



CITY of CALABASAS

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT
NOVEMBER 2, 2023

TO: Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Tom Bartlett, AICP, City Planner

FILE NO(s): SPR-2020-002

PROPOSAL: Application for a Site Plan Review to allow for construction of a new 1,470 square-foot single-family dwelling and attached 799 square-foot Accessory Dwelling Unit on a vacant 4,906 square-foot legal lot located at 3462 Lilac Trail, in the Rural Residential (RR) zoning district and the Calabasas Highlands (CH) overlay zoning district.

APPLICANT: Geoffrey Sheldon

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission direct Staff to prepare a resolution for approval, or a resolution for denial, of File No. SPR-2020-002.

REVIEW AUTHORITY:

The Planning Commission is reviewing this project because Section 17.62.020 of the Calabasas Municipal Code (CMC) stipulates that construction of new residential single-family housing requires approval of a Site Plan Review, subject to review by the Commission.

BACKGROUND:

On August 31, 2020, an application was submitted by Geoffrey Sheldon, on behalf of the property owner(s), seeking zoning approval for construction of a new residential single-family housing unit and an attached accessory dwelling unit on a

vacant lot located at 3462 Lilac Trail. The subject property falls within the Rural Community (RC) zoning district, and the Calabasas Highlands (CH) overlay zoning district.

In association with this private property development, necessary off-premise public facilities will be constructed, including public street and a stormwater drainage system along the Lilac Trail right-of-way between Aster Trail and Summit Drive.

The project was reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC) on September 14, 2020. Review comments included concerns about, and/or plan revisions to address: site plan conformance, grading and drainage plans, building design, off-site improvements (including streets, drainage, and utilities), and biological resources assessment. Following multiple rounds of re-submittals and reviews by City staff, all necessary revisions were accomplished by the applicant, and final revised plans were resubmitted the on October 20, 2023.

In accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC, the Architectural Review Panel reviewed the project on August 25, 2023. (Details regarding the ARP review are discussed later in this report.) After addressing all comments and requested revisions, the applicant submitted the revised plans, and the Panel recommended to the Planning Commission approval of the project. (See Exhibit E for ARP meeting minutes.)

On October 4, 2023 the application was deemed complete by Staff.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

A. Existing Site/Building Layout: The subject property is a 4,906 square-foot undeveloped lot in the Calabasas Highlands (lot #3 of block #4 in Tract No. 8550). The lot fronts on Lilac Trail, an unimproved 15-foot wide street right-of-way. The property slopes steeply upward from Lilac Trail, diagonally from the northwest corner to the southeast corner and with an overall elevation differential of approximately 27 feet (lowest point to highest point).

The project site abuts vacant properties on both the northern and southern property lines. Otherwise the property is surrounded by existing single-family residences ranging from one-story to three-story, with most being two-story. The homes in immediate proximity range in size from 766 square feet to 3,365

square feet (not including garages), and an average home size of approximately 2,412 square feet.

The applicant proposes to construct a new 1,470 square-foot three-story single-family residence with attached garage, and an 799 square-foot accessory dwelling unit ADU). The proposed structure would be built into the hillside, with the back walls of the first level being retaining walls. Additional retaining walls would be constructed along the eastern/rear edge of the property (approximately 4 feet from the property line), and along portions of the two side yards. Stairways are proposed on both sides of the proposed structure, providing access to the single-family dwelling along both sides, as well as connecting the front and rear yards. The structure includes an accessory dwelling unit on the ground level, alongside the garage, while the main dwelling would occupy two levels above.

Dwellings in the immediate surrounding area are primarily two-story and three-story structures, although several one-story structures are located nearby as well. Refer to the Technical Appendix for a listing of lot sizes and home sizes for twenty homes in the immediate surrounding area. The proposed new dwelling and attached ADU (as a single building) would contain approximately 2,269 square feet, which is well within the range of home sizes in proximity. Furthermore, with a floor area ratio of 0.30, the FAR for the subject proposal meets the standard for the applicable zoning districts, and it falls well within the range of FARs for the group.

