

Mr. Nyhus,

I must also disagree with your characterization of historic districts. My husband and I chose to live in Baywood almost 25 years ago because of the architectural unity of the neighborhood, among other elements. This appreciation rubbed off on our daughter and son-in-law, who bought a house in the Historic Irvington District of Portland. The neighborhood is a source of pride to the entire city of Portland. It's gracious, has the same type of community spirit as Baywood, and has changed gracefully with the times. We just visited and were amazed at the amount of remodeling and construction taking place in the neighborhood. It's happening in a controlled and considerate manner that seems to be serving everyone's needs. It's also interesting that these vintage homes created a niche of architects and contractors who specialize in historic home construction. Change is inevitable, but Irvington shows that it can happen beautifully, without conflict. (Property values in Irvington also increase at a faster rate than in the rest of Portland.)

Let's work off of facts and not suppositions.

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From: [Eric Nyhus](#)
To: [Ron Whiteside](#); [Laurie Hietter](#); [Michael Nash](#); [Lisa Nash](#); [Teresa Rose](#); [Maxine Turner](#); [Keith Weber](#); [Connie Weiss](#); [Doug Goldberg](#); [McKay Steve](#); [rhietter](#); [REDACTED]; [Keren Kotowitz](#); [Jeff Kotowitz](#); [Neal Tandowsky](#); [Ilana Tandowsky](#); [Jennifer Kycenga](#); [jeanne bosschart](#); [REDACTED]; [Ken Constantino](#); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [Miriam Majors](#); [anne Sortwell](#); [REDACTED]; [Jean Garcia](#); [John Hietter](#); [REDACTED]; [Peter Stone](#); [REDACTED]; [Vinson Kwan](#)
Cc: [Roberto Martinez](#); [Gene Alston](#); [Nicole Alston](#)
Subject: RE: Comments on 415 Fairfax
Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 11:39:08 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)

Good morning Ron,

Thank you for the message below. On behalf of Gene and Nicole, we are pleased to have the chance to respond to your and other neighbors' comments and concerns and will do so in a similar bullet point format to ensure we address each comment and others. We would also like to reiterate that they remain excited about living in this community, love the setting of varied architecture and greenery, and have met some very nice, supportive people in the neighborhood despite some negative and insufficiently informed comments from some in this group. To hopefully clarify some of the false information that is being circulated, we provide the feedback below:

- "Historic home": As requested by the City of San Mateo, 415 Fairfax has not only been reviewed professionally by an historic consultant and officially deemed not historic, it has also been added to and modified over the years at the rear, sides, and interior with very little care and with inappropriate and cheaper materials (see below). Though the front Living Room retained some wonderful heavy timbered ceilings, the rest of the house has very little architectural integrity. The interiors has had makeshift changes made over the years to where roof leaking is occurring in some areas, and flow and spaces have been enormously compromised. Gene and Nicole lived in the house for a while and had to make several substantial repairs to correct gas leaks, an inoperable water heater, and a fire hazard within the furnace just to be able to live there safely.

A picture containing building, outdoor, sky, house? ? Description automatically generated

This image shows an incongruous addition with thin and poorly applied stonework. Multiple patterns of hardscape including exposed aggregate, varied cut stone, and brick combined with the stone on the addition, have no correlation to one another and reveal the inappropriate add-ons over the years.

A picture containing outdoor, tree, grass, house? ? Description automatically generated



This image at the rear reveals more incongruity in the windows and doors. There are both double-hung windows and casement windows. At the newer addition, there are clear glass French doors, and the older, lower level shows a divided glass door. In addition, the entire rear and side facades have little architectural appeal, particularly with this random assortment of window sizes and types.

- Massing: We have conducted a comparison of the homeowners who have expressed concern with this project and discovered that without the ADU, this project falls in the lower 1/3 in size with respect to FAR calculations. That is the Floor Area Ratio prescribed by the City and afforded all home owners in San Mateo. We are proposing to be at 32.58% (3,440 sf home on a 10,558 sf lot), where the 17 other homes on the list range from 27.57% (Joe Musich who has a 3,860 sf home on the largest lot at 14,000sf) to 47.31% (Laurie and Randy Hietter who have a

3,520 sf home on a 7,440 sf lot). These numbers do not include garages and are generated from multiple real estate websites and County information. ADUs are not included because any of these residents, or any in San Mateo, have the right to build one per State of California mandate. On top of this, the Kotowitzes at 411 Fairfax immediately adjacent to 415 have a 4,020 sf home on a 9,539 sf lot. There are many other examples of homes in the immediate area with Floor Area Ratios that are larger than what we are proposing. We therefore respectfully disagree with the assertion that this project is 'much larger than other homes in our immediate area.'

- Additionally, to the point of Massing: The highest point of the roof of our proposed home is the same height as the Kotowitz's next door and 3 feet lower than the Armstrong's home at 300 Harvard (two doors down at the corner).
- As for the ADU, it is in fact intended to be housing for Gene or Nicole's parents. Nicole's mother lives with them now and they are looking forward to being able to provide her with her own independent living situation. If this were not provided, they would need to find other accommodations in the area and therefore take another dwelling off the market. This is exactly the purpose of the new ADU laws implemented by the State. Whether it is family or a renter, it accounts for additional housing, and that helps with the housing shortfall in California.
- Style and exterior materials similar to what we are proposing can also be found in the immediate area. Almost identical to what we are proposing is 301 Jackson St at the corner on the same block.
- As for an attempt to establish Baywood as an 'historic district' and all the development limitations that come along with such an official designation, we understand that Gene and Nicole were approached by other neighbors who expressed a concern over that possibility. These neighbors are concerned about the potential negative impact on their property values and new restrictions on improvements and modifications that would likely apply to their homes following such a designation.

Gene and Nicole have met privately with City Council Member Eric Rodriguez, Mike and Lisa Nash and supportive neighbors in the neighborhood in a genuine attempt to convey their appreciation for this community and neighborhood, and their desire to create a wonderful addition to the area. After showing them the drawings and renderings, both expressed a greater understanding of the design and appreciation for Gene and Nicole's vision for how their family home will fit into the neighborhood. Mr. Nash went so far as to compare it to a home a few doors away which actually won a design award. This certainly comforted them and helped reassure them that they were on the right path to building a great home. To see that Mr. Nash is now leading the effort to stop this project is both confusing and concerning after his initial positive response to Gene and Nicole. Particularly since his home at the rear is 3 stories high (+/- 32' where what we are proposing is 27') and a few years ago, moved his garage from the rear basement of his property to the front with a double wide door, and added a second curb cut at the street. These changes could be seen by some as contrary to the intent of the City's Design Guidelines and yet the project was approved and completed.

They have also hired Mike Callan, a well-respected landscape architect who lives in San Mateo, for both his design aesthetic and his experience providing appropriate and intelligent privacy screening, while creating as much green space as possible.

Respectfully, the reason the rules and guidelines are in place is to set expectations for new buyers around improvements they can make to a property before even purchasing it. They also provide for

new residents to have the same rights as anyone else in San Mateo to build within a prescribed envelope and set of rules. We are well within those rights and parameters and are simply asking for the same opportunity.

Many thanks,

Eric G. Nyhus LEED AP
CEO/Principal



Nyhus Design Group
1555 Bayshore Highway, Suite 120
Burlingame, CA 94010

T: [REDACTED]
F: [REDACTED]
C: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
www.nyhusdesign.com
[NDG on Houzz!](#)

Good day Mr. Nyhus,

I have read your response to the public comments on 415 Fairfax and noted more than a few inaccuracies and misleading statements. To clarify the record and for the benefit of the interested parties, I offer a few corrections.

Your statement that 415 Fairfax has been "officially deemed not historic" is only partially true and therefore inherently misleading. While it may be correct that the home is not "individually" historic, it does appear to retain the objective characteristics and integrity that would qualify it as a contributing building to a Baywood historic district, thereby conferring historic status on the home itself. Individual significance is not what is important in this instance, it is the harmony of the whole which establishes historic significance.

According to the California Register of Historical Resources, "a district derives its importance from being a unified entity. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment." It is this relationship of style, massing, age, workmanship, location and integrity that exists between 415 Fairfax and the neighboring homes and streetscape that establishes the historic environment, and in which every home with similar characteristics participates.

Your remarks regarding "all the development limitations" that would be imposed and "new restrictions on improvements and modifications" are also inaccurate mischaracterizations. Historic district designation is no more burdensome to a property owner than current objective zoning standards, subdivision standards, and design review standards that we accept as beneficial protections that ensure our quality of life. According to the National Register of Historic Places, "listing on the National Register does not restrict your right to modify your home." You may still remodel, upgrade, and make improvements to your historic home. You can even add "incongruous additions" in the back, if you choose.

Design standards for historic homes provide guidance and assistance on maintaining the character of the home - generally appreciated by the homeowner, and certainly by the neighbors - because historic designation gives them the assurance that the qualities that initially attracted them to the neighborhood will endure over time. Clearly, decades of improvements and upgrades to Baywood homes have been made by responsible and considerate owners who maintained the historic neighborhood character and recognized the value of their unique homes.

Likewise, your remark about "potential negative impact on property values" is inaccurate. In his 2021 book, *Preserving Los Angeles: How Historic Places Can Transform America's Cities*, Ken Bernstein writes that "evidence from Los Angeles

and around the nation indicates that historic districts have a modest positive impact on property values compared with similar neighborhoods not designated as historic." He adds, "experience has demonstrated that many homebuyers actually seek out historic districts." This certainly is the case in Baywood, based on the many comments from the 415 Fairfax neighbors.

In addition there are property tax benefits for historic homes. In many California cities, including San Mateo, owners of historic homes can participate in the Mills Act Property Tax Abatement Program. This program allows qualifying owners to receive a potential property tax reduction and use the savings to help rehabilitate, restore, and maintain their homes.

Your parting remarks about rules and guidelines being in place to serve new buyers' expectations are only a small part of the picture. Consideration must also be given to the many existing residents who have invested in their homes and their neighborhood with the expectation that its historic character would be maintained, cared for and cherished by new neighbors. Most residents who have moved into Baywood understand what a special neighborhood it is and have done their part as respectful stewards to maintain the historic integrity of their homes and neighborhood. That new buyers would abide by this traditional understanding, the unwritten rule that generally "goes without saying," has been the expectation of generations of Baywood residents. Until now, there has never been a need to create a new rule and put in writing what most everyone understands and mutually respects. Whether or not you realize it, Mr. Nyhus, you have helped make the case for a Baywood historic district designation.

Keith Weber
San Mateo

From: [Andres Solis Molina](#)
To: [Vinson Kwan](#)
Subject: Fw: 415 Fairfax oaks
Date: Monday, November 22, 2021 4:01:29 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Laurie Hietter <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Trees Mailbox <TreesMailbox@CityofSanMateoOrg.onmicrosoft.com>;
[REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax oaks

Hi,

I live at [REDACTED] within 500 ft. of 415 Fairfax. I am strongly opposed to removal of the large heritage oaks on the 415 Fairfax property. The oaks greatly enhance the aesthetics of the area and provide important wildlife habitat.

The lot is large and provides ample space for a large home without removing these important oak trees.

Thank you,
Laurie

From: [Vinson Kwan](#)
To: [Vinson Kwan](#)
Subject: RE: RE 415 Fairfax and Historic areas/buildings
Date: Friday, June 24, 2022 10:29:52 AM

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED] >
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021 at 10:42 AM
To: Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Proposed demolition of Baywood Home

Dear Mr. Mayor:

As a concerned Baywood homeowner, I am writing to let you know the City received an application for demolition of a 1933 home at 415 Fairfax Avenue (photo of existing home included). The proposal includes construction of a 3,910 square foot contemporary-style home with a 1 bedroom, 2 bathroom ADU. See the attached notice for additional details and plans. Baywood is a unique collection of hand-built homes with classic architecture. It should be protected from construction of large homes out of character for the neighborhood.

The applicant's architect will hold a virtual meeting to hear comments on the proposal on Wednesday, August 4th at 6 pm. We hope you can participate if you have comments. The link to the Zoom meeting is below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89857645499?pwd=UFdxQTdqeGFleFVnWUphNHU1LzEvdz09>

Meeting ID: 898 5764 5499

Passcode: 298832

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,89857645499#,,,298832# US (San Jose)

The attached notice also provides the opportunity to submit written comments.

Please forward this email to any neighbors you think might be interested.

Thank you,
Laurie Hietter

From: [Julia Klein](#)
To: ["Steve McKay"](#)
Cc: [Linda Ly](#)
Subject: RE: Please help put an end to the 415 Fairfax tear down and death of a majestic oak tree
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:30:22 PM

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 4:11 PM
To: Julia Klein <jklein@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Please help put an end to the 415 Fairfax tear down and death of a majestic oak tree

Hi Julia,

Following up on my previous email ...

Also related to the property of 442 Parrott is the removal of the two redwood trees that were in their backyard. While we understand that the trees were dying or dead and therefore needed to be removed, the result is a near complete loss of shade and privacy that we previously enjoyed. Our final source of shade and privacy is the wonderful and perfectly healthy oak tree in the yard of 415 Fairfax where a gigantic structure is being proposed on a small lot. While their architect made it very, very clear that they are operating inside the boundaries of the law, the construction of that structure will upset neighbors, reduce property values, and reduce the quality of life for others. Is this really what we are aiming to achieve with our building codes targeted at more affordable housing? While the removal of the majestic oak tree will improve the view of their new pool from their 2 bathroom ADU, it will have a profoundly negative effect on our family and many others in the neighborhood who rely on that tree for shade, privacy, and beautification of the neighborhood. We hope you will help put an end to that project.

Thank you for your consideration and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Steve McKay
[REDACTED]

Vinson Kwan

From: Andres Solis Molina
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 3:37 PM
To: Vinson Kwan
Subject: Fw: Majestic and Healthy Oak Tree at 415 Fairfax

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2021 8:55 AM
To: Trees Mailbox <TreesMailbox@CityofSanMateoOrg.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Majestic and Healthy Oak Tree at 415 Fairfax

Hello, I'm copying here an email sent to Matthew Fried as I wasn't sure on how to best communicate this to the planning department. Thank you,

Steve McKay

=====

I hope this email finds you well.

