



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 W. Ocean Boulevard Long Beach, CA 90802 (562) 570-6194 FAX (562) 570-6068

September 19, 2011

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness as conditioned for a second story addition to a new two-story duplex currently under construction, located at 3039 and 3049 East Ocean Boulevard in the Bluff Park Historic District. (District 3)

APPLICANT: Simon M. Gonzales
3611 Berggeman Drive
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(Application No. HP 11-0161)

DISCUSSION

The subject site, 3039 and 3049 East Ocean Boulevard, is located within the Bluff Park Historic District on the north side of Ocean Boulevard between Orizaba and Paloma Avenues (Exhibit A- Location Map). The site has a zoning designation of R-2-L (Two-family residential district with large lots). The parcel is 11,000 square feet in area (55 feet by 200 feet) with a 20-foot-wide alley to the rear. A two-story duplex is currently under construction at this site. The Bluff Park Historic District was adopted in 1982 (C-5869) and expanded in 1990 (C-6835).

2006 - Property reviewed by Cultural Heritage Commission

This property first came before the Cultural Heritage Commission on May 17, 2006. The applicant had submitted plans for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing duplex and construct a new duplex. The existing development consisted of a 2,842-square-foot single-story duplex with detached garages that were built in 1955. This International-style residential property had various alterations over the years and was not identified as contributing to the historic district. Thus, staff concluded that demolition of the existing duplex would not affect the overall historic character of the Bluff Park Historic District. The record indicates the Commission emphasized that if the demolition permit was approved, any new residential development proposed for the property should respect the size, proportion and scale, height, mass, textures, features, and styles of the adjacent properties and those elsewhere in the district.

The proposed plans for the new duplex had a contemporary design with a nondescript architectural style. As proposed, the plans did not comply with the Secretary of the Interior Standards in terms of compatibility with the historic district. Staff recommended that the agenda item be continued to a future date. The intent of the recommendation was to give the applicant time to work with staff to refine the plans, bring them into compliance with the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance and return to the Commission with revised plans for consideration. The record reflects that after a lengthy discussion, a motion was made to lay the item over to a future date and create a subcommittee to work with the applicant. The motion was approved unanimously. Three commissioners volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

On June 21, 2006, the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property was brought back before the Cultural Heritage Commission. The record of the proceedings indicates the Commission believed the existing single-story duplex was historically significant as an individual landmark and as a contributing resource to the historic district although it was identified as a non-contributing property in the Ordinance (C-6835). The Historic Preservation Officer performed a preliminary assessment of the property and found the property ineligible for landmark status at any level due to the lack of notable architectural merit or association with significant historical events or personages. In addition, staff found the revised plans for the proposed new duplex to be lacking in detail and originality and not in compliance with the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance and the Secretary of the Interior Standards, including the landscape plans, due to incompatibility of the overall form, massing, scale, materials and proportion with other nearby residential buildings. The adjacent property to the east is a well executed International-style single-story residence designed by Edward Killingsworth in 1958 (3051 East Ocean Boulevard), and the adjacent property to the west is a 1928 two-story Spanish Colonial Revival residence (3035 East Ocean Boulevard). Staff recommended that the applicant continue to work with the subcommittee to refine the plans for compatibility with the historic district. A motion was made to continue the request to a future meeting and for the subcommittee to continue working with the applicant regarding the design of the proposed construction. The vote carried unanimously.

2009 - Property received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the City

Between September 2008 and July 2009, the Cultural Heritage Commission did not exist due to term limits and a reorganization of the Commission. On May 12, 2009, a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property was approved and issued by the Historic Preservation Officer. The Certificate authorized the demolition of the existing 2,842-square-foot single-story duplex (1955) and the construction of a Prairie style (influenced) two-story 5,796-square-foot duplex with a four-car garage and storage area at the rear of the lot (Exhibit C - Certificate of Appropriateness dated May 12, 2009 and approved plans). The permit to demolish the existing duplex was approved on December 18, 2009.

