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City of Carmel-by-the-Sea  
Community Planning & Building Department  
Re: DS 18-252 (Li Residence)

December 18, 2018

Dear Ms. Tarone & Planning Commissioners,

This letter is in response to the list of recommendations and draft conditions we received following our hearing on 11/14/18. It explains what steps we've taken to address each one of the conditions.

1. **Condition #1 - Prior to final Planning Commission review, the applicant shall work with staff and the neighbor to identify a specific alternate location for the required uppercanopy tree on the landscape plan that is less impactful to the view.**

**Response:**

Prior to the previous PC review we had worked with our planner and the City Forester to identify the Northwest corner of the property as a preferred location for the required upper-canopy tree. This proposed location has the least impact to views as seen from adjacent neighbors to the Northeast, East, and Southeast.

We discussed this proposed location with the former neighbor to the East, Mr. Leach, who was in agreement with the proposed location.

Refer to the updated site plan on Sheet A1.1 and landscape plan L1 for the proposed location. We are proposing that this upper-canopy tree be a Monterey Cypress.

2. **Condition #2 - The applicant shall ensure that the footing for the deck and stairway on either side of the oak tree shall be located at least 6 feet back from the base of the tree. Show the footing location on the plans.**

**Response:**

Refer to the updated site plan on Sheet A1.1. We are showing the anticipated location of the helical pier system that will support the deck and steps. This updated plan follows conversations and meetings with a structural engineer who we have hired to assist us with this project.

After initial conversations with our structural engineer and planner we are proposing helical piers to support the deck and steps. These piers actually screw into the ground and then are fitted with metal saddles that will receive the wood deck girders. This system does not require concrete or excavations for footings and would minimize site disturbance. We have had success with this system on past projects and it will allow us to locate the helical piers in areas where no roots are present. This will require coordination on site as we go to build and final placement of the helical piers will be determined based on areas where no roots are found to be present.

Since this is a condition of approval we will continue to work with the City Planner and Forester as we develop more detailed structural drawings.

3. **Condition #3 - The applicant shall plant adequate vegetation to shield the 14-foot span of kitchen windows on the south elevation of the residence. A vegetation type shall be used behind the garage that has an average height of approximately 12-14 feet in height to protect the view shed over the garage.**

**Response:**

Refer to the updated landscape plan L1. The plan proposes Pacific Reed Grass along the kitchen window as well as a Blue Tree Yucca. We are also proposing a 6' high fence along the south property line to also provide privacy between properties. The proposed Blue Tree Yucca has also been selected as it has an average maximum height of 12' which will not exceed the height of the adjacent garage. This will protect the view shed over the garage as seen from the East.

4. **Condition #4 - Prior to final planning commission review, the applicant shall submit the decibel level information for the proposed air conditioning unit and propose noise shrouding for the unit.**

**Response:**

A product cutsheet for the proposed air conditioning unit, as well as decibel data, is being included as part of this submittal to the City. The product cutsheet indicates a minimum decibel level of 57 dB's and a max of 66 dB's, at the source. Also per the cutsheet we are opting to add rubber isolators which reduce sound transmission. Furthermore we are proposing a solid wood shroud, 3'-3" high around the air conditioning unit to lessen the sound even more. This shroud will be made of horizontal wood boards to match the proposed fence.

Please refer to the decibel calculations also being provided. There are online tools that allow us to calculate the anticipated noise level and drop in noise over a certain distance and so we ran two scenarios – the first is the reduction in sound from the source of the noise (AC unit) to the south property line, and the second is from the source to the west property line. These calculations indicate that the approximate sound level at the south property line would be 44.4 dB, and 49.1 dB at the west property line. These are within the allowable ranges per the City's code. These calculations do not consider the additional noise reduction that would occur do to the proposed wood shroud around the unit as well as the dampening affect the surrounding landscape would have.