I'm writing to you about the fantastic and healthy oak tree that resides at 415 Fairfax.

As you may know, the new owners of that property have devised a construction and landscaping concept that eliminates that tree to make room for a gigantic (nearly 5,000 sq. foot), modern, newly-constructed home on a small lot. The tree does not appear to interfere with the massive new home they are building. However, it may impede the view of their swimming pool.

We live directly behind the property and previously enjoyed wonderful shade and privacy due to the two redwood trees of our neighbors at [REDACTED]. Unfortunately, those trees were removed because they were sick, resulting in a tremendous loss of shade and beauty for many of us living on Parrott and Fairfax. The majestic oak tree at 415 Fairfax does not appear to have any such issues. It is beautiful; healthy; protected; and nowhere near power lines.

When we raised our concerns about removing that tree to the architect for 415 Fairfax, his response was that the owners have the legal right to do what they determine as the "best use" for them. He went on to say, "we like trees," but that they can also be a nuisance when they get mature and that this tree doesn't serve a purpose for the new owners. It is therefore within their legal rights to remove it for whatever reason they select as its "best use."

I have no doubt that the city approves the removal of countless heritage trees and every permit comes with a good reason why the owners want them gone. But I also believe that the city arborist has great respect for the incredible majesty of mature trees and the tragedy caused when they are destroyed, especially when the loss of a perfectly safe and healthy tree negatively affects so many people in the community. The wonderful oak tree at 415 Fairfax provides shade, beauty, and privacy for dozens of people. It is also the product of many decades of growth that cannot be replicated in our lifetimes. We love that tree; we depend on it; and we cannot understand any rationale to kill it. Please help us save it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. You are doing very important work and we are grateful for your service to the community. I would be more than happy to respond with answers to any questions you may have, or details about our family's concerns.

Best regards,
Steve and Elaine McKay



From: [Andres Solis Molina](#)
To: [Vinson Kwan](#)
Subject: Fw: Heritage Tree at 415 Fairfax Avenue, San Mateo
Date: Monday, November 22, 2021 3:56:31 PM

From: Connie Weiss [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 5:12 PM
To: Matthew Fried <mfried@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Heritage Tree at 415 Fairfax Avenue, San Mateo

Hello Mathew,

Michael Nash gave me your email so I could let you know that we are fully supportive of your decision to decline the permit to remove the heritage tree at 415 Fairfax. Many of us are very concerned with the new owner's plan for this property, it goes against what many of us have done over the years to preserve and protect this beautiful historic neighborhood with its lovely trees.

Thank you for agreeing with us!

Connie Weiss and Dave Cohen
[REDACTED]

Caregivers to 2 Heritage Sycamores and 1 Heritage Fig

From: Rita Armstrong [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 9:42 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Bruce Armstrong [REDACTED]; Neal Tandowsky [REDACTED]; Ilana Tandowski [REDACTED]; Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Christiane and Douglas Morais [REDACTED]; Ron and Cheryl Whiteside [REDACTED]; Jill Valladares [REDACTED]
Subject: Project at 415 Fairfax

Dear Vinson,

We're Rita and Bruce Armstrong and live at [REDACTED], [REDACTED] from the proposed project. We have lived here since 1997. We moved to Baywood because of its simple old-world elegance, harmony, and top-notch construction. The proposed project erodes this vibe in a neighborhood that is one of the jewels of San Mateo. This fact merits consideration in the permitting process. The 415 Fairfax project requires further public and city review before proceeding further.

We are actually surprised that the project has progressed this far, despite the extent of neighborhood dissatisfaction that has been registered. This erodes trust in the ability of San Mateo's administrative bodies to handle the city's future infrastructure and growth. This past spring we suffered through the horribly-managed repaving of Fairfax Ave. The City did not actively monitor or control the project until the neighborhood roared its discontent. 415 Fairfax is beginning to sound similar.

As far as the demolition of 415 Fairfax, the owners are literally trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. Specifically:

- The proposed structure is oversized for the narrow lot and would destroy light and sight lines. Sometimes we just have to accept that small lots are not meant for big houses.
- The design clashes with its surroundings.
- The extent of construction would again tear up Fairfax Ave., which has just been repaired after years of delay.
- The enlarged residence and ADU would house multiple adults, putting more pressure on street parking.
- This summer I talked to 415 Fairfax's owner when the property was first purchased. She said they wanted to expand the house to accommodate their teenage children, who attend local higher education. She said nothing about housing elderly parents. Did this argument just crop up as justification to build an 800-sq-ft ADU?

The neighborhood wants to be fair in its consideration of this project; however, this cannot be achieved without further review and input, as well as consideration of the elements that make Baywood a terrific and sought-after neighborhood. This disturbing lack of transparency gets our relationship with our future neighbors off on the wrong foot.

Please let me know if you have further questions. Thanks for your consideration.

Rita Armstrong
[REDACTED] (mobile)

From: Peggy Berlese [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2021 9:13 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: re: 415 Fairfax, San Mateo

Good morning Mr. Kwan and Council members,

Since I sent you the below email I have discovered that a couple of my statements are not correct. I apologize for it and wish to correct my email.

First, I have found that in fact the project has not yet been approved and permits haven't been issued. This is a relief to all people in the neighborhood. I reviewed the plans and there just doesn't seem to be a question that the house is out of place design-wise in the neighborhood, and it is way too big for the size of the lot and in comparison to other houses on the street. I am not sure what your criteria is for permitting plans but I hope you have some reasonable basis to look at these factors in deciding whether or not to approve plans, and not just whether the plans meet the strict letter of the Planning and other codes. Aesthetics is an important consideration.

Second, it appears the arborist has not approved the removal of the heritage oak tree. This really is good news. The tree is healthy and beautiful, provides much needed shade, and of course gives us environmental benefits. Years ago, we got permission to remove a heritage Sycamore from our yard. It was a tough decision to remove the tree; but it had been inappropriately pruned for years and it was sickly. Those are perhaps good reasons why a tree can be removed. But those factors just don't apply in the case of the oak at this project.

Third, and this is an additional consideration that I didn't bring up before. I think it would be appropriate for you to speak to the architect and owners about the viewpoints of the neighbors. This is a close knit community; it's a true neighborhood. Of course we all want to welcome a new homeowner and we don't want there to be any hard feelings against a new owner before he or she even moves in. Perhaps making peace with the neighborhood is another thing the owner should consider in designing the project.

Thank you and again please excuse my incorrect statements in the previous email.

Peggy Berlese
[REDACTED]

On Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 2:33 PM Peggy Berlese [REDACTED] wrote:

Good afternoon Council members,

My husband and I have lived at [REDACTED] in Baywood since 1985. Before that, we lived in the Aragon beginning 1978. You can see we are committed to the neighborhood and the City of San Mateo.

It is the proposal for the demolition of the lovely old home at 415 Fairfax that has most people in the neighborhood contacting you. I too think it is a shame that this home has been permitted to be demolished and replaced by a home that is too large for the lot and the neighborhood and has been designed such that the architecture just doesn't fit well. I also can't understand how permission was obtained to remove a heritage oak tree. But, what is past is past and my understanding is that you have already approved the demolition of the older home, the removal of the tree and the construction of a huge home and ADU on the lot.

Looking forward, I join the neighbors in asking you please to complete the City's Historic Resources Inventory at this time. It is my understanding that this project was started years ago and hasn't been finished. I understand you are busy but protecting the historic character of Baywood should be a priority for the City Council. The City benefits in many ways by this lovely neighborhood and the desire of many people, including young families, to live here. It would be such a tragedy to permit the older homes to be demolished and newer and larger homes to be built instead.

Thank you,

Peggy Berlese

-----Original Message-----

From: jeanne bosschart [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 2:39 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue

Vinson Kwan:

As a long time resident of Fairfax Avenue, I have enjoyed the architectural heritage of our neighborhood and respectfully request that you deny the demolition of the above. The new owners are seeking permission to build a house totally out of character with our neighborhood and it is also out of scale with the surrounding homes.

Also, the removal of the large oak tree would be a loss to our area.

Thank you.

Jeanne Bosschart

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: Mary Chigos [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 1:37 PM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: 415 Fairfax

Regarding the proposed demolition of 415 Fairfax:

. I was completely shocked when I first received notice and then walked around the block to look at the site. The proposed house is too large for the lot!

. the house as it exists fits into the neighborhood, it is in character of the neighborhood. A walking tour will confirm this statement.

.removal of the heritage oak tree (which should be protected) and the design to have the house so close to the property line is intrusive. Take a look at other houses in the area, backyards are large enough to enjoy and have some privacy. This would provide zero privacy to the adjacent homes - all three.

. At the last zoom the owners made the comment "we don't want to live where we are not wanted." I have not had the opportunity to meet the owners and only saw them on the zoom for the first time that evening. I welcome them to the neighborhood. The issue is the demolition of an existing home that fits the neighborhood and building a huge replacement house that does not.

Mary Chigos

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Rebecca Coker [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 2:15 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Ave

Hello Vinson,

I would like to add my voice in opposition to the proposed demolition of this historic home on Fairfax. Allow them to remodel, but please do not let them destroy this beautiful Spanish Colonial home whose style is what we love about our neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Coker

Rebecca Coker

[REDACTED]
cell: [REDACTED]

From: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>
Sent: Sunday, February 6, 2022 7:43 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: FW: 415 Fairfax Avenue

FYI. Comment letter related to 415 Fairfax.

From: Chris Cooper [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 6, 2022 5:41 PM
To: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]; Stephanie Liberty Zheng [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: 415 Fairfax Avenue

Dear Mr. Dahl,

Please conduct the historic survey of San Mateo and develop policies to protect our historic neighborhoods.

Below is a message that I sent to members of our city council in December and I did not receive a single reply or acknowledgement. I've lived and paid taxes in San Mateo for more than 20 years and I'm both concerned and frustrated by the state of affairs regarding housing and development within our neighborhoods and our city.

Our historic neighborhoods deserve more and better attention.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,
Chris Cooper
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chris Cooper [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Dec 12, 2021 at 11:15 PM
Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue
To: <citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>, <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>, <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>, <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>, <rbonilla@cityofsanmateo.org>, <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Connie Weiss [REDACTED], Stephanie Liberty Zheng [REDACTED], Jeffrey Kotowitz (US - ADVS) [REDACTED], Karen Vitale [REDACTED], <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>, [REDACTED], Rocky Francis [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Michelle Mickey [REDACTED], Lisa Nash [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Council Members,

We live at [REDACTED], just a few houses away from 415 Fairfax. We have owned and cherished our home for almost 21 years. We have been careful stewards of our home and property and we are proud to be contributing to the preservation of our important historic Baywood community.

I continue to be simply stunned regarding the situation at 415 Fairfax and the plans to demolish that property. Never could I have imagined that our city would allow one of the historic Baywood homes to be simply torn down when the structure is solid and well maintained. This home is most certainly historic and in a historic area for California and the Bay Area. In fact, this very home has been featured in at least one historical study regarding the formation of Baywood. I attach that page below.

In 21 years, I have never asked anything of my city. We have tried to give back by helping to maintain common park areas and other community outreach. I am now asking that you pause and consider the need to preserve this property. My wife, Stephanie, and I support:

- the protection of historic homes and neighborhoods in San Mateo.
- updating/completing the City's Historic Resources Inventory now.

Thank you for all your hard work to keep our city a desirable community.

With respect, Chris Cooper [REDACTED]



This home at 415 Fairfax Avenue was built in 1933 by Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Chalmers at a cost of \$7,500 and would remain their home for the rest of their lives. Built in the popular Spanish Revival style of the time, the house featured custom ironwork, oversized rooms, and three bedrooms elevated over the one-car garage. Mr. Chalmers, an avid gardener, planted a variety of fruit trees, among other plantings, on the property. One of his creations was his "fruit salad tree," which featured grafts of seven fruits on a single tree.

[illegible]

J.M. Chalmers kept scrupulous records of the costs of his new home, as evidenced by this 1933 cost sheet. Because it was built during the worst year of the Depression, cost overruns were to be avoided, and Mr. Chalmers kept a sharp eye on all aspects of the construction.

Chris Cooper古博

Mobile:

Chris Cooper古博

Mobile:

From: Chris Cooper [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 5:50 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Rocky Francis [REDACTED]; Michelle Mickey [REDACTED]
Stephanie Liberty Zheng [REDACTED]; dc [REDACTED]; Maryanne
Mandle [REDACTED]; Connie Weiss [REDACTED]; Robert Gonzalez
[REDACTED]; Kotowitz Jeff [REDACTED]; De Winter Liz
[REDACTED]; Karen Vitale [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Call for Action: Notice of DEMOLITION of 415 Fairfax Ave.

Vinson, I am very much against this plan and the demolition of a treasured vintage Baywood home. I am shocked that our city would even consider such a plan.

We have lived in our vintage Baywood home for more than 20 years. A huge value for our neighborhood is that we all focus on being good stewards of our historical homes.

Please preserve our history and our amazing vintage neighborhood. Let me know I'll w how to help to stop this action.

[REDACTED]
Cooper family

Chris Cooper 古博
Mobile: [REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

On Sunday, November 21, 2021, 1:55 PM, Laurie Hietter [REDACTED] wrote:

URGENT ALERT! Notice from Your Neighbors
PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF 415 FAIRFAX AVENUE



A formal Planning Application has been submitted to demolish this neighborhood home at 415 Fairfax Avenue and replace it with a significantly larger contemporary house. The existing home, a unique example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style built in 1933, is an integral part of the neighborhood streetscape that makes Baywood the very special and desirable neighborhood it is. The hand-hewn beams, ironwork, and other hand-crafted artisan details, along with its contributory presence to the neighborhood fabric will be lost if this application is approved.

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on August 4, 2021 and over 20 neighbors expressed opposition to the demolition of the historic home and to the size, style, and materials of the proposed new house.

