

5

Examples of multi story homes less than a few houses from our home





Notice of Public Hearing

Hearing Officer

Hillside Development Permit #6335 528 Avon Avenue

Zoning: RS-6-HDSR (Single-Family Residential, 0-6 lots per acre, Hillside District Overlay, San Rafael Area)

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential

Subject: The applicant, Eric Lin, has submitted a Hillside Development Permit application to allow a first floor addition of 226 square feet and a new second floor of 607 square feet to an existing 1,388 square-foot, one-story residence. The resulting square footage for the residence would be 2,221 square feet. The project also involves the construction of a new 400 square-foot, two-car, attached garage. A Hillside Development Permit is required for second floor additions greater than 500 square feet in size in the RS-6, HDSR zoning district. The project will result in the removal of two non-protected trees.

Environmental Determination: This project has been determined to be categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(9); Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 1, §15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities). Section 15301 exempts from environmental review additions, expansions, or alterations to existing structures where there is negligible or no expansion of the use. The project consists of additions to an existing single-family residence; the land use will remain a single-family residence.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Hearing Officer will hold a public hearing to consider the application. The hearing is scheduled on:

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2016
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Permit Center Hearing Room
175 North Garfield Avenue Pasadena, CA 91101
(Enter at Ramona Street Side Entrance)

Public Information: Any interested party or their representative may appear at the meeting and comment on the project. Written comments may also be mailed or delivered to the Hearing Officer at the Current Planning Section address below. If you challenge the matter in Court, you may be limited to raising those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing, or in written correspondence delivered to the Hearing Officer at, or prior to, the public hearing. The file can be reviewed at the Permit Center, 175 North Garfield Avenue by appointment only.

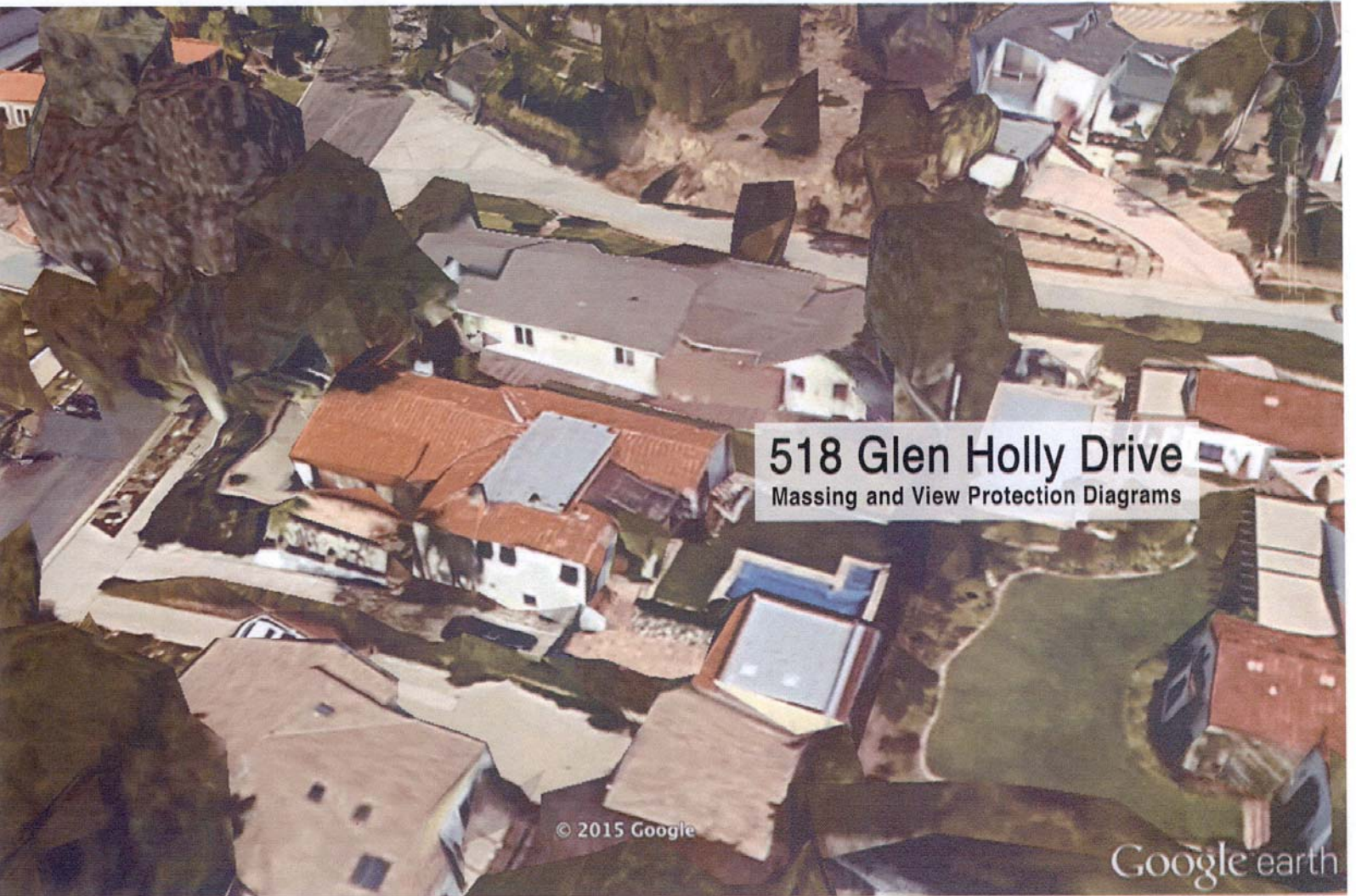
For more information about the project and the related environmental documentation or to schedule an appointment:

Contact Person: Kent Lin
Phone: (626) 744-6817 **Fax:** (626) 396-7271
E-mail: klin@cityofpasadena.net
Website: www.cityofpasadena.net/planning

Mailing Address:
Planning and Community Development Department
Planning Division, Current Planning Section
175 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

ADA: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), listening assistive devices are available with a 24-hour advance notice. Please call (626) 744-4009 or (626) 744-4371 (TDD) to request use of a listening device. Language translation services may be requested with 48-hour advance notice by calling (626) 744-4009.

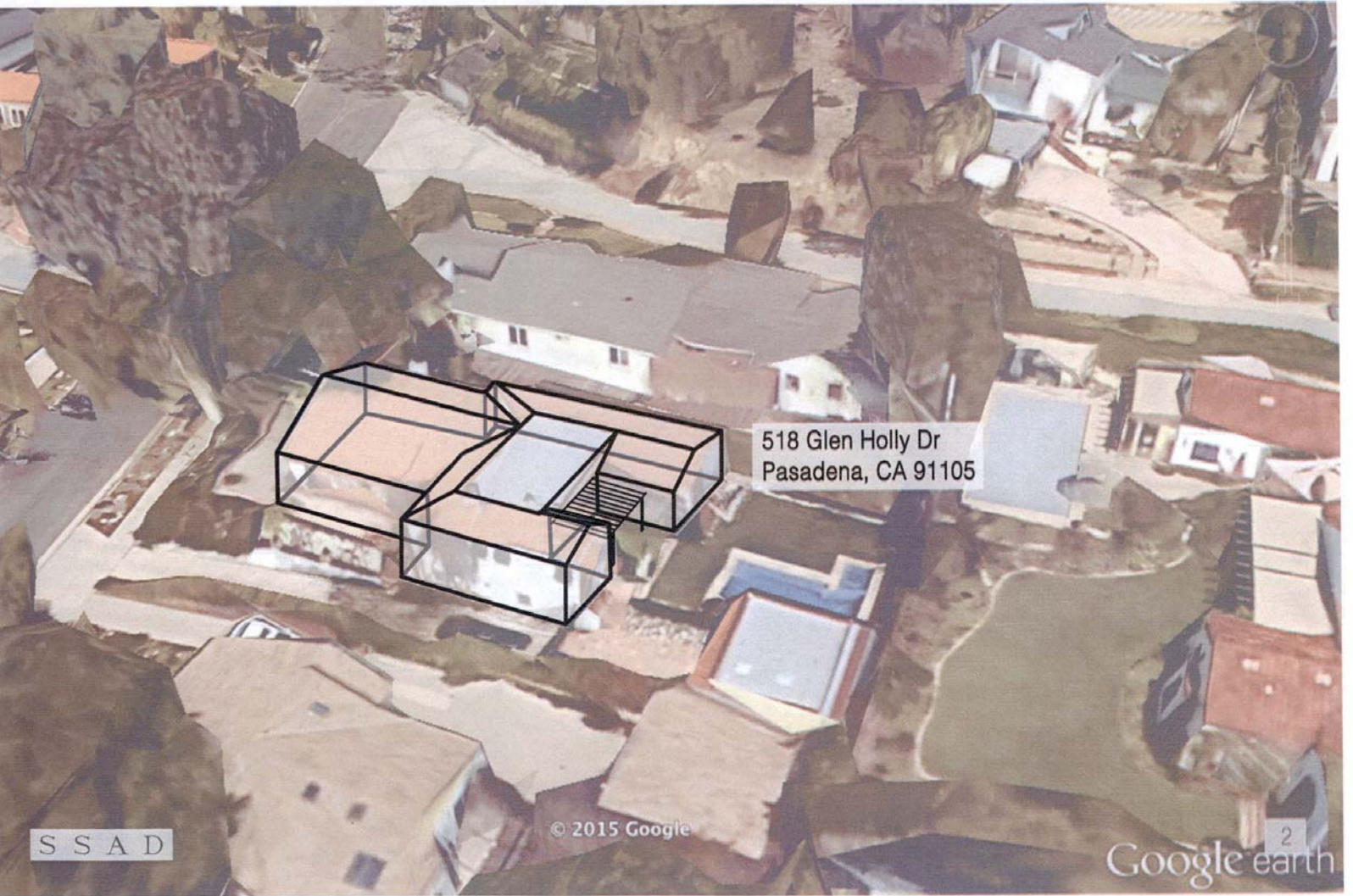
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518 Glen Holly Drive
Massing and View Protection Diagrams

