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## CITY OF BURLINGAME PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

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<b>Agenda Item: 8a</b>	<b>Hearing Date: September 8, 2025</b>
Project No.	DSR25-0023
Location	1385 Hillside Circle, Lot 1 APN: 027-282-050
Applicant and Architect/Designer	James Chu - Chu Design Associates, Inc.
Property Owner	Sherman Chiu and Jen Ngo
Staff	Catherine Keylon, Senior Planner
General Plan Designation	Low Density Residential
Zoning	R-1 (Low Density Residential)
Lot Area	Existing Parcel: 36,955 SF Proposed Lot 1: 10,545 SF

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review of an application for Lot Subdivision, Major Design Review, Hillside Area Construction Permit and Special Permits for declining height envelope and attached garage to subdivide one lot into three lots and construct one new, two-story single-unit dwelling on each of the three newly created lots in the R-1 (Low Density Residential) zoning district.

This staff report pertains to the proposal for 1385 Hillside Circle, Lot 1 (refer to separate staff reports prepared for proposals on Lots 2 and 3).

### BACKGROUND

The project site is currently one 36,955 square foot parcel that is a through lot, bounded by Hillside Circle to the north and Easton Drive to the south, with a steep downward slope toward Easton Drive. The existing dwelling on the site is approximately 11,300 square feet and contains two stories, plus a basement. The site has two accessory structures including an approximately 1,856 square foot detached garage in the northeastern corner of the site and an approximately 661 square foot detached garage in the southwestern corner of the site. The existing house fronts on Hillside Circle and the detached garage has frontage along Easton Drive. The site contains four trees, consisting of three protected size Oak trees (18.8, 19.1 and 26.4 inches in diameter) and one Acacia tree. The Acacia tree is non-protected (8-inch diameter) and is proposed to be removed. There is an African fern pine tree off-site to the east.

In 2019 there was unlawful tree removals on the site. There were several protected size trees removed, in addition to a significant amount of shrubs, unprotected size trees and other foliage removed from the rear of the site, abutting Easton Drive. A Tree Removal Permit was applied for in 2023 for a Redwood tree and Coast Live Oak tree; that permit was appealed and following a hearing was ultimately approved by the Beautification Commission.

### PROPOSAL – LOT 1

The applicant has submitted an application to demolish all existing structures on-site, subdivide the parcel into three individual lots, and construct three, two-story, single-unit dwellings, with one residence on each lot. Each of the new three properties would front directly on Hillside Circle with no access from Easton Drive, with the exception of Lot 3 which would have pedestrian access directly

from Easton Drive to the new dwelling. The project would include the construction of a new driveway for each of the three proposed lots from Hillside Circle.

The following information pertains to Lot 1; please refer to the separate staff reports prepared for Lots 2 and 3 for project information pertaining to those lots.

Lot 1 is located on the far east side of the project site and would measure 10,545 square feet in area. The applicant proposes the construction of a new, two-story single-unit dwelling with an attached garage. The total proposed floor area would be 4,255 SF (0.40 FAR), where 4,474 SF (0.42 FAR) is the maximum allowed (including a 175 SF front porch exemption).

The subject property is located within the Hillside Overlay Zone. Code Section 25.20.040 states that hillside development shall be designed to preserve existing distant views. View preservation shall be limited to obstruction of distant views to San Francisco Bay, the San Francisco Airport, and Mills Canyon from primary indoor living areas, such as living rooms and family rooms (Code Section 25.20.040.B.).

With the proposed project, there would be five bedrooms (den qualifies as a bedroom per C.S. 25.108.030). Three parking spaces, two of which must be covered, are required for a five-bedroom house. The proposed attached garage would provide two covered parking spaces (20'-0" x 20'-0" clear interior dimensions) where 20'-0" x 18'-0" is the minimum required. Two uncovered parking spaces (24'-0" x 28'-3") are provided in the driveway. The application includes a Special Permit for an attached garage.