2010 - Plans for new duplex approved by City

The construction plans for the new duplex were approved by the Department of Development Services on April 20, 2010 (BNEW 44298). The approved plans depict a

two-story primary unit (3039) that is connected to a single-story secondary unit (3049) over a four-car garage. The primary (front) unit is 4,650 square feet in size with a 2,910-square-foot first floor and a 1,740-square-foot second floor. The 1,238-square-foot secondary unit is located above the 1,215-square-foot four-car garage for a total living area of 5,888 square feet. The primary unit has five bedrooms, a great room, a media room and a home office while the rear unit has two bedrooms and two bathrooms. A 325-square-foot accessory storage room on the first floor connects the garage to the primary (front) unit. The total living area for both units is 5,888 square feet. There is a separation of approximately sixty linear feet on the second floor between the primary and secondary units. Construction of the project commenced in mid 2010.

2011 - Request to amend approved plans submitted to City

Earlier this year the applicant submitted a request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to add approximately 1,300 square feet of living space to the new duplex currently under construction. Of this area, approximately 1,220 square feet is proposed to be added to the primary unit for a 920-square-foot great room and a 300-square-foot storage room and 56 square feet is proposed to be added to the secondary unit to enlarge the master bathroom. The height of the addition measured from top of curb to the ridgeline of the roof would vary from 27 feet-6 inches to 25 feet-6 inches. The architecture style of the structure will incorporate elements of the Prairie design with a low-pitched roof, overhanging eaves, side entry, horizontal banding and tall groups of casement windows. The exterior finish material is beige stucco with brown trim. The Certificate of Appropriateness approved in 2009 allows for dimensional recessed vinyl or aluminum clad windows with exterior Prairie/Craftsman style mullions (non-sandwich). These windows include single hung, double hung and fixed styles.

If approved as proposed the addition will result in the primary unit at approximately 5,950 square feet and the secondary unit at approximately 1,300 square feet for a combined square footage of 7,250 square feet with a 1,540-square-foot garage/storage area. The addition will connect the front unit to the rear unit on the second level, creating a continuous building wall 160 feet in length.

When the plans were approved in 2010 by the Planning Department a few alterations were approved that include elimination of the fireplace on the south elevation, conversion of a 130-square-foot covered patio to a laundry room on the north elevation, and converting a laundry room to a full bathroom on the first floor.

Staff has concerns regarding the elimination of the sixty-foot separation between the two units on the second level. The addition, as proposed, would result in a second story continuous building wall of 160 linear feet. Based on the existing structures on either side of the project site, the mass and proportions would be out of scale. Traditionally, secondary units in the Bluff Park area have been smaller units located in the rear portion of the lot and detached from the primary unit. Staff believes that the attachment of the two units would not be consistent with the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance or with the Secretary of the Interior Standards to maintain spatial relationships that characterize the property. As proposed, the scale, mass and proportions of the duplex would not be

compatible with the development pattern of the area in which the two-unit property is located. Staff is recommending a condition that maintains a separation of thirty feet between the primary unit and the secondary unit on the second story level and results in no increase in the overall building footprint of the two-unit development. A Local Coastal Development Permit will also be required prior to construction of the addition.

With revised plans that reflect a thirty-foot separation between the two units on the second level, the project would arguably comply with Section 2.63.070 of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code (Cultural Heritage Commission), the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (the Standards), and the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance (Ordinance No. C-6835). The conditions of approval reflect the above 30' separation recommendation (Exhibit D – Findings and Conditions of Approval). The conditions of approval also identify a Local Coastal Development Permit (LCDP) as a needed requirement for the project. In summary, staff recommends that the Cultural Heritage Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness, as conditioned.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public notices were distributed on September 1, 2011 to over 1,000 addresses and the Bluff Park Neighborhood Association. One letter of opposition was received (Exhibit E – Letter).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with Section 15303 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, (CEQA), this project is exempt for construction of a new duplex, subject to the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully submitted,


JILL GRIFFITHS, AICP
PLANNING OFFICER


ROBERT M. ZUR SCHMIEDE, AICP
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

RMZS: JG: LF

Attachments: Exhibit A – Location Map
Exhibit B – Plans & Photographs
Exhibit C – Certificate of Appropriateness dated May 12, 2009
Exhibit D – Findings and Conditions
Exhibit E - Letter