© 2015 Google

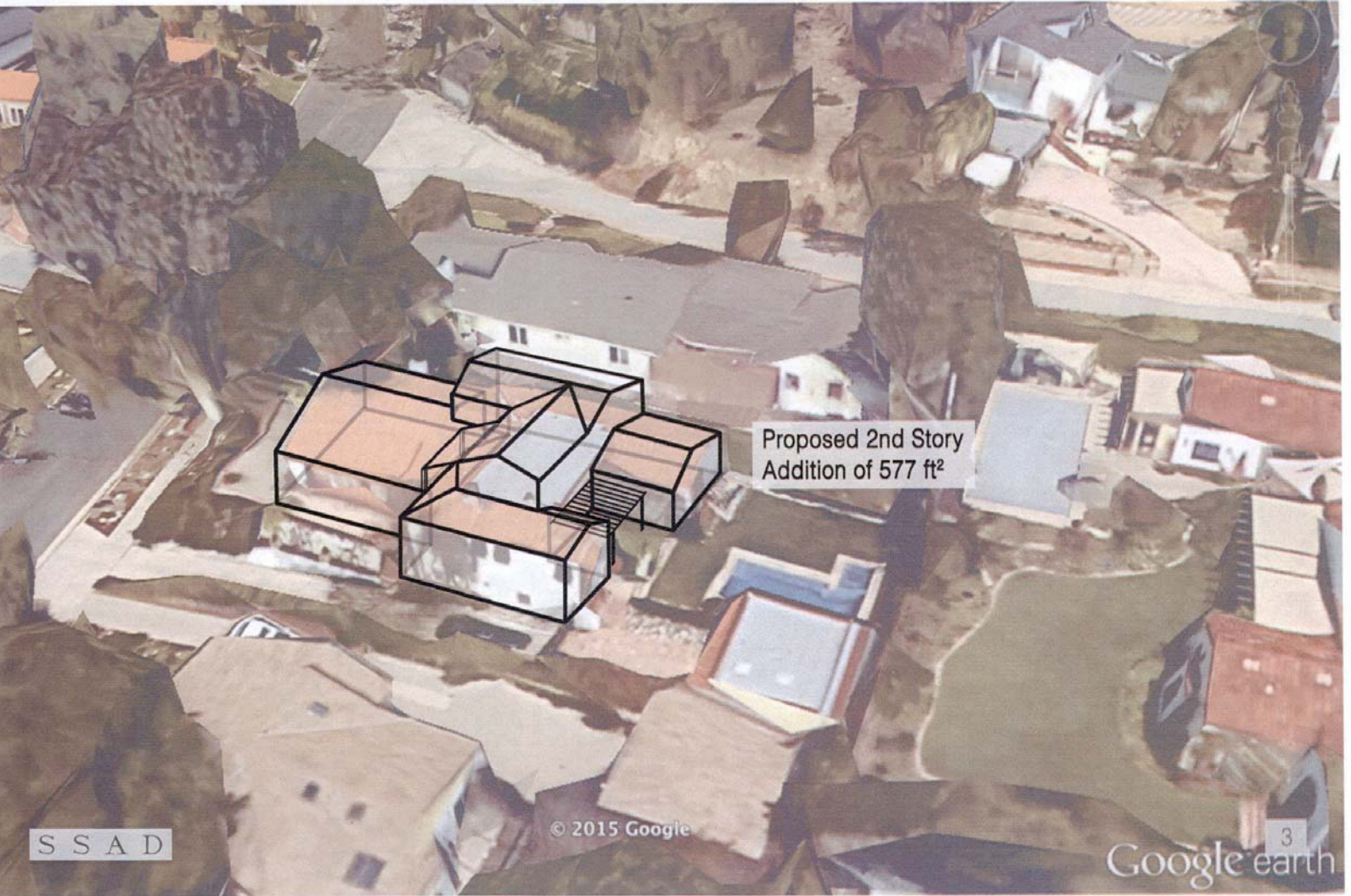
Google earth



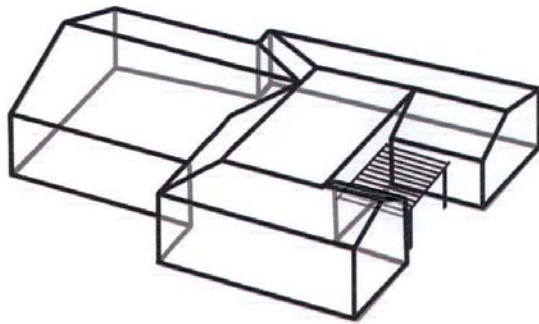
S S A D

© 2015 Google

Google earth



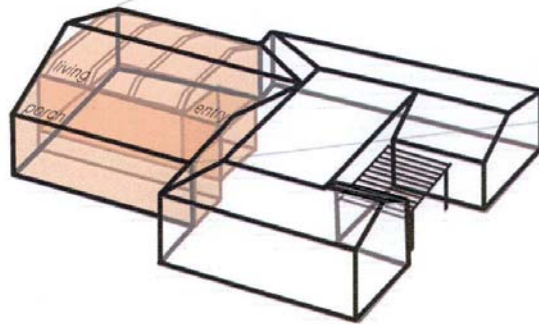
Proposed 2nd Story
Addition of 577 ft²



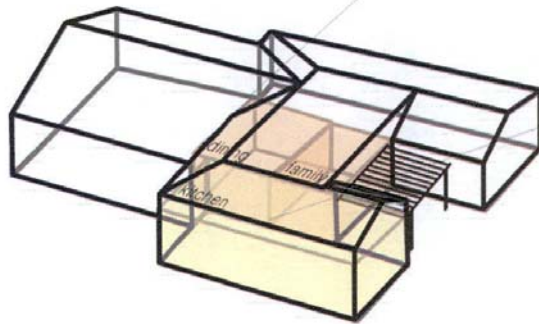
Massing

West of Pasadena city center in a hillside district stands the existing 2-bedroom, 1-bath, 1,547 ft² home.

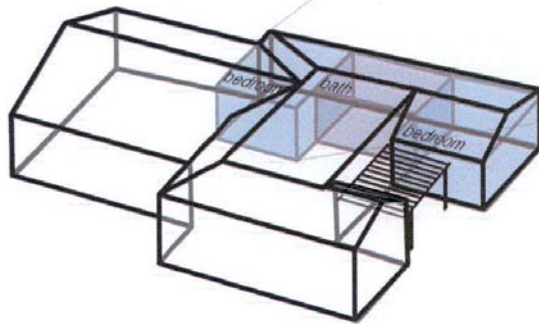
Our intent is to expand on the property by adding the maximum allowed squarefootage and creating a comfortable Master Bedroom Suite, all while keeping intact the building's unique Spanish style and existing architectural integrity.



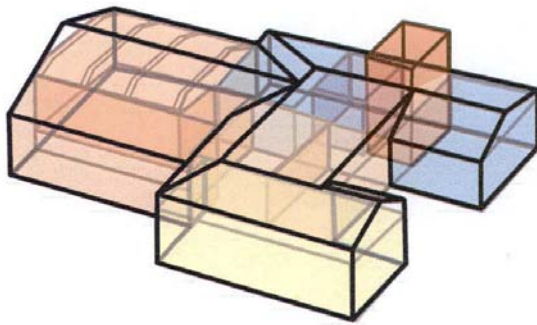
In order to maintain the character of the existing property, any alterations and additions could not impose on the most vital architectural features of the house. These features include but are not limited to: the living room vaulted ceiling and chimney, arched openings in the entryway, the front porch space, and backyard pergola.



To minimize the impact on the building's existing functionality, the overall layout of the building should be left unaltered. This means making as few changes as possible to the spaces that see the most use, such as the kitchen, dining room and family room. While stairwell locations were explored in these areas, it was seen as too imposing on the functions and proportions of the building layout.

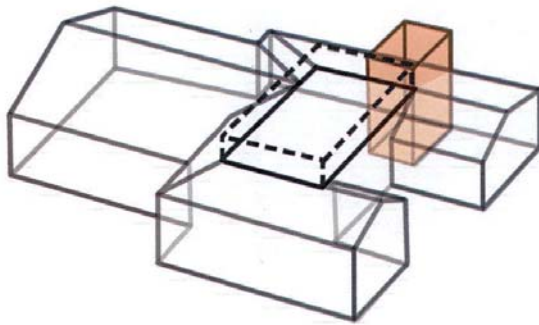


Existing bedrooms and bath are the most flexible spaces. Maintaining the private functionality of a clustered sleeping area while also having a small impact on the overall functionality of the house were primary objectives in determining where to put a staircase.

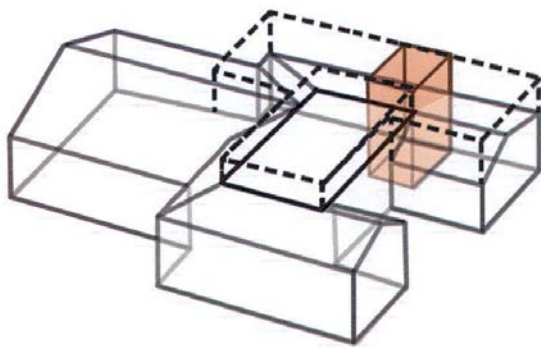


Taking into account the placement of the stair is the first major design decision when constructing a second story. This decision ultimately drives and confines the layout of the proposed second story addition.

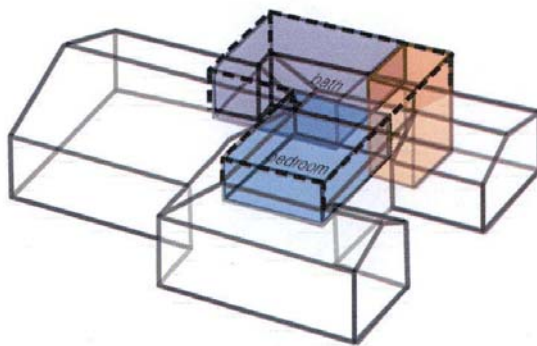
Our main goal in designing any addition is to incorporate the new space into the existing in a way that looks completely premeditated, as if the second story has always been a part of the house. This can be executed in a number of ways, but most importantly for a second story, this means making a minimal impact on an existing pitched roof.



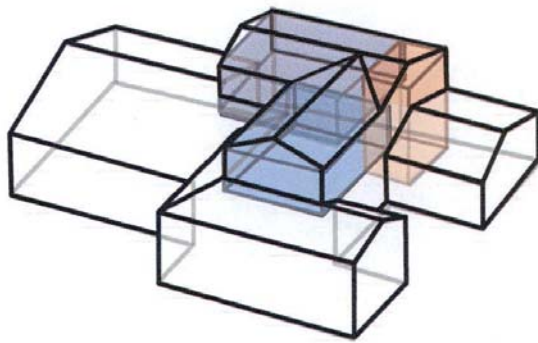
The first obvious choice of where to build a second story space is on top of the only existing flat roof space. This decision has many structural and aesthetic implications, but only accounts for so much of our maximum allowed squarefootage.



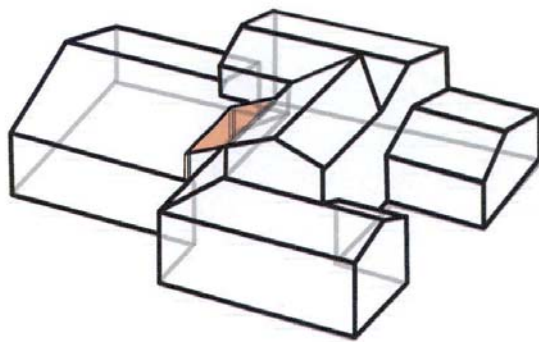
Naturally, in following the shape of the existing building's footprint and by surrounding the proposed staircase, space above the existing master bedroom was considered to meet our maximum allowed squarefootage.



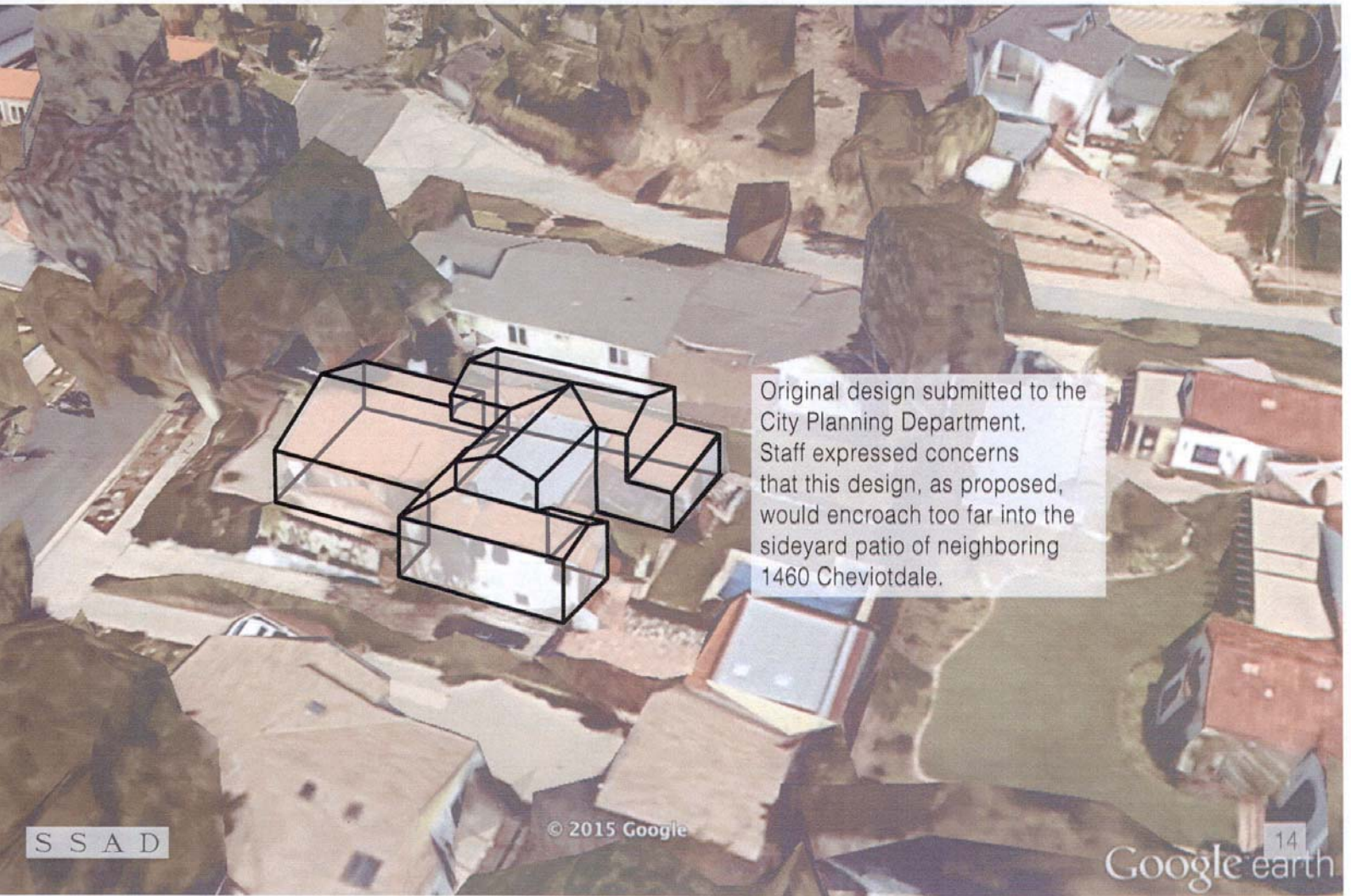
Filling in the 583 ft² maximum allowable space—all while allocating enough room for the master bedroom, laundry, and master bath—pushes the massing of the second story further into the center of the existing building footprint.