If you agree that this irreplaceable home should not be demolished, **PLEASE EMAIL CITY PLANNER, Vinson Kwan NOW** and let him know that you are joining with the neighborhood and opposing demolition of this home! **YOU MUST ACT NOW - COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY this Wednesday, NOV. 24TH**

Vinson Kwan, Assistant Planner

(650) 522-7206

VKwan@cityofsanmateo.org

What your neighbors said at the neighborhood meeting:

1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished
2. The large heritage coast live oak tree on the property should not be removed
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if the new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompolis, 2004
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character with the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about 70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

If you are not interested in this topic, just reply no thanks and I will take you off the list.

Thank you for your support of our amazing neighborhood.





--

Chris Cooper 古博

Mobile: [REDACTED]

From: Larry Garnick [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 8:51 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: I'm Opposed to 415 Fairfax

Hi Vinson. I am a homeowner at [REDACTED] in San Mateo since 1992 and I have recently become aware of the application to tear down the house and trees at 415 Fairfax and replace them with a larger contemporary home.

While this property is not adjacent to mine, it is a stone's throw away and I am disturbed by this application which would destroy a lovely historical home in the Baywood community and replace it with a house which is out of character for this neighborhood.

By approving this application, the city would permanently damage the beauty and character of the neighborhood and set precedence for future erosion of this great place to live in San Mateo.

I urge the city to deny the application and help preserve the existing classic and fitting house.

I'm happy to comment or discuss if that would be helpful to the city.

Regards,

Larry Garnick

[REDACTED]

From: Brian Haverty [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 6:20 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: No Vote: For Even Considering the Demolition of 415 Fairfax

Vinson and Eric,

We are opposed to your plan to tear-down the existing home at 415 Fairfax Avenue.

I have learned never to trust a politician. Unfortunately, our legislators made the SB9 decision for us. The citizens of California should have had the opportunity to vote on this matter. Instead, SB9 is designed to erode and destroy the traditional single family suburb. One of my very best friends and neighbors lives [REDACTED] to this beautiful house located at 415 Fairfax and he is very upset about the future plans for this property.

How would you like to be living in a single family community and all of a sudden your neighbor decided that he/she is going to disrupt your traditional neighborhood by building a condo? A rational person would be very concerned. This is his/her investment in the future and possibly where they decided to spend the rest of their lives. I would be worried too. How is this going to impact my home value? Who are my neighbors? What about parking? No-worries; street parking for all.

Parable: I was walking on the Coastal trail in Half Moon Bay last week and could not help but notice that there was a sign located about every 100 yards that cautions those using the trail to "Stay on the trail - Protected Wildlife Habitat" I seriously thought of taking one of these signs and placing it on my front lawn. The State of California, the County of San Mateo and the City of San Mateo place more emphasis on grasslands (the wildlife habitat" over the habitat of their citizens and that just is not cutting it for me.

This is a STRONG No Vote: For Even Considering the Demolition of 415 Fairfax.

Kind Regards,

Brian Haverty

[REDACTED]
M: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: linda herz [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 1:15 PM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]

Subject: 415 Fairfax

We just learned of the proposal to tear down this existing home and replace it with a large modern structure. We bought our home in the Baywood/Aragon neighborhood over 30 years ago, and specifically chose this area because of the schools and the charm of the beautiful old homes. The house on Fairfax is a prime example of a typical beautiful Baywood home which makes up the fabric of this neighborhood. Please reconsider not allowing a home of this nature to be torn down and replaced with something that is too big and too modern.

Thank you,

Ken and Linda Herz

[REDACTED]

Laurie and Randy Hietter

November 24, 2021

Mr. Vinson Kwan
Assistant Planner | Community Development Department
330 W. 20th Ave.
San Mateo, CA 94403

VIA EMAIL

Mr. Eric Nyhus
Nyhus Design Group

SUBJECT: Opposition to Application to Demolish 415 Fairfax Avenue, Remove a Heritage Oak, and Build a New Contemporary Home

Dear Mr. Kwan and Mr. Nyhus:

Please consider these comments regarding the proposed demolition of a classic 1933 Baywood Spanish Revival-style home, removal of a heritage Coastal Live Oak, and construction of a new contemporary-style home at 415 Fairfax Avenue. My comments are:

1. The historic home should not be demolished because it is well preserved and an excellent example of the split-level Spanish Revival architecture in Baywood and would be a contributor to a likely-eligible Baywood Historic District.
2. The proposed home is out of character and too large for the neighborhood and is not consistent with the City's Design Guidelines.
3. The removal of the heritage oak would violate the Protected Tree Ordinance.
4. The architect's meeting notes do not reflect the extent and scope of the neighbor concern. The area of concerned neighbors extends throughout Baywood and the 500-foot notice area should be expanded.

I have lived in San Mateo for over 40 years, with the last 27 years in Baywood. My husband and I, growing up, both drove through Baywood with our families to admire the architecture and manicured gardens. Sadly, we have seen house after house in San Mateo remodeled with inappropriate materials, contemporary styles, and inconsistent with the surrounding homes. Baywood has remained largely intact, with owners usually carefully remodeling to maintain the quality and character of the homes including sourcing original period materials and hardware .

1. Historic Home Should Not be Demolished

The Baywood Neighborhood has long been recognized as one of the most desirable neighborhoods in San Mateo. The area was developed starting in 1927 and the homes are architectural jewels, as described in a real estate sales brochure for a Baywood home:

“It is the **quality of the homes**, the **exquisite architectural detailing**, the manicured lawns and gardens along with Baywood’s strategic location and excellent schools that make Baywood so special. The streetscape of Baywood is nothing short of spectacular with virtually every home a home of **great architectural distinction**. To drive or walk along the streets of Baywood is to be awed by the **authenticity of the architecture**, a **virtual treasure trove of European storybook homes** in garden settings of lush flowers and trees.”

The home at 415 Fairfax is one of the architectural jewels in the neighborhood that has been carefully maintained over the years to preserve the architectural integrity, as have most of the homes in the neighborhood. The split-level Spanish Revival style home is an excellent example of the quality and style of homes in the Baywood neighborhood and should not be demolished. The home was determined not individually significant or historic, but would certainly be a contributor to the Baywood Historic District because of the architectural integrity.

The 1989 Historic Survey acknowledges that Baywood is a potential historic district:

“...the older neighborhoods on the west side of town had a large number of historically interesting structures. After consulting with staff members of the Office of Historic Preservation, we determined that the most sensible approach to documenting the neighborhoods in planning areas "Baywood," "Baywood Knolls," "Aragon," and "San Mateo Park" would be as potential historic districts. Since these neighborhoods contain a large number of older buildings that relate historically and have a high degree of architectural consistency, the district approach makes more sense.”

The house is prominently featured on pages 96 and 97 of the paperback book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompoli, 2004. How sad it would be to go looking for the house shown in the book and find a contemporary McMansion that does not respect the character of the neighborhood.

San Mateo evaluated the downtown historic buildings in 1989. It is well past time to evaluate the neighborhoods as historic districts.

2. Proposed Design Inconsistent with Neighborhood Homes and City Design Guidelines

We, and many neighbors, oppose the demolition of the house. The proposed new house design would be inconsistent with the City’s design guidelines and the character of the neighborhood. Here are some of the design elements that violate the City Design Guidelines:

Immediate and Neighborhood Context—The proposed replacement house is about 75 percent larger than the homes that recently sold in the neighborhood, and would tower over the neighboring houses.

Does Not Relate to Adjacent Houses—The contemporary style does not relate to the adjacent Spanish Revival and Tudor homes and uses materials not typical of Baywood’s historic homes.

Does Not Respect Established Building Footprint Pattern of the Neighborhood—The proposed replacement house would be much larger and closer to the street than other neighborhood homes.

Garage and Driveways—The garage and driveways would be both large and prominent.

Does Not Respect Adjacent Neighbor Privacy—The northeast side of the proposed replacement presents a massive wall, towering over the neighbor's home.

3. Application Violates the City's Protected Tree Ordinance

The proposed project would remove a heritage Coastal Live Oak tree that should be retained under criteria in the San Mateo Protected Tree Ordinance. We oppose the issuance of the tree removal permit.

4. Neighborhood Meeting

The 500-foot radius map included in the project plans grossly underestimates the number of neighbors who have grave concerns about the demolition of this historic home and the inappropriate replacement proposed by the applicant. There were over 20 people on the Neighborhood Meeting Zoom call for the project. The people who spoke were welcoming to the new neighbors but expressed very frank and direct opposition to the demolition of the existing historic house and the style and enormous scale of the proposed dwellings. The comments were very direct and unvarnished – this level of neighbor opposition was not represented in the applicant's notes of the meeting – this was clearly disingenuous and misleading. The map showed 7 concerned neighbors when at least 12 voiced opposition to the demolition and style of the proposed new dwelling. Not everyone on the call spoke their opposition as many other speakers had already voiced their concerns. The architect's meeting notes do not reflect the extent and scope of the neighborhood concern which extends throughout Baywood. There are over 50 neighbors who are now aware of the project, and most are opposed. The 500-foot notice area should be expanded to include all of the Baywood neighborhood.

Summary

We are strongly opposed to the demolition of the house, removal of the heritage oak, and the construction of the large, contemporary replacement. It is baffling to us that someone would buy a landmark historic home, only to tear it down. We ask you to please deny this application.

Sincerely,



Laurie and Randy Hietter

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 12:54 PM
To: Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Demolition Permit Review

Dear Ms. Horrisberger and Mr. Kwan,

On April 18, 2022, attorney Rachel Mansfield-Howlett submitted a letter to you with documentation that the Baywood neighborhood qualifies as a historic district eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and that 415 Fairfax is a contributor to the district. The documentation included a report by Richard Brandi, architectural historian, on the eligibility of the Baywood neighborhood as a historic district and a letter from Mr. Brandi that states that 415 Fairfax is a contributor to the Baywood Historic District.

To my knowledge, you have not responded to the letter from Ms. Mansfield-Howlett. Vinson told me today the letter is still under review. I am therefore making this written request to please provide an update on the status of the 415 Fairfax application and a detailed description of how the City will process the application in light of the new information provided by Ms. Mansfield-Howlett.

Thank you,

Laurie Hietter

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022 5:01 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rachel Mansfield-Howlett [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Demolition Permit Review

Hi Vinson,

Thank you for reaching out to the owners at 415 Fairfax. The neighbors will appreciate remediating the eyesore.

I am surprised and disappointed the city is choosing to disregard the legal requirements of CEQA. CEQA is very clear on the points Ms. Mansfield-Howlett made in her letter (Ms. Mansfield-Howlett is a noted expert in CEQA and treatment of historic resources).

1. Historic districts do not need to be formally designated or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A noted architectural historian has determined the Baywood Historic District meets several criteria for listing on the National Register.

As Ms. Mansfield-Howlett noted, the case *League for Protection v. City of Oakland* (1997) 52 Cal.App.4th 896 held that treatment of a resource as historic does not require prerequisite listing in an official inventory of historic resources or in the California Register of Historic Resources.

2. A structure that is a contributor to an eligible historic district is a historic resource, and must be treated as such under CEQA.

3. Under CEQA, a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment (Pub. Res. Code §21084.1; CEQA Guidelines, §15064.5.). Guideline section 15064.5(a) defines criteria for qualifying historic resources, provides standards for assessing adverse effects on such resources, and confirms that a substantial alteration of an historic resource that materially impairs historic integrity causes a significant environmental impact.

An historic resource cannot be approved for a discretionary demolition without preparation of an EIR. (Pub. Res. Code §21084.1; *League for Protection v. City of Oakland* (1997) 52 Cal.App.4th 896.). A Categorical Exclusion, therefore cannot be used to approve demolition of an historic resource.

Please provide additional rationale for your decision and keep me informed as to the schedule for 415 Fairfax.

Thank you,
Laurie

On May 25, 2022, at 2:11 PM, Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

I've let the applicant know about the overgrown front lawn and they will remediate the issue. I've also copied the City's Code Enforcement Manager, Christine Civiletti, in my email to the applicant who is aware of this issue.

The City has noted and included Ms. Mansfield-Howlett's letter and Mr. Brandi's report as part of the administrative record. As mentioned previously, the focus of the City's CEQA analysis is based on whether the structure proposed to be demolished qualifies individually as a historic resource given that Baywood, is not currently a historic district. The City has reviewed Ms. Mansfield-Howlett's letter and Mr. Brandi's report but given that Baywood is not currently a district, and the house is not an individual resource, we expect to move forward with the CEQA exemption. The project has been deemed complete and we are checking to see if a Planning Commission hearing is appropriate for this project. Appropriate notices will go out as soon as the path forward is confirmed.

Best,



Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department
330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403
650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org



From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 9:55 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Demolition Permit Review

Hi Vinson,

The front lawn at 415 Fairfax has now reached chest-high in weeds and grasses. It looks like it could be a fire hazard. I know at least one neighbor complained to Code Enforcement. Is it possible for you to ask the Alstons to mow/weed whack the front lawn?

Also, do you have an update on when the City will respond to Rachel Mansfield-Howlett's letter?

Thank you,

On Fri, May 6, 2022 at 4:35 PM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

The City is still reviewing the application for 415 Fairfax Ave and will provide an update to the status for the application no later than 5/20.

As mentioned before in the letter sent by the Planning Manager, Manira Sandhir, while 415 Fairfax Ave. may potentially be a contributor to the potentially historic Baywood district, the focus of the City's CEQA analysis would be on whether the structure proposed to be demolished individually qualify as historic resources. As previously documented through the historic resource evaluation provided by the City's historic consultant, 415 Fairfax does not qualify as an individually eligible historic resource and speculation of future projects may cause cumulative adverse impacts to a potentially historic district is not sufficient to disallow nor preclude the use of a categorical exemption. The City's historic consultant is currently reviewing the documents provided by Ms. Mansfield-Howlett and will be meeting with the consultant to better understand the implications of the information. We appreciate your concern and patience throughout this process and project.

Best,



Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org



From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 12:54 PM

To: Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: 415 Fairfax Demolition Permit Review

Dear Ms. Horrisberger and Mr. Kwan,

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To my knowledge, you have not responded to the letter from Ms. Mansfield-Howlett. Vinson told me today the letter is still under review. I am therefore making this written request to please provide an update on the status of the 415 Fairfax application and a detailed description of how the City will process the application in light of the new information provided by Ms. Mansfield-Howlett.

