

February 5, 2026

Ms. Samina Merchant
Community Development Department
Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95031

RE: 695 Bicknell Road

Dear Samina

I reviewed the drawings and evaluated the neighborhood context. My comments and recommendations on the design are as follows:

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The site is located on deep lot in an established neighborhood of homes. Photos of the site and its surrounding neighborhood are shown on the following page.





THE SITE



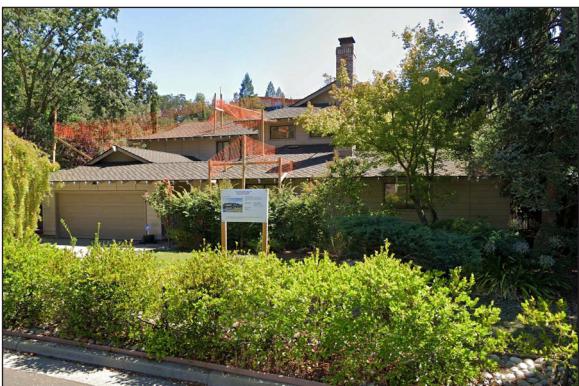
House immediately across Bicknell Road



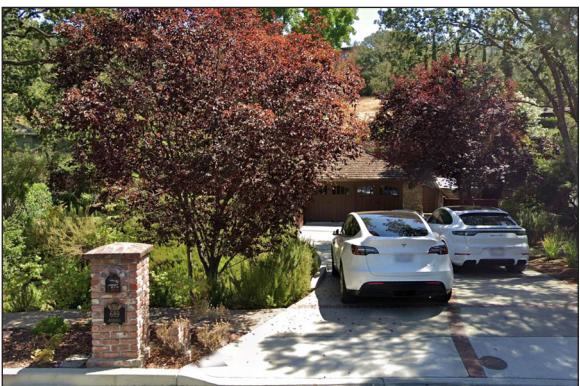
House to the immediate left



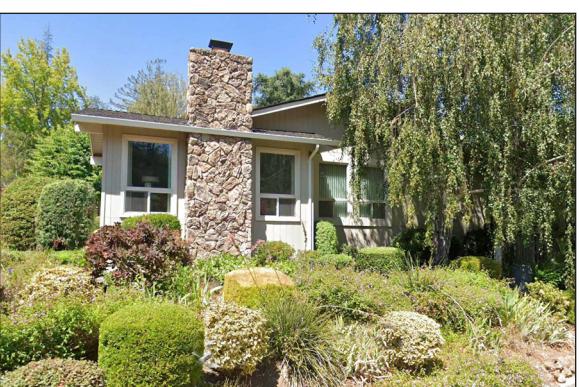
House to the immediate right



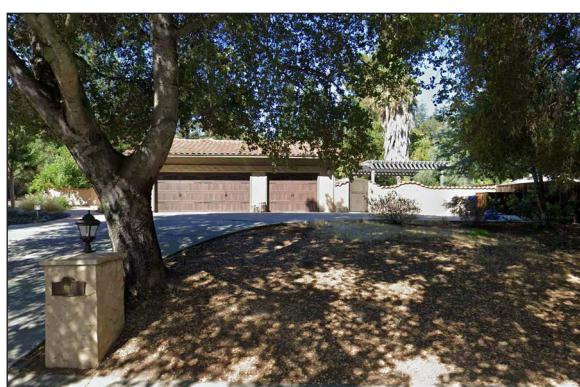
Nearby house to the left



Nearby house to the left



Nearby house across Bicknell Road



Nearby house across Bicknell Road

PROPOSED PROJECT

EXISTING ELEVATIONS

SITE PHOTOS



FRONT



REAR



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The project includes a second floor addition to the existing second floor plan, an infill addition to the rear of the first floor and the addition of a balcony extending across the full rear facade. - see illustrations below.



