



# CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 W. Ocean Boulevard Long Beach, CA 90802

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November 10, 2014

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the adaptive reuse of the designated landmark Ocean Center Building at 110 W. Ocean Boulevard in the PD-6 Planned Development District.

APPLICANT: Alon Averbuch  
David Lawrence Gray Architects, Inc.  
527 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90014  
(Application No. HP 14-340)

## DISCUSSION

The subject site, 110 W. Ocean Boulevard, is located at the southwest corner of Ocean Boulevard and Pine Avenue (Exhibit A - Location Map). The site is improved with the 14-story Ocean Center Building, which received landmark status in 1989. Constructed in 1929 as the first downtown commercial building on the bluff, the Mediterranean Revival building features a terraced massing that rises from the lower Seaside Way grade up to Ocean Boulevard, culminating in a distinctive octagonal tower serving as a visual landmark of the City's skyline. The Ocean Center Building's preserved terracotta roof tiles, stucco walls and tower element exemplify the Spanish influences popular in Southern California architecture at the time of its construction. Occupancy of the building is currently office, with other commercial uses (retail, lounge) located at grade along the Pine Avenue and Seaside Way frontages. A two-level parking garage, accessed from Ocean Boulevard, is contained within the building's fourth and fifth floors.

The proposed adaptive reuse of the Ocean Center Building consists of converting the office areas (totaling 69,108 square feet) into 74 apartment units and reintroducing commercial leasing areas along the Ocean Boulevard and Seaside Way frontages in areas of existing wall fills. Similarly, wall fills along the building's Pine Avenue frontage would be removed for the reestablishment of storefronts in their original locations (Exhibit B - Plans). Flat roof portions of the building (located on the sixth floor and up) would feature common and private amenity areas, including a new 1,147-square-foot, contemporary-designed amenity room. The building's parking garage would remain on the fourth and fifth floors, but be restriped for a more functional and code-compliant stall arrangement.

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Proposed interior and exterior improvements to the building would maintain its historic character and are consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Exhibit C – Findings & Conditions of Approval). Important historic design and material features are being maintained and preserved without alteration, and a concerted effort has been made to integrate new features – many of which, namely the storefronts, were original building elements that were subsequently removed – in a considered manner. Key features of the proposed adaptive reuse include:

### Interior

- Existing, publicly-accessible common areas, such as the main entryway and lobby corridor off Ocean Boulevard, will be maintained and preserved without alteration. This includes retention of the marble terrazzo flooring, painted entryway ceiling, marble walls, and wainscot and mahogany wood panels.
- Existing circulation corridors between each floor's stairways will retain their original configuration and tile flooring (a change from the reconfigured circulation corridors that were presented to the Cultural Heritage Commission at a March 2014 study session), as required by the State's Office of Historic Preservation.
- Marble wainscoting, wood trim, and elevator surrounds in existing corridors and stairwells will be also be retained.
- At the urging of the State's Office of Historic Preservation, carefully designed fire doors enclosing existing interior stairwells will be installed for compliance with current smoke control (stairwell pressurization) regulations. The installation of these doors, as opposed to complete stairwell-corridor separation (via a wrap-around corridor), will allow character-retaining, visually continuous, corridors.

### North Elevation (Ocean Boulevard)

- Two double-height wall fills east of the building's main entry will be removed for purposes of reintroduction of a storefront system featuring narrow profile aluminum-framed windows/doors. These openings would provide access to a tentative restaurant space that would feature an outdoor patio dining area adjacent to Victory Park.
- A new circular window, in the location of an existing metal louvered opening, will be installed at the cupola level.
- New blade signage, at the eastern edge of the restaurant space, directed to east-west pedestrian and automobile traffic.

South Elevation (Seaside Way)

- Removal of double-height wall fills and non-original storefront openings and installation of new storefront systems at original locations with more appropriate design and dimensions.
- New third floor window openings (2) to match the existing window pattern (material, color, and size).
- Installation of new seventh and eighth floor tube steel balconies in keeping with the façade's existing fire escape design.
- New canvas awnings of terracotta color over storefront areas.