Thank you,

Laurie Hietter

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Laurie

* PRIVILEGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This message, together with any attachments, is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is confidential and prohibited from disclosure. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination or copying of this message or any attachment is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the original sender immediately by telephone or by return e-mail and delete this message along with any attachments from your computer. Thank you.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 9, 2021 9:23 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax demolition

Hi Vivian.....I heard about the demolition and rebuild at 415 Fairfax in San Mateo and just wanted to voice my opposition to the size and out of character house that is being proposed. I live in the area which is an area built up in the 1920's -1940's. Even though it's not legally historic, the look, feel, and character of this area will be ruined if more developments like this go up, especially with ADU's which could be put in front of the main house or behind it with no additional on-site parking required. SB 9 and 10 will even make it worse.

The city needs to take a real hard look at what's starting to happen to the city and I hope in 10 years we do not have a real urban mess that resembles many parts of San Francisco. The city needs to start putting in their own restrictions as to what can be done with community input from the people who actually live in these areas and who purchased their home for what they thought would be a certain type of neighborhood.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.

Gary Isoardi

From: Ilana Tandowsky [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 8:41 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Neal Tandowsky [REDACTED]; Jeff Kotowitz [REDACTED]; Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue

Hello Vinson,

My name is Ilana Tandowsky and my husband Neal and I live at [REDACTED], a couple homes away from 415 Fairfax Avenue. We were involved with the meeting on August 4th and continue to want to remain involved in whatever way we can.

We have lived in the neighborhood for 18 years and have loved the character and the historic value of the properties around us. Many of us have remodeled our homes but have taken great care to preserve what is special and unique about our homes in this community. We are new to being this involved in the process, but certainly are eager to be involved. **Please consider another hearing so you can hear the varying perspectives and concerns.**

Thank you for your time and for considering our request.

Ilana Tandowsky
[REDACTED]

From: Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 12:20 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Photos

Hi Vinson,

Thanks again for taking the time to meet with me yesterday. Based on our conversation, I'm attaching photos from several vantage points between my home and 415 Fairfax. Feel free to share with the Alston's and their architect. If there is anything else I can help with, please let me know.

Thanks for your time!

Best,
Keren Kotowitz



















Sent from my iPhone

From: Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 11:41 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]; Michael Nash [REDACTED]; Jeff Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Comments on 415 Fairfax

Hi Vinson & Eric,

As neighbors who live adjacent to 415 Fairfax, we concur with Ron & Cheryl Whiteside's comments below. We would like to further emphasize our concerns around the mass and bulk of the proposed home. While the setbacks might be to code, we would like to reiterate that no homes on the street are so close to the sidewalks, making the house stand out like an eyesore. Additionally, the home is being built very close to neighboring homes which is totally out of character for the neighborhood limiting the beautiful green space we all embrace and enjoy.

Thank you,

Keren and Jeff Kotowitz

On Feb 8, 2022, at 6:13 AM, Ron Whiteside [REDACTED] wrote:

•

From: Ron Whiteside [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 12:14 AM

Eric and Vison,

We are opposed to your plan to tear-down the existing home at 415 Fairfax Avenue.

My wife Cheryl and I, Ron Whiteside, have resided at [REDACTED] in San Mateo since 1981. We live on the corner of Harvard and Fairfax, a few doors down and across the street from 415 Fairfax. We obviously love the Baywood area – since we have chosen to live here for so long.

We were participants in the Augusts 4th meeting about plans for 415 Fairfax and stated our concerns – that:

- The proposed demolition will destroy a historic home that has been carefully maintained and fits well into the neighborhood
- The proposed replacement home is very large and bulky for the lot size. Without the area referred to as an ADU, it is still much larger than other homes in our immediate area

- The proposed ADU will not add housing, which is what the law intended. It is attached to the main house and can easily be converted to a simple addition by adding a door. The new owners stated that it would be used as guest quarters for visiting family. How does this qualify as an ADU?

Numerous neighbors have sent emails to you eloquently expressing their concerns about this proposed project (see: Tandowsky, Armstrong, etc). We agree with all of the concerns in their emails, so I won't repeat them, but we definitely concur.

Houses in Baywood don't turn over very often, as long-time owners want their treasured homes to go to family or others who will cherish and respect the old-world charm of the house and Baywood neighborhood. New owners often renovate their homes and may make additions – always with respect for their heritage home. It makes me wonder why a new home owner would say how much they just love Baywood; yet want to destroy a heritage fabric in our community that makes Baywood what it is; the neighborhood they just love.

Vison et al, we urge you to deny the planning request for 415 Fairfax Avenue and encourage the new owners to come up with a plan that respects the home and our Baywood neighborhood.

Regards

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Hi,

Thank you to all of you who have submitted comments already. Here is a reminder for everyone else to send comments regarding the proposed demolition and construction of a 3,910 square-foot house and 798 sq. ft. attached ADU. Comments and numbers count! Even a simple email saying I am opposed counts.

•

Please send comments to the City planner AND the applicant's architect (and copy me):

vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

You might want to request another meeting so you can voice your comments. Please see the original information below.

Thank you! We are making a difference!

--

Laurie

URGENT ALERT! Notice from Your Neighbors
PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF 415 FAIRFAX AVENUE



A formal Planning Application has been submitted to demolish this neighborhood home at 415 Fairfax Avenue and replace it with a significantly larger contemporary house. The existing home, a unique example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style built in 1933, is an integral part of the neighborhood streetscape that makes Baywood the very special and desirable neighborhood it is. The hand-hewn beams, ironwork, and other hand-crafted artisan details, along with its contributory presence to the neighborhood fabric will be lost if this application is approved. A Neighborhood Meeting was held on August 4, 2021 and over 20 neighbors expressed opposition to the demolition of the historic home and to the size, style, and materials of the proposed new house.

If you agree that this irreplaceable home should not be demolished, **PLEASE EMAIL CITY PLANNER, Vinson Kwan NOW** and let him know that you are joining with the neighborhood and opposing demolition of this home! **YOU MUST ACT NOW - COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY this Wednesday, NOV. 24TH**

Vinson Kwan, Assistant Planner
(650) 522-7206

VKwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[REDACTED]

What your neighbors said at the neighborhood meeting:

1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished
2. The large heritage coast live oak tree on the property should not be removed
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if the new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompolis, 2004
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character with the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about 70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

If you are not interested in this topic, just reply no thanks and I will take you off the list.

Thank you for your support of our amazing neighborhood.

Attachments area

From: Jeff Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue

Hello Vinson

Keren and I live at [REDACTED] to [415 Fairfax](#) which is going to be torn down and replaced with a new home. We attended the first hearing which was attended by over 20 neighbors who had many concerns like us. I have reviewed the plans but I think it is important that residents and their architect host another hearing for the neighbors. As a zoning and architect novice, it is difficult to review the plans without any context or the ability to raise questions. In fact, we learned a lot about the proposed home from our questions at the hearing.

I ask you please host another hearing for the neighborhood. We, as well as all the immediate neighbors, are very concerned about this project and the graphic in the plan that identifies concerned neighbors in red is vastly understated.

Thank you

Jeff

Links in the message (1)



From: Shana Larson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 12:33 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax

Hi Vinson,

As a new homeowner in Baywood, I've been following the 415 Fairfax project. Having grown up in Burlingame, my husband and I specifically sought out a family home in Baywood since we love the charm, character and walkability that Baywood offers. We paid a premium to live here and do not want to see huge, modern homes being built in this historic neighborhood. Learning of the proposed plan to demolish 415 Fairfax and oak tree is really devastating. I stand with my neighbors on the below points.

1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished
2. The large heritage coast live oak on the property should not be removed
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book San Mateo (Images of America) by Gregory Zompoli, 2004
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character of the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about 70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

Thank you for your time,
Shana Larson
[REDACTED]

From: Bmah [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 12:05 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax - Demolition and New Home

Hi Vinson

We are writing to you as a concerned Baywood neighbor.

We learned of the proposed project on 415 Fairfax and we have seen the plans for the new home.

As we not opposed to homeowners remodeling, we believe a complete home tear down with the current home design does not relate to the neighboring aesthetic, materials, context, and history. The value of our neighborhoods depend on jurisdictional guidance and boundaries.

We appreciate your time.

Brian and Lisa Mah

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Nash [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 13, 2021 8:35 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Opposition to demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue

Vinson,
Here is another email about 415 Fairfax.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Peter Mandle [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, Dec 10, 2021 at 9:40 PM
Subject: Opposition to demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue
To: Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>, Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>, <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>, <rbonila@cityofsanmateo.org>, <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>, [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Kwan

This is to express our opposition to the demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue.

We attended the neighborhood meeting in August and continue to share the concerns that were expressed by our neighbors during that meeting: the planned house is out of character with the neighborhood due to its size (which is significantly larger than any other nearby home), and in very close proximity to the adjacent properties. We also understand that no variances are needed to obtain a building permit, demolish the existing 90-year old home, and construct the planned large structure. Just because it is allowed does not make it right.

Having lived in Baywood for over 30 years, we have seen many homes constructed, but unlike the 415 Fairfax project, they were nearly always remodels retaining one or more walls of the existing structure and reflecting the character of the neighborhood. The planned demolition and replacement fail to preserve the unique character of this home and the adjacent historic neighborhood.

We also question, due to the location of its entrance, whether the proposed ADU will ever function as an independent dwelling. Who would wish to live in an ADU that requires them to walk past the owner's living room window and swimming pool? Our concern is that the wall separating the ADU and primary dwelling will be modified to allow for a future passageway and expansion of the home without the owners needing to obtain a permit.

We hope City Council and staff will consider our concerns and require the owners to submit a revised design. Thank you for considering our note.

Regards,
Marianne and Peter Mandle
[REDACTED]

From: Peter Mandle [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 4:15 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Opposition to demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue

Dear Mr. Kwan

This is to express our opposition to the demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue.

We attended the neighborhood meeting in August and continue to share the concerns that were expressed then: the planned house is out of character with the neighborhood due to its size (which is significantly larger than any other nearby home) and in very close proximity to the adjacent properties. We also understand that no variances are needed to obtain a building permit and construct the planned house. Just because it is allowed does not make it right.

Having lived in Baywood for over 30 years, we have seen many homes constructed, but unlike the 415 Fairfax project, they were nearly always remodels retaining one or more walls of the existing structure and reflecting the character of the neighborhood.

We also question, due to the location of its entrance, whether the proposed ADU will ever function as an independent dwelling. Who would wish to live in an ADU that requires them to walk past the owner's living room window and swimming pool? Our concern is that the wall separating the ADU and primary dwelling will be modified to allow for a future passageway and expanding the home without the owners needing to obtain a permit.

We hope the Planning staff will consider our concerns and require the owners to submit a revised design. Thank you for considering our note.

Regards,
Marianne and Peter Mandle
[REDACTED]

From: Rachel Mansfield-Howlett [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2022 11:21 AM
To: Community Development Distribution <communitydevelopment@cityofsanmateo.org>; Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>; Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>; Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Submission re Baywood neighborhood and 415 Fairfax Ave.

On behalf of the Baywood Neighborhood Association, I submit the following documents:

- (1) Letter from Rachel Mansfield-Howlett
- (2) Report prepared by historic architecture expert Richard Brandi, Historic Preservation Consulting, which evaluates the eligibility of the Baywood Neighborhood under the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district
- (3) Letter from Richard Brandi, which analyzes the property at 415 Fairfax Ave. as an individual contributor to the district
- (4) Letter from the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Please confirm receipt.

Thank you,
Rachel

Law Office of Rachel Mansfield-Howlett
Phone: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Pamela McCarthy-Hudson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 4:37 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: re the proposed project

Dear Vinson -

I am concerned about the proposed 5K square foot house project for the lot of 415 Fairfax Avenue. I believe the project needs to be studied more closely by the city planning commission due to the size of the house on the lot and the proposed style. My husband and I personally just went thru the review and approval process on our remodel (not rebuild!) one year ago and the comments were very thorough and feedback was extremely detailed. It is hard for me to imagine the city not approaching this project similarly; the fact that it was ok'd by the city certainly surprises me.

Please do let me know if you have any questions for me.

Regards
Pam

Pam McCarthy-Hudson
Samaritan House Volunteer & Board Member
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 7:39 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Subject: Strongly opposed to 415 Fairfax demolition

Dear Vinson,

I understand you are supervising the city of San Mateo's assessment of a major construction project at 415 Fairfax Drive.

It appears the project is being fast tracked with no plans for neighborhood meetings or involvement of the San Mateo Planning Commission. My family got to know the project "up close and personal" last week when PG&E invaded our backyard and uprooted two trees so that they could turn off the gas service to 415 Fairfax. As you might imagine, we felt violated (just imagine how our dead lemon tree felt).

We live directly behind 415 Fairfax. Our home is [REDACTED] and we will be extremely, negatively impacted by this ill-conceived project.

I've had an initial glance at the plan published on your website. It is egregiously misleading. For example, are you aware that there were dozens of attendees at the preliminary neighborhood meeting and that every person that spoke was opposed to the project? Does that typically happen at your meetings, or might this have raised some red flags as to the enormous controversy surrounding this project? Perhaps the strong wave of vocal opposition by concerned neighbors would suggest that this project needs careful vetting and supervision by the Planning Commission rather than a perfunctory fasttrack process that seems to be underway over the holidays in hopes that nobody is looking?

There is a diagram in the [plan](#) that shows only a few red dots, each representing concerned neighbors. There are many other neighbors who are not only concerned, but who actually spoke up at the meeting and yet they have a green dot on their home. At best, this misrepresents the magnitude of opposition of this project and was prepared in a way to intentionally mislead the reviewers of the plans. As a matter of due process, I urge you to reach out to everyone on the diagram and ask them their views. My guess is that you will find your diagram littered with red dots. In any case, it is dangerously misleading to include the diagram as it currently exists in the plan because it is not only untruthful, but it harms those who are being misrepresented.

