

November 28, 2022

Mr. Steve Monowitz  
Director of Community Development  
County of San Mateo  
455 County Center 2nd Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

**VIA ELECTRONIC and HAND DELIVERY.**

**Re: 890 Upland Road Emerald Lake Hills – General Plan Land Use Map Amendment,  
Vesting Tentative Parcel Map for Three Lots, Grading Permit, and CEQA Initial Study.**

Dear Steve:

Per my email dated October 27, 2022 and the property owner Mr. Paul Goswamy's hand delivered letter of agency authorization, I am representing him and his wife Rupinder Kaur to assist them and their project team with the above listed planning applications. This proposal consists of a General Plan Map Amendment from low density to medium-low density and a minor subdivision in the form of a Vesting Tentative Parcel Map (VTPM) to divide the subject single-family lot of 44,721 square feet into three lots each meeting the RH/DR lot size criteria as verified by the slope analysis. We are also applying for a grading permit for the whole project to add the elements of concurrence and detail to better facilitate the CEQA Initial Study. The subject parcel (APN 058-272-120) was lawfully established in its present configuration by subdivision on May 10, 1916.

The property presently contains an aged main residence, decks, a small cottage, two planters, and a small water tank. Currently, the existing dwelling and cottage have non-conforming rear yard setbacks. Both the site and the immediate neighborhood would greatly benefit from removal of the present structures. The county will also benefit economically from a significant increase in property taxes derived from three custom homes and other features such as landscaping.

In addition, two concurrent external applications will be filed upon favorable consideration of the VTPM. The first is to procure three capacity available connections to Redwood City's public sewer system directly from the City with an out-of-district service approval by LAFCo or by Annexation to the Oak Knoll Sewer Maintenance District (OKSMD) through the County Department of Public Works and the Board of Supervisors. Again, sewer capacity is available, however, further consultations with Redwood City and County Public Works will determine the specific course of connection approvals. The existing residence is currently served by an old septic system and will be removed to comply with current day County public sewer requirements. The second external application is also with the City of Redwood City and LAFCo to procure two additional out of district water connections. Given that the site presently functions on its own septic system and a single water connection from Redwood City, the proposed minor subdivision will bring the property into compliance with General Plan Policy 8.30 to "Encourage the infilling of

urban areas where infrastructure and services are available”; and Policy 8.32 a. to “Encourage efficient and effective infrastructure (e.g.) water supply, wastewater, roads) necessary to serve the level of development allowable within urban areas”. Effectively, these two post-approval external applications will facilitate the delivery of improved services and facilities.

The site is presently zoned RH/DR, therefore, no zone change is needed. Further, the entire surrounding area which includes nearby land within the City of Redwood City is zoned RH which eliminates any “spot” zoning consideration. Parcels 1, 2, and 3 are respectively proposed to be 12,010, 19,023 (gross and 14,926 net of driveway), and 13,687 square feet. Under the County’s RH District regulations all lots must be a minimum of 12,000 square feet and are designed to easily meet all RH/DR development standards.

Prior to the filing of this application package, Mr. Goswamy consulted with the City of Redwood City’s staff regarding potential annexation and received a determination that annexation is not necessary to pursue entitlements from the County. Further, Mr. Goswamy consulted with former LAFCo Executive Director Martha Poyatos and current Executive Director Rob Bartoli on out-of-district sewer and water connections. Both agencies determined that these service approvals shall be undertaken after approval of the VTPM and prior to recordation of the Final Parcel Map.

In addition to standard County Application Forms the following technical documents and reports in support of the VTPM application are included in this filing package.

- A Planning and Building Department Slope Analysis.
- MacLeod and Associates VTPM with Preliminary Grading & Drainage Details.
- MacLeod and Associates VTPM with Erosion & Sediment Control Plan.
- MacLeod and Associates Footprint Analysis Context Map.
- MacLeod and Associates Footprint Site Analysis Map.
- MacLeod and Associates Non-Development Area Map.
- MacLeod and Associates Preliminary Subdivision Layout Map.
- MacLeod and Associates C.3 and C.6 Checklist and Calculations.
- MacLeod and Associates Site Distance Study.
- Silicon Valley Soils Engineering’s Geotechnical Investigation dated September 21, 2021. This report addresses site and area geology, seismicity, slope stability, liquefaction potential, site conditions, and provides conclusions and preliminary recommendations. The report concluded that the contemplated minor subdivision into three home sites is feasible. Prior to actual design of three homes, a more detailed field and laboratory analysis of on-site soils will be required. This analysis will assist the project’s civil engineer in preparation of a final grading plan in consultation with the architect and a structural engineer in design of a pier and grade beam foundation system.
- Mayne Tree Expert Company, Inc.’s Arborist’s Report dated February 8, 2022 prepared by Jeromey A. Ingalls. This report was undertaken in compliance with the International Society of Arboricultural and San Mateo County’s standards for assessing the health of