East Elevation (Pine Avenue)

- Removal of two levels of wall fills for reintroduction of storefront systems at original locations. Restaurant and retail options are presented for the northernmost space. Restaurant tenancy would involve recessing the storefronts between the column bays for purposes of creating two outdoor dining areas.
- Conversion of existing tube steel fire escapes into balconies via the removal of vertical ladders connecting the fire escape landings.
- Replacement of existing metal mechanical louvers for stair pressurization purposes at the cupola level.
- New Walk of a Thousand Lights monument plaque adjacent to the façade's large archway opening.
- Up to five blade signs are proposed along this façade, two adjacent to the Walk of a Thousand Lights opening and three adjacent to the more northerly retail/restaurant spaces.
- New canvas awnings of terracotta color over storefront areas.

West Elevation (Interior)

- Removal of two levels of wall fills for purposes of introducing seven loft units fronting onto the 15-foot public easement running north-south between Ocean Boulevard and Seaside Way. Wall recesses will be incorporated at the loft units for creation of private patio spaces.
- New tube steel balconies at the third level and on the recessed tower façade (with window opening enlargements, to accommodate), levels six – 12. Balcony material, shape, and size to match existing/adjacent fire escape.



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- New two-level storefront system to be installed south of the Walk of a Thousand Lights opening, adjacent to Seaside Way.

Proposed improvements also include amenities on the building's many flat roof surfaces. The sixth floor roof will feature eight private patio areas for adjacent units. Proposed on the seventh floor roof would be the aforementioned amenity room (tastefully designed in a minimalist, contemporary style to distinguish it as a modern improvement), an adjacent common deck area, and two private patios serving adjacent units. The seventh floor deck area will be connected to the sixth floor rooftop below with an open metal staircase, designed to match existing and proposed fire escapes and balconies, for secondary emergency exiting (the seventh floor fire escape alone cannot accommodate exiting for the proposed seventh floor deck area occupant load). The ninth floor rooftop would be improved with a common amenity deck as well as one private patio. The highest deck level, at the 12<sup>th</sup> floor level, would feature a small dog park, a non-occupiable garden area, and one private patio.

In compliance 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, and the Historic Landmark Ordinance for the Ocean Center Building, staff has analyzed the proposed project and believes that the project meets these requirements and those of the City's zoning codes.

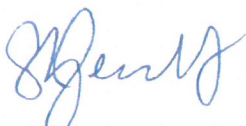
### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices were distributed on October 23, 2014. No responses were received as of the date of preparation of this report.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

In accordance with Section 15302 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is exempt as an alteration to an existing structure, subject to the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.

