

ANDREW SKURMAN ARCHITECTS

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94118

Town of Atherton
Planning Department
80 Fair Oaks Lane
Atherton, CA 94027

07.10.2023

Request for Lot Line Redesignation

The following is an explanation of the proposed lot line redesignation at 80 Coghlan Lane, made to accompany the application and documents appertaining thereto, submitted to the Town of Atherton on the above date. Please note that the owner is not requesting an address change.

Written Description

The owner of the property at 80 Coghlan Lane (Coghlan LLC) in the Town of Atherton has engaged Skurman Architects (SA) to design a new residence to be built on the property. The owner proposes to demolish the existing residence. In consultation with the Planning Department, SA has determined that the eastern boundary of the property which partially fronts onto the cul-de-sac of Coghlan Lane is currently designated as the “Front Yard”. SA has labeled it as such in the accompanying drawing “230504 Site Diagram – Existing”.

At this time, and pursuant to the accompanying application, the owner requests that the Planning Department redesignate the front yard of the property to be its northern boundary, as shown in the accompanying drawing “230504 Site Diagram – Proposed”.

The reason for this request is the intention of the owner to situate the proposed residence as well as its driveway and garage along the northern edge of the property as shown. The front entrance to the proposed house faces North, and the major axis of the proposed plan runs approximately East to West. By this orientation, the owner hopes to take advantage of a long southern exposure. Given appropriate design, southern exposure can provide solar heat gains in the winter when the sun angle is low, while also providing solar shading when the sun angle is high in the summer. This would increase efficiency and reduce emissions related to conditioning the house throughout the year.

Redesignation of the “Front” of the property would allow the 60’- 0” front yard setback to be assessed from the northern boundary of the property, and the 50’- 0” side yard setbacks be assessed from the eastern and western boundaries increasing the length of the possible southern exposure.

Pursuant to Chapter 17.20 section 030 of the Town of Atherton municipal code, it is required that the Planning Commission find that this proposal will not be injurious to persons, property or improvements in the vicinity, and will not be detrimental to the public health, peace, safety, comfort or general welfare or movement of vehicles, people, and goods in and around the subject property. Furthermore, it is required that the Planning Commission find that the proposed redesignation be in accord with the general plan and its purposes as well as this title (Title 17).

We hold that the proposed redesignation is in accord with title 17 of the Town of Atherton Municipal Code as we have endeavored to ensure that it abides by the various regulations set out in title 17 such as setbacks, uses, size of buildings and so forth.

We hold that the proposed redesignation is in accord with the Atherton General Plan, as it does not substantially alter the function of the relevant property with respect to any of the six elements of the Atherton General Plan. 1. Land Use: the proposed redesignation does not require any change in the use of the relevant property. The proposal does allow for an extended southern exposure which would function as an energy saving measure as described in the Climate Action Plan section of the Land Use Element. 2. Circulation: the proposed redesignation does not require any change in the circulation of people and goods throughout the town. The automobile entrance from the street onto the property is proposed to be moved by approximately 35 feet to the west along Coghlan Lane as shown in the proposed site plan. 3. Housing – the proposed redesignation does not alter or prevent future alteration to the amount of housing present on the property or in the town. 4. Open Space – the proposed redesignation does not substantially alter the amount of open space present within the property, and does not alter the amount of open space or access to open space in the town. 5. Noise – The proposed redesignation does not propose to alter any particular noise generating or noise attenuating feature of the property. Furthermore, throughout the design and planning process for the property, the owner will continue to abide by all relevant sections of the CBC with respect to noise levels within and around the property. 6. Community Safety – there are no aspects of the proposed redesignation that would affect or alter the community's ability to respond to the threats to public safety described in the community safety element of the Atherton General Plan.

Finally, we hold that the proposed redesignation will not be injurious to persons or property in the vicinity as it pertains only to the property in question, and has already been met with support from a number of immediate neighbors. It does not substantially alter the function, use or features of the existing property. And it does not affect or prevent any future improvements – private or public – that may be devised for this area of the town. If, as we contend, the proposed redesignation is in accord with the general plan, then it can also be found not to be detrimental to peace, safety, and circulation near the property. The proposed redesignation does not in any way alter, affect, or propose to alter or affect the public health, comfort, or general welfare of the community. Lastly, both vehicular and pedestrian circulation on the property would remain substantially the same with a revised layout per the proposed redesignation, and as detailed in the included schematic site plans.