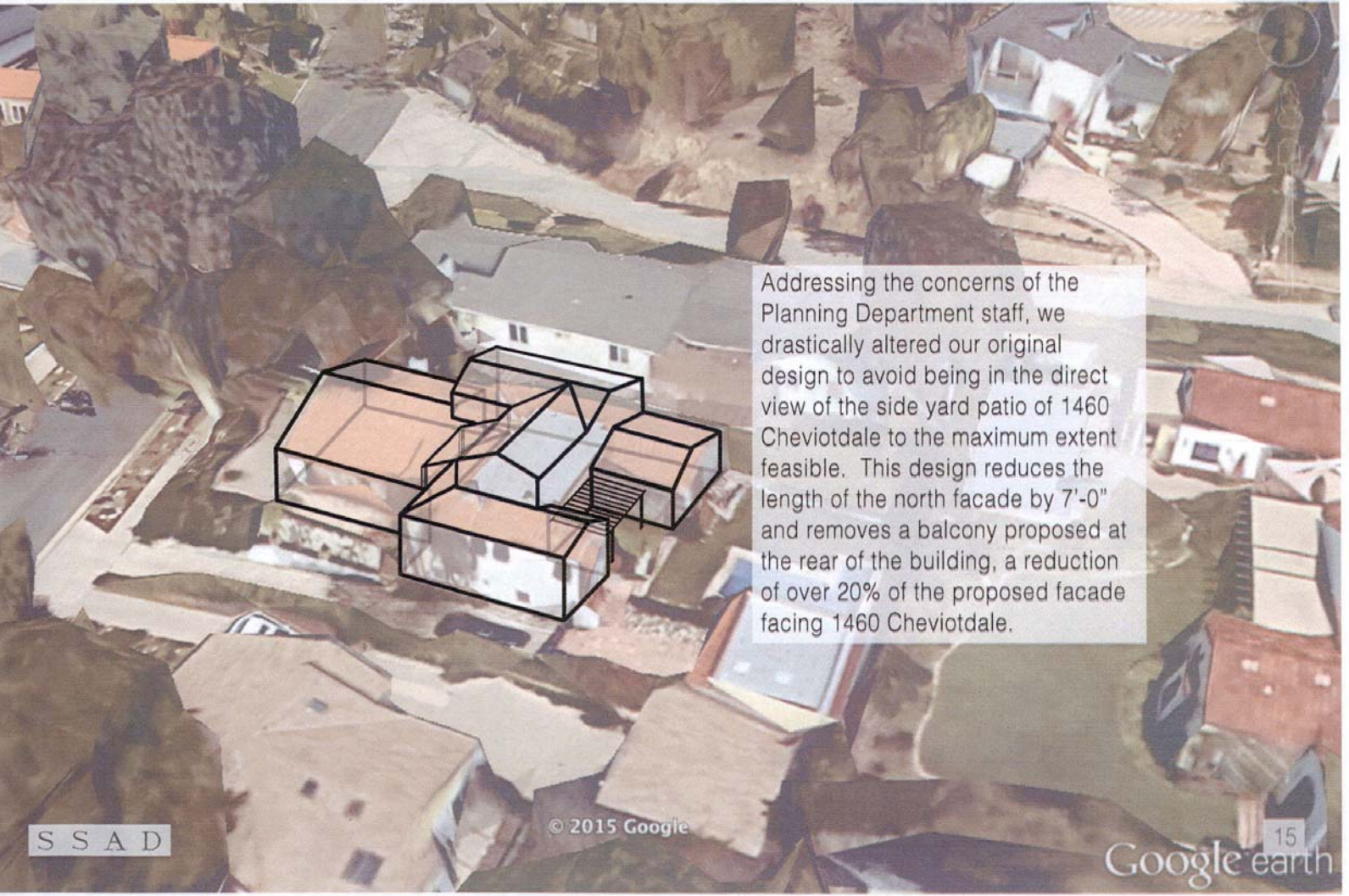
Emulating the existing character of the house, a pitched, clay tile roof is stacked on top of the proposed second story.



A balcony was proposed in the most private location available, out of sight from nearly all adjacent properties. This balcony also emulates the pitched clay tile roof of the existing property.

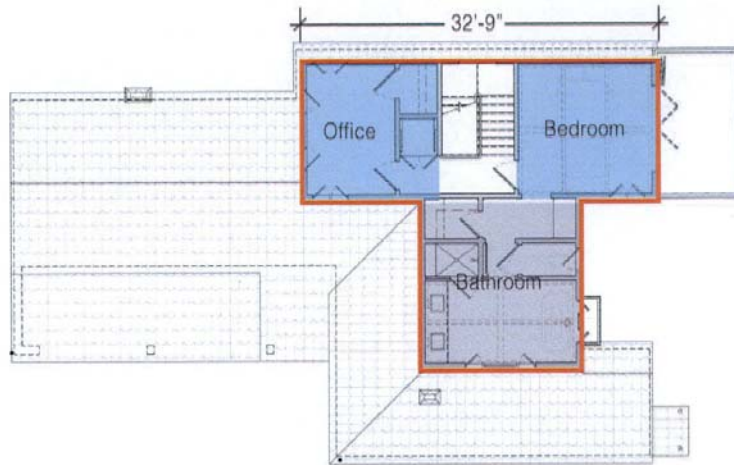


Original design submitted to the City Planning Department. Staff expressed concerns that this design, as proposed, would encroach too far into the sideyard patio of neighboring 1460 Cheviotdale.

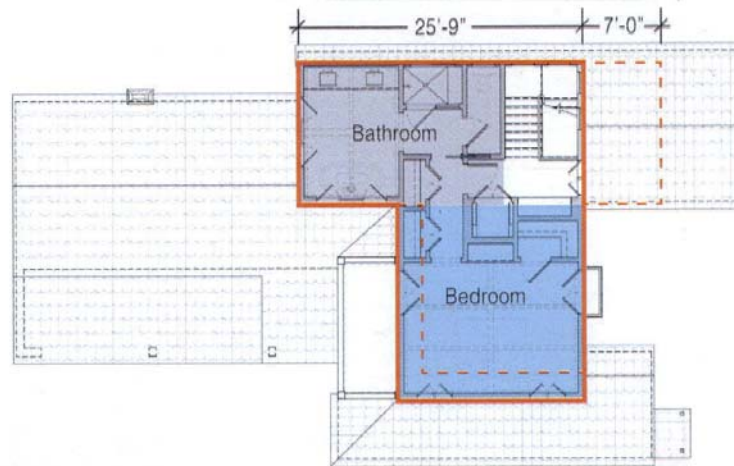


Addressing the concerns of the Planning Department staff, we drastically altered our original design to avoid being in the direct view of the side yard patio of 1460 Cheviotdale to the maximum extent feasible. This design reduces the length of the north facade by 7'-0" and removes a balcony proposed at the rear of the building, a reduction of over 20% of the proposed facade facing 1460 Cheviotdale.

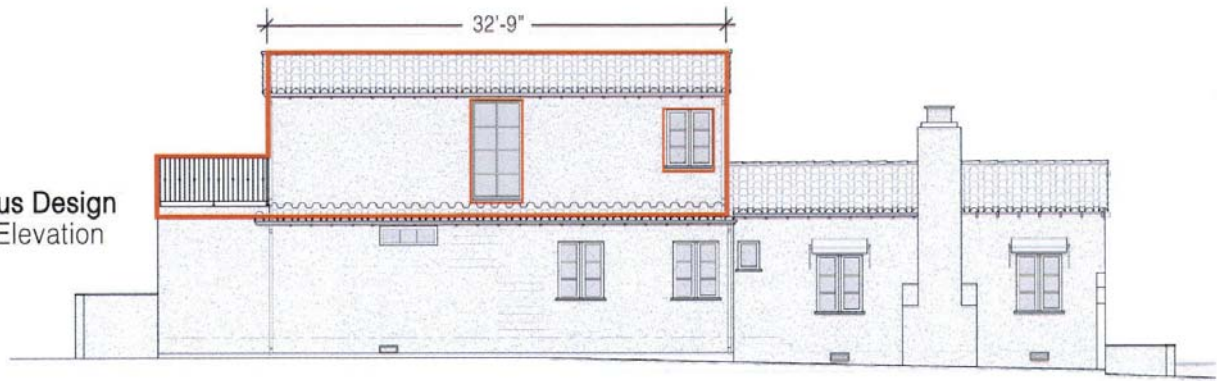
Previous Design
Second Floor Plan



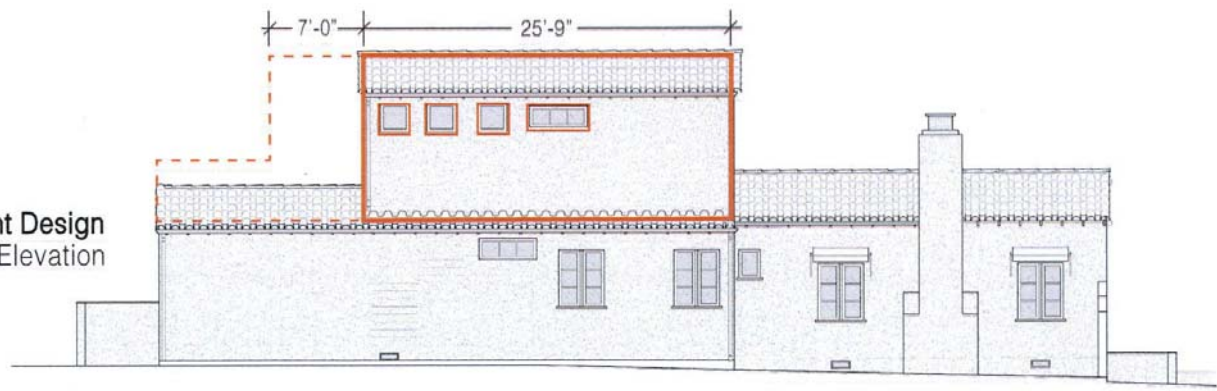
Current Design
Second Floor Plan

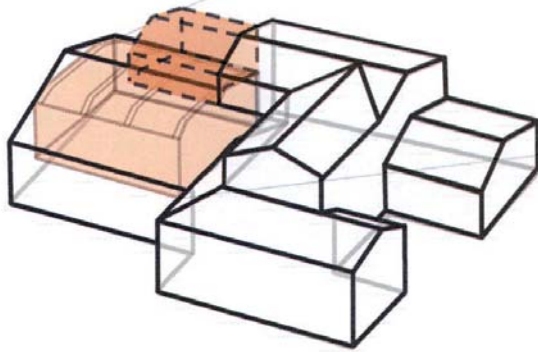


Previous Design
North Elevation

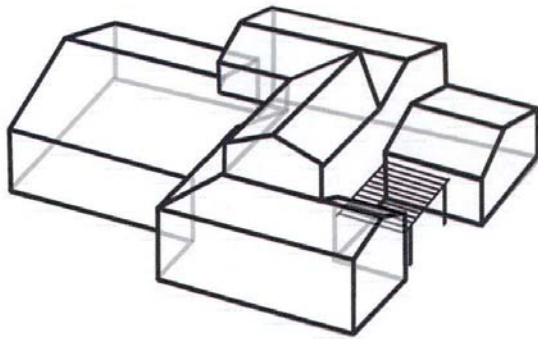


Current Design
North Elevation

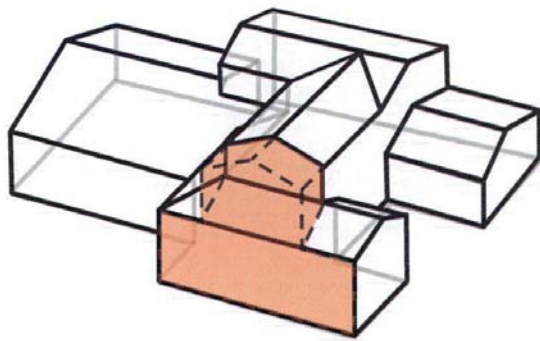




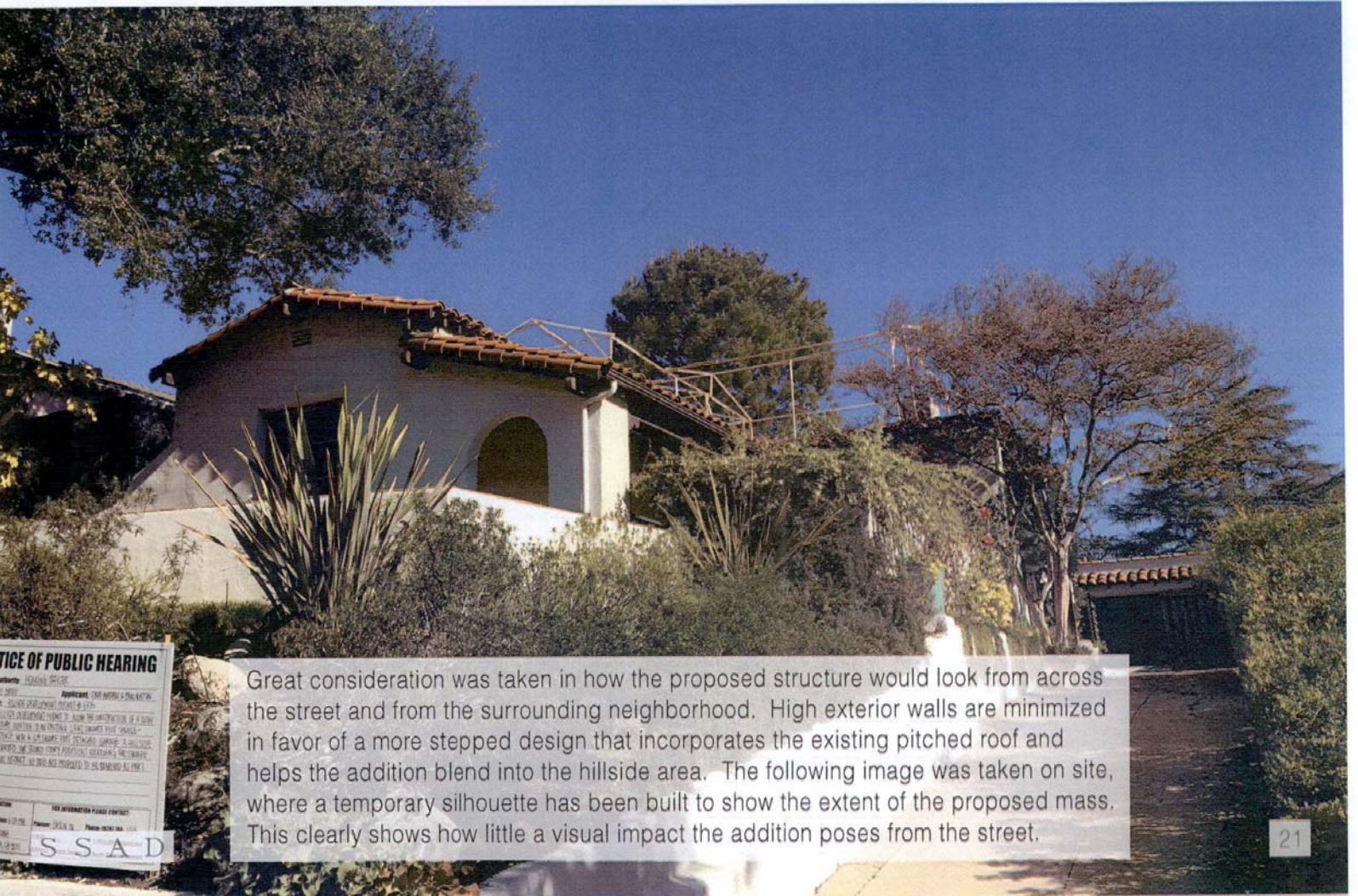
Massing cannot be proposed any farther west of the proposed addition without compromising some of the most vital architectural features of the 518 Glen Holly, such as the living room and entry spaces.