A number of off-site infrastructure improvements are also components of the project:

- Hard surfacing of Lilac Trail between Summit Drive and Astor Trail;
- Drainage culverts and changes to stormwater runoff conveyance and flow velocity reduction systems; and,
- Water, electrical, and natural gas connections.

The proposed single-family residence will be set back 10 feet from the south side property line (10-foot minimum required), 20 feet from the front property line (20-foot setback is the minimum), and 15 feet from the rear property line (15-foot minimum setback). Along the north property line (the second side yard), the new single-family residence will be set back 10 feet (10-foot setback minimum), although the lower-level attached ADU will be set back 4 feet (under State law a

4-foot minimum side yard or rear yard setback must be accommodated for an accessory dwelling unit). The proposed site coverage is 35% (35% minimum), and the proposed permeable surface area is 3,190 s.f., or 65% (65% minimum) (Refer to Technical Appendix).

- B. Architecture/Building Design: The subject site is surrounded by one-story, two-story, and three-story single-family homes that vary in regards to architectural style, colors, and materials. The Architectural Review Panel reviewed the proposed project on August 25, 2023, and recommended several revisions to the design, to include: changing the lone straight gable end to a double-hipped roof; refinements to the proposed exterior finishes and colors; and, extended cross-section lengths to carry on to and past the property lines;

The ARP recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission, subject to the revisions being accomplished. The applicant subsequently revised the project plans to include the Panel's suggested changes, and submitted the revised plans on October 4, 2023. (see Exhibit A for the project plans.)

As a result, the proposed three-story residence will be a contemporary architectural style, with sand and nut-brown colored stucco, stacked-stone wainscot (gray-brown hue), dark brown trim, and a medium gray shingle roof with a double-hipped roof with varied-gray tiles. (Refer to Exhibit D.)

- C. Landscaping: The new project includes all new landscape and hardscape for all yard areas. The proposed landscape plan is included as part of Exhibit D.

Grading/Drainage: The proposed new residential housing unit and attached ADU will have a 2-car garage and the ADU at the ground level, with the main residence above, occupying floors two and three. A pair of terraced retaining walls are proposed at the rear of the property, behind the proposed new structure. Retaining walls are also necessary along both sides of the structure, and a small retaining wall will face the street at the northwest corner of the property. All proposed retaining walls are six feet tall at their maximum heights (6-foot maximum height allowed).

The subject property owner also owns the adjoining lot to the south, and some of the contour grading south of the new home location will be necessary on the adjoining lot (refer to the preliminary grading plan included as part of Exhibit A). The preliminary grading and drainage plans have been reviewed by the Public Works Department, and conditions of approval related to grading, geotechnical,

and hydrology have been provided to Planning staff for incorporation into a resolution of approval if so directed by the Commission.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

If the Planning Commission were to recommend preparation of a resolution to approve the project, the Site Plan Review findings applicable to the project (per Section 17.62.020 of the Calabasas Municipal Code) are as follows:

1. The proposed project complies with all applicable provisions of this development code;
2. The proposed project is consistent with the general plan, any applicable specific plan, and any special design theme adopted by the city for the site and vicinity;
3. The approval of the site plan review complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
4. The proposed structures, signs, site development, grading and/or landscaping are compatible in design, appearance and scale, with existing uses, development, signs, structures and landscaping for the surrounding area;
5. The site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed structures, yards, walls, fences, parking, landscaping, and other development features; and,
6. The proposed project is designed to respect and integrate with the existing surrounding natural environment to the maximum extent feasible.

Draft Site Plan Review findings for the project, per the above list and as may apply to a resolution of approval, are attached as Exhibit C, and draft Conditions of Approval are presented in Exhibit D.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This project is Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule Exemption) and Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) of the California CEQA Guidelines.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

If the Commission directs Staff to prepare a resolution of approval, potential project conditions of approval are attached as Exhibit D and will be incorporated into an approval resolution, which would return for Commission adoption at the next meeting.

