

August 8, 2019

City of Burlingame  
Mayor Donna Colson and the Burlingame City Council  
501 Primrose Road  
Burlingame, CA 94010

**Re: Appeal to City Council for decisions made during May 28, 2019 Planning Commission meeting specific to the 25 Arundel Road home renovation project**

Dear Mayor Colson and Members of the City Council,

We sincerely appreciate your time in considering our appeal and reviewing the documentation we are providing along with this letter. We feel strongly this matter is not only important for our family, but for the broader Burlingame community as well.

We are appealing two decisions made by the Planning Commission on May 28, 2019 to (1) reject our request to change the material of our lap siding from wood to James Hardie ("Hardie") fiber cement siding and (2) reject adding corner caps to the new exterior design of our home renovation project. We feel these decisions were not properly supported by facts, were inconsistent with other recent decisions made by the Planning Commission, seemed rather subjective and could potentially set the wrong precedent for other community members looking to build or renovate with newer, more sustainable, and durable products.

As background, we are not developers or builders looking to 'flip' a home. We are a family with 2 children currently attending Washington Elementary. We moved to Burlingame in 2012, leaving San Francisco like many families with young children – looking for a safe, diverse, walkable community with strong public schools. We subsequently purchased our home in 2013 knowing it would need work in the future to make it our "forever home" but that we were starting with good bones and curb appeal. We are active volunteers at our children's school and have built a community of friends in the Lyon Hoag neighborhood and throughout Burlingame. We are committed to this home and this community for the long term. Channing is a native of the Bay Area - born in San Francisco, raised on the Peninsula, and attended high school in San Mateo. Carrie moved to the Bay Area in 1999 to pursue her graduate degree, and now calls this area "home." Natalie (9) and Carter (7) were both born in San Francisco and we are raising them in Burlingame. We both work locally in careers dedicated to improving the environment and public-school education. Channing is founder of a solar energy finance advisory firm and Carrie is the Executive Director of the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation.

We bought 25 Arundel Road in 2013 as a 2 bedroom/1.5 bath home. Our intent has always been to upgrade the 90-year old home and add more space. Natalie, who was 4 when we moved in, has been sleeping in the garage that had been converted to a studio room by a prior owner of the house. We began planning this renovation in 2015 and, important to us and our neighbors, is ensuring that our house continues to blend in and is cohesive with the neighborhood. We also wanted to maintain the lap siding look of our house but upgrade the siding to a more modern, sustainable, eco-friendly and fire-resistant material that is more durable than the original wood lap siding installed when the house was built in 1929. The wood lap siding on our home had a great deal of wear and tear including dry rot and flaking paint – therefore withstanding the elements with minimal maintenance was high on our list of considerations. The newly designed exterior of our house is very consistent with many other homes with lap siding found in the neighborhood.

In addition to the appeal letter submitted to the City of Burlingame and recorded on June 6, 2019, we would like to provide the following supplemental materials and information for your consideration:

**Lap Siding:**

During the May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, we requested updating the material for the lap siding from wood to Hardie fiber cement. We believe that Hardie fiber cement is an ideal material when reviewing the many benefits compared to wood siding:

<b>Benefit of Fiber Cement Siding</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Fire Resistance</b>	Primarily cement material with characteristics similar to stucco, brick, and stone. Will not contribute fuel to a fire and not ignite. Wood is highly combustible.
<b>Eco-Friendly</b>	No need to cut trees to manufacture this siding plus it has a longer useful life than wood with a 30 yr warranty.
<b>Moisture, Rot, Pest Resistance</b>	Unlike wood materials which are more vulnerable.
<b>Durability / Weather withstanding</b>	Hardie products are less susceptible than wood to expansion or contraction due to changes in moisture, heat and humidity.
<b>Color Retention / Lower Maintenance</b>	Our Hardie siding comes pre-colored. Multiple coats of finish (~50% more than average house painter) is used when manufactured. The finish is then cured or 'baked'. Unlike vinyl and paint which both fade in the sun, the Hardie finish resists fading with UV protection. The result is longer life with less upkeep than wood.

