



CITY of CALABASAS

**PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**  
**JUNE 17, 2021**

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**TO:** Members of the Planning Commission

**FROM:** Jaclyn Rackerby, Assistant Planner

**FILE NO.:** SPR-2021-005 and VAR-2021-001

**PROPOSAL:** Request for a Site Plan Review and a Variance to construct a 2,373 square-foot addition to an existing 13,716 square-foot two-story single-family residence. The project scope of work also includes a covered BBQ area, new balcony, and exterior remodel. The project involves a request for a variance for an addition greater than 1,200 square feet to an existing structure located within 50 feet of a significant ridgeline. The subject site is located at 25400 Prado de la Felicidad (APN: 2069-089-012) within the Residential, Single-Family (RS) zoning district.

**APPLICANT:** Arc Design Group

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2021-721, approving File No. SPR-2021-005, VAR-2021-001

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Commission adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 2021-721, approving File No(s). SPR-2021-005 and VAR-2021-001.

**REVIEW AUTHORITY:**

The Planning Commission is reviewing this project because Section 17.62.020 of the Calabasas Municipal Code (CMC) stipulates that additions over 1,200 square-

feet to existing single-family homes within the RS zoning district require approval of a Site Plan Review, subject to review by the Commission. Section 17.62.080 stipulates that Variance applications shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On September 25, 2019, Arc Design Group (applicant) submitted an application for on behalf of 25400 Prado de la Felicidad LLC (owner) to construct a 1,552 square-foot addition to the second floor of an existing 13,716 square-foot two-story single-family residence located at 25400 Prado de la Felicidad, within the Residential, Single-Family (RS) zoning district. The subject site is located in the estate lots of The Oaks Homeowners Association, which is made up of custom homes that range in size from approximately 6,920 square-feet to 18,692 square feet (not including garages).

The project was reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC) on October 15, 2019, and had no major comments. The proposed project was also reviewed by the City's Architectural Review Panel (ARP) on November 1, 2019, in accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC. The Panel recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission. On December 10, 2019, the application was deemed complete by staff. On January 16, 2020, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. 2020-695, approving SPR-2019-003 and VAR-2019-004 as described above.

Subsequently, the owner chose not to proceed with construction of the previously approved project, and on March 16, 2021, Arc Design Group (applicant) submitted an application on behalf of 25400 Prado de la Felicidad LLC (owner) to construct a 2,373 square-foot addition to the second floor of the existing residence, inclusive of exterior remodel to alter the architectural style of the existing home. As a result, the total proposed square footage of the house is 16,089 square feet. If approved, this Site Plan Review and Variance would supersede the prior approval. However, if this Site Plan Review and Variance is denied, the prior approval will remain in effect.

The project was reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC) on March 30, 2021, and had no major comments. The proposed project was also reviewed by the City's Architectural Review Panel (ARP) on April 23, 2021, in accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC. The Panel recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission. On May 20, 2021, the application was deemed complete by staff.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS:**

**A. Existing Site/Building Layout:** The subject site is an 86,858 square-foot interior lot. The site is developed with a 13,716 square-foot two-story single-family residence, basement garage/storage area, driveway, walkways, attached patio cover, pool, spa, BBQ, firepit, and 766 square-foot cabana. There are 4 oak trees located on the subject site, none of which are impacted by the proposed project. The site is surrounded by single-family residences to the north, east, and south, and a sloped open space property maintained by the Oaks HOA to the west. The surrounding neighborhood is made up of two-story single-family residences ranging in size from 6,920 to 18,692 square feet. The applicant is proposing to add 2,373 square feet to the second floor, bringing the total house size to 16,089 square feet.

The existing basement consists of a garage and storage area totaling 8,242 square feet, and a bedroom/living area consisting of 1,490 square feet. The existing first-story consists of a dining room, office, theatre, living room, lounge area, kitchen, family room, and bedrooms, totaling 9,072 square feet. The existing second-story of the house consists of one bedroom and a master bedroom, bath, walk-in closets, and a sitting room totaling 3,154 square feet. The living area of the existing residence is 13,716 square feet because the garage and storage area of the basement are not habitable.