Building to the east of the property is not feasible due to the very small back yard, patio, and small pool.



Building further to the south of the current addition is not feasible due to the location of the driveway and lack of square footage. This massing would result in a large, two-story exterior wall that would be an eyesore from the street, imposing upon other neighbors' views of the hillside.



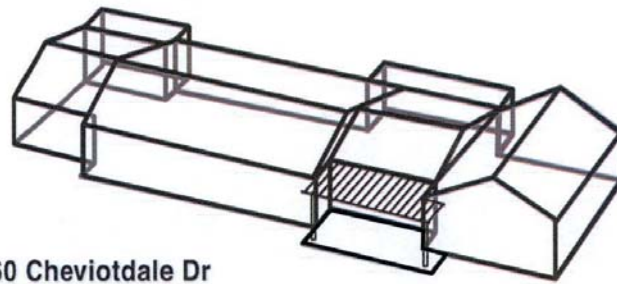
Great consideration was taken in how the proposed structure would look from across the street and from the surrounding neighborhood. High exterior walls are minimized in favor of a more stepped design that incorporates the existing pitched roof and helps the addition blend into the hillside area. The following image was taken on site, where a temporary silhouette has been built to show the extent of the proposed mass. This clearly shows how little a visual impact the addition poses from the street.



View Protection

Extreme care was taken in delineating protected views from all sides of the property, especially from the northern uphill property.

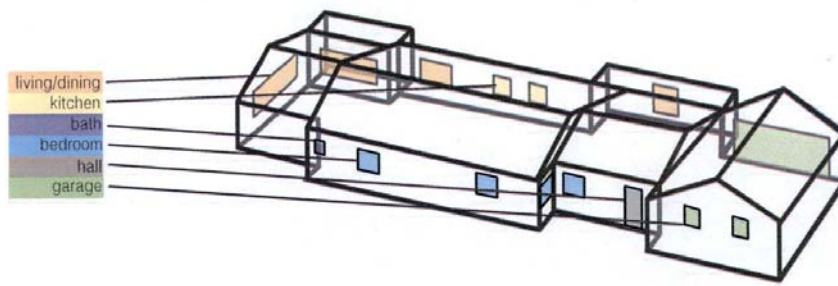
The following slides show how the proposed building completely complies with the view protection guidelines of the City of Pasadena.



**1460 Cheviotdale Dr
Pasadena, CA 91105**

The northern adjacent property, uphill from 518 Glen Holly. The owners of 1460 Cheviotdale maintain that our proposed design does not obey the view protection guidelines set forth by the City of Pasadena in that it blocks the views from their "primary living areas."

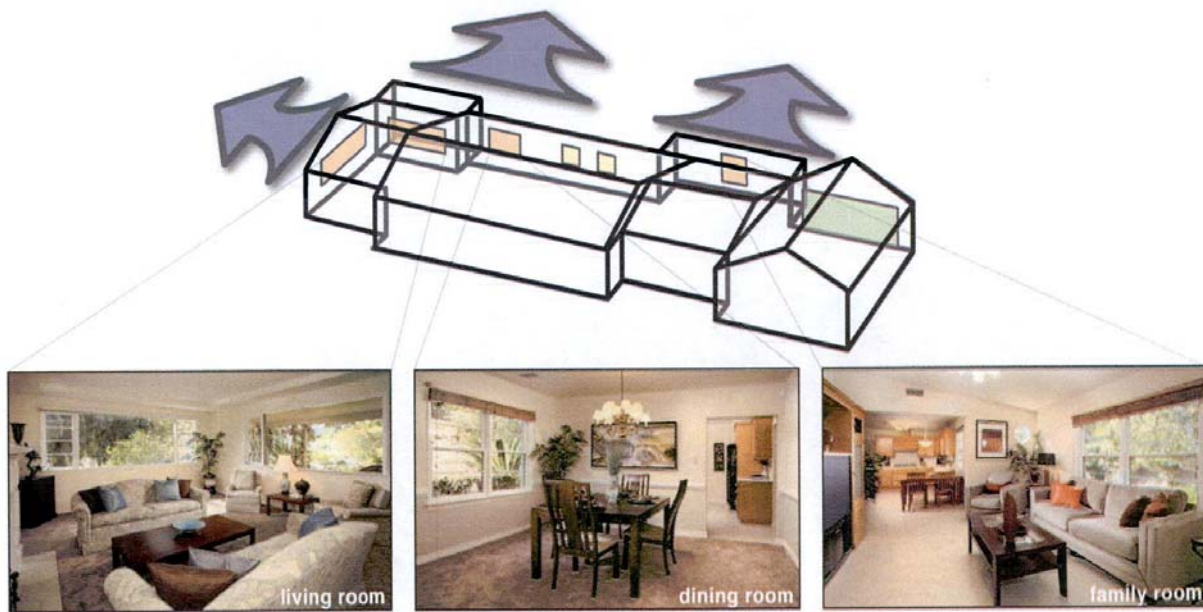
Defining "primary living areas" in the City of Pasadena Zoning Code



Hillside Overlay Districts

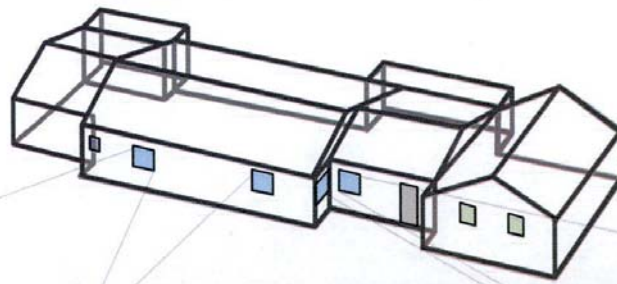
17.29.060

- E. View protection.** A proposed structure shall be designed and located so that it avoids blocking views from surrounding properties to the maximum extent feasible, as determined by the review authority, and as follows. See Figures 2-6 and 2-7. For purposes of this Chapter, "surrounding" properties refers to all abutting properties as well as properties directly across a street from the subject property.
1. New structures and tall landscaping shall not be placed directly in the view of the primary living areas on a neighboring parcel. For purposes in this Chapter, "primary" living area refers to living rooms, family room, patios, but not a kitchen, bedroom, or bathroom.

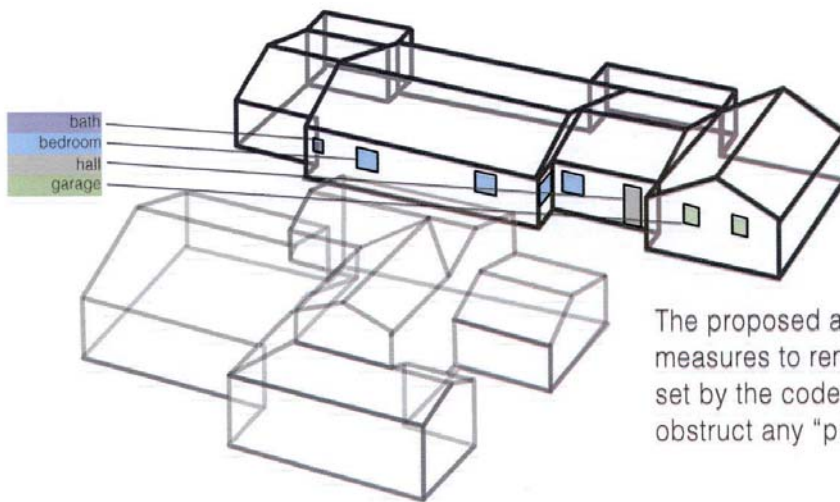


1460 Cheviotdale's existing "primary living areas" and its corresponding views include those off the living/family rooms and dining rooms. These views, as interpreted by the Zoning Code, are the primary views that hold the most intrinsic value to 1460 Cheviotdale. Because these views are oriented towards the opposite side of the property and do not face towards 518 Glen Holly, our proposed addition does not obstruct them in any way.

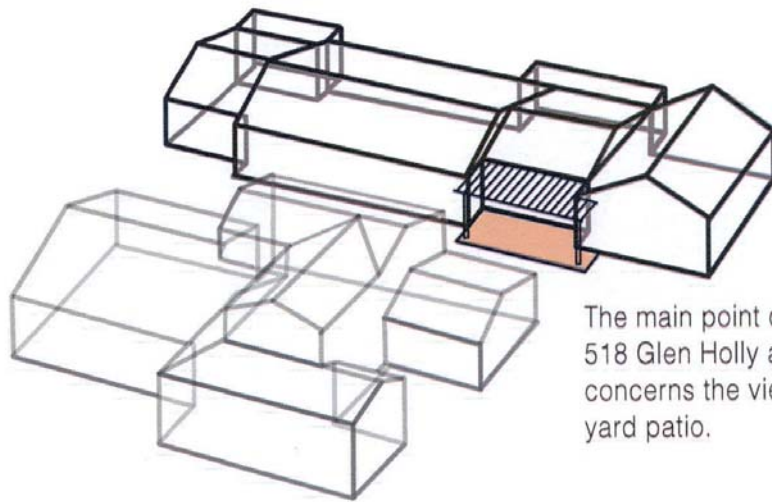
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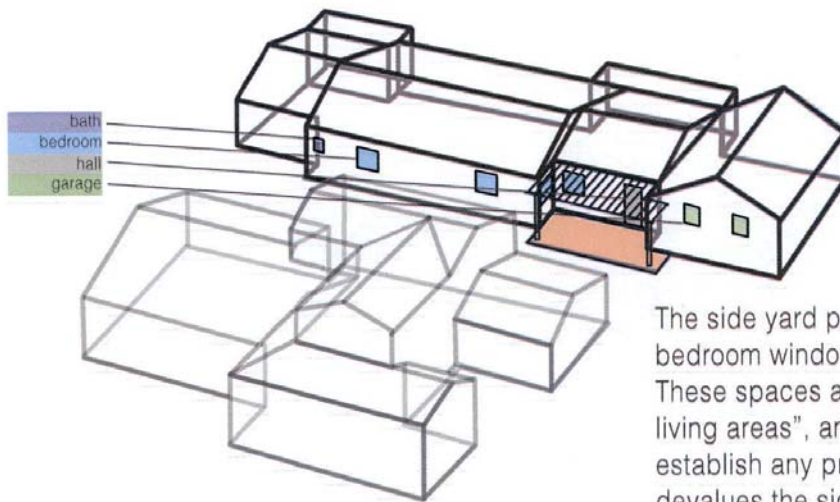
Three bedroom windows, a hallway door, a bathroom window, and two garage windows are oriented towards 518 Glen Holly. None of these adjacent spaces are defined as "primary living areas" and therefore do not have their views protected according to the aforementioned code.



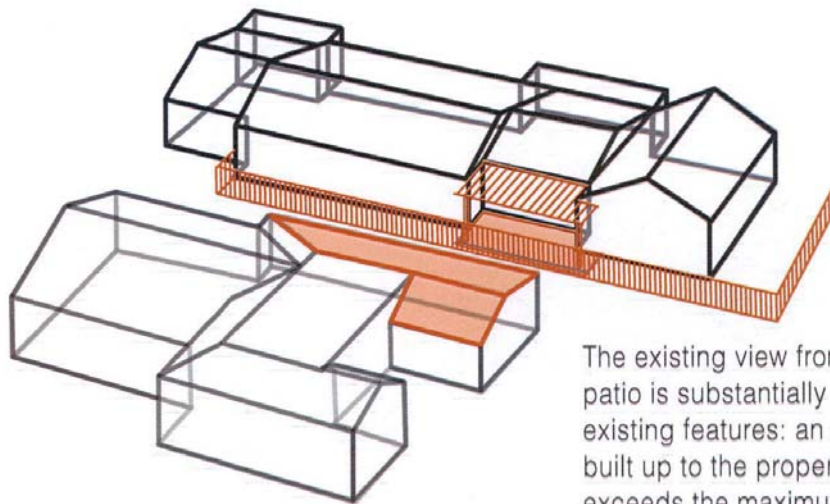
The proposed addition takes extraordinary measures to remain within the parameters set by the code, in that it does not directly obstruct any "primary living areas".