The only concern voiced by a Commissioner, in regards to the Hardie siding, was the following:

- *“doesn't think it's a material that works for Burlingame. Looks cheap to me and we are trying to fit into the neighborhood..”*

These were the sole reasons provided during the meeting rejecting our request to change the type of material for the siding (from wood to Hardie). In reviewing publicly available planning commission documents, we confirmed there have actually been a number of projects approved by Planning for installation of Hardie lap siding:

- 612 Vernon Way
- 705 Vernon Way
- 616 Lexington Way
- 840 Paloma Avenue
- 810 Crossway Road
- 1268 Cortez Avenue
- 1408 Bernal Avenue
- 904 Bayswater Avenue
- 920 Bayswater Avenue - this multiunit complex was approved for Hardie siding. One comment made by a Commissioner was *“I usually am opposed to Hardie siding...however, when applied properly and maintained I think they can look pretty good...”* (August 13, 2018 Planning Commission meeting)

**Corner Caps (edging):**

During the May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, we also requested the use of corner caps to go with the new lap siding. When discussed that evening, one Commissioner stated:

- *“I was looking at shingled houses and houses with siding and there are very, very few and there are no old ones that have corner caps on them, they all have mitered corners...”*

These were the sole reasons provided in rejecting our request to include corner caps into our design. In our survey of homes found in the Lyon Hoag neighborhood, we actually found the opposite to be true:

- There are 149 houses with lap siding found in the Lyon Hoag neighborhood within 7 blocks of where our home is located, of which **71% (106 homes) have some version or style of corner caps on the exterior.**
- Specific to our block of Arundel Road where our house is located (between Peninsula Avenue and Bayswater Avenue) – there are **7 homes with lap siding, all of which have corner caps (100%).**
- Corner caps can be found on both newly renovated and homes built prior to 1940 in Lyon Hoag.

This data contradicts the statement made during that May 28<sup>th</sup> meeting upon which the decision was rendered. The attached documentation provides the full data, maps and pictures from the neighborhood survey for your review.

Additionally, when proposing corner caps for an older home like ours we considered that mitered corners can be difficult to install properly due to uneven settling of the house structure over the years and the fact that we live in a seismic zone which could make them more vulnerable to movement. There is risk the mitered corners could separate and open - allowing water to enter and cause damage. For a new home that is fully proportional, mitered corners can make sense but, for our much older home, it makes more practical sense to use corner caps.

**Additional Materials:**

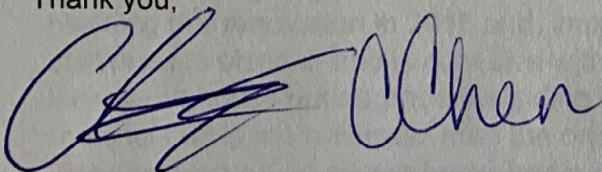
In consideration of our appeal request, we have provided additional documentation and materials in the attached packet for your review including:

- Letter of support from Peter & Hillary Blum
- Letter of support from Jenny Coleman
- Maps, charts and lap siding/corner cap survey data from the Lyon Hoag neighborhood
- Information regarding the durability, fire resistance and other key features of Hardie siding.

In conclusion, we believe the decision by the Planning Commission to reject our requests lack basis and therefore warrants a change in the decision. Ironically, a big reason why we chose to incorporate Hardie siding material with corner caps was, in fact, to ensure that our home does blend in and is cohesive with other homes in our neighborhood.

Mayor Colson and members of the Burlingame City Council, we appreciate your time and consideration in addressing this matter and hope we have provided sufficient information to your satisfaction in support of our appeal.

