

April 21, 2014

Ms. Christine Usher  
Department of Community Development  
City of San Mateo  
330 West 20th Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403-1388

**RE: 3328 Verdun Avenue**

Dear Christy:

I visited the site, and reviewed this project initially in February. At that time, I provided comments and recommendations to staff. The current drawings reflect the applicant's changes based on the review comments and recommendations as well as further consultation with staff. My comments and recommendations on the proposed changes are summarized below.

### **Neighborhood Context**

*For completeness, the neighborhood context text and photos are repeated in this letter.*

The existing house is one story in height and located on a sloping street. Most of the nearby homes are one and two stories in height as they step down the street slope. Homes are traditional in design with flat or relatively low pitched roofs. Photos of the site and surrounding neighborhood are shown on the following page.





*Existing house with house to immediate left*



*Existing house*



*Adjacent and nearby house to the left*



*Immediately adjacent house to the right*



*Homes across Verdun Avenue*



*House immediately across Verdun Avenue*



*View down Verdun Avenue to the Bay*



*View down Verdun Avenue to the Bay*

## Issues, Concerns and Recommendations

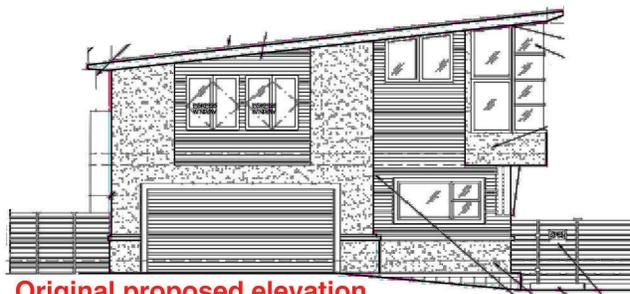
The proposal is to add a partial second floor to the existing house. Placement of the addition would be over the front of the house closest to Verdun Avenue. The home style would change from a gable-fronted Ranch Style home to one that is more modern in appearance with a partial sloped roof at the second floor addition. Bay windows at the new second floor Bedrooms and Family Room are proposed to break up the two-story walls facing the street.

My conclusion in the February review letter was that the proposed design seemed well done, and appropriate to the scale of other nearby homes. The house design, while a bit more modern in appearance than some in the immediate neighborhood, would be attractive and of a style that should be complementary to the street.

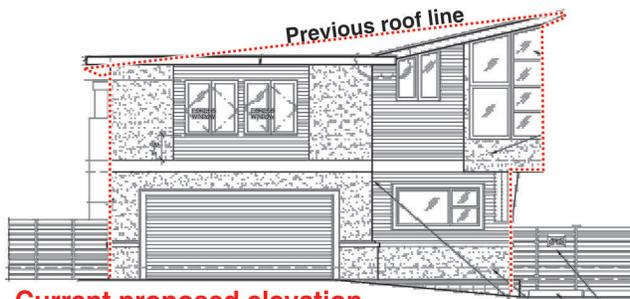
However, recommendations for changes in that letter included:

- A modification to the extent of the sloped roof form on the second floor to reduce visual mass seen from the adjacent neighbor, and to better relate to the other nearby homes.
- Breaking up the two-story wall facing Verdun Avenue by the addition of belt trim at the second floor line, a projection of the bedrooms over the first floor facade, and the enhancement of the bay window at the bedrooms;
- Recessing of the garage door to provide greater facade depth.

The applicant has made changes to the design in response to those recommendations. The original and currently proposed front elevations are shown in the diagram below.



**Original proposed elevation**



**Current proposed elevation**

The flat roof form on the west side of the second floor would be similar to the adjacent house to the west, and the added belt trim and overhanging second floor bedrooms would relate well to other nearby homes (see photos below)



*Home immediately adjacent to the west*

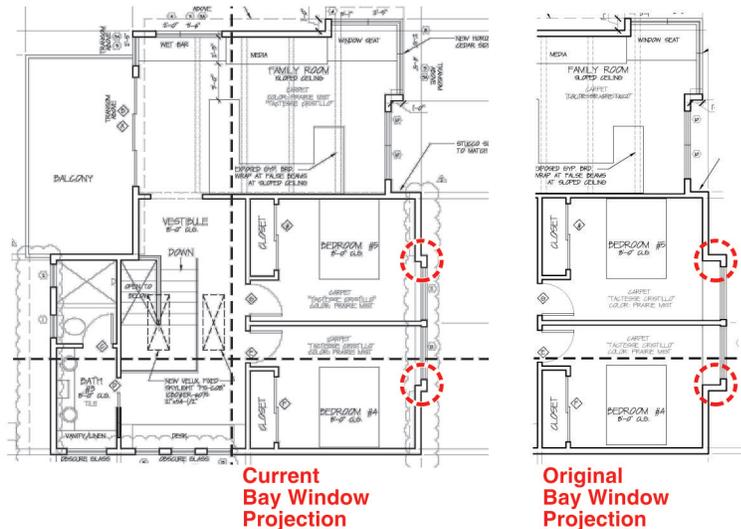


While the modified second floor roof form is not exactly the same as recommended, I feel that it is a reasonable solution that I could support.

I do, however, have a concern with the reduction in the projection of the second floor bedroom bay windows. The projecting bay window would help to increase visual interest off the front facade, and reduce the prominence of the garage, as shown in the photo example below.



Shifting the second floor toward the street to create the overhang recommended in the previous review letter has substantially reduced the bay window projection. The current and original projections are shown in the floor plan diagram below.



There are inadequate dimensions on the drawings to determine the exact dimensions of the bay window projection. However, the one dimension on the drawings relating to this issue is on the Sheet A4.1 section which is 1'-6" from the first floor wall to the face of the bay window. My recommendation would be to increase the projection of the bay window by extending it to the 15 ft. front setback line which should add another 4.5 inches to the total projection of the second floor and bay window from the first floor wall below. The resulting dimension available to work with would be about 22.5" which could be roughly divided equally between the second floor projection and the bay window.

I would also again recommend that the garage door be recessed further, as noted in the February review letter. An example is shown in the photo below.



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

Sincerely,

CANNON DESIGN GROUP



Larry L. Cannon