

Site Plan Review
23616 Valley View Road

Findings

a. The proposed project complies with all applicable provisions of this development code;

The subject site is a vacant 5,040 square-foot parcel, located in the Rural Community (RC) zoning district, and Calabasas Highlands (-CH) overlay zone. The proposed new single-family residence is an allowed use in the RC zoning district. Additionally, the site design and building design conform with applicable development code standards including height, setbacks, pervious surface, retaining wall heights, landscaping, downhill building walls, and hillside development. Also, with the proposed quitclaim of existing easements on the property, the project will also conform with site coverage and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirements. Furthermore, the project as reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee and Architectural Review Panel (ARP), and at its January 26, 2024 meeting, the ARP found the project's design to be compatible with other homes in the neighborhood, and recommended approval of the project as designed. Therefore, the project meets this finding.

b. 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;

The proposed new single-family residence is specified within the Land Use Element as an appropriate use for a parcel within the Rural Community (RC) zoning district. The proposed project complies with all development standards and is compatible with the residential character of the community.

Chapter IX of the General Plan, specifically policies IX-1, IX-5, IX-8, and IX-10 emphasize that new development shall maintain a high-quality appearance, and is aesthetically pleasing and compatible with the area's natural setting. The Architectural Review Panel reviewed the proposed project on January 26, 2024 and, based in part on consideration of applicable general plan policies, recommended approval of the project as designed. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan and meets this finding.

c. The approval of the site plan review is in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);

This project is exempt from environmental impact review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule Exemption) of the CEQA Guidelines. Additionally, the project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15332 (In-fill Development Projects) and Section 15303 (New Construction) of the California CEQA Guidelines.

Therefore, because the proposed project is exempt from environmental impact review under the California Environmental Quality Act, the proposed project meets this finding.

d. 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;

The subject site is located within the RC zoning district, and is surrounded by one-story, two-story, and three-story single-family homes that vary substantially in regards to home sizes, as well as architectural style, colors, and materials. By design, the proposed project fits the unique character of the Calabasas Highlands by being both a hillside terraced design in compliance with height, downhill building wall, and setback requirements. The contemporary design aesthetic fits the irregular nature of the existing building forms in the Calabasas Highlands. Additionally, the landscape design seeks to blend into the existing conditions via color, texture and planting. Furthermore, the Architectural Review Panel reviewed the proposed project on January 26, 2024 and recommended the project as designed, including that the design was compatible with the surrounding area.

e. The site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed structures, yards, walls, fences, parking, landscaping, and other development features; and

The subject site is a 5,040 square-foot parcel. The project layout and design are in conformance with the applicable development standards, including in regards to height, setbacks, pervious surface, site coverage, FAR, landscaping, allowable wall heights, and grading and drainage. Off-street parking is provided in an attached garage of 564 square feet, and includes two additional off-street spaces, which meets the parking requirements for a single-family residence. Therefore, the proposed project meets this finding.

f. The proposed project is designed to respect and integrate with the existing surrounding natural environment to the maximum extent feasible.

The proposed project includes the construction of a new single-family residence with attached garage, driveway, retaining walls, hardscape and landscaping, on a vacant 5,040 square-foot hillside parcel located in the Rural Community (RC) zoning district, and Calabasas Highlands (-CH) overlay zone. The subject property is relatively small, narrow, sloping, and has oak trees present both on- and off-site. The residence is designed to be terraced into the hillside, thereby reducing its mass. Additionally, although the residence is stylistically contemporary, yard features including the use of decomposed granite and proposed landscaping elements will blend and integrate the design with its surrounding natural environment. Furthermore, of the four native oak trees in the vicinity of the property (one that is on-site and three that are immediately surrounding the property), only one of the less mature trees will require removal to accommodate the driveway, therefore preserving the natural setting.

Oak Tree Permit

g. The request to remove an oak tree or scrub oak habitat is warranted to enable reasonable and conforming use of the subject property, which would otherwise be prevented by the presence of the oak tree or scrub oak habitat. Reasonable use of the property shall be determined in accordance with the guidelines.

Our request to remove an existing oak is warranted and within reason due to the relatively small impact to the property and surrounding trees. Oak trees are located on and off-site at the entrance to the property – we are requesting the removal of a young oak that will admit access as a driveway to the lot. In removing of the immature oak, we preserve the perimeter of the mature Heritage Oak to the east that is in the city right-of-way. Removal of the oak tree will need to be mitigated at an inch for inch ratio relative to the diameter of the oak tree removed

h. The request to alter or encroach within the protected zone of an oak tree or scrub oak habitat is warranted to enable reasonable and conforming use of the property, which would otherwise be prevented by the presence of the oak tree or scrub oak habitat. In addition, such alterations and encroachments can be performed without significant long-term adverse impacts to the oak tree or scrub oak habitat. Reasonable use of the property shall be determined in accordance with the guidelines.

Encroachment is difficult to avoid due to the small size of the lot and number of oak trees in the area. The encroached trees are located off site with protected zones that overlap with our lot, including a Heritage Oak with a 50' foot protected zone. Due to the location and size, development of the property cannot avoid encroachment, but we can do our best to mitigate impacts to the existing oaks during construction and educating the owners who will inherit the area thereafter.