We are also very concerned with the way things have been communicated. At the end of the preliminary meeting hosted by the project architect, he and the homeowners promised to reach out to the neighbors and engage them in the process. Instead, this project is being snuck through the back door over the holidays when nobody's looking. Seriously, you posted these revised plans on your website with zero communication to the dozens of people who voiced concern at the preliminary meeting? I've seen that type of thing happen on The Wire and Boardwalk Empire, but right here in San Mateo? The whole thing has a certain smell to it and the process is obviously tipped against the residents of Baywood.

There is a long litany of issues with this project but I will be judicious by just listing a few questions and concerns.

Is this design appropriate for the neighborhood? Have you looked at the facade of the house in the context of the rest of the neighborhood? It would be like dropping a spaceship in the middle of a Tuscan village. It's just bizarrely out of place. Having spent many months trying to get our own plans approved by the city many years ago, we are well aware how much the Planning Commission cares about preserving the character of our neighborhoods. I consider that to be their calling as protectors of the city's architecture, cultural heritage and history. I think it's fair to say that many of us would like to understand why this project is being treated differently. Given its opposition and controversy, might we want to bring it to the Planning Commission's attention for closer scrutiny?

Are the proportions appropriate for such a small lot? We are blessed to have one of the larger lots in the neighborhood and, yet, we have not been able to build out further. We tried to add an inlaw bedroom (just a bedroom!) and that was not allowed because of the city's protection of the appropriate house / lot square footage ratio. The house being contemplated at 415 Fairfax is obnoxious in its proportions. This will now be one of the largest houses in Baywood constructed on a quaint little lot. When coupled with the bizarrely out-of-place design, you can start to understand why so many dozens of people showed up and spoke out in opposition. Most importantly, it is an absolute violation of our privacy. We currently enjoy about a 70 foot space between the back of our house and the current house on 415 Fairfax. The current house has a lovely design in keeping with other homes in the neighborhood and there is a nice buffer of privacy between us. If the proposed plans for 415 Fairfax are approved, we will instead be standing face-to-face with an ADU eyesore peering directly over our fence. This will violate our privacy, destroy value in our home, and dramatically decrease the quality of our living space.

Why murder the oak tree? The homeowners of 415 Fairfax paid an arborist to give a favorable view on their plans to kill their oak tree. Even then, the best he could do was to say it is in "Fair" condition and may need to be removed to make room for their ADU. We had an arborist visually assess the tree and their words were: "perfectly healthy", "excellent condition", "needs to be saved." I would like to hire another arborist and get a 2nd opinion about whether that tree should be murdered. Please note that, despite the enormous footprint of the proposed 2BR ADU, the oak tree is still several feet away. While I understand that "old trees can be a nuisance" (in the words of project's architect) and it may obstruct the view between the ADU and the swimming pool, there is no rationale to remove that tree. It is historic. It is majestic. It is perfectly healthy. It is in excellent condition. More importantly, many homes in the neighborhood rely on that tree for privacy, shade and beauty. Removing that tree is murder and it is completely unnecessary.

In glancing at the plan on your website, it depicts walls of privacy trees that don't currently exist. Many of us would like to know exactly what trees are being planned and what their height will be on Day 1 (not after years of growth).

We are very impressed with the architect on this project. He is extremely smart, eloquent, and extraordinarily self-assured. He is no-doubt an expert in pushing these projects through the system and getting things done for his clients. When Eric did spend a few minutes with us, he repeatedly noted that this project is "legal." He frequently quipped: "change is hard." Maybe it's true that we can't quite process that times have changed and we are too ossified in our curmudgeonly ways of thinking. Having said that, please appreciate that many of us have invested decades of our lives and our life's savings in our homes. We have also worked very hard to preserve the things we love about this neighborhood: sense of community, privacy between homes, proportion and space, caretaking of natural beauty, and respect for our neighbors. There is nothing in the 415 Fairfax project that aligns with

these values and THAT is why this change is too hard to accept and THAT is why it is bringing so much sadness and stress to our otherwise tranquil neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Stephen McKay

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Stephen McKay.

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: Strongly opposed to 415 Fairfax demolition

Hi Vinson, I hope you were able to enjoy your Thanksgiving though I'm sure this project at 415 Fairfax is stressful for you, just as it is for everyone in the neighborhood. It's extremely controversial and has people very upset.

I re-read my initial note to you and made some edits. I'd like to rescind my previous note and have it replaced with this edited version please. It is updated to fix some typos and clarify a couple of the points.

Thank you,
Steve

=====
Dear Vinson,

I understand you are supervising the city of San Mateo's assessment of a major construction project at 415 Fairfax Drive.

It appears the project is being fast tracked with no plans for neighborhood meetings or involvement of the San Mateo Planning Commission. My family got to know the project "up close and personal" last week when PG&E invaded our backyard and uprooted two trees so that they could turn off the gas service to 415 Fairfax. As you might imagine, we felt violated (just imagine how our dead lemon tree felt).

We live directly behind 415 Fairfax. Our home is at [REDACTED] and we will be extremely, negatively impacted by this ill-conceived project.

I've had an initial glance at the plan published on your website. It is egregiously misleading. For example, are you aware that there were dozens of attendees at the preliminary neighborhood meeting and that every person that spoke was opposed to the project? Does that typically happen at your meetings, or might this have raised some red flags as to the enormous controversy surrounding this project? Perhaps the strong wave of vocal opposition by concerned neighbors would suggest that this project needs careful vetting and supervision by the Planning Commission rather than a perfunctory fast track process that seems to be underway over the holidays in hopes that nobody is looking?

There is a diagram in the [plan](#) that shows only a few red dots, each representing concerned neighbors. There are many other neighbors who are not only concerned, but who actually spoke up at the meeting and yet they have a green dot on their home. At best, this misrepresents the magnitude of opposition to this project and was prepared in a way to intentionally mislead the reviewers of the plans. As a matter of due process, I

urge you to reach out to everyone on the diagram and ask them their views. My guess is that you will find your diagram littered with red dots.

We are also very concerned with the way things have been communicated. At the end of the preliminary meeting hosted by the project architect, my understanding was that we would hear back from the architect and owners and there would be some effort to address the concerns raised at the preliminary meeting. We understood this was just the beginning of the process. Instead, this project feels like it is being snuck through the back door over the holidays when nobody's looking. The whole thing has a certain smell to it and the process is obviously tipped against the residents of Baywood.

There is a long litany of issues with this project but I will be judicious by just listing a few questions and concerns.

Is this design appropriate for the neighborhood? Have you looked at the facade of the house in the context of the rest of the neighborhood? It would be like dropping a spaceship in the middle of a Tuscan village. It's just bizarrely out of place. Having spent many months trying to get our own plans approved by the city many years ago, we are well aware of how much the city planners care about preserving the character of our neighborhoods. They are the protectors of the city's architecture, cultural heritage and history. I think it's fair to say that many of us would like to understand why this project is being treated differently. Given its opposition and controversy, it seems that it deserves closer scrutiny. For example, I urge you to gather the input of all neighbors and ensure that their voices are being heard and earnestly considered by everyone--the Alstons, their architect, the San Mateo city planners, and other impacted neighbors.

Are the proportions appropriate for such a small lot? We are blessed to have one of the larger lots in the neighborhood and, yet, we have not been able to build out further. We tried to add an inlaw bedroom (just a bedroom!) and that was not allowed because of the city's protection of the appropriate house / lot square footage ratio. The house being contemplated at 415 Fairfax is obnoxious in its proportions. This will now be one of the largest houses in Baywood but on a lot that cannot aesthetically support its size. When coupled with the bizarrely out-of-place design, you can start to understand why so many dozens of people showed up and spoke out in opposition. Most importantly, it is an absolute violation of our privacy. We currently enjoy about a 70 foot space between the back of our house and the current house on 415 Fairfax. The current house has a lovely design in keeping with other homes in the neighborhood and there is a nice buffer of privacy between us. If the proposed plans for 415 Fairfax are approved, we will instead be standing face-to-face with an ADU eyesore peering directly over our fence. This will violate our privacy, destroy value in our home, and dramatically decrease the quality of our living space.

Why murder the oak tree? The homeowners of 415 Fairfax paid an arborist to give a favorable view on their plans to kill their oak tree. Even then, the best the hired arborist could do was to say it is in "Fair" condition and may need to be removed to make room for their ADU. We had an arborist visually assess the same tree and their words were:

"perfectly healthy", "excellent condition", "needs to be saved." I would like to hire another arborist and get a 2nd opinion about whether that tree should be destroyed. Please note that, despite the enormous footprint of the proposed 2BR ADU, the oak tree is still several feet away from the structure. While I understand that "old trees can be a nuisance" (paraphrasing the project's architect) and it may obstruct the view from the ADU to the swimming pool, there is no rationale to remove that tree. It is historic. It is majestic. It is perfectly healthy. It is in excellent condition. More importantly, many homes in the neighborhood rely on that tree for privacy, shade and beauty. I trust that the Alstons would decide against removing it if they understood the harm they are doing to others in the process.

In glancing at the plan on your website, it depicts walls of privacy trees that don't currently exist. We would like to know exactly what trees are being planned and what their height will be on Day 1 (not after years of growth).

We are very impressed with the architect on this project. He is extremely smart, eloquent, and extraordinarily self-assured about his plans for this project. He is no-doubt an expert in pushing these projects through the system and getting things done for his clients. He is working on their behalf and we don't begrudge him for trying to optimize their outcome within the boundaries of the law. Where we take issue is that this project is doing so much harm to others in the process. It's a zero-sum situation where they gain and the rest of us lose.

When we all met together at the preliminary meeting, we were continuously reminded that this project is "legal" and "compliant." Our concerns were repeatedly met with a quip: "change is hard." Maybe it's true that we can't quite process that times have changed and we are too ossified in our curmudgeonly ways of thinking. Having said that, please appreciate that many of us have invested decades of our lives and our life's savings in our homes. We have also worked very hard to preserve the things we love about Baywood: sense of community, privacy between homes, proportion and space, caretaking of natural beauty, and respect for our neighbors. There is nothing in the proposed 415 Fairfax project that aligns with these values and THAT is why this change is too hard to accept and THAT is why it is bringing so much sadness and stress to our otherwise tranquil neighborhood. I do not believe for a moment that this is the intention of the Alstons and I therefore plead with them to reconsider the entire project, including the destruction of the existing home, the construction of a gigantic ADU, and the destruction of a majestic oak tree that brings so much beauty, shade and privacy to the neighbors.

Sincerely,
Stephen McKay

[REDACTED]

On Wed, Nov 24, 2021 at 3:08 PM Steve McKay [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Vinson, thanks for your note. You have been put in a very uncomfortable position. This may be one of the most controversial residential projects that San Mateo has ever seen and yet you have a very skilled

architect who is trying to stream roll you in the process. I think that makes your job very challenging. Please just remember that nobody (nobody!) has spoken up in support of this project and it is doing enormous harm to many people. Please do the right thing by escalating this project to the top and make sure that it gets the scrutiny it deserves. I urge you to survey the neighborhood so that you can get a better sense of the massive opposition to this very dangerous project.

Have a nice Thanksgiving weekend. I will not take your time away from that with a phone call. Thank you,
Steve

On Wed, Nov 24, 2021 at 2:58 PM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hello Stephen,

Thank you for reaching out and expressing your concerns regarding this project; your comments are appreciated and taken into consideration during the review process. The City understands there are multiple concerns raised by neighbors regarding this project. If you are available today, I would be happy to schedule a quick phone call and hopefully help address some of the items of concern you raised in your email. Please let me know of your availability for today and next week.

Best,



Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org



From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 7:39 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Subject: Strongly opposed to 415 Fairfax demolition

Dear Vinson,

I understand you are supervising the city of San Mateo's assessment of a major construction project at 415 Fairfax Drive.

It appears the project is being fast tracked with no plans for neighborhood meetings or involvement of the San Mateo Planning Commission. My family got to know the project "up close and personal" last week when PG&E invaded our backyard and uprooted two trees so that they could turn off the gas service to 415 Fairfax. As you might imagine, we felt violated (just imagine how our dead lemon tree felt).

We live [REDACTED] 415 Fairfax. Our home is at [REDACTED] and we will be extremely, negatively impacted by this ill-conceived project.

I've had an initial glance at the plan published on your website. It is egregiously misleading. For example, are you aware that there were dozens of attendees at the preliminary neighborhood meeting and that every person that spoke was opposed to the project? Does that typically happen at your meetings, or might this have raised some red flags as to the enormous controversy surrounding this project? Perhaps the strong wave of vocal opposition by concerned neighbors would suggest that this project needs careful vetting and supervision by the Planning Commission rather than a perfunctory fasttrack process that seems to be underway over the holidays in hopes that nobody is looking?

There is a diagram in the [plan](#) that shows only a few red dots, each representing concerned neighbors. There are many other neighbors who are not only concerned, but who actually spoke up at the meeting and yet they have a green dot on their home. At best, this misrepresents the magnitude of opposition of this project and was prepared in a way to intentionally mislead the reviewers of the plans. As a matter of due process, I urge you to reach out to everyone on the diagram and ask them their views. My guess is that you will find your diagram littered with red dots. In any case, it is dangerously misleading to

include the diagram as it currently exists in the plan because it is not only untruthful, but it harms those who are being misrepresented.

We are also very concerned with the way things have been communicated. At the end of the preliminary meeting hosted by the project architect, he and the homeowners promised to reach out to the neighbors and engage them in the process. Instead, this project is being snuck through the back door over the holidays when nobody's looking. Seriously, you posted these revised plans on your website with zero communication to the dozens of people who voiced concern at the preliminary meeting? I've seen that type of thing happen on *The Wire* and *Boardwalk Empire*, but right here in San Mateo? The whole thing has a certain smell to it and the process is obviously tipped against the residents of Baywood.

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In glancing at the plan on your website, it depicts walls of privacy trees that don't currently exist. Many of us would like to know exactly what trees are being planned and what their height will be on Day 1 (not after years of growth).

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Sincerely,

Stephen McKay

[REDACTED]

* PRIVILEGE AND CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This message, together with any attachments, is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is confidential and prohibited from disclosure. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination or copying of this message or any attachment is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the original sender immediately by telephone or by return e-mail and delete this message along with any attachments from your computer. Thank you.