FRONT

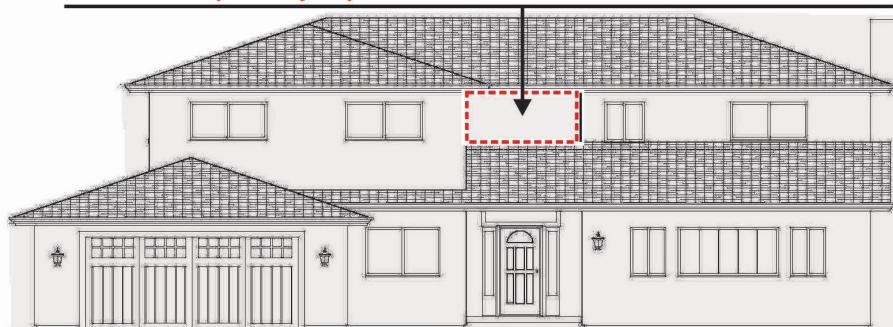


REAR

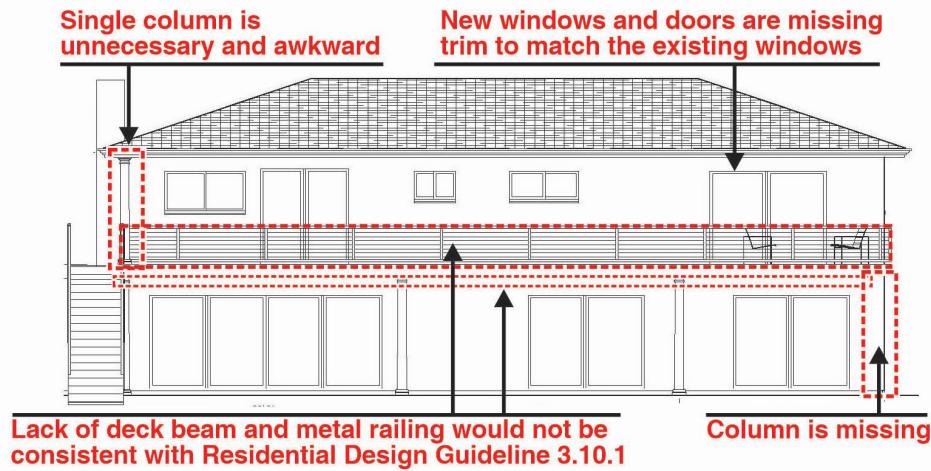
The proposed additions are modest and in keeping with the building form traditional to the architectural style. There are, however, a few issues related to the town's Residential Design Guidelines.

1. There is something missing and not coordinated at the second floor addition over the home entry. The floor plans call for an open space to the floor below but does not show an exterior wall.

**Unclear what happens in this area
Second floor plan says open to below but there is no outside wall shown**



2. New windows and doors have sizes and proportions compatible with the existing house but do not show surrounding trim to match the existing openings as required by the Residential Design Guidelines.
3. The new rear balcony across the full width of the rear facade is missing a supporting column at one end and has an unnecessary and awkward added single column at the second floor.



4. The rear balcony lacks a beam over the columns which would not be consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.10.1.
5. The metal railing at the rear balcony would not be consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.10.1.

3.10.1 Porches and Entries

- Select columns that are traditional to the architectural style of the house. Take care in selecting columns with an appropriate width to height ratio for the style. Except for a very few styles, the columns should have appropriate caps and bases with proportions typical of the style.
- Provide a well proportioned beam between the column caps and the roof. Size and detail the beam so that it looks like a convincing structural member. It should be visible both from inside and outside of the porch.

6. There is one other substantial concern that has some visual design issues but may be more of an issue of the applicant's construction detailing. The current proposal has an awkward front first floor roof form caused by the desire to have front-facing windows on the Bedroom 5 facade that match the existing second floor windows on Bedrooms 3 and 4. This would have some impact on the roof form view from the street but might not be critical. This roof form could be a potential construction roof drainage and waterproofing issue for the owner since it directs roof drainage into the adjacent wall rather than away from it which is usually the preferred solution.