forty-seven trees of 6" in diameter or greater. These trees were surveyed and plotted by the project engineer Dan MacLeod. Thereafter, Mr. Ingalls' field verified and provided each a metal foil ID tag and assessed the tree's health. Because no home designs are included in the subject application package, Mr. Ingalls provided general remedial tree care and preservation recommendations. As specific home designs are developed, they will require field consultation with the arborist, county staff, and project contractors to establish tree protection zones and protocols for preservation and supervisory inspections.

- Fidelity National Title Company Preliminary Title Report dated January 7, 2022.
- Recorded Grant Deed, and a current 2022 and 2023 Secured Tax Bill.
- As previously mentioned, a CEQA Initial Study application checklist is included as required by the State of California involving the legislative act of amending the site's General Plan designation from low to medium-low density. It is essential to recognize that without the required General Plan density amendment this three-lot parcel map would fall under multiple CEQA Categorical Exemptions. Accordingly, we anticipate the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration will result in certification given the fact based absence of any significant impacts that could not in the worst case be mitigated.

While I have managed to procure the approval of two previous ELH General Plan amendments, I also cite a third clearly established precedent granted by the Board of Supervisors. That application was PLN2006-00128 for Ronald and Sally Edwards. My client's proposal would mirror the Edwards' approval in terms of policy application and approval rationale. That precedent addressed the following key considerations that apply to the subject property and application as follows:

**Conformance with the General Plan** – The present Low Density Residential land use map designation of 0.3 to 2.3 dwellings per acre do not allow this underutilized resource to be subdivided even though it will easily comply with its RH/DR zoning for a three-lot minor subdivision. However, a land use map amendment to the Medium-Low Density Residential designation of 2.4 to 6 dwellings per acre would facilitate such division on the low end of that range at 2.99+/- dwellings per acre. Edwards' approval at 3.6 dwelling units per acre exceeded this proposal. Therefore, there is consistency between the proposed General Plan Medium-Low Density Residential land use designation and the implementing RH zoning of the subject property. Based upon a review of the patch work quilt lot sizes within ELH and the immediate neighborhood, the proposed land use map amendment and minor subdivision into three lots would be entirely in keeping with current density, land uses, and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

In addition, this application will be in compliance with the following applicable Urban Land Use Policies for the ELH Area:

**Policy 7.16** - Provides for revitalization of existing developed neighborhoods without creating urban sprawl. This proposed amendment will foster these goals by facilitating efficient use and renewal of the site. As indicated in my description of current use, the site presently accommodates one outdated single-family residence with detached decks, planters, a shed, and a small water tank. Approval will lead to their removal and replacement with three new custom homes and associated landscaping.

**Policy 8.12 - a (2)** - "Adopt the land use designations and amendments thereto, of the Emerald

Lake Hills Community Plan”.

**Policy 8.12 - C (3)** - “Amending the land use designations of existing area plans”.

**Policy 8.13** - The requested medium low density land use designation complies with the five locational policy criteria for the ELH area. In addition, low density and medium-low density designated parcels are dispersed throughout the area. Further, incorporated nearby parcels within Redwood City are designated low density on the City’s land use plan that allows for up to seven dwelling units per acre under the City’s more generous RH zoning provisions.

**Policy 8.14 - a** - “Utilize as guidelines only, the designations and densities shown in Table 8.1P to achieve stated land use objectives within unincorporated Urban Communities, Urban Neighborhoods and Special Urban Areas”. The subject property is located within both (1) a designated unincorporated community, and (2) designated urban neighborhood.

**Policy 8.14 - b** - “Use the criteria in Table 8.1P, as guidelines only, to locate land use designations in urban unincorporated areas”.

**8.15 - a** - “Protect and enhance the character of existing single-family areas”. This proposal maintains the single-family land use of the neighborhood while revitalizing the underutilized site with three character enhancing modern custom homes.

**Policy 8.30** – This policy calls for infilling, or in this case, refilling of an established urban area. Infrastructure and services are available and approval of the land use map amendment and minor subdivision will facilitate removal of the existing septic system and connection to the public sewer system without any cost to tax payers. This extension of available infrastructure is no longer affordable to local government. However, private capital will accomplish beneficial connections to the OKSMD’s sewer system, and revamping or undergrounding of water, electrical, gas, and cable systems. Any required improvement to the adjacent roadway will also be undertaken with private funds. These site enhancements benefit other properties within the immediate neighborhood. Approval of this project will substantially improve the quality of the local housing supply and its associated infrastructure without encroachment into undeveloped areas or increasing urban sprawl.

