



Job No. 16-233 (rev 1)
August 6, 2020

Sally Zarnowitz, Planning Manager
Town of Los Gatos
Planning Department
110 East Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Subject: **Project Description and Letter of Justification
Minor Subdivision of 400 Surmont Drive
Lands of Anderson, Town of Los Gatos**

Dear Sally:

Thank you for having the wisdom to send this application to the Town CDAC on January 9, 2019. From that meeting we gleaned the following direction from Town Councilmembers:

- 1) Relocate the building site for Parcel 2 away from the “freckles” of slope over 30%.
- 2) Settle all shared street right of way issues with neighbors before filing the application.
- 3) The flag lot issue is not pertinent to this site.

Proposed Access Road Refinement

So, as were further evaluated access options along with the homeowner’s desire to preserve the upper residence site, it became clear that the preferred access road design would be a shared private driveway to the east of the minor drainage swale at the terminus of Surmont Drive. That driveway has evolved, shifted, and finally narrowed to only 15’ wide as opposed to the original 18’. This was endorsed by Santa Clara County Fire and represents refinement under CEQA. The narrowed road now moves another 3’ east of the top of the bank of the incised drainage swale. Thus negating the need for any Water Agency Permits.

Private Access Road versus Public Street

The terminus of Surmont Drive currently operates as a cul de sac with three independent driveways. One additional driveway connecting to the southeast corner of Surmont would be the least disruptive design. Extension of a public street would create the following complications:

- The crossing or piping of the small existing swale, which would trigger a CDFW streambed alteration permit and be considered a loss of habitat.
- Additional public street right of way would be required from the adjacent

neighbor – Bate at 401 Surmont Drive and/or Constantino at 200 Surmont Drive.

- The grading and tree removal to accommodate a 20' paved public roadway and 32' radius cul de sac bulb would be a potentially significant environmental impact on the site.

Development at 60% of Maximum Allowed Density

Since we are proposing merely 2 new lots and not the 5 that are possible based upon slope density, this private driveway is much preferred. We have been able to nestle in a 15' wide driveway at 20% slope with retaining walls at the fire department turnaround limited to 5' in height.

Residence Driveway Compliance to LGHSP

The two individual site driveways are depicted at 15% to 20% slope in the future. Please note that the 15% slope is a standard from the 2004 HDS&G and is not applicable to access roads pursuant to the discussion in the 1978 Hillside Specific Plan. That document encourages roadway design solutions that minimize grading and conform to the existing terrain which is indeed the case here.

Future One-Story Residences

Further conceptual development of the building site designs has been provided. Suffice to say that any residence will be oriented parallel to the existing contours and likely be of a daylight basement design, resulting in structures well under the 30' height limit. For now, we depict the potential building sites on the terrain of less than 30% and these locations have been cleared for any geologic hazards by the consulting geologists.

Summary

We have worked with the Hillside Specific Plan for 39 years and find the document to be excellent in its clear intent with design standards that create clustered lots served by optimal infrastructure. This property in particular results in the placement of low visibility residences at the current suburban edge of development. We look forward to comments and review by Town Staff.

Sincerely,



TS/CIVIL ENGINEERING, INC.
Terence J. Szewczyk, P.E. C35527
Principal Engineer