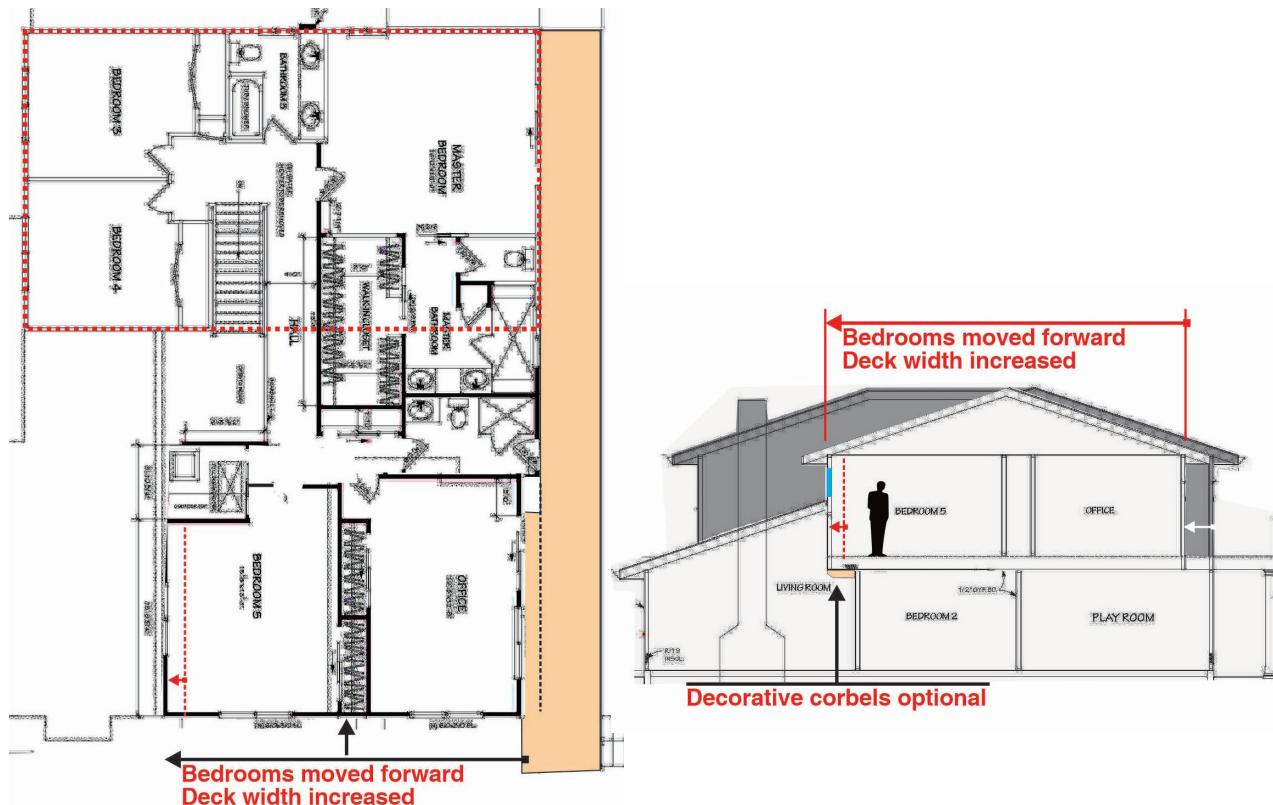


RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Clarify the second floor plan above the home entry. I am assuming that the front wall of Bedroom 5 will continue in line with the front facade.
2. Add surrounding trim on all windows and doors consistent with Residential Design Guideline 3.7.4.
3. Add the missing ground floor column at the balcony and remove the random second floor column.
4. Add a beam across the columns at the rear balcony.
5. Use a wood balcony railing in lieu of the proposed metal railing.
6. The issue of the awkward second floor roof form and waterproofing is one that I believe that the applicant should address. If they wish to leave it as proposed, I do not believe that the resulting condition would be detrimental enough to recommend changes. However, should the applicant wish to explore alternatives to maintain the second floor use areas while improving the construction drainage and waterproofing details, a couple of approaches are illustrated below.