**Policy 8.32 - a** - “Encourage efficient and effective infrastructure (e.g., water supply, waste water, roads) necessary to serve the level of development allowable within urban areas”. This proposal fully complies with the stated General Plan policy.

**Policy 8.36** - This density policy calls for the regulation of maximum allowable densities in zone districts to ensure that the intensity of development is consistent with land use designations. The ELH Land Use Plan has been in place since 1979 and was adopted with imprecise broad brush land use densities. In fact, the last three Environmental Services Agency Managers/Community Development Directors have openly acknowledged that the plan’s land use density designations were very broadly applied without regard to an individual property’s specific urban service capabilities, slope density considerations, or the established neighborhood development pattern. Density designations were based upon the broadest general criteria in connection with development of a public sewer system for the ELH plan area. Accordingly, over time there have been a substantial number of land use plan density amendments granted to balance a property’s access to services, facilities, and public infrastructure where there is minimal exposure to natural or manmade hazards. In the case of the subject property, the land use amendment to medium-low density would be in complete keeping and character with the immediate neighborhood and the larger ELH plan area. Further, the resulting subdivision into three lots and associated

construction of three custom built single-family homes can be accomplished in total compliance with the existing RH/DR district zoning regulations and applicable building codes.

**Conformance with the ELH Community Plan** - The proposed amendment and minor subdivision are in compliance with applicable policies of the ELH Community Plan. Future replacement of the old residential dwelling on the subject one lot property, subdivision into three lots, and construction of three new custom homes would result in the same overall site density at 2.99+/- dwelling units per acre in keeping with the existing neighborhood pattern and character. Further, this proposal complies with the land use and open space conservation objectives of the ELH Community Plan because it does not conflict with identified potential community park locations.

**Conformance with Zoning Regulations** – As indicated in previous paragraphs and as evidenced on the accompanying three lot parcel map, the size of the subject parcel of 44,721 square feet is more than adequate to comply with cross-slope and minimum lot size requirements of the RH zoning district to allow for subdivision into three lots.

In closing, please feel free to contact me if this letter or any component of the application package requires clarification or supplemental information. This comprehensive letter is intended to facilitate a clear understanding of the application by staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors as to the basis and facts of this request, its correlation with a precedent approval, and its consistency with the County's policy and zoning regulations. Accordingly, please include this letter with the staff reports to the Commission and Board.

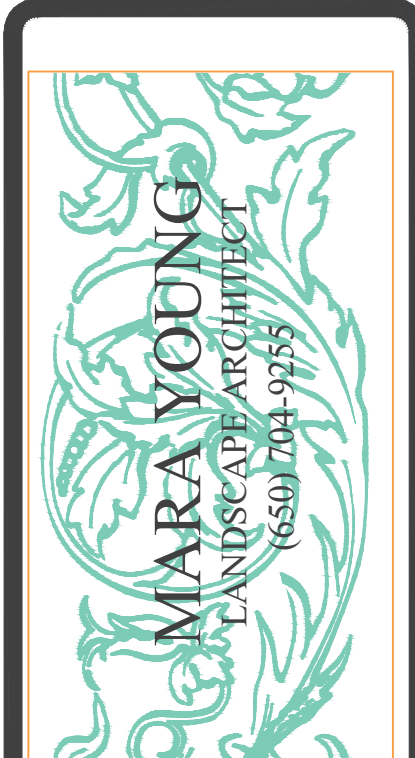
Regards,



J. R. Rodine

CC: Paul Goswamy  
Dan MacLeod  
Sophie Mintier  
Mike Schaller  
Members of the Planning Commission/With Staff Report  
Members of the Board of Supervisors/With Staff Report