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 5:03 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Rendell Bustos <rbustos@cityofsanmateo.org>; Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: PA-2021-066 415 Fairfax Ave., SUP+SFDDR Project Update

Vinson, thank you for your email and update on the plans at 415 Fairfax. In 20 years of living next to that house, I've never raised a single concern about any project in our wonderful neighborhood. In general, I feel people investing in their homes are also investing in the neighborhood. I'm grateful to others who invest in the neighborhood, especially those who choose to live in the homes they buy here. However, this project at 415 Fairfax has created enormous stress in our neighborhood because of its destructive nature that exploits loopholes and does active harm to other citizens of San Mateo. It's a zero sum project -- the gain for the owners of 415 Fairfax comes from the loss of others in the neighborhood.

One item in particular that I was surprised to still see in the plans is the wonderful, perfectly-healthy oak tree in the backyard of the property. The architect and owners could very easily build around the wonderful tree. Actually, it doesn't even sit on the footprint of the newly designed property or its gigantic "ADU". It is a protected heritage tree that many neighbors depend on for privacy, shade and beautification. The only reason the architect wants to remove it appears to be to improve the view from the 2 bedroom / 2 bathroom ADU and the swimming pool. I urge you to please reject the idea of killing a protected heritage tree that brings important value to every home in its proximity.

Thank you for your consideration and all that you do in support of our city and its residents.

Steve McKay
[REDACTED]

p.s., note that there has already been significant damage to our property as a result of this project because PG&E came into our yard and dug a deep hole under two of our trees in order to shut off the gas to 415 Fairfax. They killed our lemon tree in the process.

p.p.s, because the owners have chosen to live in on of their other home (in Burlingame I believe), they are not maintaining the property. We'd ask that they at least mow the lawn and try to keep the appearance of the property up to a minimum level of maintenance.

On Mon, Mar 14, 2022 at 3:39 PM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi all,

Hope this email finds you well. Please be aware, a resubmittal for PA-2021-066 415 Fairfax Ave., SUP+SFDDR has been submitted on March 5th and is currently under review by the City's Development Review Board. The project [What's Happening in Development page](#) has been updated with the most recent plan set. Please note, those who are on the attached list are included in the BCC line of this email.

Best,



Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org



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From: martha moore [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 5:07 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: re demolition and proposed new build at 415 Fairfax Ave

Hello,

I have just heard today about this proposed demolition and rebuild in our neighborhood. Because our home is 4 blocks away we were not notified of the proposal to replace the existing spanish style home from the 1930's with an inappropriate modern style home which will not fit into the area in size or style.

I have walked through areas of Burlingame and Hillsborough where this sort of overbuilding and inadequate concern for existing structures has occurred. This has a detrimental impact on the 'feel' and tone of the streets and neighborhoods.

The thought that a heritage oak tree might be removed to make room for a monster home is abhorrent. Given the importance of heritage trees, and the importance of trees in general , in our environment.

If someone wants to build a home that encroaches on the surrounding homes it is up to the city planning department to deny and redirect the project.

If the owners would like to add square footage it should be done carefully and with respect to the neighbors. If the city is to allow rebuilding it is up to the city planning department to reign in designs that do not meld with the structures surrounding.

I will look forward to your response.
Martha Moore

From: Joseph Musich DC [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 2:26 PM
To: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]; Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]

We are one of the homes that would be behind this project. We have a garage that is essentially a converted carport that is falling down. We have been working with the McKay's and the Nash's to find a way to rebuild it to a standard home matching garage and we are being denied, and being held to the existing floor space, not a San Mateo current minimum 2 car garage. How is this house can be torn down and then be built beyond what is allowed if the email information is correct. We are not a new neighborhood. Our values are derived from the historic homes and architecture. Bluntly, don't buy a historic spanish style home to tear it down, but a generic California style home.
Joe Musich

On Tuesday, November 23, 2021, 09:19:20 PM PST, Laurie Hietter [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks, Steve. Will do.

Laurie

On Nov 23, 2021, at 8:36 PM, Steve McKay [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Lauri and Teresa, I know you have tried to build a consolidated list. Just adding a few others who should be on your lists going forward please. I know that the Voyles, Garnicks and Mary Chigos have all reached out to Vinson. The Musichs will be very heavily impacted so will have a deep interest in the outcome.. Thank you for all the efforts.

Steve

On Tue, Nov 23, 2021 at 8:12 PM Laurie Hietter [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi,
Thank you to all of you who have submitted comments already. Here is a reminder for everyone else to send comments regarding the proposed demolition and construction of a 3,910 square-foot house and 798 sq. ft. attached ADU. Comments and numbers count! Even a simple email saying I am opposed counts.

Please send comments to the City planner AND the applicant's architect (and copy me):

vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

You might want to request another meeting so you can voice your comments. Please see the original information below.

Thank you! We are making a difference!

--

Laurie

URGENT ALERT! Notice from Your Neighbors

PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF 415 FAIRFAX AVENUE



A formal Planning Application has been submitted to demolish this neighborhood home at 415 Fairfax

Avenue and replace it with a significantly larger contemporary house. The existing home, a unique

example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style built in 1933, is an integral part of the neighborhood

streetscape that makes Baywood the very special and desirable neighborhood it is. The hand-hewn

beams, ironwork, and other hand-crafted artisan details, along with its contributory presence to the

neighborhood fabric will be lost if this application is approved.

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on August 4, 2021 and over 20 neighbors expressed opposition to

the demolition of the historic home and to the size, style, and materials of the proposed new house.

If you agree that this irreplaceable home should not be demolished, **PLEASE**

EMAIL CITY PLANNER, Vinson Kwan NOW and let him know that you are joining with the neighborhood and opposing demolition of this home! **YOU MUST ACT NOW - COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY this Wednesday, NOV. 24TH**

Vinson Kwan, Assistant Planner

(650) 522-7206

VKwan@cityofsanmateo.org

What your neighbors said at the neighborhood meeting:

1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished
2. The large heritage coast live oak tree on the property should not be removed
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if the new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompolis, 2004
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character with the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about 70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

If you are not interested in this topic, just reply no thanks and I will take you off the list.

Thank you for your support of our amazing neighborhood.
Attachments area

From: Michael Nash [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 4:06 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Roger Dewes [REDACTED]; Doug Goldberg [REDACTED]; Mark Grieco [REDACTED]; Scott Long [REDACTED]; Lisa Diaz Nash [REDACTED]; Michael C. Nash [REDACTED]; Margaret Nieman [REDACTED]; Roger Oser [REDACTED]; Teresa Rose [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax Project

Vincent:

The Board of the Baywood Owners Improvement Association (BOIA) has voted to request a second public review of the 415 Fairfax project which call for the demolition of a home that contributes to the historic area of Baywood (even though it may not qualify as historic itself). It will be replaced by a much larger home and ADU both of a modern design.

This second meeting is necessary for the following reasons:

1. The information in the submittal is not accurate as to the neighborhood's acceptance of the project. We have been copied on a number of emails, many of which were sent to you, that point out objections from neighbors that are not mentioned in the plans. The "red-green" diagram misses "red" residents who did express concerns.
2. There is significant concern about the removal of an oak tree which qualifies as a heritage tree. I understand its removal was not approved by the City Arborist earlier. The reasoning for continuing to show this as needing removal is unclear. This is also the most consistent view expressed by all those who commented that this tree should be protected. There is no explanation as to why this neighborhood opinion was not considered in the plans. A tree that the City Arborist and all the neighbors who commented agree should not be removed still shows its removal. Reason dictates that an explanation be provided to the neighborhood. The Alstons were made aware of this concern but the plans reflect no change in the tree removal plan. A reason sufficient to explain why a heritage tree should be removed is expected in any case.
3. The first meeting had over 20 people in attendance who were strongly opposed to the project. The tone, I understand, was not congenial. A second meeting to allow further discussion toward an understanding among the parties is reasonable. Further, the Alstons advised us that they have 3D renderings that provide better views of the proposed house. It would be useful to share these.
4. Most of the people in Baywood who did renovations were required to have two meetings. Why is this case different?

We do hope you can offer the people in Baywood an opportunity to review the Alston's current plans with highlights showing what, if anything, was done to address the concerns expressed in the first meeting.

Michael Nash

President
Baywood Owners Improvement Association



[Redacted]
[Redacted]

From: Vinson Kwan
Sent: Tuesday, November 16, 2021 3:10 PM
To: Michael Nash [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Michael,

Apologies for the delayed response. The project is currently under review by the City's Development Review Board and permits will not be issued until the application is approved. You can follow along with the progress on the City's [What's Happening in Development](#) page.

Best,



Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department
330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403
650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org



From: Michael Nash [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 10:48 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Julia Klein <jklein@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Fwd: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Vincent:

I am a neighbor of those involved in this project. I am also President of the Baywood Owners Improvement Association. Please advise the status of any demolition permit for 415 Fairfax. Is there any reason it would not be approved?

Regards

Michael Nash
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve McKay [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Date: November 11, 2021 at 10:30:30 AM PST

To: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Cc: Teresa Rose [REDACTED], Lisa Nash [REDACTED], Michael Nash [REDACTED], Mark Grieco [REDACTED], Connie Weiss [REDACTED], Doug Goldberg [REDACTED], Randy Hietter [REDACTED]

FYI, PG&E was in our back yard for about 5 hours on Tuesday to shut off the 415 Fairfax gas service. It was their 5th trip to our house about that project, each time telling us that it is because the 415 Fairfax house is being razed. They removed two small (brand new) trees in our yard in the process. (I should note that the PG&E crew were extremely careful and courteous). It sure feels "full speed ahead", though I understand nothing has been formally approved just yet.

Steve

On Wed, Nov 10, 2021 at 8:30 PM Laurie Hietter [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi,

FYI. Vinson Kwan has been assigned to the 415 Fairfax project.

Laurie

Begin forwarded message:

From: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Date: November 10, 2021 at 4:49:20 PM PST

To: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Laurie,

Thanks for reaching out. The applicant for 415 Fairfax Ave has recently submitted plans and is currently under review by the City's Development Review Board. Currently, no permit for demolition nor noticing will be issued until the Planning Application has been approved and finalized. I am the assigned Staff Planner and will be the point of contact for this project. A webpage for the project will be created on the City's [What's Happening in Development page](#) where you can find the status and plans for the project. Please allow some time for the page to be created since this is a new project.

Best,

[<image003.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

<image005.png>

<image007.png>

<image009.png>

<image011.png>

<image030.png>

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 4:17 PM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vinson,

I see from the online portal that 415 Fairfax has submitted Plan Number: **PA-2021-066** for demolition and construction. We have not received a notice showing the proposal (we are within 500 ft.). Can you send me the plans? Has a planner been assigned?

Thank you,

Laurie

On Tue, Oct 26, 2021 at 8:51 AM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

No demolition permit has been issued and I have not heard any new information regarding this project.

Best,

[<image031.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image015.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image018.png>](#)

[<image019.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 2:45 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi again,

It looked like PG&E cut off service to 415 Fairfax, as per the permit. I was asked to check in and make sure they can't start demolition on the house.

Have there been any discussions about the project?

Thanks,

Laurie

On Thu, Oct 7, 2021 at 9:59 AM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Laurie,

No application has been submitted since our last correspondence.

Best,

[<image032.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image022.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image023.png>](#)

[<image024.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 6:11 PM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vincent,

Hope you are doing well. I haven't seen PG&E was issued a permit to turn off the gas at 415 Fairfax. It says PG&E is the applicant. That makes me think the owners requested PG&E disconnect the gas because the house is going to be razed.

The public meeting was held August 4. I have not seen a new application. Have you?

Thanks,

Laurie

On Sep 27, 2021, at 9:24 AM, Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laura,

There has been no new action taken since the meeting. The applicant would need to submit plans within 60 days of the Neighborhood Informational meeting, so they still have a bit of time to submit plans.

Best,

<[image031.png](#)>

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image022.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image023.png>](#)

[<image025.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 9:14 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vinson,

Hope you had a great weekend. I'm checking in to see if there is a new application for 415 Fairfax. I checked the online portal and didn't see anything new. It has been over 45 days since they held the public meeting (where there was overwhelming opposition to the size and style of the house and loss of the heritage oaks).

Anything new to report?

Thanks,

Laurie

On Fri, Aug 13, 2021 at 8:10 AM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

To answer your questions:

1. No, none of the items you listed will trigger Planning Commission review. On rare occasions, single family Planning Applications can be elevated to the Planning Commission.
2. Since the site is relatively flat and the removal of a heritage tree would also require intensifying of use, this project would likely not trigger a Site Development Planning Application. Please note, this could change upon review of the application if the applicant/owner decides to proceed.
3. No, there does not appear to be any previous remodeling proposed for the location.

Best,

[<image033.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image028.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image023.png>](#)

[<image029.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2021 11:01 AM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vinson,

I really appreciate your responses to my questions and your messages. I have a few more questions for you.

1. Is there anything about demolition, heritage tree removal, and building a new house that triggers a Planning Commission review?

2. Do the demolition and site grading trigger a Site Development Planning Application or is that likely due to the heritage tree removal?
3. Was there a previous application for 415 Fairfax for remodeling that was rejected?

Thank you!

Laurie

On Tue, Aug 10, 2021 at 8:57 AM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

As of right now, no formal application has been applied. As mentioned before, only a historic evaluation and neighborhood informational meeting has been conducted. It is up to the applicant/owner to decide whether or not they would like to proceed with the process of a Planning Application.

Thanks,

[<image031.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan 關梓樂

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image022.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image023.png>](#)

[<image025.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 9, 2021 3:10 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vinson,

Thanks again for the historic report. Is there any change in the application? There were about 20 participants in the architect's neighborhood meeting. Pretty much everyone is very opposed to both demolition and style of the new construction. Massive (almost 5,000 sq ft) and not at all in keeping with the neighborhood.

Thanks,

Laurie

On Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 8:32 AM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

Here is a copy of the Historic Evaluation for 415 Fairfax Ave.

Best,

[<image032.png>](#)

Vinson Kwan

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image015.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image018.png>](#)

[<image024.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, July 31, 2021 5:36 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Re: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi Vinson,

Would it be possible for you to send me a copy of the historic report for 415 Fairfax?

