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PROJECT: 2017-17024 – Cheeney Street Townhouses
APN 104-12-025 and APN 104-12-026

Cheeney Street Townhouses – Statement of Justification

Overview

Saul Flores, owner of Ground Zero Construction, based in San Jose, CA, is a general contractor and developer of small-scale housing sites in and around the Bay Area. He has 25 years of experience and has constructed over 200 projects. Mr. Flores acquired the half acre Cheeney Street property from Bill and Marlene Rebello in September 2017. The property consists of two adjacent parcels APN 104-12-025 and APN 104-12-026 and is located near Agnew Road in the Agnew Village neighborhood of the City of Santa Clara. Per the current Land Use Designation, this property allows for three single family homes and two additional accessory dwelling units up to a 40% total lot coverage.

Zoning:	R1-6L
Land Use:	Very Low Density Residential (current)
Proposed Use:	Single Family Residential Townhomes
Proposed Units:	9
Proposed Levels:	2
Parcel Area:	22,500 sq ft
Proposed Building Area:	17,821 sq ft

Existing Conditions

The 150' square project site is currently vacant with no existing buildings or infrastructure. Vegetation is limited to a handful of small trees and bushes, and is mostly barren. The empty lot unfortunately provides unobstructed views of the neighboring homes' rear walls and backyards.

The property sits among residential lots containing one or two story homes, scattered outbuildings and driveways. In Agnew Village homes are set back with vegetated front yards and there is a wide display of material finishes and building forms; architectural style is not regulated in Santa Clara. The adjacent lot to the east is similar in size and contains the Ramshall Place condos, nine in total. The Ramshall condos serve as a telling precedent for the Cheeney site's potential.

Vision

Agnew road contains a scattering of small businesses, and Cheeney Street is in close proximity to technology campuses, large entertainment venues (Levi's Stadium and California's Great America), and an international airport. Though Agnew Village is predominantly residential, it is within a larger area of movement and commerce. As such, a more progressive use of the site seems appropriate.

As a region, Silicon Valley's population is growing rapidly and townhomes of this size and type are very desirable. In the neighborhood context, within a three block radius are found more than half a dozen townhome communities of similar density. A slight increase in density through a general plan amendment allows for the construction of our proposed nine-unit development mid-block along Cheeney.

There is a ripe opportunity at this location for a tidy cluster of deliberate townhouses that maximize natural daylighting, operate efficiently, and connect residents seamlessly.

Guiding Principles

- **Conscious Massing:** Limit the mass of buildings along Cheeney frontage to mimic the separation of single family homes in the neighborhood and create prominent front porches. Restrict the amount of each building that reaches the 25' height limit to minimize the perceived bulk from the street.
- **Site Efficiency:** Group buildings on site to sit within their most logical footprint; ie. meet separation minimums and setbacks without creating 'dead space'. *Four townhomes along street to be touching, and Type C unit to be eliminated, in next design iteration.*
- **Walkable and Welcoming:** This community will not be fenced; instead, landscaped pathways will extend to the public right-of-way. Prioritize pedestrian access to homes and outdoor spaces. *Bike parking and outdoor sitting space to be incorporated in next design iteration.*
- **Focus Inward:** Orient public program components of townhomes toward one another, rather than toward neighboring properties or the street. *Second floor corner balconies to be relocated in next design iteration.*
- **Maximize Daylight:** Incorporate generous expanses of glass and clerestories to create well-lit spaces for homeowners. *Sun shades under consideration for next design iteration.*
- **Site Harmony:** Utilize mirrored symmetry where possible. Provide shielded exterior lighting to illuminate the site and benefit neighborhood safety. Introduce compatible plant species to create a visually-pleasing composition along the street frontage.
- **Material Quality:** Clad buildings with a mix of soft/natural and linear/reflective materials to create material harmony. Consider use of local reclaimed redwood as siding. *Additional trellis elements to be incorporated in next design iteration.*