



CITY OF BURLINGAME PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item: 7b	Hearing Date: September 8, 2025
Project No.	DSR25-0009
Location	728 Newhall Road APN: 028-142-310
Applicant	Behrooz Nemati
Property Owner	728 Newhall Rd LLC
Staff	Brittany Xiao, Assistant Planner
General Plan Designation	Low Density Residential
Zoning	R-1 (Low Density Residential)
Lot Area	7,865 SF

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Review of an application for Major Design Review and Special Permit for plate height for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and detached garage in the R-1 (Low Density Residential) zoning district.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission, by resolution, approve the Major Design Review and Special Permit applications as conditioned.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is an interior lot with an existing one-story single-unit dwelling and a detached garage. The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing dwelling and garage and build a new, two-story, single-unit dwelling and detached garage. The proposed floor area is 4,013 SF (0.51 FAR) where 4,017 SF (0.51 FAR) is the maximum allowed (includes covered porch and ADU exemptions).

A Special Permit is being requested for the proposed first floor plate height of 10'-0", where 9'-0" is the maximum plate height allowed for the first floor.

The dwelling would contain five bedrooms. Three parking spaces, two of which must be covered, are required for a five-bedroom dwelling. Two covered parking spaces (10'-0" x 19'-4" and 9'-4" x 19'-4" clear interior dimensions) are provided in the detached garage and one uncovered parking space (9'-0" x 18'-0") is provided in the driveway. While the width of one of the covered parking spaces does not comply with the minimum code requirement of 10'-0" in width, AB 2097 prevents the City from enforcing minimum parking requirements. Therefore, a Variance for the covered parking space width is not required in this case.

This project includes a new 756 SF attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) on the first floor of the dwelling. Per State law, review of the ADU is administrative only and is not reviewed by the Planning Commission. Staff has determined that the ADU complies with ADU regulations.

The site contains a total of eight trees, four of which are protected. The proposed project includes removing six trees, two of which are protected (a 62-inch diameter Coast redwood and a 32-inch diameter Coast live oak). An Arborist Report prepared by Heartwood Consulting Arborists (attached), dated May 22, 2025, provides support for removal of the Coast redwood and the Coast live oak; the arborist report was reviewed and accepted by the Parks Division. A Protected Tree Removal Permit will be required for the removal of any protected tree. The Arborist Report also provides a Tree

Protection Plan to protect the existing Coast redwoods to remain in the rear yard. The proposed landscape plan shows three new 24-inch box size Cercis Forest Pansy trees to be planted at the front and rear of the site. Based on the proposed floor area, four landscape trees are required on-site. Therefore, the project complies with Urban Reforestation and Tree Protection Ordinance.

The applicant is requesting the following applications:

- Major Design Review for a new, two-story single-unit dwelling and detached garage (C.S. 25.68.020.C.1.a.); and
- Special Permit for first floor plate height (10'-0" proposed where 9'-0" is the maximum plate height allowed on the first floor) (C.S. 25.10.030).

ANALYSIS

The proposed project has been designed in accordance with the Residential Design Guidelines and R-1 zoning district development standards. While the architectural style is modern, the proposed single-unit dwelling is complimentary to the context of the other homes on the block in that it contains traditional elements, such as a covered front porch, hip and gable roofs, articulated massing, and proportional fenestration throughout. The proposed design will be integrated into the neighborhood with the use of quality materials and architectural elements, including a combination of smooth stucco (with and without control joints) and composite (simulated oak) exterior siding and high quality aluminum windows. Staff does not have any suggested changes for the Planning Commission to consider.

July 14, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting

At the Planning Commission study meeting on July 14, 2025, the Commission had several suggestions regarding this project and voted to place this item on Action when all information has been submitted and reviewed by the Planning Division.