5. **Condition #5 - Incorporate more natural materials into the design.**

**Response:**

The proposed design has been updated to include light brown cedar siding, light tan and brown stucco, as well as natural stone veneer. We believe these new materials and colors give the proposed home a more natural appearance and serve to compliment the more earth-tone colors of the surrounding neighborhood.

6. **Condition #6 - Revise the color of the design to be more muted and compatible with the other residences and the forest character of the block.**

**Response:**

The proposed colors have been changed from gray and black tones to more earth-colored tones including tan and brown stucco, cedar vertical and horizontal siding, and gray/brown stone veneer. We believe these new colors are more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and in fact the proposed stucco color is going to be very similar to the stucco color of the existing home on the Li's property.

7. **Condition #7 - The Metacrylics roof that will be under the gravel top coat shall be a grey or brown color and not white to prevent light reflection.**

**Response:**

Refer to the revised roof plan and roofing notes on Sheet A2.1. Also refer to the Metacrylics cut sheet and color chart being included with this resubmittal. In addition to the gravel ballast being a tan/gray color the actual roofing product will also be a tan color so that if the gravel ballast becomes disturbed or displaced there will not be a white roof showing through.

8. **Condition #8 - All windows on the upper-floor loft shall have non-reflective glass.**

**Response:**

The window schedule on Sheet A2.0 has been updated to indicate that all windows around the upper-floor will have non-reflective glass. We have also updated the notes on the proposed exterior elevations on A3.0 and A3.1 to also reflect this requirement. At the time of submission to the building department we can provide window cutsheets and/or shop drawings that will indicate the glass specified is non-reflective.

9. **Condition #9 - Reduce the number of lights that are proposed outdoors. Per CMC 15.36.070, all exterior lighting attached to the main building shall be no higher than 10 feet above the walking surface.**

**Response:**

Refer to the updated site plan on Sheet A1.1. In order to reduce the number of proposed outdoor lights we have removed (2) low wall lights that were previously along the north side of the new driveway. We have also removed (6) lights along the north living room eave. In lieu of these lights we are now just proposing (2) low wall lights on either side of the living room doors that lead out to the deck. These low wall lights will produce less light than previously proposed but will still provide a degree of safety when stepping out onto the deck from the living room.

Per Sheet L2 we have also eliminated one of the path lights from the Northwest yard of the property and are now only proposing (3) path lights in this area as opposed to (4).

We are proposing to keep the (3) low wall lights leading up to the front door, plus the (1) overhead light at the front entrance as we feel these are necessary for safety. These lights, per the site lighting notes on A1.1, will meet the requirements the City has for lighting.

10. **Condition #10 - The Planning Commission advised the applicant to revisit the comments from the public at the November Planning Commission meeting in regard to the compatibility and style of the residence.**

**Response:**

We reviewed the notes and audio from the November Planning Commission and have adjusted the proposed materials and colors to what we feel is more appropriate to the neighborhood and forest character.

While we recognize that there were some comments regarding the flat roof forms not being compatible, we have noted a handful of other flat roofed homes in the area and are including photos of these homes. We feel that we are making a connection to these surrounding homes based on comparable materials, colors, and overall massing.

We also believe that we are being more respectful to the neighbors by maintaining flat roofs in lieu of pitched roofs. If we were to add gabled or shed roofs to the proposed design it would push the first and second floor rooflines to the maximum buildable heights and have a significant impact to the views enjoyed by the neighbors to the east.

11. **Condition #11 - Consider connecting the design to the character of the block and forest by bringing in some architectural elements from residences on the block, but treating these architectural forms in a contemporary manner.**

**Response:**

We are including photo exhibits of other homes in the surrounding area that we feel our proposed design makes connections to. Our updated design uses wood siding, stucco, and stone veneer that can be found throughout the neighborhood, and our revised color palette draws on similar colors of the surrounding homes. We feel these changes make for a much more compatible and respectful design.

Sincerely,



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