Thank you,

On Fri, Jul 30, 2021 at 3:58 PM Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org> wrote:

Hi Laurie,

Thank you for reaching out. At this time, only a historic evaluation has been completed for 415 Fairfax Ave, which finds that the existing structures do not qualify as a historic resource under CEQA. The applicant/owner has not filed a formal Planning Application, so there is no assigned staff planner at this time. For now, I would recommend writing a comment letter with your position on the project so that I can forward that to the staff planner once the application is submitted, and/or attend the scheduled community meeting. At the community meeting, it is your opportunity to provide comments on the project to the applicant/owner. Let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

[<image033.png>](#)
Vinson Kwan

Assistant Planner | Community Development Department

330 W. 20th Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403

650-522-7206 | vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[<image015.png>](#)

[<image016.png>](#)

[<image017.png>](#)

[<image018.png>](#)

[<image019.png>](#)

From: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 29, 2021 10:35 AM
To: Planning <planning@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Ave. Application

Hi,

Can you please provide me with the email address of the planner for 415 Fairfax application? The house is proposed for demolition and I am vehemently opposed. The house is literally in the San Mateo book.

After what was built on 3rd Avenue after tearing down the historic art deco era home, I need to speak up to save our historic architecture.

Thank you,

Laurie

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Laurie

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Laurie

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Laurie

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Laurie

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Laurie

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Laurie

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From: Neal Tandowsky [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2021 9:49 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]; Jeff Kotowitz [REDACTED]; Ilana Tandowsky [REDACTED]; Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>; Christina Horrisberger <chorrisberger@cityofsanmateo.org>; Ron Whiteside [REDACTED]; Cheryl Whiteside [REDACTED]; Rita Armstrong [REDACTED]; Bruce Armstrong [REDACTED]; Douglas Morais [REDACTED]; Josh Smith [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue Demolition & New Home

Dear Vinson,

My wife, Ilana and I have lived in our Baywood Community for over 19 years and we raised our 3 now-grown children here. We love the beauty of the area, we value the excellent local school system and we enjoy our many neighbors. I believe homeowners should have the right to improve their properties as they wish; however, with the caveat that the home should fit into our community and adhere to minimum standards. With this lens in mind, I continue to be surprised and disappointed by the proposed plans for 415 Fairfax.

I am less concerned about a full demolition of the property than I am about the plans to build a very large and bulky home on the property. Though I recognize the need for additional housing units in California and our local community, I do not see how creating an 798-square foot attached ADU at 415 Fairfax Avenue creates additional housing for our community. To me, plans for the ADU appear to be a way for the homeowners to get as large of a home as possible when they are restricted by lot coverage maximums. My bigger concern is that based on the plans that were shown and discussed at the August 4th meeting, the new home appears massive and bulky for the lot, takes the property all the way back to the lot line and removes green space that remains critical to our Baywood environment and community.

The fact that so many neighbors attended the August 4th meeting should be a natural concern. My sincere hope is that another meeting will be set up for the owners and/or architect to show what modifications have been submitted since the last meeting so the neighbors could be brought up to date. In the end, the decision to demolish and rebuild a home on the lot will go through the city planning process. I suspect that as long as the plans meet the legal requirements of the city, the plans will be approved. At the same time, I believe consideration should be given to the spirit of our overall neighborhood and that merely passing this project without

further discussion and review would be a detriment to our 90-year old neighborhood.

Thanks for your consideration here.

Sincerely,

Neal Tandowsky

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Susan Oser [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 10:13 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: URGENT: 415 Fairfax construction

Dear Mr. Kwan,

We are writing to you not only as concerned neighbors but more importantly as 2nd generation natives of San Mateo.

While we support growth, improvement and upgrading of the homes in our community we strongly believe that such activity must preserve the historical nature of our neighborhood as well as the privacy and security that we all cherish. Both are reasons we live here and believe most of our neighbors have chosen to purchase and live here.

As you know, the area was developed to a large extent in the late 1920's, particularly the Baywood area where we live and where the 415 Fairfax project is being contemplated. These historic homes were carefully designed to represent elegant architectural features seen in Mediterranean, Colonial, French and other sought after designs. 415 Fairfax clearly is one of the Mediterranean styles so desired then, and now.

Allowing an owner, while likely adhering to codes and ordinances, to demolish this historical style and construct something astray from this may be "acceptable" to the City, however clearly it moves towards a very bad precedent of allowing residents to destroy what we all have moved here to enjoy—glorious historical preservation.

If this project proceeds as planned it not only destroys a beautiful historical home, it also will set the stage for others to do the same such that the wonderful exhibits of these sought after designs will disappear very quickly leaving us all a great void, and thereafter likely rapidly decreasing neighborhood desire and property values.

Additionally, our understanding is the owners are removing a heritage tree in the rear, encroaching on the downhill neighbor's property line which will intrude on their privacy, and building an ADU that in reality is simply a way to increase the square footage beyond normal code requirements for their own use, further encroaching on the downhill neighbor's privacy.

Again, though likely to code and ordinances, we ask you and the City to seriously consider what this proposed project is doing to the neighbors, the neighborhood today, and the terrible precedent it sets which will likely destroy what we all live here to enjoy.

Happy Holidays.

Roger and Susan Oser
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 3:18 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Ave

Hello,
I am a Baywood homeowner.
Recently heard of the plans for one of the charming Spanish Style homes on Fairfax and I have concerns.
Please let me know if there will be a meeting where we can voice our concerns regarding the character
of
our neighborhood.
Thank you.
Kim Randick
[REDACTED]

From: Michael Nash [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 13, 2021 1:23 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Fwd: 415 Fairfax - historic home and heritage oak tree

Hi Vinson,
Here is another comment letter for 415 Fairfax.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Amit Fernandes [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Dec 5, 2021 at 5:48 PM
Subject: 415 Fairfax - historic home and heritage oak tree
To: <citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>, <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>, <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>, <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>, <rbonilla@cityofsanmateo.org>, <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>, <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: [REDACTED], melanie rodrigues [REDACTED]

Hi San Mateo City Council,

My wife Melanie and I reside at [REDACTED]. We were recently informed that the historic home and heritage oak tree at 415 Fairfax Ave, San Mateo CA 94402 may be demolished with no public hearing.

We are writing to you to express:

- Our support for the protection of historic homes and neighborhoods in San Mateo.
- Our support to update and/or complete San Mateo City's historic resources inventory now.

Thank you.

Regards,
Melanie Rodrigues & Amit Fernandes
[REDACTED]

From: Anne Sortwell [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 4:53 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: 416 Fairfax

Dear Eric & Vison,

We are writing to tell you that we OPPOSE the demolition of 415 Fairfax. We have lived in Baywood for 29 years and bought into this neighborhood for its distinct charm and architectural integrity. We feel strongly that the proposed new structure would be out of scale and not in keeping with the character of the Baywood community. When we remodeled our home, we were mandated to keep the size of our house to scale with others on our street.

We urge you to reconsider allowing this heritage home (as well as the heritage trees) to be destroyed.

Sincerely,

Anne & Peter Sortwell

Vinson Kwan

From: Zachary Dahl
Sent: Sunday, February 6, 2022 12:54 PM
To: Vinson Kwan
Cc: Christina Horrisberger; Manira Sandhir
Subject: FW: Historic review of Baywood neighborhood

----- Original message -----

From: jennifer tietz [REDACTED]
Date: 2/6/22 12:36 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Historic review of Baywood neighborhood

Dear Mr. Dahl,

As a long time San Mateo resident, I would like to see the Baywood Neighborhood designated as a historic district in order to preserve the integrity of the architecture that is so rich in that neighborhood.

Although we have lived in Baywood Knolls for over 35 years, Baywood proper is the neighborhood we cherish the most as we take our daily walks and drives down the hill. The authentic nature and history the houses represent is the best of the 1920s and 1930s architecture. Seeing these houses on a daily basis is what thrills us the most about living in San Mateo. We marvel at the talent and immense planning each and every one of these houses took to design and build during the WWI era. These houses should be revered and celebrated for the period in time they represent. They are truly the beginning of the historical formation of San Mateo as a city. They need to be protected from aggressive developers, especially with SB 9 and 10 being signed into law.

We are dismayed at even the thought of demolishing one of these Baywood historical gems, most specially the house at 415 Fairfax. We sat in on the Zoom meeting with the architect and current owners only to learn about their plans to mow down the entire structure for a house design that does not belong in the Baywood neighborhood. We were appalled by their lack of willingness to keep the outside integrity of the house in their remodeling plans.

Please support and pursue the Baywood neighborhood as historical to preserve and protect the stunning San Mateo architecture it represents.

Most sincerely,

Jennifer and Dennis Tietz
[REDACTED]

From: jennifer tietz [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 5:20 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Baywood historical designation

Dear City Council Members,

As a long time San Mateo resident, I would like to see the Baywood Neighborhood designated as a historic district in order to preserve the integrity of the architecture that is so rich in that neighborhood.

Although we have lived in Baywood Knolls for over 35 years, Baywood proper is the neighborhood we cherish the most as we take our daily walks and drives down the hill. The authentic nature and history the houses represent is the best of the 1920s and 1930s architecture. Seeing these houses on a daily basis is what thrills us the most about living in San Mateo. We marvel at the talent and immense planning each and every one of these houses took to design and build during the WWI era. These houses should be revered and celebrated for the period in time they represent. They are truly the beginning of the historical formation of San Mateo as a city. They need to be protected from aggressive developers, especially with SB 9 and 10 being signed into law.

We are dismayed at even the thought of demolishing one of these Baywood historical gems, most specially the house at 415 Fairfax. We sat in on the Zoom meeting with the architect and current owners only to learn about their plans to mow down the entire structure for a house design that does not belong in the Baywood neighborhood. We were appalled by their lack of willingness to keep the outside integrity of the house in their remodeling plans.

Please support and pursue the Baywood neighborhood as historical to preserve and protect the stunning San Mateo architecture it represents.

Most sincerely,

Jennifer and Dennis Tietz

From: John Van Kirk [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 4:21 PM

To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Subject: 415 Fairfax remodel

Dear City of San Mateo,

We have also lived in the Baywood community for 35 years, and are very much apposed to changing the architectural design of the property, adding an additional building to the property, and not obeying the size requirements or the easement restrictions that are a part of every other baywood homeowner's property.

The new owners do have choices that don't negatively affect other owners in the area. If they want a new, large house, with outbuildings that don't fit the size and easement requirements of the established neighborhood, an alternatively option would be to purchase land or a home with larger acreage that is not in such a mature close knit neighborhood. The neighbors in this community love their homes and hate to see the design degraded by inappropriate building that is not in keeping with established homes.

John & Jennifer Van Kirk

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: karenvitale@comcast.net [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Opposing Demolition of 415 Fairfax Ave.

Vinson,

I am a Baywood resident joining with my neighbors to express strong opposition to the proposed demolition and new-build project at 415 Fairfax Ave. The existing home is a historical home (Spanish Colonial Revival built in 1933) full of beautiful and skillfully crafted artisan details. It is irreplaceable. It should be respectfully preserved, not demolished to build yet another cookie cutter "Modern Farmhouse" of a size far exceeding what is existing in the neighborhood. This historic home as part of the original Parrott estate subdivision and until now it has been lovingly cared for. It also has a garden with trees contributing to the unique beauty of the neighborhood and its identity as a gem of the Peninsula. We are horrified that this demolition is even being proposed.

As 19-year residents of Baywood, we have observed again and again fellow homeowners being respectful stewards of these historical, character homes. We have seen faithful maintenance and care of homes and gardens. We have seen that remodeling is nearly always conducted with an eye to preserving the facades and unique character of each home. All of this stewardship contributes to the beauty and character of the neighborhood and of the City of San Mateo as a whole. Any project on this property should fit within the overarching framework of stewardship that all of us have tacitly agreed to in exchange for the privilege of living in this neighborhood.

Please do not allow this project to move forward!

Vitale Family
[REDACTED]

From: Voyles, Glenn [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 19, 2021 3:51 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax remodel

Hi Vincent – I was forwarded your contact info along with the latest on the 415 remodel by a neighbor. I'm quite concerned about the lack of communication from the architect and the city, and the implied consent from me and other neighbors that I see on the city website. First of all, I had no idea the onus was on me to go to the website to get updates. This should have been made clear in the neighborhood meeting last spring. For a controversial project such as this, I had assumed there would be additional meetings that I would be notified about.

And I don't understand why my house and several others that I know have serious reservations about the project show up as green dots on the map on the website – where was our opportunity to object? If you just red-dotted the houses of those who spoke up on the call last spring and left everyone else green dot, you should know that that is not a very thorough understanding of local opinion. I and others didn't speak up in that meeting because 20 other people had voiced our same concerns and after a two hour meeting it didn't seem necessary to repeat them yet again. So if the city is using that as the basis of tacit approval, you are sorely misunderstanding the neighborhood sentiment.

From a practical perspective none of us are architects nor have trained eyes to readily evaluate the changes – at the very least you or the architect should provide an overlay of the existing footprint, the initial proposal, and the revised proposal so we can more easily evaluate exactly what type of monstrosity we are looking at.

Given the serious impact of the teardown of a beautiful house and the building of a McMansion in its place, I think a complete and thorough understanding of the facts are in order. Based on my conversations with neighbors, no one is aware that the project is moving forward – my recollection is that the public meeting ended with the Alstons saying they would reconsider and get back to us. No one has heard a peep from them or the city, so everyone is under the impression that the project is still in limbo. Given the major alteration of the neighborhood aesthetic that this proposed project represents, and the dangerous precedent it could set, I strongly encourage you to stick to your rules/precedent and have another public meeting so that everyone's voice can be heard.

sincerely,
Glenn Voyles
[REDACTED]

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From: Carmela Wagner [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 9:21 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Chameleon Like [REDACTED]
Subject: OPPOSITION: Demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue in San Mateo
Importance: High

Good Morning Vinson,
I'm sure it's a busy season for our city planners – thank you for all you do to continue the beauty and enrichment of a city we call home.

Vinson, it came to our attention just today that the gem on 415 Fairfax would be demolished and updated to a modern expanse.

One of the things that has made Baywood such a rich community is the aesthetic consistency and nod to its roots as a community steeped in architectural heritage. Add to that, the glory of our heritage trees continue to make this a coveted community to live in.