The applicant submitted revised plans, date stamped August 5, 2025, to address the Planning Commission's comments. Below is a summary of the Commission's comments and changes made to the project:

1. Address the second story massing over the first floor.
 - Two ornamental posts (on either side of the living room windows at the front of the house) have been added below the second floor and the header height of the living room windows on the first floor have been raised to match the height of the main door on the Front Elevation to mitigate the squashed feeling (see revised renderings and sheets A2.0 and A2.1).
2. Address window articulation and alignment throughout the house.
 - The placement and size of windows have been revised to be more in proportion with one another on the Front, Left, and Right Elevations (see revised sheets A2.0 and A2.1).
3. Minimize the extensive glazing over the stairwell.
 - The window on the stairwell on the Left Elevation has been split into two smaller windows (see revised sheet A2.0).

4. Address the rear eave element that connects to the single-story portion at the rear of the house.
 - The roof of the attached ADU has been modified on the Left and Rear Elevations (see revised sheets A2.0 and A2.1).
5. Consider utilizing the available front setback to shift the house forward in order to retain one of the trees in the rear yard.
 - The front setback for the dwelling has been reduced by 3 inches (see revised sheet A1.0B). The two trees previously proposed to be removed near or within the footprint of the ADU will still be removed. Two existing trees at the rear corner of the site behind the ADU will remain.
6. Provide more attention to materials and detailing on the Rear Elevation to reflect the design of the other three sides of the house.
 - On the Rear Elevation, wood siding has been incorporated around one of the second floor windows and the siding was changed from smooth stucco to smooth stucco with control joints to match the other elevations (see revised sheet A2.1).

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.

	PREVIOUS (6/27/25 plans)	PROPOSED (8/5/25 plans)	ALLOWED/REQ'D
Front Setback (1st flr): (2nd flr):	23'-9" 20'-3"	23'-6" 20'-0"	19'-8" (block average) 20'-0"
Side Setback (left): (right):	10'-0" 4'-3"	no change	4'-0" 4'-0"
Rear Setback (1st flr): (2nd flr):	32'-1" 73'-4"	no change	15'-0" 20'-0"
Lot Coverage:	2,952 SF 38%	no change	3,146 SF 40%
FAR:	4,013 SF ¹ 0.51 FAR	no change	4,017 SF 0.51 FAR

¹ (0.32 x 7,865 SF) + 1100 SF + 400 SF = 4,017 SF maximum allowed (0.51 FAR).

Table continued on next page.

	PREVIOUS (6/27/25 plans)	PROPOSED (8/5/25 plans)	ALLOWED/REQ'D
<i>Off-Street Parking:</i>	2 covered (10'-0" x 19'-4" and 9'-4" x 19'-4") ² 1 uncovered (9' x 18')	no change	2 covered (10' x 18' each space) 1 uncovered (9' x 18')
<i>Building Height:</i>	23'-7"	no change	30'-0"
<i>Plate Height (1st flr):</i> <i>(2nd flr):</i>	10'-0" ³ 8'-0"	no change	9'-0" maximum 8'-0" maximum
<i>Declining Height Envelope:</i>	complies	complies	C.S. 25.10.055

² AB 2097 exempts project from off-street parking requirements.

³ Special Permit requested for first floor plate height.

Summary of Proposed Exterior Materials:

- **Windows:** aluminum
- **Doors:** wood
- **Garage Doors:** wood
- **Siding:** smooth stucco (with and without control joints) and composite wood
- **Roof:** standing seam metal
- **Other:** metal deck guardrails

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.

Environmental Review

The project is Categorically Exempt from review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), per Section 15303 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines, which states that construction of a limited number of new, small facilities or structures, including one single-family residence, or a second dwelling unit in a residential zone, is exempt from environmental review. In urbanized areas, this

PC/09/08/2025
Project No. DSR25-0009
728 Newhall Road
Page 5

exemption may be applied to the construction or conversion of up to three (3) single-family residences as part of a project.

Attachments:

Area Map
Arborist Report
Public Comment Email
Resolution
Proposed Plans dated August 5, 2025
Previous Plans dated June 27, 2025