The proposed second-story addition is 2,373 square feet consisting of a new master suite, his and hers walk-in closets, new bathrooms, and the creation of additional bedrooms. The proposed addition is located above the existing first-story, to the north, south, and west of the existing second-story portion of the house. The total proposed square-footage of the living space on the second floor is 5,527 square feet. The proposed grand total of the house is 16,089 square feet.

**B. Architecture:** The estate lots within The Oaks HOA is comprised of homes with a wide variety of architectural styles. The existing home has an Italianate Villa architectural style, and the proposed project involves an exterior remodel to create a more contemporary exterior, including a smooth white stucco finish, gray brick accents, black trim, and a charcoal slate roof. The proposed project was reviewed by the City's Architectural Review Panel (ARP) on April 23, 2021, in accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC. The Panel recommended approval of the design to the Planning Commission as proposed.

The placement of story poles on the subject site is required for additions over 500 square feet located on a designated significant ridgeline. Story poles were installed on May 20, 2021, in accordance with the City's Story Pole Procedures, and will remain up until a final decision is made on the project.

- C. Variance:** Pursuant to CMC Section 17.20.150(C)(2) (Hillside and ridgeline development), the highest points of any proposed structure shall be located at least fifty vertical feet and fifty horizontal feet from a significant ridgeline. The applicant is requesting a variance to construct a 2,373 square-foot addition to the second floor of an existing 13,716 square-foot two-story single-family residence that is located within a mapped significant ridgeline as identified in the Open Space Element of the General Plan, and less than 50 feet vertically and 50 feet horizontally from the ridgeline. Because the existing home is located on the mapped ridgeline, it is not possible to add onto the house and remain at least 50 feet vertically or 50 feet horizontally from the ridgeline.

In 2010, the City of Calabasas adopted hillside and ridgeline development standards, which apply to development proposed on lots with slopes greater than ten percent or that include a significant ridgeline. The ridgeline policies aim to maintain the natural appearance of the ridge. Mapping of the significant ridgelines was accomplished using USGS topographic maps, which did not reflect graded and altered hillside conditions that resulted from recent development of various subdivisions throughout the City, including The Oaks estate lots. Nonetheless, the code applies to all mapped ridgelines. Accordingly, the subject project includes a variance application because Section 17.20.150(C)(3) of the Development Code stipulates that a variance shall be sought where a proposed addition over 1,200 square feet cannot meet the 50-foot ridgeline setback standards provided in Section 17.20.150(C)(2). The project cannot meet the established ridgeline setback standard, because the existing home located on the mapped ridgeline was approved prior to the adoption of this Code. The proposed project, therefore, requires a variance from the City's standards for Hillside and Ridgeline Development (Chapter 17.20.150) to permit construction of the 2,373 square-foot addition within 50-feet of the significant ridgeline.

Chapter 17.62.080 of the City's Land Use and Development Code allows for the granting of a variance from the development standards of the code when, because of special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings, the strict application of the Code denies the property owner privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the

vicinity and in identical zoning districts. Absent the ridgeline setback requirement discussed above, the proposed addition could otherwise have been permitted by only a Site Plan Review.

The five required findings for approval of a variance (per CMC 17.62.080(E)) can be made and are contained within Planning Commission Resolution 2021-721. Additionally, Section 17.20.150(C)(3) of the Municipal Code allows for approval of a variance from the ridgeline setback siting standard if the following additional two findings can be made:

- a. Alternative sites within the property or project have been considered and eliminated from consideration based on physical infeasibility or the potential for substantial habitat damage or destruction if any such alternative site is used and that the siting principles outlined under subsection (C)(4) have been applied; and
- b. The proposed project maintains the maximum view of the applicable significant ridgeline through the use of design features for the project including minimized grading, reduced structural height, clustered structures, shape, materials, and color that allow the structures to blend with the natural setting, and use of native landscaping for concealment of the project.

