

Owner Comments

Regarding our new home, many of the concerns you voiced refer to the impact our house would have on 1803 A Bonita. We have reached out to Rafael and Jenna, who are supportive of our project, but we want to make sure they can share any concerns with us and we will work with them to address impacts to their unit. We'd like to work with you primarily on concerns that specifically affect you and the front unit.

Below are the items you've mentioned that we can address with some changes of our own, and we hope that you would be agreeable to them.

1. Concern about the strong effect of the proposed metal siding. We can consider replacing portions of the metal with wood siding, for a softer appearance, particularly where the house is visible from the street and from the Bonita properties.
2. Notes about the hardness of the exposed steel structure in the back. We will consider giving the structure a warmer feel by changing the trellis material to wood.
3. Concern that there may be glare from second story windows in the back. There are anti-glare films that can be applied to windows (such as the Gila Glare Control Window Films shown in this link http://www.gilafilms.com/en/Glare-Control-Window-Film.aspx#.Ub_eFvb71TM). We can consider applying these after construction to any windows that may shine uncomfortably into your property.
4. Concern that proposed trees in the backyard may block light in the back. We value sunlight highly and do not want to take away any from our neighbors. We would very much like to collaborate with our neighbors on the landscaping plans for the backyard and the west fence. This is an area where we are confident we can find a solution that everyone is happy with.
5. Would like us not to tear down the tree in front. We have noted the line of Buckeye trees and we'd love to keep this if we can. It may not be feasible to keep that particular tree during construction. However, the city actually requires us to plant trees when we do the work, so we will have the opportunity to replace the Buckeye tree, and are open to suggestions on the species.
6. Concern about the steel garage door shown in the drawing. We will consider changing the material of the garage door to wood or another material that would help soften the facade of our new house.
7. Request that we do some kind of stairstep of the two stories in back. This is a suggestion you made to us in person after the hearing. While it is typical of most houses in Berkeley to have a two-story façade in the rear, the trellis at the back of the home is intended to help break up the form of the home. We will consider some additional elements on the trellis to help reinforce the form and stepping of the rear façade.

Again, we look forward to working with you to continue to improve our home plans. We value maintaining goodwill in the neighborhood above all. We look forward to hearing back from you on our proposed changes.