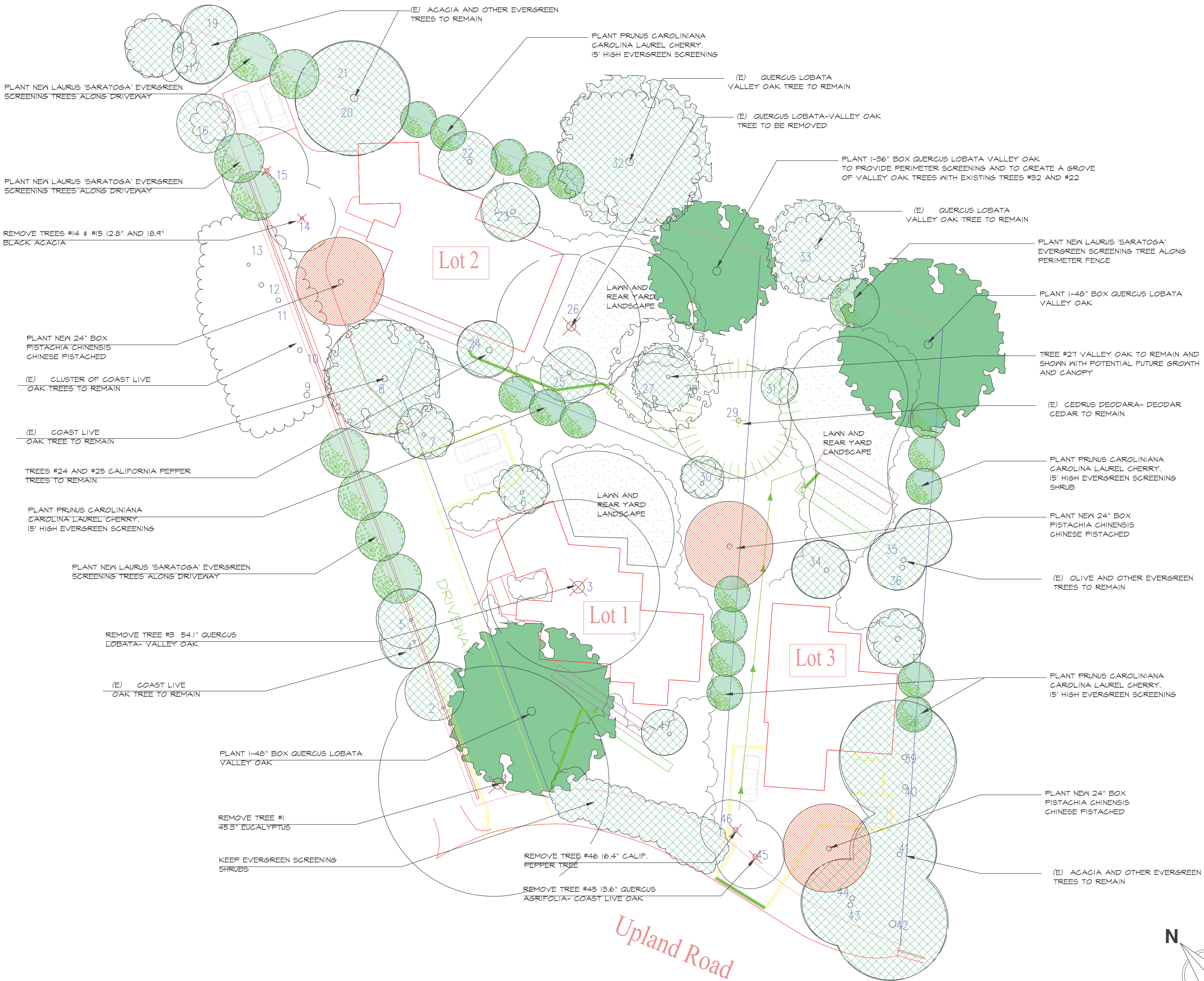
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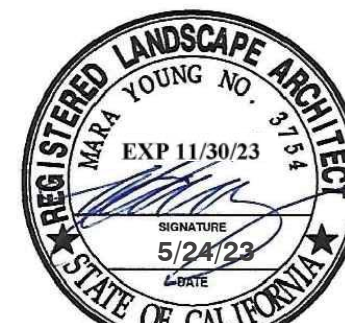
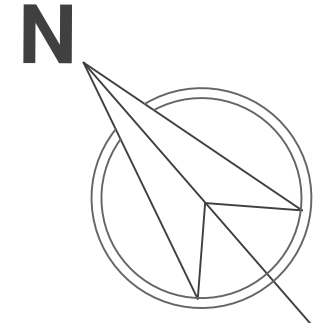
**CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN**

**APPLEWOOD INVESTMENTS  
890 UPLAND ROAD  
REDWOOD CITY, CA**

DRAWN MY
CHECKED MY
DATE 5/24/23
SCALE 1"=16'-0"
JOB NO. xxx
SHEET L-1
OF SHEETS 



**CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN**



1"=16'-0"



Elevations shown are conceptual to exemplify the lot layouts. Individual Design Review Permits shall be submitted to the County for each house following the Subdivision Approval

890 Upland Road, San Mateo County

Conceptual Streetscape