



CITY of CALABASAS

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT
OCTOBER 17, 2024

TO: Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Jaclyn Rackerby, Planner

FILE NO(s): SPR-2023-017, OTP-2024-009

PROPOSAL: Request for a Site Plan Review and an Oak Tree Permit to construct a new two-story 5,224 square-foot single-family residence and associated new 762 square-foot ADU, swimming pool, three-car garage, retaining walls, landscaping, and hardscape located on the vacant lot at 4440 Park Aurora (APN: 2068-019-022) within the Residential Single-Family (RS) zoning district. The proposed project also involves encroachment into the protected zone of one on-site oak tree.

APPLICANT: MBB Design Studio

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission direct Staff to prepare a resolution for approval, or a resolution for denial, of File No(s).
SPR-2023-017, OTP-2024-009

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 December 21, 2023, an application was submitted on behalf of the property owner(s) to construct a new single-family residence on a vacant lot located at 4440 Park Aurora (APN: 2068-019-022), within the Residential Single-Family (RS) zoning district. The project was reviewed by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC) on January 5, 2024. No major concerns were expressed, but review comments included plan revision comments, oak trees/biological resources comments, grading and drainage, and comments regarding the presence of easements on the subject site. Following resubmittals and reviews by City staff, final plans were submitted on October 2, 2024.

In accordance with Section 2.40.040 of the CMC, the Architectural Review Panel reviewed the project on June 28, 2024. At the meeting, the ARP recommended approval of the project, with additional considerations (See Exhibit C for ARP meeting minutes). The applicant subsequently submitted revised plans to address the ARP's considerations.

On October 2, 2024, the application was deemed complete by Staff.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

A. Existing Site/Building Layout: The existing site is a 16,794 square-foot (0.39 acre) undeveloped property located at 4440 Park Aurora (APN: 2068-019-022), within the Residential Single-Family (RS) zoning district. The majority of the property is primarily flat, sloping upwards towards the rear of the property, near the drainage culvert in the northeastern portion of the parcel.

The project site is a corner lot at the intersection of Park Aurora and Park Sienna, and abuts HOA-maintained undeveloped open space to the east, an HOA-maintained park to the north, and is adjacent to other single-family residences to the south and west. Within the surrounding area, home sizes range in size from approximately 1,940 square feet to 4,712 square feet, (See Technical Appendix), according to data from the LA County Assessor. The average home size in the vicinity is 3,153 square feet, and the average lot size is 13,601 square feet.

The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story 5,224 square-foot single-family residence and associated new 762 square-foot ADU, swimming pool, three-car garage, retaining walls, landscaping, and hardscape. Storm drain

easements exist within the northern side setback area, running parallel to the street and occupying a portion of the lot at the corner; within the eastern side setback, another easement exists for utility purposes.

As part of the proposed project, the applicant has obtained approval from So Cal Edison and the LA County Flood Control District for the encroachments into the easement areas necessary for construction of the proposed project, including construction of retaining walls/garden walls in both side setbacks. The applicant has provided written authorization from both entities, which has been placed in the project file.

Additionally, there is an oak tree, walnut tree, and drainage swale towards the sloped area at the rear of the property, and the proposed project will not any of these features, with development concentrated on the primarily flat portions of the parcel.

The proposed single-family residence will be set back 20'5" from the front property line (20' min. required), 16'0" from the street side property line (15' min. required), 10'10" from the opposite side property line (10' min. required), and 45'10" from the rear property line (20' min. required). The proposed site coverage is 34.8% (35% maximum) and the proposed permeable surface area is 70.05% (65% minimum required) (see Technical Appendix).

- B. Architecture/Building Design:** The subject site is surrounded by one and two-story single-family homes that vary in regard to architectural design, colors, and materials. The dominant architectural style in the neighborhood is nonetheless Spanish/Mediterranean, with the majority of the homes having Spanish tile roofs.

