



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

411 West Ocean Boulevard, 3rd Floor • Long Beach, CA 90802 • (562) 570-6194

August 12, 2019

CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Certificate of Appropriateness request for the demolition of an existing detached two-car garage and the construction of a new 759 square-foot detached three car garage with a 449 square-foot studio unit above the garage. The property is located at 2609 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street and is a contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District. (District 3)

APPLICANT: Joe Zieba  
2609 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Long Beach, CA 90803  
(Application No. COAC1906-01)

## THE REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness request for the demolition of an existing detached two-car garage and the construction of a new 759 square-foot detached three-car garage with a 449 square-foot studio unit above the garage.

## BACKGROUND

The subject property is located on the north side of E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, between Molino Avenue to the east, Lindero Avenue to the west, and is adjacent to a 20-foot alley on the north (Exhibit A - Location Map) within the R-2-L zone (Two-Family Residential District with Large Lots). The property was developed in 1919, with a one-story, 2,005 square-foot single-family residence with a detached 400 square-foot two car garage on an 8,250 square-foot lot. The property is a contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District.

The existing residence resembles a Spanish Colonial Revival or Mediterranean Revival architectural style building that appears to have been altered over time. The existing exterior cladding on the dwelling consists of a smooth stucco finish. The existing dwelling is designed with a flat roof system, with a 6-inch parapet wall that includes an aluminum trim along the roof edges and throughout the exterior of the home. All the existing wood windows on the residence are original and consist of a casement windows, fixed windows with geometric muntins, and double-hung windows throughout the dwelling. The front

façade of the dwelling is integrated with four (4) pairs of wood French doors with a grid upper divided light pattern, rectangular attic vents as well as a high flat porch with decorative supporting columns and open railing. According to 1949 Sanborn Maps, the dwelling once had what appears to be an interior courtyard central to the dwelling. Staff believes the interior courtyard was enclosed with the skylight existing today and when the high porch was built. The residence is well preserved and retains some of the original Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style features despite being altered over time (Exhibit B- Photographs).

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) because the size of the second unit and accessory structure exceeds 250 square-feet. In order to be granted approval, the project must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and meet the criteria for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The proposed two-story structure will be located in the rear half of the lot and will stand alone from the existing single-family residence (Exhibit C – Plans). The proposed three-car garage will be 759 square-feet in size. The second floor, second unit (studio) will be accessed by exterior stairs along the south elevation of the new two-story structure. The new 449-square-foot studio unit will include a bathroom, kitchen, and combined living/bedroom space within the unit. The proposed three-car garage will take access from the alley located to the north of the property and conforms to the minimum 24-foot turning radius requirement.

The project will maintain an appropriate scale within the context of the Bluff Park Historic District and of the block, which consists of primarily one- and two-story structures and a mixture of architectural styles along E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Within the Bluff Park Historic District, there are many existing properties with a detached two-story dwelling unit located at the rear of the property. The properties located to the east and west sides of the subject site feature two-story structures, while the properties to the north are constructed with two four-story multi-family residential structure that spans the entire width of the subject site. Although, the proposed two-story structure would be visible above the ridgeline of the existing residence, the design and depth of the lot makes the new structure minimally visible and is consistent with development patterns of adjacent properties and others found on the same block and throughout the district.

The proposed two-story second unit and accessory structure will be consistent and in full compliance with the City's residential development standards for the R-2-L zoning district, which permits two dwellings on the lot, as well as with the Secretary of Interior's Standards, the Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines, and the Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide.

The design guidelines for the Bluff Park Historic District states a second unit to the Bluff Height Historic District is allowed, subject to meeting the Zoning code requirements. As proposed, the lot size of the property meets the current minimum lot size requirements to

propose a second dwelling unit. As proposed, the new structure will be set back approximately 125 feet from the front property line and will maintain a 31'1" separation distance between the existing primary residence. The second-floor studio unit would be setback 4'10" from the east property line and 4'0" from the rear property line. The garage will maintain space for two standard parking spaces and one compact parking space for a total of three parking spaces to meet the current zoning code requirements based on the proposed bedroom count of the two dwelling units combined.