Thank you,



Channing and Carrie Chen  
Owners, 25 Arundel Road  
Long-Term Residents, City of Burlingame

**The Blum Family**  
705 Vernon Way  
Burlingame, CA 94010

August 2, 2019

City of Burlingame – City Council  
501 Primrose Road  
Burlingame, CA 94010

RE: 25 Arundel Road Appeal

Dear Burlingame City Council Members:

This letter is to express our support of Carrie and Channing Chen's appeal to the decision made by the Burlingame Planning Commission on May 28, 2019 to not allow the change in materials for their lap siding from wood to a J. Hardie type fiber cement material.

Our house is in the adjacent neighborhood of Oak Grove Manor, approximately six blocks away from Carrie and Channing's home in the Lyon Hoag neighborhood. We are completing a remodel to add a new addition to our home and went through the design/planning approval process in which our initial permit application was approved in May 2018.

During construction, we began to consider some changes to the exterior of our home, including materials. Our original plans called for stucco on the new addition, matching the existing exterior of the house. This said, we wanted to change approximately two-thirds of the house to have J Hardie siding.

When considering this change in material, we researched various options, and ultimately chose the J. Hardie siding for many reasons including:

- **Durability:** J. Hardie lap siding made of fiber cement is specifically designed as a long-lasting product that can withstand the harsh elements of rain, sun and insects. We used to live in an old Victorian in San Francisco with wood siding and repeatedly had to deal with termite issues. With the J. Hardie product, we can have the peace of mind that our siding will be pest-free.
- **Eco-Friendly:** J. Hardie lap siding is an environmentally conscious choice as virgin trees are not sacrificed in the production of this product.

- Fire-Retardant: J. Hardie lap siding is a safe product in areas such as Northern California that are at risk for wildfires as the product is made of non-flammable material.
- Aesthetics: We believe that our remodeled home looks just as beautiful and traditional with the J. Hardie siding as it would with wood. We continue to get compliments on our house as folks walk by on their way to Washington Park.

We submitted our request to the Planning Commission for this change in material in December 2018 and our request was approved at the January 15, 2019 meeting.

We are very happy with the installation of the J. Hardie siding on our home. This said, we find it inconsistent that the Planning Commission did not approve the Chen's similar request to change the material of the exterior of their home from wood lap siding to J. Hardie lap siding, as their request was only six months after ours was approved.

As a result of the reasons we have listed in this letter, we disagree with the rationale given to the Chen's for the planning commission's decision that J. Hardie siding is not "a material that works in Burlingame" and "looks cheap." We are in full support of the Chen's appeal of that decision and urge you to consider their appeal request.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter J. Blum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hillary and Peter Blum

August 5, 2019

Mayor Donna Colson and Members of the Burlingame City Council  
City of Burlingame, CA

Dear Mayor Colson and Members of the City Council,

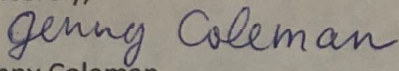
My name is Jenny Coleman. I am a Washington Elementary School teacher, resident of Burlingame for 15 years, and a neighbor of the Chen Family. I am writing this letter in support of the Chen Family's appeal to add fiber cement siding and corner caps to their home as part of their renovation. I have lived next door to 25 Arundel Road for 6 years. The home has had the same look and exterior for all of the years I've lived in my home. As a neighbor who has plans to stay here for the long term, I am excited and anxious to see the finished home in the next few weeks and my understanding is that this siding issue is the gating item.

The Chens have demonstrated their commitment to being long-term residents in the community. Both of their kids have attended Washington Elementary School since kindergarten and both Carrie and Channing Chen are very active with the school and work locally. They are ideal neighbors and I can count on them to help me while I am out of town or if I need help with anything in/around the house. What the Chens are planning to do with the exterior of the house is very consistent with what I have seen on plenty of other homes in the neighborhood and, in fact, on our block.