The proposed project includes an off-white stucco exterior, limestone veneer, forest brown trim elements, and a brown-gray blend Spanish tile roof (see colors & materials on Sheet A-2.0-A2.1 of Exhibit A). The Architectural Review Panel reviewed the proposed project on June 28, 2024, and recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission, with additional considerations to better balance the exterior and create differentiation between the first and second floors (see ARP minutes in Exhibit C). The applicant subsequently revised the plans to address the Panel's concerns and suggestions.

- C. Landscaping and Oak Trees:** The project site was previously under common ownership with the adjacent single-family residence, and for many years the property functioned as a side yard for the adjacent home, with landscaping and

fruit trees planted on the property. Now, the properties are under different ownership, and the landscaping/fruit trees planted by the prior owner have since been removed—only the on-site walnut tree and oak tree remain. The proposed new residence includes all new landscaping and hardscaping, and the proposed landscape planting plan is included on Sheet L-1.0 of Exhibit A.

As described in the Oak Tree Report included as Exhibit E, one coast live oak tree occupies the rear of the subject site. All proposed new structures will be located outside of the oak tree protected zone, and the only proposed encroachment will be for the installation of a wooden property line fence, outside of the tree's drip line but within the tree's protected zone. In the City Arborist's review memorandum, dated July 15, 2024 (Exhibit F), the City Arborist found the applicant's submitted oak tree report to be factually accurate, and he agreed that construction activities were not likely to cause any long-term adverse impact to the tree. He recommended approval of the Oak Tree Permit with associated mitigation measures listed in the submitted report.

In addition to oak trees, the applicant submitted a special status species report to analyze the presence of the on-site Southern California Black Walnut Woodland, which begins at the rear of the property adjacent to the coast live oak tree and continues upslope off-property onto the adjacent HOA-maintained parcel. The report recommends construction to occur outside of the drip line of the walnut tree, to facilitate the continued existence of the portion of native walnut woodland that is located onsite and adjacent. As depicted on Sheet T-1.1 of Exhibit A, construction will be located outside the protected zones of both the walnut tree and oak tree.

- D. Grading/Drainage:** The proposed new residence and associated site improvements will be located on areas of the site that are primarily flat, with a slight slope down from the neighboring home towards Park Sienna to the north. A retaining wall is proposed along the south side property line to facilitate construction of a flat graded pad, and additional retaining walls are proposed in the rear yard for installation of rear yard improvements. All proposed retaining walls are no more than six feet tall at their maximum heights.

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 within Exhibit D for incorporation into a resolution of approval, if so directed by the Commission.

REQUIRED FINDINGS:

The findings for a Site Plan Review, and which the Planning Commission would have to make for a project approval, are stated in Section 17.62.020 of the Calabasas Municipal Code 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 is in compliance 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.

The findings for an Oak Tree Permit are stated in Section 17.32.010 of the Calabasas Municipal Code. The Planning Commission would have to make one of the following findings for a project approval:

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. The condition or location of the oak tree or scrub oak habitat requires altering to maintain or aid its health, balance or structure.
4. The condition of the oak tree or scrub oak habitat warrants its removal due to disease, dangerous condition, proximity to existing structures, high pedestrian traffic areas, such as parking lots and pedestrian walkways when such conditions may be unsafe or cannot be controlled or remedied through reasonable preservation and/or prevention procedures and practices.
5. Removal or altering of the oak tree(s) will have minimal impact on the total hardwood canopy with special emphasis on associated tree growth and their natural regeneration, wildlife habitat and heritage oak trees.

The applicant's proposed justification for the findings listed above is attached as Exhibit B.

REQUESTED COMMISSION ACTION:

Staff requests the Commission conduct the public hearing, and then direct Staff to develop findings in support of either approval or denial of the project, supported by the facts and testimony provided at the hearing. Note: A resolution of denial must include an explanation as to why at least one of the required findings discussed in this report cannot be made.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This project is Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule Exemption) and Section 15303 (New Construction) 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.