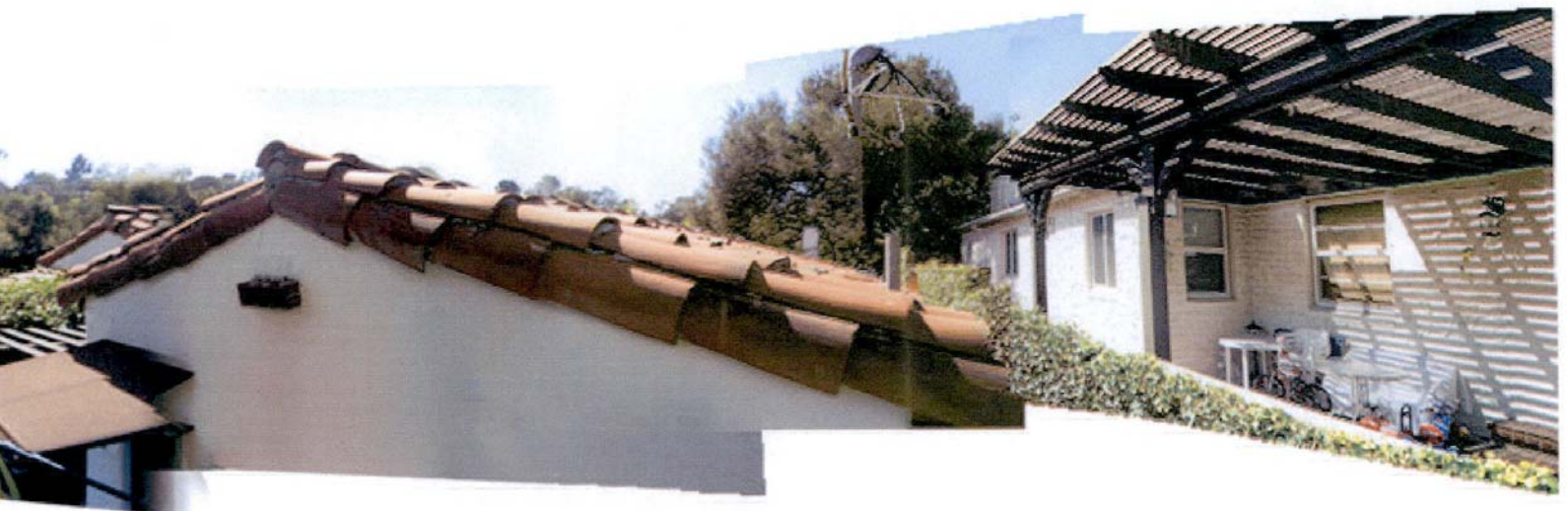
The main point of contention between 518 Glen Holly and 1460 Cheviotdale concerns the view from Cheviotdale's side yard patio.



The side yard patio extends from two bedroom windows and a hallway door. These spaces are not defined as "primary living areas", and therefore do not establish any protected views. This greatly devalues the significance of the view in question.

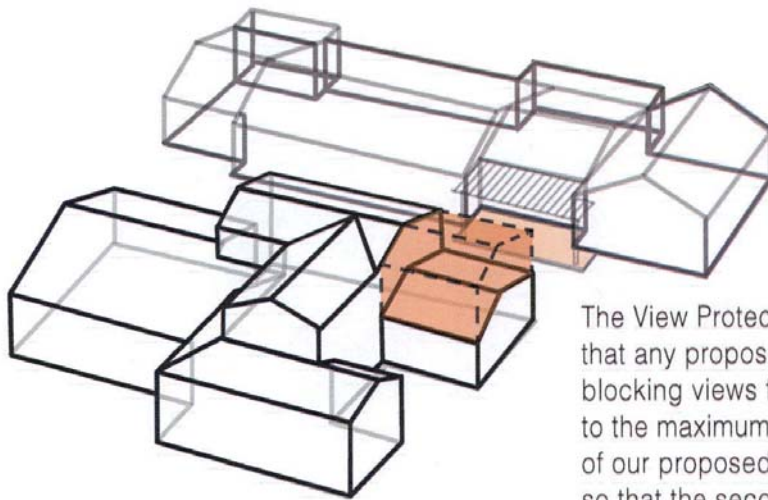


The existing view from 1460 Cheviotdale's patio is substantially blocked by several existing features: an open trellis unlawfully built up to the property line, a fence that exceeds the maximum height allowed by the Zoning Code, and 518 Glen Holly's existing pitched roof. The combination of these obstructions drastically reduce the intrinsic value of the view from the neighbor's patio.



This panorama image taken from an eye-level height of 1460 Cheviotdale's patio clearly shows the obstructive nature of the existing pitched roof of 518 Glen Holly. A few treetops beyond the roof line are barely visible as it currently exists. This shows that the view in question provides little more than a view of the sky, and that the intrinsic value this view provides to 1460 Cheviotdale has been exaggerated.

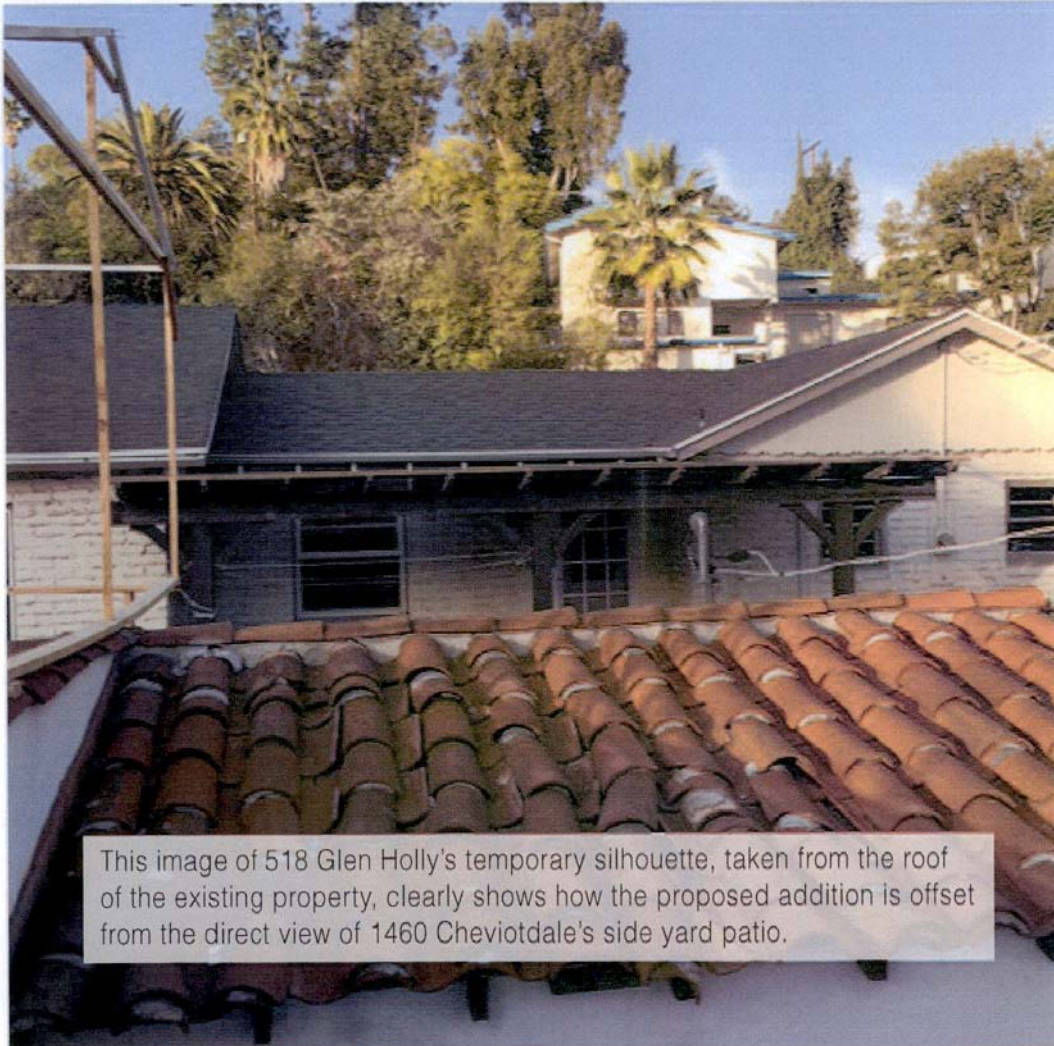
S S A D



The View Protection guidelines mandate that any proposed structure must "[avoid] blocking views from surrounding properties to the maximum extent feasible". The layout of our proposed addition has been designed so that the second story is pushed out of the direct view of the neighboring patio as much as possible. The red area shown here demonstrates possible second story massing that was avoided due to view protection.



This panorama image of 518 Glen Holly's temporary silhouette was taken to show the relative unobstructiveness of the proposed addition in relation to the side yard patio of 1460 Cheviotdale. The picture clearly shows how the structure has been offset to maintain the view from 1460 Cheviotdale's side yard patio.



This image of 518 Glen Holly's temporary silhouette, taken from the roof of the existing property, clearly shows how the proposed addition is offset from the direct view of 1460 Cheviotdale's side yard patio.



In Conclusion

The proposed addition to 518 Glen Holly will be a beautiful addition to the neighborhood. Its design best suits the function of the interior layout, keeps intact its existing architectural integrity, and is a natural continuation of the building's structure and style.

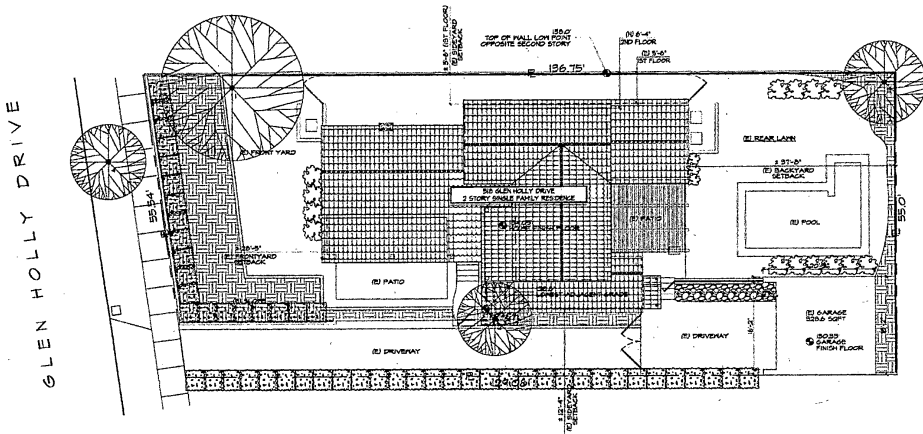
The building, as designed, meets all View Protection guidelines of the Zoning Code. The design takes numerous steps to avoid blocking any views from a "primary living area" without compromising its own architectural integrity.



Designed and implemented by
Sergio Schwark
Principal and head designer of SSAD,
Andrew Scott Campbell
Project Manager

7

APPROVED DESIGN



PROPOSED SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

SERGIO SCHWARK
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER
1015 F STREET, SUITE 200
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015
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FAX: 213-475-1112

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TEL: 818-797-1050
FAX: 818-797-1050

WATSON RESIDENCE
518 GLEN HOLLY DRIVE
PASADENA, CA 91105

HD SET

DRAWN BY	ASC	
CHECKED BY	SS	
NO.	REVISION/ISSUE	DATE

DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED SITE PLAN

DATE: 11.16.15
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
SHEET # **A0.2**

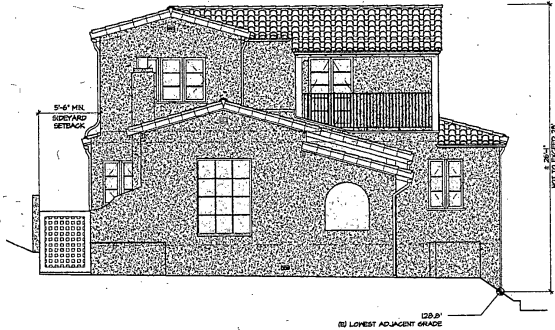
00 TOP OF ROOF
 154.71'

01 SECOND FLOOR CEILING
 151.00'

04 FINISH SECOND FLOOR
 143.34'
 02 FIRST FLOOR CEILING
 142.34'

03 TOP OF RETAINING WALL
 138.00'

02 FINISH FIRST FLOOR
 134.00'
 01 LIVING ROOM FINISH FLOOR



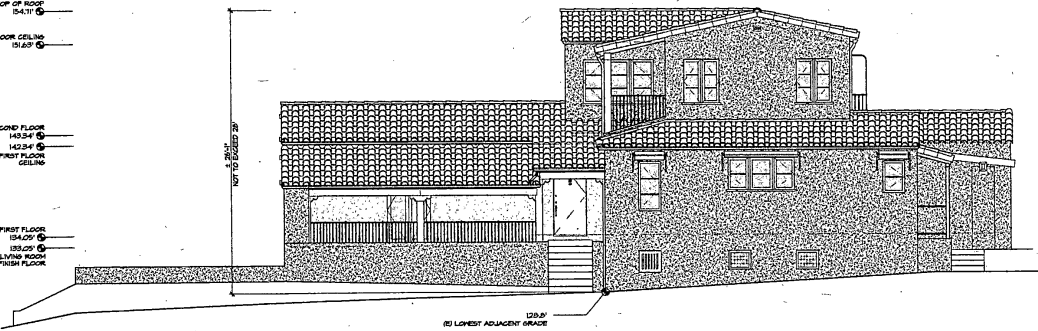
1. PROPOSED "WEST" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