They are near the finish line with their renovation and I know this appeal process and the installation of their desired siding is really the last step in what has been a long (and sometimes arduous) process for them since early 2016. I am voicing my support here and writing this letter with the hope that this will help them achieve their desired outcome in a timely manner.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Jenny Coleman  
Owner, 27 Arundel Road

Address	City	Zip	Corner Caps?	Wide or Narrow?	Contrasting Color?	House / Corner Cap Colors
10 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
108 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
114 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
115 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
118 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
12 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
122 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
125 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
126 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
129 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
133 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
137 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
204 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
208 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
21 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
210 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
213 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
217 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
220 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
221 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
229 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
233 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
236 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
28 Clarendon Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
310 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
315 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
404 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
409 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
409 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
412 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
412 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
413 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
511 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
705 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
705 Burlingame Ave	Burlingame	94010	No			
711 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
715 Burlingame Ave	Burlingame	94010	No			
716 Burlingame Ave	Burlingame	94010	No			
8 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	No			
804 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
809 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
811 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
821 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	No			
101 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan all
103 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan All
105 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan all
109 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all
114 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	White all
121 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Green all
133 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey all
134 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey All
136 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey all
138 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey all
17 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan All

Address	City	Zip	Corner Caps?	Wide or Narrow?	Contrasting Color?	House / Corner Cap Colors
219 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Lt Grey All
223 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Green all
225 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Green all
228 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Beige all
236 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan all
324 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all
33 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan all
33 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey all
34 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all
401 Bayswater Ave.	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all
408 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey all
508 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Yellow All
515 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all
615 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Moss green all / Mix of lap siding & shingle
712 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan all
713 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Tan All
801 Burlingame Ave	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	No	Grey All
109 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes	Green House / White CC
209 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes	Green House / White CC
237 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes	Yellow House / White CC
33 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes	Tan house / White CC
515 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes	Lt Grey House / Dk Grey CC
125 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow	Yes & No	Some tan all / some White CC in back
704 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Narrow & Wide	No	White all
10 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Cream all
100 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All / Apt Building
105 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
108 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	White all
109 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Peach all
112 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	White all
116 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Tan all / 2nd story only
12 Clarendon Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Tan All
128 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All
13 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Brown all
14 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Blue all
15 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All
15 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
19 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
201 Bloomfield Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	White all
212 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	White all
216 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
221 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Red all
225 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Tan all
228 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Dark tan all
23 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
241 Stanley Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Moss green all
25 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	White all
28 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Blue All
306 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Yellow All
313 Bayswater Ave.	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Beige all
501 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Moss green all
6 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Light Grey all
608 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All
620 Peninsula Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All / Apt Building



Address	City	Zip	Corner Caps?	Wide or Narrow?	Contrasting Color?	House / Corner Cap Colors
708 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Navy All
716 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Tan all
716 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Grey All
808 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	No	Tan all
109 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Yellow House / White CC
12 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan house / White CC
120 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Blue House / White CC
124 Dwight Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	White house / Red CC
126 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan house / Cream CC
130 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / White CC
133 Bloomfield Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt. Green House / Cream CC
138 Clarendon Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / White CC
14 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Brown House/Dk Brwn CC
14 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan house / Cream CC
201 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Green House / Cream CC
208 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Brown House / Cream CC
21 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan House / Dk Brown CC
21 Clarendon Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan House / White CC
210 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Rust house / Tan CC
213 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey House / Cream CC
232 Bancroft Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan House / White CC
24 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey House / White CC
28 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey House / White CC
30 Anita Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Cream House / Green CC
305 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Green House/ Dk Green CC
308 Bayswater Ave.	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Blue House / White CC
315 Burlingame Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / White CC
316 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Green House/ Dk Green CC
32 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Brown House / Moss Grn CC
33 Channing Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey House / Blue CC
33 Clarendon Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey house / White CC
36 Arundel Road	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Lt Blue House / Dk Blue CC
404 Peninsula Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Grey house / White CC
408 Peninsula Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / Blue CC
411 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / White CC
518 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Beige House / White CC
604 Bayswater Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan House / White CC
605 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan house / White CC
609 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan house / White CC
709 Howard Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide	Yes	Tan House / White CC
16 Clarendon Avenue	Burlingame	94010	Yes	Wide & Narrow	Yes	Tan House / Brown CC