PREVIOUS REVIEWS:

Development Review Committee (DRC):

January 5, 2024 No major comments.

Architectural Review Panel (ARP):

June 28, 2024 The Panel reviewed the project plans, and recommended approval of the project with additional considerations. The ARP commented that the applicant should:

- At the front elevation, adjust the tower element to differentiate the two areas.
- Add a taller window at the front tower element to better balance the space.
- Consider opening the roof at covered front entry.
- Consider adding a water element at the front courtyard area, if possible.
- Improve window placement and mullions on north elevation facing Park Sienna.
- Consider adding balcony to the south elevation to break up the blank side of the residence.
- Provide separation between 1st and 2nd floors on the south elevation

The project plans were subsequently revised to address the ARP's comments (See Exhibit A).

ATTACHMENTS:

- Exhibit A: Project Plans
- Exhibit B: Findings Justification Submitted by Applicant
- Exhibit C: ARP Minutes from June 28, 2024
- Exhibit D: Draft Conditions of Approval
- Exhibit E: Oak Tree Report submitted by Applicant
- Exhibit F: Peer-reviewed Oak Tree Report from City Arborist
- Exhibit G: Preliminary Grading & Drainage Plan

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Location Map



Applicable Development Standards:				Code Limit
Lot Size:	16,794	Sq. Ft.		N/A
Floor Area:				N/A
Main House:	5,224	Sq. Ft.		
ADU:	762	Sq. Ft.		
 Setbacks:				
Rear:	45 Ft	10 In.		20 Ft. Min.
Street Side:	16 Ft.	0 In.		15 Ft. Min.
Side:	10 Ft.	10 In.		10 Ft. Min.
Front:	20 Ft.	5 In.		20 Ft. Min.
Rear (ADU):	18 Ft.	4 In.		4 Ft. Min.
Side (ADU):	5 Ft.	0 In.		4 Ft. Min.
 Height:				
Main House:	31 Ft.	1 In.		35 Ft. Max.
ADU:	16 Ft.	1 In.		16 Ft. Max
 Site Coverage:				
Proposed:	4,972	Sq. Ft.	34.8 %	35% Max.
 Pervious Surface:				
Proposed:	11,764	Sq. Ft.	70.05 %	65% Min.

Area Home and Lot Size Comparisons:

SITE ADDRESS	RESIDENCE SF	LAND SF
4440 PARK AURORA (subject)	5,224	16,794
4439 PARK AURORA	4,712	11,074
4511 PARK SERENA	4,598	7,195
4532 PARK MONACO	4,402	20,135
4501 PARK SERENA	4,400	7,355
4507 PARK SERENA	4,103	5,530
4520 PARK MONACO	4,088	14,412
4500 PARK MONACO	3,457	15,644
4400 PARK AURORA	3,302	27,570
4382 PARK CORONA	3,291	8,288
4430 PARK AURORA	3,291	12,004
4450 PARK ALISAL	3,291	13,976
4377 PARK CORONA	3,162	12,480
4421 PARK AURORA	3,128	14,034
4411 PARK AURORA	2,990	44,832
4500 PARK SERENA	2,960	5,946
4381 PARK CORONA	2,840	9,065
4430 PARK ALISAL	2,827	19,496
4431 PARK AURORA	2,827	14,110
4406 PARK AURORA	2,819	14,910
4426 PARK ALISAL	2,793	20,633
4444 PARK ALISAL	2,748	12,612
4420 PARK AURORA	2,523	14,046
4374 PARK CORONA	2,256	7,993
4416 PARK AURORA	2,256	10,329

4515 PARK SERENA	2,092	5,811
4508 PARK SERENA	2,044	6,431
4434 PARK ALISAL	1,940	11,316
AVERAGES (excluding subject site)	3,153	13,601

Notes:

- 1) The House sizes do not include garages.
- 2) Project Site information obtained from the submitted project plans. Information on neighboring homes obtained from records of the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Office.