APPROACH A

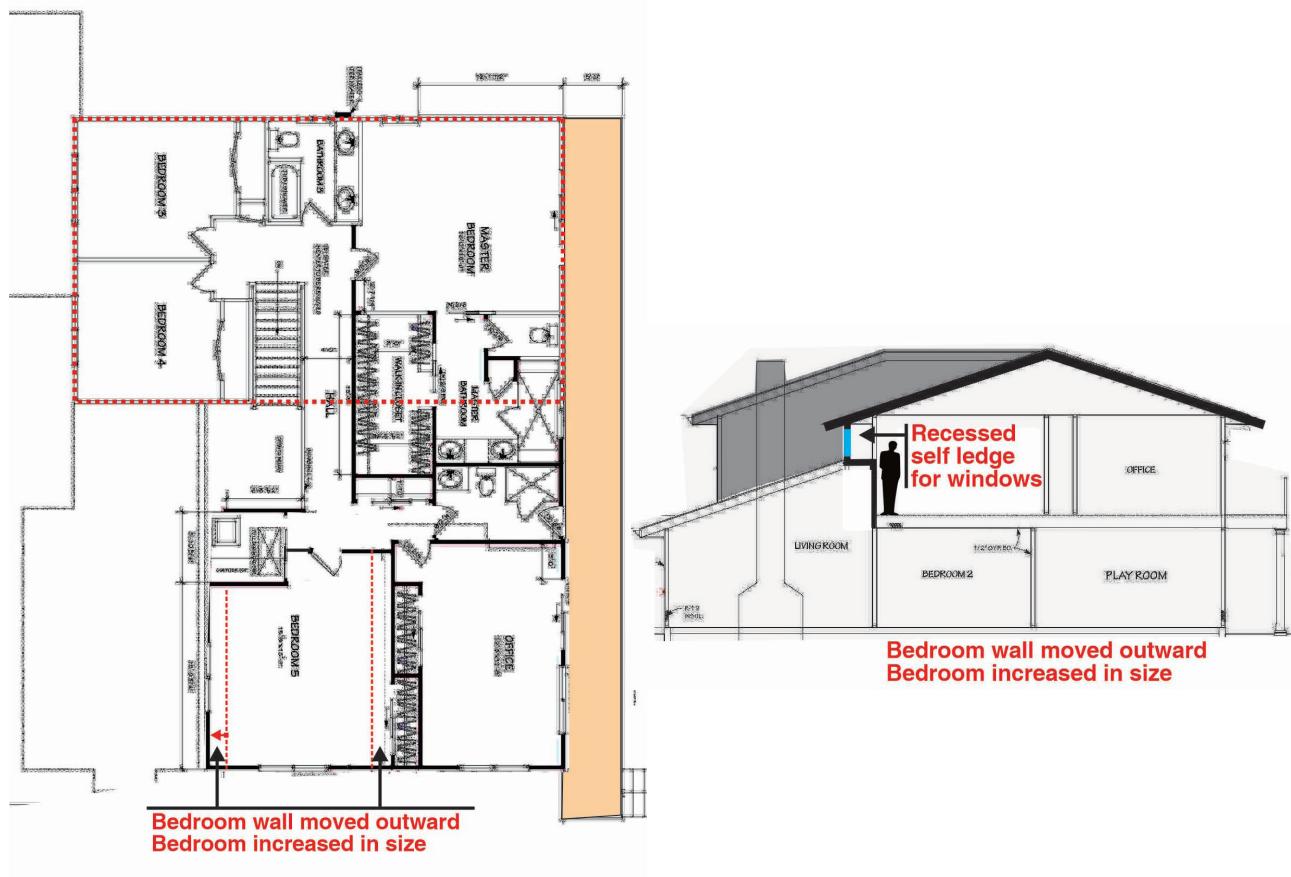
The simplest approach would be to shift Bedroom 5 and the office a bit toward the home frontage so that the first floor roof peak would hit the wall plane, eliminating the roof drainage toward the building face and maintaining the proposed windows. This is shown in the plan and section illustrations below. An option would be to retain the rear wall at the office in alignment with the adjacent rear wall by increasing either the depth of Bedroom 5 or the office.



The downside of this approach as shown is that a portion of the second floor Bedroom 5 volume would intrude into the first floor elevated ceiling space.

APPROACH B

A similar approach that would leave the first floor Living Room volume untouched looks awkward in section but would be a simple fix. It would align the Bedroom 5 wall with the Living Room wall below and add an extended window ledge to bring a wall facade out to match the first floor roof ridge.



The applicant should be asked to explore other approaches but in the end it is probably their choice to make.

Samina, please let me know if you have any questions or if there are any issues that I did not address.

Sincerely,
CANNON DESIGN GROUP



Larry L. Cannon