The overall height of the existing primary residence is 16 feet measured from top of curb to the top ridge of the existing roof. The proposed garage and second floor unit proposes an overall height of 25 feet. Staff has recommended a condition of approval to reduce the overall height of the existing structure to 24 feet to reduce visibility from the public right-of-way. With regard to scale, the proposal will alter the existing scale and massing established for the property.

The property currently has a detached two-car garage on site. The existing garage proposed for demolition is located behind the primary structure and is not visible from the street, and, is consequently, not a prominent feature of the site. By maintaining the existing driveway and the general rhythm and pattern of the site's walkways and driveways, the demolition of the existing accessory garage structure will not have an impact on an essential historic feature of the site nor will it change the historic significance of the property. Allowing the proposed project enables the development of a second unit on the site, as permitted by the zoning, and accommodates the required parking in a manner that both retains the historic features of the site and minimizes the visual impact of the project.

As proposed, the project conforms to the current zoning requirements; with the addition of a second dwelling unit on the site, an additional parking space is required for a total of three parking spaces. The adopted historic guidelines for the Bluff Park Historic District also provide guidance for accessory structures. The guidelines state that a new accessory structure may be acceptable provided that the size and scale of the accessory structure is appropriate to the existing residence and the size of the backyard, is not taller than the existing roofline, does not envelop, is not larger than the overall existing residence, is designed in a way that does not obscure or damage the existing character-defining features or structures, and is compatible in design with the primary structure. The proposed detached three-car garage will take access from the alley, will be setback 4'0" from the rear (north) property line to meet the minimum 24-foot turning radius requirement, 6'0" from the east property line and will maintain a 31'1" separation from the primary dwelling. As part of the project, the detached three-car garage will maintain an overall height of 13 feet measured to the top of the wall, which is lower than the existing dwelling. In order to be compatible with the current Altered Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, the plans propose a smooth stucco finish and incorporates a flat roof configuration with an aluminum trim along the exterior perimeter of the structure consistent with the primary structure. The plans also propose wood contemporary style garage doors, a pair of quad French doors along the west elevation and a pair of triple French doors along the south elevation.

In accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard No. 9 states the new addition will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. As proposed, the new three-car garage and second unit above meets all current zoning regulations, the Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide, and the Bluff Heights Historic District Design Guidelines (Exhibit D – Findings). Based on the current site conditions, it is important to retain the current driveway on the property. The guidelines for the Bluff Park Historic District states that "driveways should not be relocated or resized, the width, location and configuration of existing driveways should be retained as this will preserve the building's historic

relationship to the site and maintain the visual continuity of the district. As such, retaining the existing driveway will preserve the primary dwelling's relationship to the site as required per the historic district's guidelines.

Standard No. 9. also states that "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features..." While the proposed two-story structure, housing a detached three-car garage, and a second unit above located in the rear half of the lot are not original features to the 1919 building, the second unit and accessory structure will incorporate consistent materials and elements compatible with primary dwelling to maintain the character of the Altered Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. To differentiate between the old and the new as required from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, staff has added a condition of approval to incorporate a weep screed to the garage elevations that shall be painted to match the existing dwelling unit. This feature is common to the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style and will serve to differentiate the new structure from the existing, as the existing does not currently have this feature. While the proposed improvements represent a change from existing conditions on the primary dwelling, they are generally compatible with the existing residence's Altered Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style and are configured on the site in a manner that minimizes the structure's visibility from the public right-of-way.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff has analyzed the proposed project and has determined that the project meets the requirements set forth in Title 21 of the City's Zoning Code, Section 2.63.080 (Cultural Heritage Commission) of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code, the Secretary of the Interiors' Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, the Spanish Colonial Revival Style Guide, and the Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines.

With conditions, staff supports approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness request for the demolition of an existing detached two car garage and construction of a new 759-square-foot detached three-car garage with a 449-square-foot second unit above the garage. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as these improvements are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportions, materials and colors with the architectural style of the existing structure on the property and in the

context of the District. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval).

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with Section 15301(e), Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), environmental review is not required for construction of small additions to single-family residences.

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices were distributed on July 24, 2019. As of this date, no letters were received in response to this project.

Respectfully submitted,



SERGIO GUTIERREZ  
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



PATRICIA A. DIEFENDERFER, AICP  
ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER

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Attachments: Exhibit A - Location Map  
Exhibit B - Photographs  
Exhibit C - Plans  
Exhibit D - Findings  
Exhibit E - Conditions of Approval