REQUESTED COMMISSION ACTION:

Staff requests the Commission conduct the public hearing, and direct Staff to develop final project findings in support of either approval or denial of the project, with such findings supported by the project plans, facts and analyses presented in the staff report, and testimony provided by the applicant and others at or prior to the hearing. Note: A resolution of denial must include an explanation as to why at least one of the required Site Plan Review findings cannot be made.

PREVIOUS REVIEWS:

Development Review Committee (DRC):

September 14, 2020 Substantial comments were provided to the applicant, requiring redesign of the project and submittal of necessary technical studies. (Multiple rounds of re-submittals and reviews followed, prior to submittal and acceptance of final proposed project plans.)

Architectural Review Panel (ARP):

August 25, 2023 The Panel recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission, with several suggestions for design refinement. All revisions recommended by the ARP have been incorporated into the final set of plans.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A: Project Plans
Exhibit B: Landscape Plan, Colors & Materials exhibit; Perspective Rendering

- Exhibit C. Draft findings (in support of an approval, if directed)
- Exhibit D: Draft Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit E: ARP Minutes from August 25, 2023

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

**Subject Property,
3462 Lilac Trail**



**Applicable Development Standards for
Rural Community (RC) zoning district
and Calabasas Highlands overlay
district:**

Code Limit

Lot Size: 4,906 Sq. Ft. 1 Acre (Legal Non-Conf.)

Floor Area:

Proposed
SFR: 1,470 Sq. Ft.

Proposed
ADU: 799 Sq. Ft.

Setbacks:

Rear: 15 Ft. 0 In. 15 Ft. Min.

Side (north): 10 Ft. 0 In. * 10 Ft. Min.

Side (south): 10 Ft. 0 In. 10 Ft. Min.

Front: 20 Ft. 0 In. 20 Ft. Min.

Height: 26 Ft. 27 Ft. Max.

Site Coverage:

Proposed: 1,716 Sq. Ft. 35% 35% Max.

Pervious Surface:

Proposed: 3,190 Sq. Ft. 65 % 65% Min.

****NOTE: Side yard setback minimum for ADUs is 4 feet per State law***

Area Home and Lot Size Comparison

| SITE ADDRESS | RESIDENCE SF | LAND SF |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|
| 3462 LILAC TRAIL (<i>subject</i>) | 2,269 (incl. ADU) | 4,906 |
| 3408 LILAC TRAIL | 766 | 5,043 |
| 23535 ASTER TRAIL | 3,072 | 9,931 |
| 3520 IVY TRAIL | 3,245 | 10,544 |
| 3510 IVY TRAIL | 3,212 | 10,525 |
| 3498 IVY TRAIL | 2,042 | 5,333 |
| 3475 IVY TRAIL | 2,200 | 9,670 |
| 3471 IVY TRAIL | 2,346 | 4,880 |
| 3463 IVY TRAIL | 2,984 | 4,803 |
| 3416 IVY TRAIL | 3,365 | 7,970 |
| 3410 IVY TRAIL | 3,159 | 8,033 |
| 3411 IVY TRAIL | 2,697 | 4,933 |
| 3415 IVY TRAIL | 2,816 | 4,967 |
| 23502 SUMMIT DR | 2,646 | 9,586 |
| 23535 VALLEY VIEW RD | 2,952 | 15,736 |
| 23539 VALLEY VIEW RD | 1,880 | 6,764 |
| 23555 VALLEY VIEW RD | 828 | 4,694 |
| 23501 SUMMIT DR | 2,004 | 5,116 |
| 23530 SUMMIT DR | 1,911 | 16,169 |
| 23551 SUMMIT DR | 1,200 | 5,767 |
| 23550 VALLEY VIEW RD | 2,918 | 7,905 |
| | | |
| AVERAGE | 2,412 | 7,918 |

- Notes: 1) Project Site information obtained from submitted project plans.
 2) Information on neighboring homes obtained from records of the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Office, and the square footage amounts do not include garage space.