00 TOP OF ROOF
 154.71'

01 SECOND FLOOR CEILING
 151.00'

04 FINISH SECOND FLOOR
 143.34'
 02 FIRST FLOOR CEILING
 142.34'

02 FINISH FIRST FLOOR
 134.00'
 01 LIVING ROOM FINISH FLOOR



2. PROPOSED "SOUTH" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

LEGEND:

- DOOR SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- WINDOW SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL SYMBOL
- SECTION SYMBOL
- OBJECTS TO ALIGN
- DIMENSION LINE
- 100.00' BENCHMARK LOCATION

KEY NOTES:

SERGIO SCHWARK
 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

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CONSULTANTS:

ASA ENGINEERING
 10200 HOLLY DRIVE
 VAN NUYS, CA 91411
 TEL: 818.887.0355
 FAX: 818.887.1953

WATSON RESIDENCE
 518 GLEN HOLLY DRIVE
 PASADENA, CA 91105

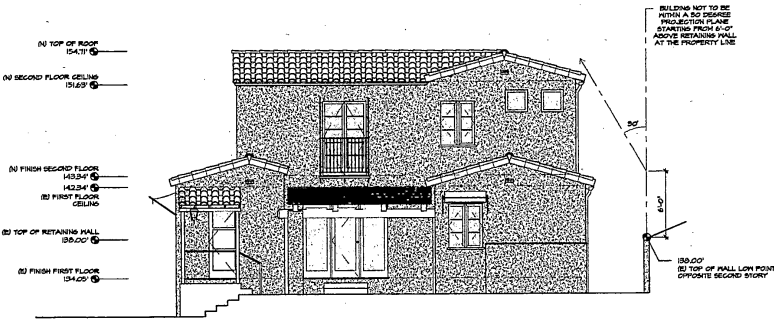
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CHECKED BY:	SS	
NO.	REVISION/ISSUE	DATE

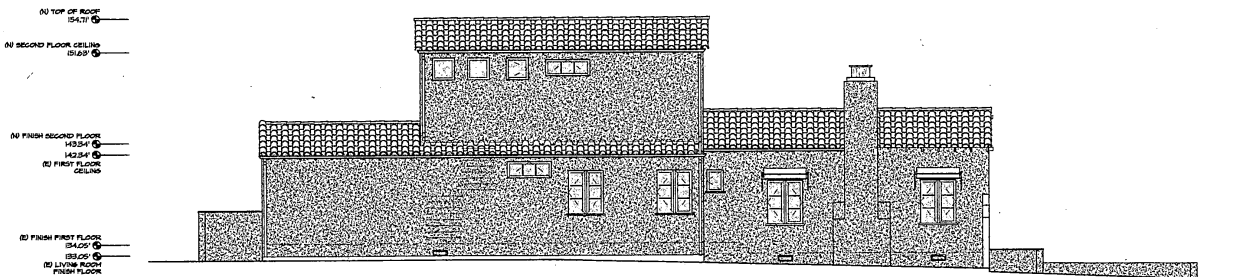
DRAWING TITLE:
 PROPOSED EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

DATE: 11.16.15
 SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

A3.1



1. PROPOSED "EAST" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2. PROPOSED "NORTH" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

LEGEND:

- DOOR SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- WINDOW SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL SYMBOL
- SECTION SYMBOL
- OBJECTS TO ALIGN
- DIMENSION LINE
- 100.00' BENCHMARK LOCATION

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FAX: 818.897.1002

WATSON RESIDENCE
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PASADENA, CA 91105

HD SET

DRAWN BY: ASC
CHECKED BY: SS

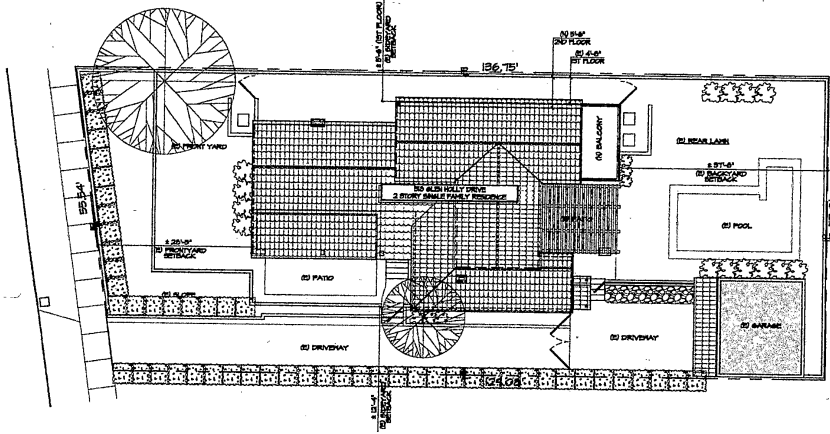
NO.	REVISION / ISSUE	DATE

DRAWING TITLE: PROPOSED EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

DATE: 11.16.15	SHEET: A3.2
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"	

ORIGINAL DESIGN

GLEN HOLLY DRIVE



PROPOSED SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



SERGIO SCHWARK
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

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www.sergioschwark.com

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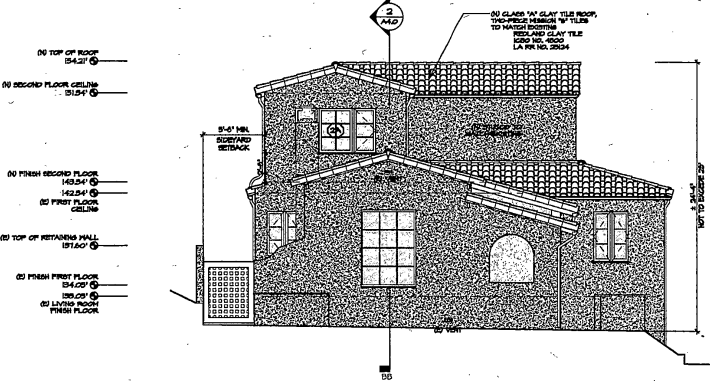
CONSULTANTS:

WATSON RESIDENCE
518 GLEN HOLLY DRIVE
PASADENA, CA 91105

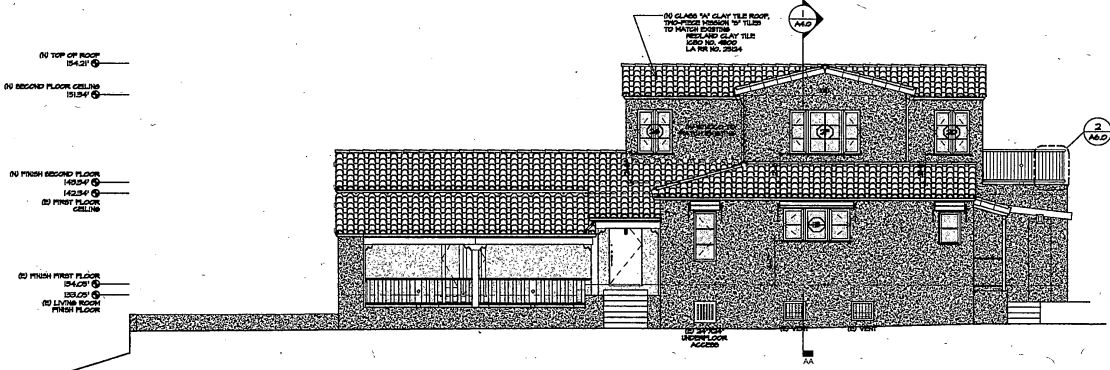
DESIGNED BY	ASC
DRAWN BY	SS
INCH	REVISION/DATE

DRAWING TITLE
PROPOSED SITE PLAN

DATE	SHEET #
12-16-14	A0.2
SCALE	
1/8" = 1'-0"	



1. PROPOSED "WEST" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2. PROPOSED "SOUTH" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

LEGEND:

- DOOR SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- WINDOW SYMBOL (SEE SCHEDULE)
- ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL SYMBOL
- SECTION SYMBOL
- OBJECTS TO ALARM
- DIMENSION LINE
- BENCHMARK LOCATION

KEY NOTES:

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WATSON RESIDENCE
518 GLEN HOLLY DRIVE
PASADENA, CA 91105

PERMIT SET

DRAWN BY: ASC

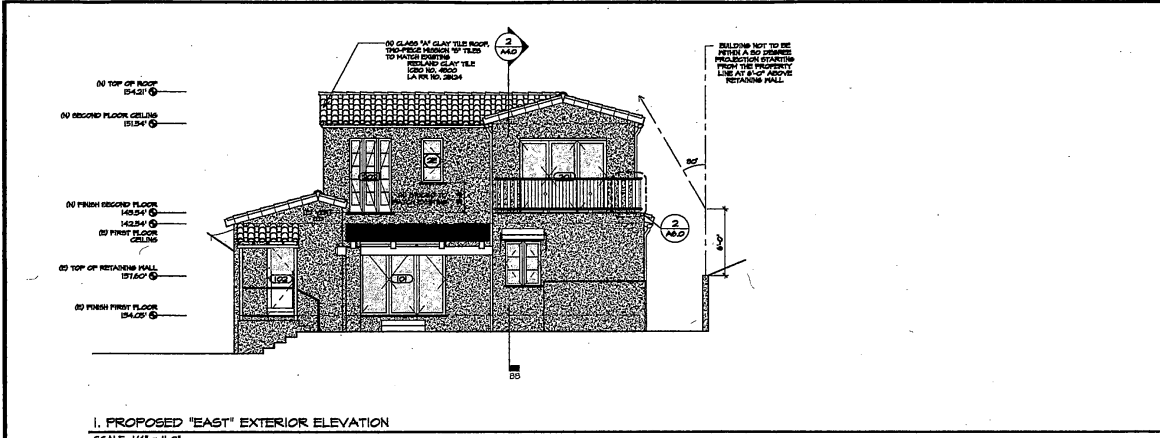
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NO.	REVISION/ISSUE	DATE

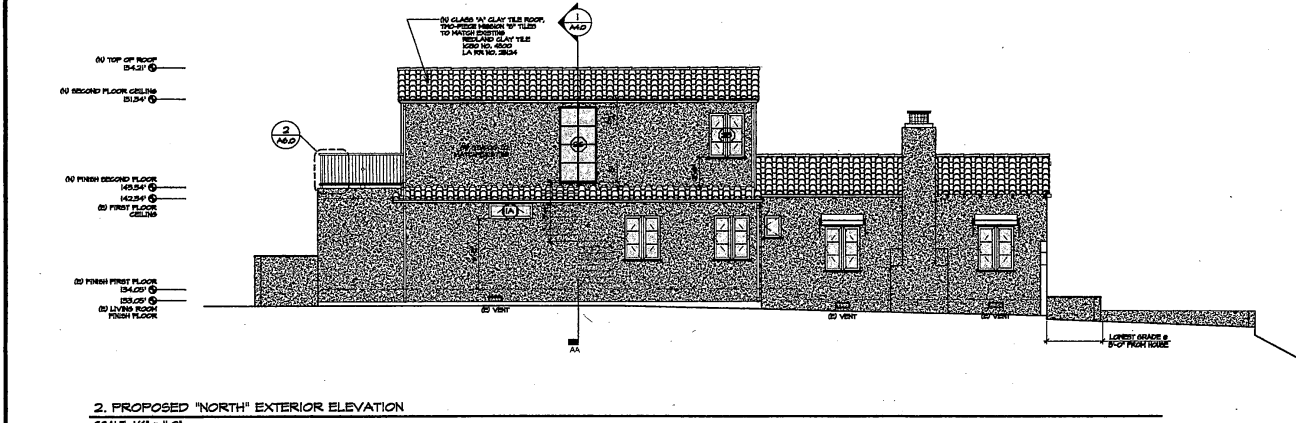
DATE: 03.26.15

SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

SHEET: **A3.1**



1. PROPOSED "EAST" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2. PROPOSED "NORTH" EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

LEGEND:

- (X) DOOR SYMBOL - ONE SCHEDULE
- (X) WINDOW SYMBOL - ONE SCHEDULE
- (A.B.D.) ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL SYMBOL
- (A.B.D.) SECTION SYMBOL
- (---) COLLECT TO ALIGN
- (---) DIMENSION LINE
- (C) 100.00' BENCHMARK LOCATION

KEY NOTES:

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WATSON RESIDENCE
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PASADENA, CA 91105