The entire site contains five existing landscape trees; two of which are located directly in front of Lot 1, but not within the property boundaries. One is a Black Acacia tree, that is proposed to be removed, and the other is an African fern pine tree that would remain. Three 24-inch box size trees would be planted as part of the development on Lot 1; two Maidenhair trees and one Trident Maple tree. Based on the proposed floor area, three landscape trees are required on-site. Therefore, the project complies with the Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance requirements. In addition, a comprehensive landscape plan has been provided with hardscape and softscape at the front and terraced at the rear of the property. An arborist report was prepared by Kielty Arborist Services, dated February 16, 2024, and is attached for reference.

The applicant is requesting the following applications:

- Major Design Review for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and attached garage (C.S. 25.68.020.C.1.a.);
- Special Permit for an attached garage (C.S. 25.10.035.1.); and
- Hillside Area Construction Permit for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and attached garage (C.S. 25.70.020.A.).

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## ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Project Information**

Table 1 below compares the proposed project to the development standards for a single-unit dwelling based on the R-1 zoning district.

	PROPOSED	ALLOWED/REQ'D
<b>Front Setback (main flr):</b> <b>(lower flr):</b> <b>(attached garage):</b>	20'-0" N/A (no street frontage) 28'-3"	16'-9" (block average) N/A (no street frontage) 25'-0" – garage (2 doors)
<b>Side Setback (left):</b> <b>(right):</b>	7'-0" 7'-3"	7'-0" 7'-0"
<b>Rear (main flr):</b> <b>(lower flr):</b>	43'-5" 35'-1"	15'-0" 20'-0"
<b>Lot Coverage:</b>	3,146 SF 29.8%	4,218 SF 40%
<b>FAR:</b>	4,255 SF 0.40 FAR	4,474 SF <sup>1</sup> 0.42 FAR
<b>Off-Street Parking:</b>	2 covered (20'-0" x 20'-0" clear interior) 2 uncovered (24'-0" x 28'-3")	2 covered (20' x 18' clear interior) 1 uncovered (9' x 18')
<b>Building Height:</b>	15'-6"	20'-0" <sup>2</sup>
<b>Plate Height (main flr):</b> <b>(lower flr):</b>	9'-0" 9'-0"	9'-0" 9'-0"
<b>DH Envelope:</b>	Special Permit requested for DHE encroachment along right and left sides <sup>3</sup>	C.S. 25.10.055.A.1.

<sup>1</sup> (0.32 x 10,545 SF) + 1,100 SF = 4,474 SF (0.42 FAR)

<sup>2</sup> Per C.S. 25.30.040.A.2. height is limited to 20'-0" above average top of curb on lots with a slope of 20% slope or greater.

<sup>3</sup> Special Permit requested for declining height envelope (106.1 SF extends beyond the DHE along right side of house and 99.82 SF extends beyond the DHE along the left side of the house).

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### **Summary of Proposed Exterior Materials:**

- **Windows:** aluminum clad wood with simulated true divided lites and wood trim
- **Doors:** stained wood entry door, wood garage door with raised panels
- **Siding:** wood siding with 6-inch exposure, stucco, stainless steel welded wire mesh (3" openings) on lower crawl space
- **Roof:** standing seam metal
- **Other:** 6x wood outriggers, 12" wood band

### **Design Review Criteria**

The criteria for design review as established in Ordinance No. 2000 adopted by the City Council on December 6, 2021 are outlined as follows:

1. Consistency with any applicable design guidelines;
2. Compatibility of the architectural style with that of the existing character of the neighborhood;
3. Respect for the parking and garage patterns in the neighborhood;
4. Architectural style and consistency and mass and bulk of structures, including accessory structures;
5. Interface of the proposed structure with the structures on adjacent properties;
6. Landscaping and its proportion to mass and bulk of structural components; and
7. In the case of an addition, compatibility with the architectural style and character of the existing structure as remodeled.

### **Attachments:**

Area Map  
Arborist Report  
Public Comment Emails  
Proposed Plans dated August 27, 2025