage. Although altered and relocated, the tank house is considered a defining feature of the property.

The house is a good example of turn of the century Shingle style in residential architecture which is uncommon in Santa Clara County. The selection of an eastern style demonstrates that the family was aware of trends and brought Eastern architectural styles to the west coast and their ranch in Santa Clara Valley. Unconfirmed is the connection to William Ralph Emerson, "Father of the Shingle Style" residential architecture. If ever confirmed it would make the building even more significant as likely the only west coast example of his work.

This conclusion supports that made by Circa Historic Property Development in July 2011

B13. Significance Continued:

The history of Los Altos begins with the Ohlone, Native Americans who lived on the land for centuries. They were decimated by the illness and lifestyles of the Europeans (Spanish) brought in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Archeological sites in Los Altos give clues to this early population. With Independence from Spain, the Mexican government allowed large Ranchos to be granted to private people, usually in recognition of service. The area which is now Los Altos was part of the 4,438 acre Rancho San Antonio, a land grant given in 1843 to Juan Prado Mesa, a soldier. The area grew with the recognition that it was a fertile plain the large tracts used for grazing were divided and turned into fruit ranches initially by Americans and by 1880 European immigrants experienced in farming and fruit ranching. By the turn of the century the area was recognized for its mild climate and with access to the Southern Pacific Railroad between San Francisco and San Jose a town was promoted by Paul Shoup, President of the Altos Land Company. Although fruit ranching continued unto the 1960s, Los Altos was defined as a residential community by 1909 and has continued to grow with primarily residential development.

The first home of the Edwin Emerson family in Santa Clara County was a farm house constructed by Edwin's uncle Silas Blake Emerson. After the house burned in 1902 Edwin took on the task of building a new home, which took three years to complete. His journal and letters to his wife describe the difficulties getting experienced construction workers to fulfill his plans.¹ The family continued to operate fruit their fruit ranch until 1930 when it was sold. The Emerson family home is associated with the fruit ranching era in the area that became Los Altos.

¹ Ethel Emerson, *The Emerson Home on Mira Monte*, A paper presented to the California History Section of the Los Altos-Mountain View AAUW, March 12, 1979