The proposed project meets the two additional findings because the home is sited on an already developed flat pad with a berm to screen the residence, and the proposed addition is located on top of the existing single-story portion of the home (requiring no additional grading for the proposed improvements), and is surrounded by existing two-story single-family homes. The project is designed to maintain the maximum view of the significant ridgeline because the ridge of the proposed additions (29'7") is shorter than the ridge of the existing two-story portion of the house (29'9"). Additionally, there is no feasible alternative location on the site for the proposed addition; the proposed second-story addition requires no alteration to the existing building footprint, and is located above existing one-story portions of the home.

**REQUIRED FINDINGS:**

The findings required in Section 17.62.020, Section 17.62.080, and Section 17.20.100 of the Calabasas Municipal Code for a Site Plan Review, Variance, and Ridgelines are contained in the resolution attached as Exhibit A.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:**

This project is Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301(e)(1) (Existing Facilities) of the California CEQA Guidelines.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:**

See conditions contained in the resolution attached as Exhibit A.

**PREVIOUS REVIEWS:**

**Development Review Committee (DRC):**

March 30, 2021                      No major comments.

**Architectural Review Panel (ARP):**

April 23, 2021                      The project application for File No. SPR-2021-005 and VAR-2021-001 was reviewed by the City's Architectural Review Panel (ARP) on April 23, 2021, in accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC. The Panel asked questions of the applicant, and recommended approval of the project as proposed to the Planning Commission.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Exhibit A:    Planning Commission Resolution No. 2021-721
- Exhibit B:    Plans and Elevations
- Exhibit C:    Site Photo and Renderings
- Exhibit D:    Approved Story Pole Plan
- Exhibit E:    ARP Minutes from April 23, 2021

**TECHNICAL APPENDIX**



<b>Development Standards:</b>				<b>Code Limit</b>	<b>Meets Code</b>
<b>Lot Size:</b>	86,858	Sq. Ft.			NA
<b>Floor Area:</b>					NA
Existing:	13,716	Sq. Ft.			
Proposed:	1,552	Sq. Ft.			
Total:	15,268	Sq. Ft.			
<b>Setbacks of proposed addition:</b>					
Rear:	228 Ft.	3 In.		20 Ft. Min.	Yes
Side (North):	53 Ft.	3 In.		10 Ft. Min.	Yes
Side (South):	23 Ft.	5 In.		10 Ft. Min.	Yes
Front:	44 Ft.	0 In.		20 Ft. Min	Yes
<b>Height:</b>	29 Ft.	9 In.		35 Ft. Max.	Yes
<b>Site Coverage:</b>					
Existing:	12,049	Sq. Ft.	13.9 %	35% Max.	Yes
Proposed:	12,543	Sq. Ft.	14.4 %	35% Max.	Yes
<b>Pervious Surface:</b>					
Existing:	68,539	Sq. Ft.	78.9 %	65% Min.	Yes
Proposed:	68,045	Sq. Ft.	78.3 %	65% Min.	Yes



Home Comparison:

SITE ADDRESS	BUILDING SF	LAND SF	FAR
25400 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	16,089	86,858	0.19
25408 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	13,400	80,613	0.17
25395 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	13,031	61,371	0.21
25385 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	9,882	49,716	0.20
25375 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	6,920	43,743	0.16
25365 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	15,706	48,186	0.33
25354 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	18,692	76,135	0.25
25364 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	10,565	69,387	0.15
25374 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	11,759	99,427	0.12
25384 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	11,127	137,257	0.08
25394 PRADO DE LA FELICIDAD	9,197	91,537	0.10
<b>AVERAGE</b>	12,028	75,737	0.18

Notes: The House sizes do not include garages.  
Project Site information obtained from information submitted by the applicant. Information on neighboring homes obtained from records of the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Office.