Having understood the plans around this home, we are highly concerned as we feel the city may be allowing over development as well as modernization that is not in keeping with our community. Add to that, the loss of green space and trees have our community alarmed.

1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished
2. The large heritage coast live oak tree on the property **should not be removed**
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if the new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompolis, 2004 – it's a local gem!
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character with the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about **70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood**
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

We respectfully look forward to your thoughts on this matter.

C

CARMELA WAGNER
VP | GLOBAL BRAND MANAGER



Note: My working hours may not be the same as yours - please feel free to respond within your normal working hours



-----Original Message-----

From: Robin Wall [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, December 1, 2021 9:47 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax SannMateo,

Dear Mr Kwan,

As a neighbor of 415 Fairfax Avenue, I have strong concerns about the proposed plan for this home. This neighborhood has a distinct character which is unique and highly valued by the people who live here. The proposed home is out of character, very large (home would be built over nearly the entire lot size), and would require removing heritage trees. There are plenty of places where this new, large, contemporary style of housing would be appropriate.

Baywood is a neighborhood with classic architecture, character and timeless American distinction. I am very aware that there are people who want to demolish this way of life and living. Tear down a beautiful home to build a modern 4 plex. Please no. We love this neighborhood, and we enjoy the beauty and benefits of living in this special and historic place.

I urge you to reject this house plan which would forever change our neighborhood into another inconsistent, non distinct, place. I would appreciate updates on this project.
Many thanks,

Robin Wall
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone
Please excuse any type-os

From: Keith Weber [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: 415 Fairfax Ave. (PA-2021-066-415)

Vinson,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed demolition of 415 Fairfax Avenue in Baywood (PA-2021-066-415).

As you may be aware, Baywood is a well established neighborhood of a large number of older homes that relate historically and have a high degree of architectural consistency, mostly in the Spanish Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles. The City of San Mateo Historic Resource Survey found the Baywood neighborhood to be worthy of study as a potentially eligible National or California Register historic district. Baywood homes that still retain their integrity would be considered contributors to the district. 415 Fairfax is a fine example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, typical of the period, and has retained its integrity. Both its style and integrity would seem to qualify the home as a contributor to an eligible historic district.

The beautiful historic architecture, elegant detailing, old-world craftsmanship, and the sense of place these homes create, is what makes Baywood one of San Mateo's most beloved and desirable neighborhoods. Most homeowners in Baywood understand this fact, and desire to be responsible stewards of their homes and their neighborhood. Many homeowners have restored, sensitively remodeled, up-dated and enlarged their homes in ways that respect both the home itself and the greater neighborhood.

This notion of neighborhood respect is reflected in broad terms by the City of San Mateo which desires to be a "healthy community that respects the quality of its neighborhoods," as declared in the 2040 General Plan vision statement. If the demolition of 415 Fairfax is allowed to proceed, other demolition proposals will surely follow, and one-by-one the neighborhood's historic homes will be lost forever and San Mateo will be the poorer for it.

I respectfully request that the demolition and replacement proposal PA-2021-066-415 be denied.

Thank you for your consideration.

Keith Weber

San Mateo

December 16, 2021

Vinson Kwan, Assistant Planner
City of San Mateo
330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
Via email: vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

Subject: 415 Fairfax Avenue /the Baywood neighborhood/ CEQA

Dear Mr. Kwan,

It has been known to the City of San Mateo since 1990 that the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) had identified “at least two huge Register-eligible residential districts” west of El Camino Real encompassing more than 500 individual resources circa 1910-1940¹.

The 1989 Historic Building Report recognized these neighborhoods and their significance. OHP agreed, calling them “undocumented districts.” And the San Mateo General Plan concurred, including policies to maintain and update the city-wide historic resources survey, and to protect “concentrations of buildings which convey the flavor of local historical periods, or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity.”

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) considers historic resources to be part of the environment. Resources determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register are resources that must be given consideration in the CEQA process. A resource does not need to have been identified previously, either through listing or survey to be considered significant under CEQA.

There is currently sufficient documentation in the City of San Mateo record to reasonably conclude that the Baywood neighborhood would qualify as a California Register historic district. Also, and notwithstanding that 415 Fairfax Avenue may not be an *individually* eligible resource, it would be reasonable to conclude - based on the integrity of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling - that it would qualify as a contributor to the Baywood district. This leads to the inescapable conclusion that the proposed demolition of 415 Fairfax (and other like properties) is a “project” that may have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of a Register-eligible historic district, making it subject to CEQA and requiring an environmental impact report (EIR).

Sincerely,
Keith Weber
San Mateo

Cc:
Rendell Bustos, Senior Planner
Zachary Dahl, Deputy Community Development Director
Christina Horrisberger, Community Development Director
Prasanna Rasiah, City Attorney
Friends of the Neighborhood

¹ Letter and attachment from Kathryn Gualtieri, State Historic Preservation Officer, to Thomas Mack, Mayor of San Mateo, January 22, 1990.

From: Connie Weiss [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 22, 2021 10:50 AM
To: Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: dc [REDACTED]
Subject: 415 Fairfax Comments - Please Read!

Hello Vinson,

We (my husband Dave, copied here, and I) were not able to attend the neighborhood meeting in August for the 415 Fairfax plans, but were encouraged when we heard it was very well attended with important concerns, similar to ours, shared at the meeting. With the changes in the plan, we were going to be fully ready for the next neighborhood meeting and were completely surprised when we heard another one is not planned as we had a VERY different experience with Planning when we did our remodel 4 years ago.

We live at [REDACTED], just up the street. We did an extensive remodel in 2017-18, but if you look at the front of our home, you really wouldn't know - we honored the architecture of the original 1936 home and respected the overall look for the neighborhood. When we decided to add an additional five feet on a planned outside balcony, which doesn't even show from the street, we were required to have another neighborhood meeting to get buy-in from neighbors on the plan.

The planned remodel at 415 Fairfax destroys an historic home with finishes that cannot be duplicated today without enormous cost.

I've heard the new plan isn't that much different, a non-descript home that doesn't fit the style or size of Baywood homes. In our remodel, we had to have our architects measure the footprints of all the houses surrounding ours to ensure our plans wouldn't dwarf them. As it stands, without another neighborhood meeting, this new plan for 415 Fairfax still is monstrously large for the the lot.

While Dave and I didn't understand all the requirements we had to address in our own remodel, we appreciated the care and detail of the Planning office to ensure we weren't doing anything to harm the neighborhood. What has happened in the last four years for the 415 Fairfax plan to just be fast-tracked through? It is a tragedy for San Mateo and this beautiful neighborhood.

Please return to the due diligence your office used to have to keep the integrity of Baywood intact. Please schedule a neighborhood meeting before any work commences.

Thank you,

Connie Weiss and Dave Cohen

[REDACTED]
San Mateo

Connie: [REDACTED]

Dave: [REDACTED]

From: Ron Whiteside [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 24, 2021 12:15 AM
To: Laurie Hietter [REDACTED]; Michael Nash [REDACTED]; Lisa Nash [REDACTED]; Teresa Rose [REDACTED]; Maxine Turner [REDACTED]; Keith Weber [REDACTED]; Connie Weiss [REDACTED]; Doug Goldberg [REDACTED]; McKay Steve [REDACTED]; rhietter [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Keren Kotowitz [REDACTED]; Jeff Kotowitz [REDACTED]; Neal Tandowsky [REDACTED]; Ilana Tandowsky [REDACTED]; Jennifer Rycenga [REDACTED]; jeanne bosschart [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Ken Constantino [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Miriam Majofis [REDACTED]; anne Sortwell [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Jean Garcia [REDACTED]; John Hietter [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Peter Stone [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Vinson Kwan <vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Reminder--Comments on 415 Fairfax

Eric and Vison,

We are opposed to your plan to tear-down the existing home at 415 Fairfax Avenue.

My wife Cheryl and I, Ron Whiteside, have resided at [REDACTED] since 1981. We live on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from 415 Fairfax. We obviously love the Baywood area – since we have chosen to live here for so long.

We were participants in the August 4th meeting about plans for 415 Fairfax and stated our concerns – that:

- The proposed demolition will destroy a historic home that has been carefully maintained and fits well into the neighborhood
- The proposed replacement home is very large and bulky for the lot size. Without the area referred to as an ADU, it is still much larger than other homes in our immediate area
- The proposed ADU will not add housing, which is what the law intended. It is attached to the main house and can easily be converted to a simple addition by adding a door. The new owners stated that it would be used as guest quarters for visiting family. How does this qualify as an ADU?

Numerous neighbors have sent emails to you eloquently expressing their concerns about this proposed project (see: Tandowsky, Armstrong, etc). We agree with all of the concerns in their emails, so I won't repeat them, but we definitely concur.

Houses in Baywood don't turn over very often, as long-time owners want their treasured homes to go to family or others who will cherish and respect the old-world charm of the house and Baywood neighborhood. New owners often renovate their homes and may make additions – always with respect for their heritage home. It makes me wonder why a new home owner would say how much they just love Baywood; yet want to destroy a heritage fabric in our community that makes Baywood what it is; the neighborhood they just love.

Vison et al, we urge you to deny the planning request for 415 Fairfax Avenue and encourage the new owners to come up with a plan that respects the home and our Baywood neighborhood.

Regards

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Hi,

Thank you to all of you who have submitted comments already. Here is a reminder for everyone else to send comments regarding the proposed demolition and construction of a 3,910 square-foot house and 798 sq. ft. attached ADU. Comments and numbers count! Even a simple email saying I am opposed counts.

Please send comments to the City planner AND the applicant's architect (and copy me):

vkwan@cityofsanmateo.org

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

You might want to request another meeting so you can voice your comments. Please see the original information below.

Thank you! We are making a difference!

--

Laurie

URGENT ALERT! Notice from Your Neighbors
PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF 415 FAIRFAX AVENUE



A formal Planning Application has been submitted to demolish this neighborhood home at 415 Fairfax Avenue and replace it with a significantly larger contemporary house. The existing home, a unique example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style built in 1933, is an integral part of the neighborhood streetscape that makes Baywood the very special and desirable neighborhood it is. The hand-hewn beams, ironwork, and other hand-crafted artisan details, along with its contributory presence to the neighborhood fabric will be lost if this application is approved. A Neighborhood Meeting was held on August 4, 2021 and over 20 neighbors expressed opposition to the demolition of the historic home and to the size, style, and materials of the proposed new house.

If you agree that this irreplaceable home should not be demolished, **PLEASE EMAIL CITY PLANNER, Vinson Kwan NOW** and let him know that you are joining with the neighborhood and opposing demolition of this home! **YOU MUST ACT NOW - COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY this Wednesday, NOV. 24TH**

Vinson Kwan, Assistant Planner
(650) 522-7206
VKwan@cityofsanmateo.org

What your neighbors said at the neighborhood meeting:

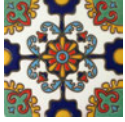
1. The existing home should be retained and respectfully remodeled, not demolished

2. The large heritage coast live oak tree on the property should not be removed
3. Irreplaceable hand-crafted details will be lost if the new project approved
4. The house is featured in the book *San Mateo (Images of America)* by Gregory Zompolis, 2004
5. The proposed replacement house is out of character with the homes in the neighborhood
6. The proposed materials would not fit with the neighborhood
7. The new house would be massive—about 70% bigger than homes in the neighborhood
8. House would be too close to side and back property lines

If you are not interested in this topic, just reply no thanks and I will take you off the list.

Thank you for your support of our amazing neighborhood.

Attachments area



SAN MATEO HERITAGE ALLIANCE

July 6, 2022

Planning Commission
City of San Mateo
330 West 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

SUBJECT: 415 Fairfax, PA21-066

Members of the Planning Commission:

San Mateo Heritage Alliance respectfully requests that the Planning Commission deny the application to demolish and replace 415 Fairfax Avenue in the Baywood neighborhood of San Mateo.

It has been firmly established that the 1933 Spanish Colonial Revival home at 415 Fairfax Avenue is a historic resource and contributor to the National Register eligible Baywood Historic District.

The City-adopted 1989 Historic Building survey determined that Baywood, along with other “well established” neighborhoods west of El Camino were deserving of “future study...as either local or National Register Historic Districts.”

The current 2030 General Plan Policy C/OS 8.2: Historic Districts, directs the City to “consider the protection of concentrations of buildings which convey the flavor of local historical periods or provide an atmosphere of exceptional architectural interest or integrity.”

Eligibility for listing was corroborated by the State Office of Historic Preservation in a January 22, 1990 letter to the City that characterized neighborhoods west of El Camino Real, including Baywood, as containing “...at least two huge (five hundred + resources) Register-eligible residential districts.”

That Baywood qualifies as a National Register historic district and that 415 Fairfax is a contributor to that district was confirmed in March, 2022 by Richard Brandi, a qualified professional architectural historian. In a report to the Baywood Neighborhood Association, Mr. Brandi concluded that “the Baywood study area does meet the requirements of a historic district under the criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places criteria and does appear to be eligible for listing.”

In a separate letter dated April 4, 2022, Mr. Brandi confirmed that “415 Fairfax Avenue is a contributor to the Baywood Historic District.”

The fact that the original Baywood subdivision is a qualifying historic district and 415 Fairfax is a contributor to that district is no longer in dispute.



SAN MATEO HERITAGE ALLIANCE

There are tools available in the City of San Mateo that would enable the applicant to remodel and upgrade the home while retaining its architectural integrity and respecting its character defining features. These tools include the State Historic Building Code, The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Residential Design Guidelines, and tax relief opportunities through the Mills Act.

While there are many compelling reasons to deny this application for demolition and replacement, there appear to be none that can justify approval.

San Mateo Heritage Alliance strongly urges the Planning Commission to deny PA21-066 application for demolition and replacement of 415 Fairfax Avenue.

Sincerely,

Keith Weber for
San Mateo Heritage Alliance

Cc:
Visnson Kwan, Project Planner
Rendell Bustos, Senior Planner
Manira Sandhir, Planning Manager
Zachary Dahl, Deputy Community Development Director
Christina Horrisberger, Community Development Director