



December 6, 2017

By Electronic Transmission

City of Alameda
Historical Advisory Board
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA. 94501

Re: Proposed second floor addition to 3278 Garfield Avenue (Item 7-A on HAB's 12-7-17 Agenda)

Dear Boardmembers:

The design makes a clear and well intentioned attempt to integrate a new second story addition with the California Bungalow architectural style of the existing one story residence.

However, there are several issues:

1. **Retain the existing chimney.** The plans show the existing clinker brick chimney to be removed, but the draft resolution states that it will be retained. It is clearly a character-defining element and should be preserved. Staff has advised that they will add a condition of approval preserving the chimney.
2. **Consider design modifications that help maintain the bungalow look.** The Guide to Residential Design calls for second floor additions to bungalows to use side-facing gables with front dormers to help maintain the bungalow look and to avoid overly dominant front-facing gables that can visually overpower the original bungalow design. Has this approach been considered for this project? A side-facing gable could be just a half gable limited to the front portion of the new second floor. The second floor's rear portion located behind the side facing gable's ridge could retain the currently proposed rear-facing gable roof.

Lowering the second floor's proposed 8' ceiling height by at least one foot along the building perimeter's eave lines, thereby reducing the overall building height by the same amount, would also help deemphasize the second floor. This would result in a sloped ceiling along the eave lines, but was a common practice historically and can add geometric interest to the second floor interiors.

3. **Ensure preservation of the predominantly one-story streetscape.** Garfield Avenue is one of Alameda's finest streetscape characterized by its one-story bungalows. The Guide to Residential Design calls for such streetscapes to be maintained when constructing second story additions, using techniques such as setting the new second floor far enough back so that it does not disrupt

the streetscape's overall one story look and the techniques discussed in Item 2 above to minimize the second story's prominence.

We are trying to evaluate the impact of the second story on the streetscape, but are finding it difficult since there are no story poles. Can story poles be provided to assist the project review? Story poles should be standard procedure in cases such as this involving upper floor additions where historic one story streetscapes could be impacted.

Although the staff report cites the design's similarity to the neighboring second story addition at 3272 Garfield, the subject building has a steeper roof slope than 3272 Garfield, resulting in a greater overall height, so its impact on the streetscape may be greater.

In any case, applying the techniques discussed in Item 2 above would help ensure preservation of the streetscape's one story look.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at 510-523-0411 or cbuckleyaicp@att.net if you would like to discuss these comments.

Sincerely,

Christopher Buckley, Chair
Preservation Action Committee
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society

cc: Debbie Potter, Andrew Thomas, Allen Tai, Henry Dong, Nancy McPeak and Erin Garcia (By electronic transmission)
AAPS Board and Preservation Action Committee (By electronic transmission)