PERMIT SET

DRAWN BY: ABC

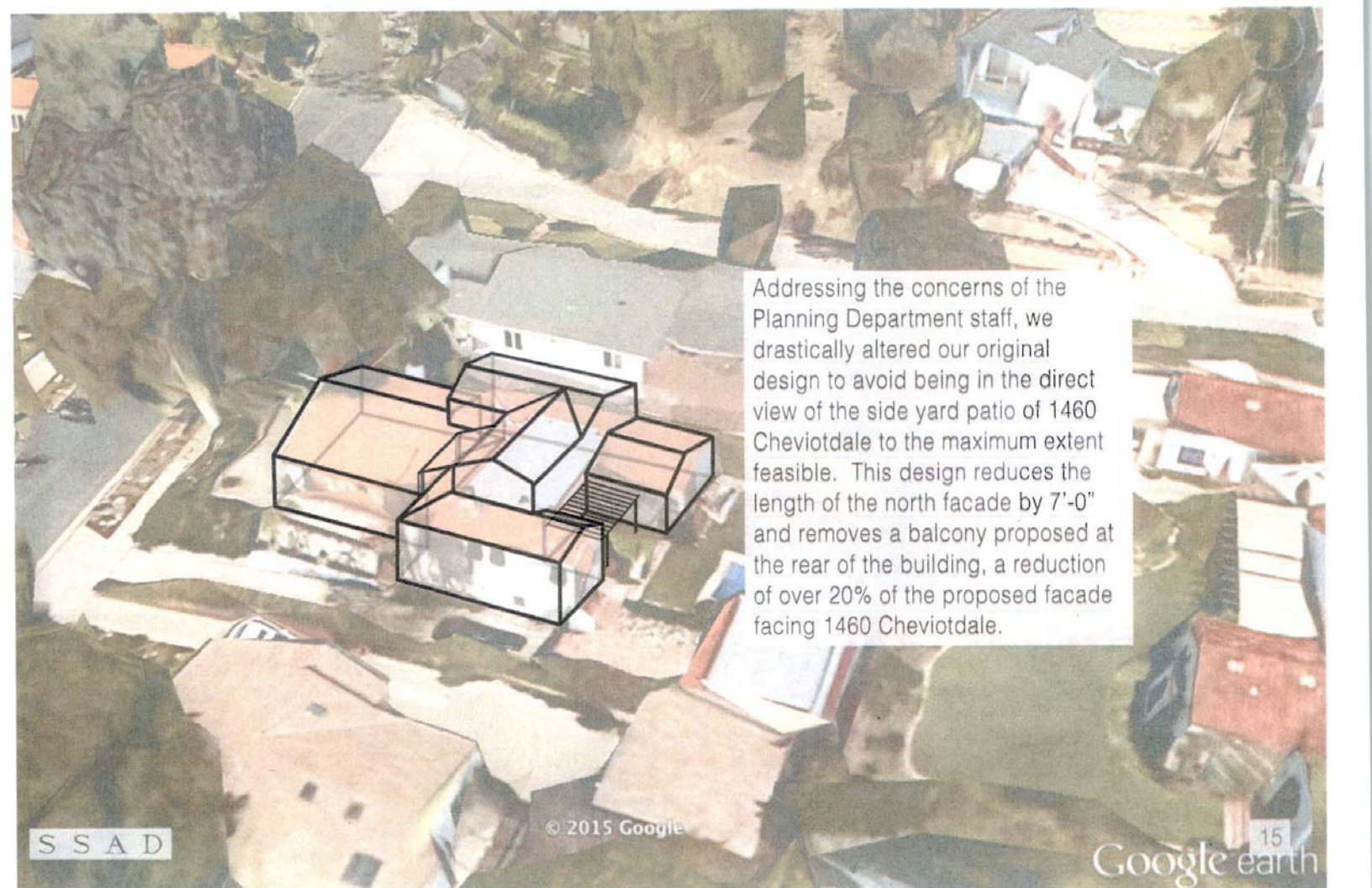
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NO.	REVISION / ISSUE	DATE

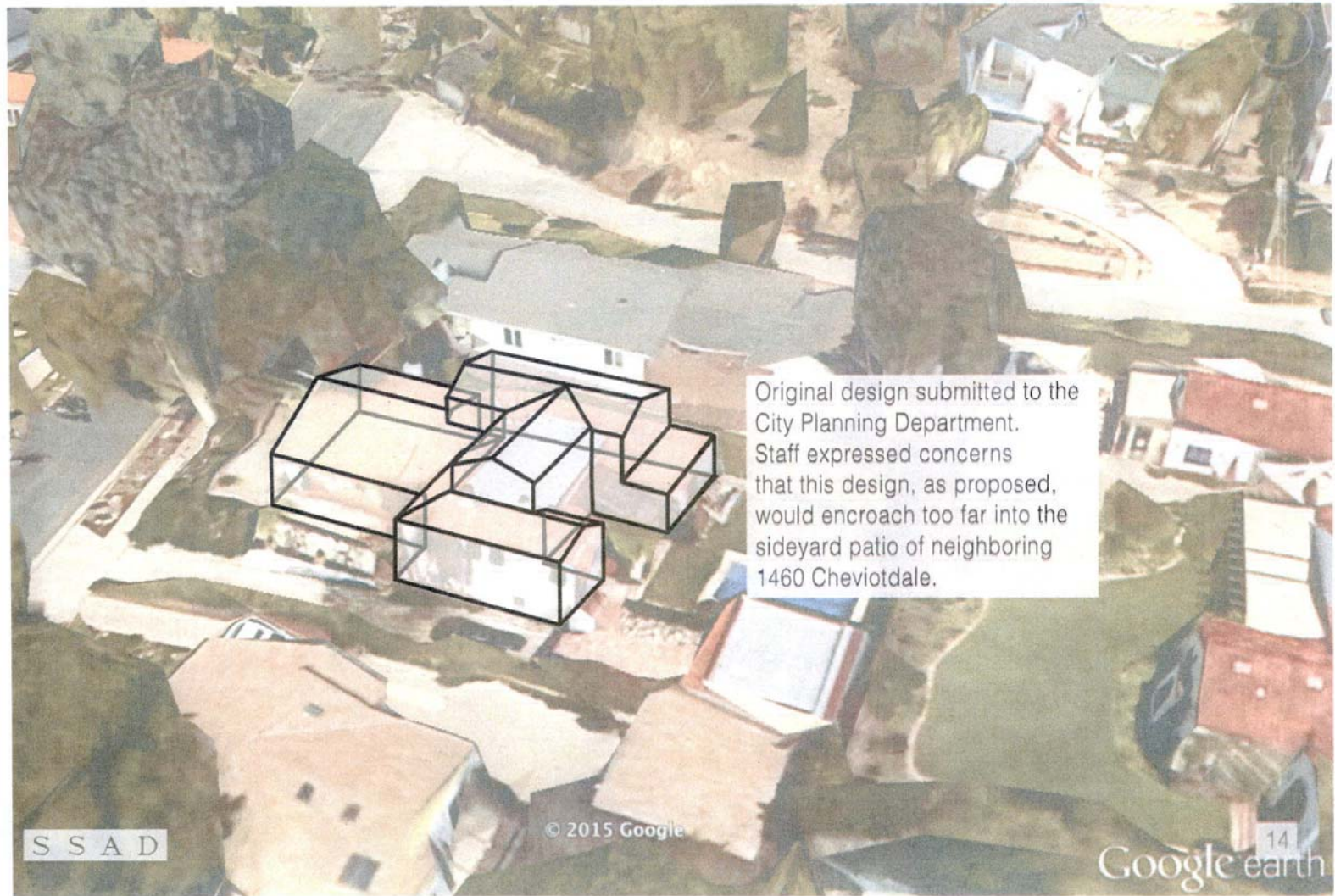
DRAWING TITLE:
PROPOSED
EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS
EAST & NORTH

DATE: 03.20.15
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

SHEET # **A3.2**

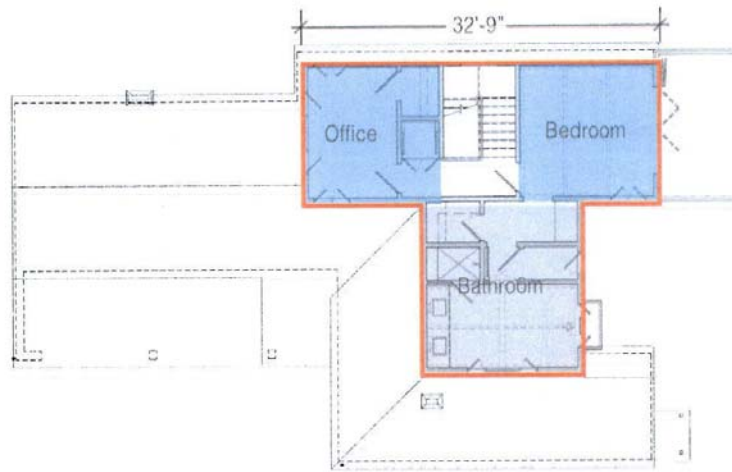


Addressing the concerns of the Planning Department staff, we drastically altered our original design to avoid being in the direct view of the side yard patio of 1460 Cheviotdale to the maximum extent feasible. This design reduces the length of the north facade by 7'-0" and removes a balcony proposed at the rear of the building, a reduction of over 20% of the proposed facade facing 1460 Cheviotdale.

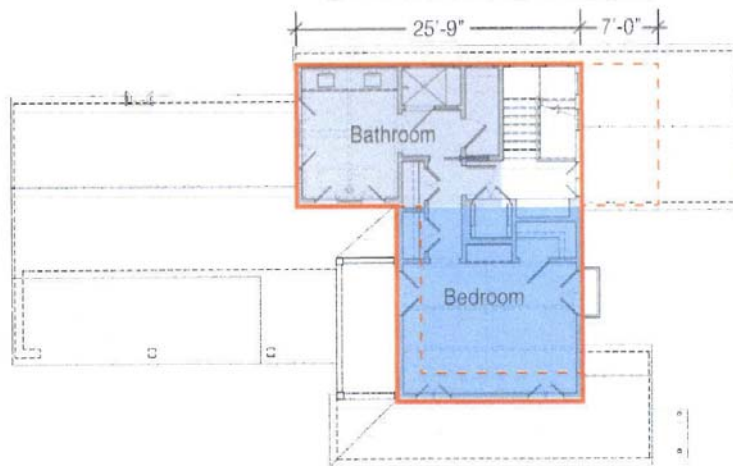


Original design submitted to the City Planning Department. Staff expressed concerns that this design, as proposed, would encroach too far into the sideyard patio of neighboring 1460 Cheviotdale.

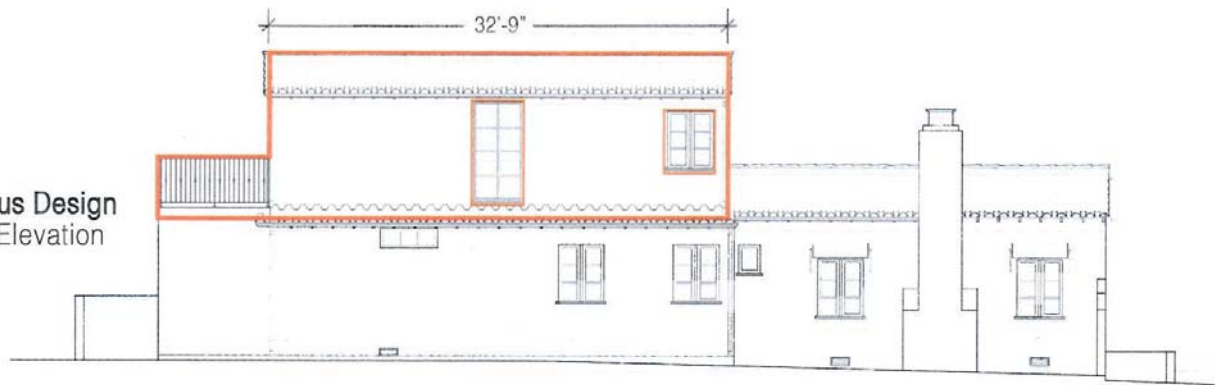
Previous Design
Second Floor Plan



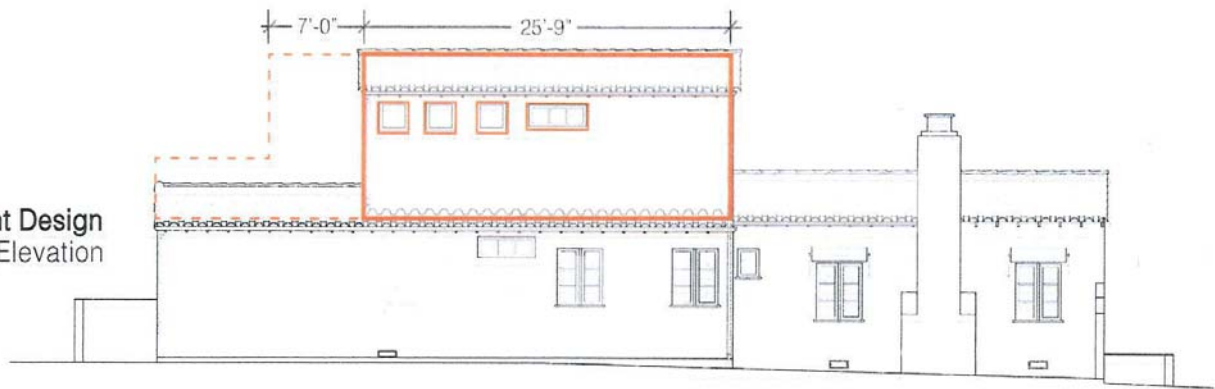
Current Design
Second Floor Plan



Previous Design
North Elevation



Current Design
North Elevation



inches for every one foot of height or length, with a minimum dimension of 15 inches.

b. A support-structure wall surface shall not exceed six feet in height.

