



Town of Atherton
Planning Department
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DATE: August 23rd, 2023
TO: PLANNING COMMISSION
FROM: Radha Hayagreev, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: Lot Line Redesignation for 80 Coghlan Lane.

LOCATION: Address: 80 Coghlan Lane
APN: 070-040-600
Zoning District: Residential District (R-1A)

CEQA: This project is categorically exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to: CEQA Section 15305, Minor Alterations to Land Use Limitations in areas with average slope of less than twenty percent, which does not result in any changes in land use or density.

APPLICANT: Charles Shafer, Skurman Architects

RECOMMENDATION:

For the reasons outlined in this staff report, Planning Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct the public hearing and **approve** the Lot Line Redesignation to designate the north property line as the front property line at 80 Coghlan Lane based on the following:

Findings for Lot Line Redesignation, Atherton Municipal Code Section 17.20

1. The proposed redesignation will not be detrimental or injurious to persons, property or improvement 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.
Staff Review This finding can be made.
2. The proposed redesignation will be in accord with the general plan and the purposes of that plan and the Zoning Code.
Staff Review: This finding can be made.

More details in the conclusion section below

INTRODUCTION:

The subject site is an odd-shaped lot accessed at the end of cul-de-sac street named Coghlan Lane. The property is zoned R-1-A and is approximately 1.65 acres (72,132.72 sq. ft.) which has an existing single-family home with accessory structures and a pool. The applicant plans to demolish the existing

home to construct a new main residence with a basement, a detached garage, pool and associated landscape improvements.

The applicant is requesting the Planning Commission grant a Lot Line Redesignation to designate the north-easterly property line as the front property line, shown in yellow in the Figure-1 below.



ANALYSIS:

Lot Line Redesignation, Atherton Municipal Code Section 17.20

Atherton Municipal Code section 17.60.020 defines the front property line as follows:

- “Front lot line” means that boundary of a lot whose narrowest portion abuts a public street or access area in the case of a flag lot, except where a different front has been previously officially designated or recognized by the town.”

The easterly property line, which is along Coghlan Lane, is currently considered the front property line as defined by the code provisions above. This lot line is shown in red in Figure-1 above. Since the lot is zoned R1-A, the existing front yard setback requirement is 60’ and the existing side yard setback requirement is 50’.

The applicant is requesting a lot line redesignation to designate the north property line that boundaries the neighbor’s lot (shown in yellow line in Figure-1 above) as the new front lot line. The front and rear yard setback would continue to be 60’ and the side yard setback would continue to be 50’.

Per the applicant’s narrative, see attachment – 3, the new proposal is to demolish the existing house and develop a new residence along with a driveway and garage along the northern edge of the property. The major axis of the new proposed residence would run approximately east to west, taking advantage of the main building orientation along the southern exposure, improving solar heat gain in winter and solar shading in summer through appropriate design.

While the review of this project does not include the development itself, the lot line redesignation has

impact on the front and rear setbacks and general orientation of the building. The proposal was circulated in advance to immediate neighbors in the vicinity. The next-door neighbors along the proposed northerly side have send staff an email of support, see attachment – 4.

The applicants have already received general direction and feedback regarding development impacts of trees present on the site. They have been advised for its protection from the Town Arborist Sally Bentz-Dalton. They are not currently pursuing removing of any existing heritage trees on the parcel.

Per AMC Chapter 17.20, the applicant may request that the Planning Commission designate a different line as the front property line.

CONCLUSION:

To approve the redesignation request, the Planning Commission must find that the request will not be detrimental to the community and is consistent with the General Plan and Zoning Code. The Commission may impose such reasonable conditions or restrictions as it deems necessary to secure the purposes of the General Plan and Zoning Code.

Furthermore, they are required to make the following findings in order to approve the lot line redesignation:

1. The proposed redesignation will not be detrimental or 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;

Staff Review: This finding can be made. The proposed redesignation of the front lot line will not create any impact on the public health, peace and safety. Since the neighbors that are the nearest to the newly designated northerly proposed lot line do not object, there is not impact on the general welfare and comfort of this proposal on those around the subject property. It does not impact the movement of the vehicles, people and good in the subject property too. Although the main building seems to be located closer to the northerly section of the parcel, it maintains sufficient required development setbacks for the R1-A zoning district (60' front and rear yards and 50' side yards). In addition to that setback, required screening and landscaping will be part of the full site development requirement. Required distance between structures will also be maintained. Sufficient setbacks will be maintained between the main residence and adjacent properties The proposed main building area also provides sufficient area for landscape screening and does not cause the removal of any heritage trees within the main building area. The redesignation will continue to allow good movement of vehicles, people, and goods in and around the property.

2. The proposed redesignation will be in accord with the general plan and the purposes of that plan and this title.

Staff Review: This finding can be made. Below are some of the general plan goals that this proposed lot line redesignation proposal can conform to:

- a. Policy LU-1.5 A. Maintenance of existing neighborhood environments shall be promoted by the design of the subdivision and subdivision improvements. Designs shall be visually harmonious and compatible with neighborhood character.
- b. Policy LU-15 I: Privacy is a factor which shall be incorporated into subdivision, subdivision improvements and home design.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Planning Commission could approve, deny or request modification of the Lot Line Redesignation.

FORMAL MOTION:

I move that the Planning Commission find the lot line redesignation to be categorically exempt from CEQA Section 15305 and **approve** the Lot Line Redesignation to designate the northerly property line as the front lot line at **80 Coghlan Lane**, subject to the conditions in the attached certificate and based on the findings and for the reasons incorporated in the Staff Report.

Radha Hayagreev
Consulting Senior Planner

Attachments:

- 1. Draft lot line redesignation certificate
- 2. Plat Map and exhibits for Lot Line Redesignation
- 3. Applicant Narrative
- 4. Applicant outreach and Communication from neighbors
- 5. Application form