4. **Colors and materials.** A mixture of materials and color shall be used to blend structures with the natural appearance of the hillside:

- a. Based upon the graphic principle that darker colors are less noticeable than light colors, darker tones, including earth tones, shall be used for building walls and roofs on highly visible sites so that structures appear to blend in with the natural terrain.
- b. Exterior finish materials shall be appropriate for the architectural style of the structure and compatible with the hillside environment.
- c. The color palate may be modified for designated historic properties with a Certificate of Appropriateness approved by the Planning Director.

D. **Neighborhood Compatibility.** New homes and additions subject to a Hillside Development Permit shall be designed with consideration of the character and scale of the existing development in the vicinity. Through the Hillside Development Permit process, compatibility will be determined following a review of existing site conditions, visibility of the site, and the size, scale, and character of existing development within 500 feet of the site. Dependent on existing conditions, the Zoning Administrator may modify the 500-foot radius to include a larger neighborhood when within the 500-foot radius there are fewer than five developed lots, or when the character of the neighborhood is defined by existing features (e.g., canyon, street, etc.). In addition to the floor area ratio requirements of Section 17.29.060.A, the allowable floor area of the home shall not be greater than 35 percent above the median floor area of the existing homes within the established radius (excluding garages and other accessory structures). Floor area shall be determined using data from the Los Angeles County Assessor. The review authority may approve additional floor area following a review of site conditions and compliance with the remainder of the Hillside District standards.

E. **View protection.** A proposed structure shall be designed and located so that it avoids blocking views from surrounding properties to the maximum extent feasible, as determined by the review authority, and as follows. See Figures 2-6 and 2-7. For purposes of this Chapter, "surrounding" properties refers to all abutting properties as well as properties directly across a street from the subject property.

- 1. New structures and tall landscaping shall not be placed directly in the view of the primary living areas on a neighboring parcel. For purposes of this Chapter, "primary" living area refers to living rooms, family room, patios, but not a kitchen, bedroom, or bathroom.
- 2. Mechanical equipment other than vents or solar panels shall be placed on a rooftop or below a deck only if the equipment is not visible from off the site. This equipment shall also comply with the height limits in Subsection B. above.

Figure 2-6 — Siting New Building to Preserve Views

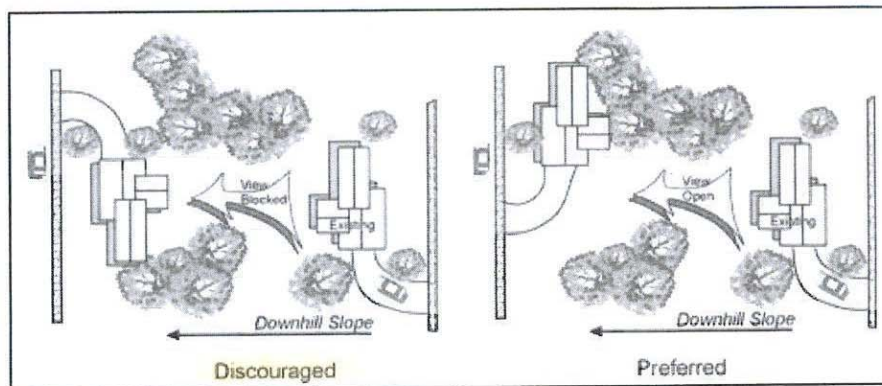
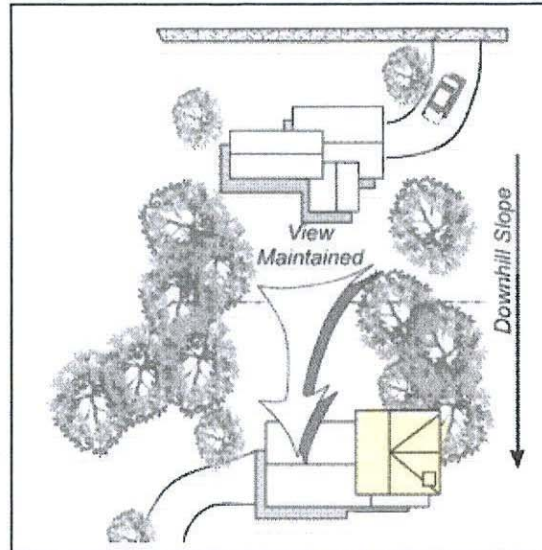


Figure 2-7 — Example of Preferred Location of Second Floor to Preserve Views**17.29.070 - Site Development Standards**

- A. **Grading.** Site grading, retaining walls, structural foundations, and all methods of retention shall comply with the requirements of Municipal Code Chapter 14.05 (Excavation and Grading in Hillside Areas), and the Pasadena Building Code. Compliance is determined by the Building Division. No Grading Permit shall be issued for an individual lot in the HD, HD-1, or HD-SR overlay zoning district until each required discretionary entitlement for the project has been approved, and the plan-check process has been completed. For grading of more than one lot in advance of a discretionary entitlement application, a Hillside Development Permit is required.
- B. **Storm Water and Urban Runoff Control Regulations.** All development and redevelopment projects on lots with any natural slope that is 15 percent or greater are subject to the City's Storm Water and Urban Runoff Control Regulations. These projects are required to submit a Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) to the City Manager, or duly authorized representative thereof, for review and approval before the issuance of any site plan approval, entitlement of use, or Grading or Building Permits.
- C. **Landscaping.** Landscaping shall meet the requirements of [Chapter 17.44](#) (Landscaping).
- D. **Exterior lighting.** Exterior lighting shall be properly shielded to avoid glare and the spill of light to surrounding areas. Low-level lighting and the use of multiple low profile fixtures is encouraged, as opposed to the use of fewer, but taller fixtures. Emphasis for exterior lighting shall be on safety and landscape lighting as opposed to structure lighting. ([See Interpretation](#))
- E. **Fire safety.** Each project shall comply with the requirements of Municipal Code Chapter 14.24 and the Pasadena Fire Code. Before the issuance of a Building Permit, all building plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Fire Chief for compliance with these requirements.
- F. **Trash receptacles.** All trash receptacles shall be screened from view from the public right-of-way.
- G. **Large vehicle restrictions.** For projects subject to a Building Permit, all construction vehicles or trucks, including trailers with lengths over 30 feet or widths over 102 inches, shall require a lead pilot vehicle and flag person to enter the streets within the Hillside District. The flag person will stop opposing traffic as necessary when trucks are negotiating tight curves. Operation of construction vehicles or trucks with lengths over 35 feet shall require approval from the Department of Transportation and Department of Public Works, subject to demonstration that the vehicles can maneuver around specific tight curves in the Hillside District. Operation of construction trucks with lengths over 30 feet shall be prohibited before 9:00 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and all day during weekends and holidays.* On refuse collection days, the operation of construction trucks with lengths over 30 feet shall be prohibited before 10:00 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m.



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Pasadena Planning Division
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Pasadena, California 91101

October 6, 2015

RE: 518 Glen Holly Drive, Pasadena – View Protection

Dear Ms. Yu:

Thank you for the time that you and Luis Rocha spent with Stacie Mayoras, Paul Watson and me on September 21, 2015 regarding Hillside Development Permit #6315. During our discussion, the topic of view protection was introduced, and it seemed that the applicability of the current provisions in the Pasadena Zoning Code may be interpreted in a manner that is not consistent with the original intent of these provisions. Having worked in the Pasadena Planning Division from 1987 through 1998 under the prior Hillside Development provisions and experiencing circumstances for which the changes were made, I believe it is helpful in the discussion to share these experiences.

The adoption of the revisions to the Hillside Ordinance in 2004 was a huge undertaking on behalf of effected neighborhood associations, the Pasadena Planning Division, the Pasadena Planning Commission and the Pasadena City Council. These changes, I believe, were crucial to the public review process and benefit all parties. Under the prior Hillside Ordinance, qualifying projects were reviewed under the standard minor conditional use permit process, and a finding of consistency with the purposes of the Pasadena Zoning Code had to be made. The purposes of the previous Hillside Ordinance included the following provision:

Preserve and protect the views to and from hillside areas to maintain the identity, image and environmental quality of the city. (PMC 17.48.010 A, 1992 – 2004)

The minor conditional use permit review often became problematic with this language because there was not any clarification of how preservation or protection would be applied. Experience from the neighborhood activists, the Pasadena Planning Division staff and effected City Council members had come to a consensus over the years for what this purpose generally meant, and the intension of the Hillside Ordinance was to codify that consensus.

To describe the intent of view protection, it is helpful to have an example. The home of another client that was developed under the prior Hillside Ordinance is sited in such a way that the front door opens to a living room, two-story vaulted space and two-story windows affording a direct view up the Arroyo looking at the Colorado Bridge. The layout of the residence continues the floor plan onto a patio that shares the view. If, for example, a neighboring property were to be developed in a manner that blocked the view to the Colorado Bridge, the intrinsic value of the existing home that the architect so astutely included in the design would be lost.

"View" protection was never intended to become "visibility" protection. It was not the intent of the Pasadena Zoning Code to prohibit development that is "visible" from neighboring properties. It was the intent of the Pasadena Zoning Code to protect an existing "view" that adds intrinsic value to a home. That intrinsic value is characterized by the site layout and design of an existing home that was placed on the property in order to "view" something that lies beyond the neighboring properties. This intent is completely misinterpreted if it is being applied such that a property owner cannot build a home that is "visible" from a neighboring residence when nothing lies beyond the site to "view."

The adoption of the Hillside Ordinance in 2004 understood that view protection remained something that required case-by-case review. For example, the aesthetic responses in the initial study include the following:

The majority of Pasadena's Hillside District is established residential neighborhoods. There are exceptions to this for certain areas that were subdivided many years ago but never developed. Submittal requirements for new hillside homes and additions to existing homes require information on views from neighboring properties. Through the proposed project, more explicit language will be added to the code relative to ridgeline protection, view preservation, and visual character. Through the discretionary review process (Hillside Development Permit) the City will review sightlines, colors, materials (including the roof), and landscaping to further ensure the residence will blend with its hillside location. The project will provide standards that will guide development and will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. *Emphasis added.*

To apply "view" protection absent of any review of sightlines is not following what the Hillside Development Permit was adopted to consider. The purpose of the Hillside Development Permit review process was to apply a case-by-case review of what a "view" may be from neighboring properties that cannot be codified in a development standard. That review must include sightlines as described in the initial study.

When applied to the proposed project at 518 Glen Holly Drive, the intent of "view" protection is fully met. As you are aware, the primary living areas (living room, family room and patio) of the neighboring property to the north are oriented towards the opposite side of the home. The contention of the property owner is that there is a landing for an exit door providing access to the side yard on the south side of the home. On the interior, the door leads to a walled hallway between a bedroom and the garage. A landing off a hallway between a bedroom and garage is not an extension of a "primary living area" as described under the Pasadena Zoning Code as a "patio." Even if one were to call this landing a "patio," it serves the residence as a secondary outdoor area with the "primary living areas" oriented toward the north of the residence. The sightline from this landing sees

sky, nothing more. In fact, the sightline to the sky is already substantially blocked with a fence that exceeds the Zoning Code maximum height and an open wood trellis that does not meet the setback requirements. The landing is extended by a raised wood deck that also does not meet the setback requirements. The fence, trellis and deck are relatively new structures built by the former property owner with no evidence in the City of Pasadena records of a building permit. Indeed, the landing off the hallway would be completely unusable being directly exposed to the southern sun in a narrow, sloping side yard if not for the trellis that provides shade, the deck that levels the slope and the fence that affords privacy and prevents one from falling over the edge. Applying the provisions view protection to an area of the neighbor's property that does not serve as a "primary living area," that was built without permits and that neither meets the requirements of the Pasadena Zoning Code nor the California Building Code is completely unreasonable. Moreover, the roof of the existing home at 518 Glen Holly Drive is already "visible" from the neighboring landing. That roof will be lowered for a substantial length adjacent to the landing allowing greater "visibility" to the sky. As we discussed in our meeting a new wall would be "visible" from the landing, but the location of the wall has been designed to allow continued "visibility" to the sky from the neighboring property to the maximum extent feasible.

In regards to the project at 518 Glen Holly Drive, a "view" has been claimed but not substantiated. The design and layout of the neighbor's property does not demonstrate that the landing off a hallway would be considered a "primary living area" as described under the Pasadena Zoning Code. Significantly, the Pasadena Zoning Code cannot be construed to mean that neighbors are afforded "view" protection from locations on a property that were built without permits and do not comply with applicable regulations. Even if one considered "view" protection to apply to this landing, the design of the home and landing serve utilitarian purposes, access to the side yard, not sightlines adding intrinsic value created from the design of the home. The claim for "view" protection without consideration of sightlines from the neighboring property is a claim for "visibility" protection. Not wanting the proposed addition to be "visible" is not the intent of the Hillside Ordinance. In applying the Hillside Development Permit review process, the City of Pasadena must fairly consider all factors related to the claim including the fact that neighboring property owners have blocked their own "visibility" to the sky from the same location with a fence, deck and trellis that were built without permits and do not comply with the applicable codes. We believe that all of the factors considered for the Hillside Development Permit when applied as intended by the Pasadena Planning Commission and City Council favor approval of the proposed addition to 518 Glen Holly Drive with the design that has been submitted for review.

Sincerely,



Burke Farrar

Copies: Steve Madison, City Council Member District 6
David Reyes, Deputy Director of Planning & Community Development
Luis Rocha, Associate Planner
Stacie Mayoras and Paul Watson
Sergio Schwark Architectural Design
Richard McDonald, Carlson & Nicholas, LLP