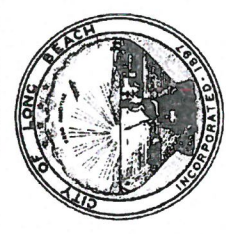
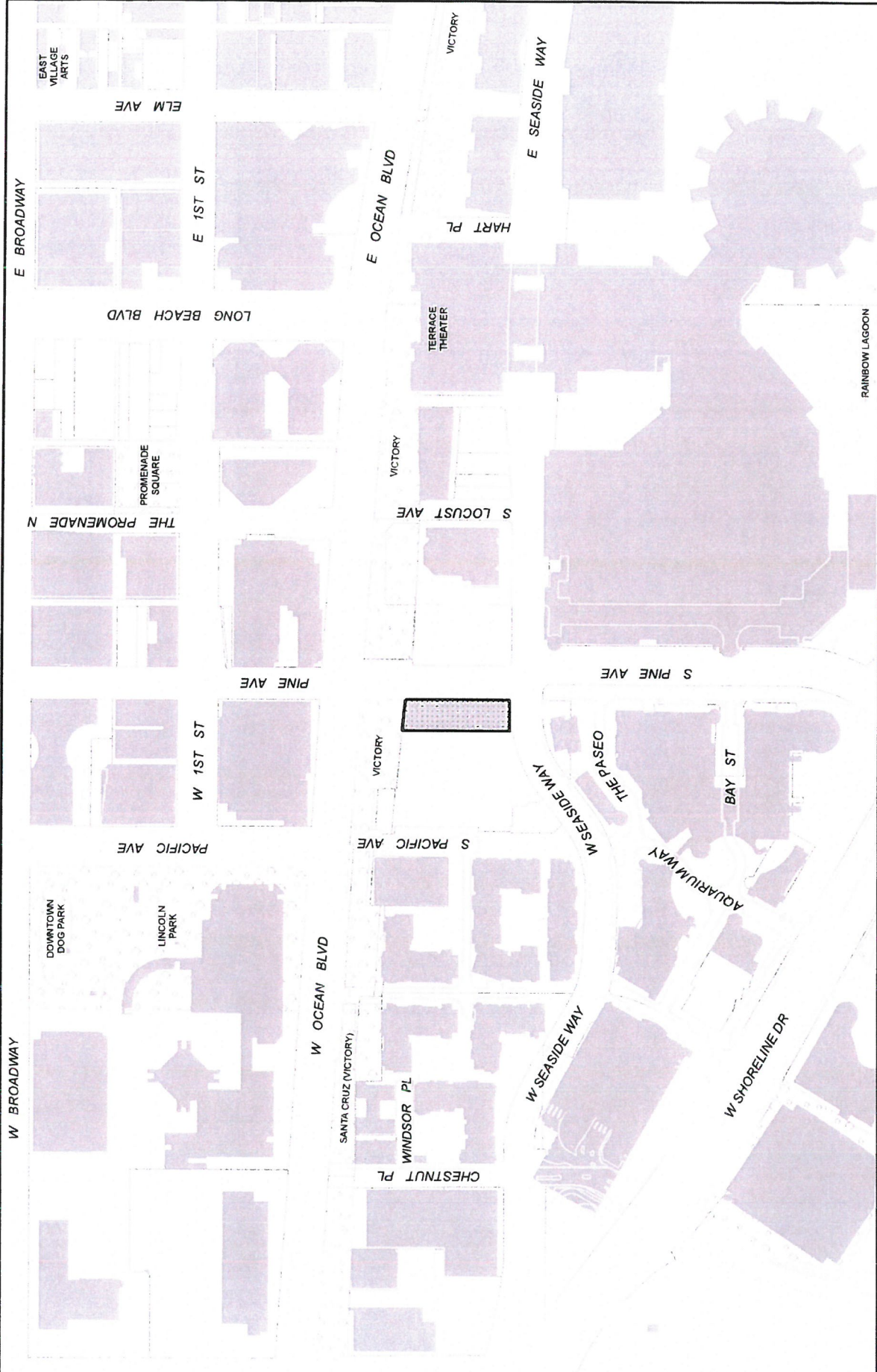
Respectfully submitted,



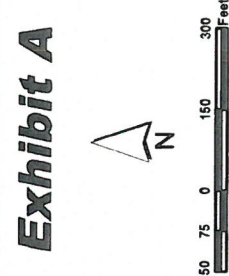
STEVE GERHARDT, AICP  
PLANNING OFFICER

SG:mh

Attachments    Exhibit A - Location Map  
                      Exhibit B - Plans  
                      Exhibit C - Findings & Conditions of Approval



**Subject Property:**  
110 W Ocean Blvd  
Application No. HP 14-340  
Council District 2  
Zoning Code : PD-6 SubArea 4



## Exhibit A



**FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**  
**110 W. Ocean Boulevard**  
**Ocean Center Building**  
**HP 14-340**  
**November 10, 2014**

**ANALYSIS:**

In compliance 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):

Staff has analyzed the proposed project in accordance with Chapter 2.63.070 of the Municipal Code (Cultural Heritage Commission ordinance), the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Staff has also reviewed the plans for consistency with the City's zoning codes and has found that the project will comply with applicable PD-6 land use and development standards and the provisions of the recently adopted Adaptive Reuse Ordinance.

Designed by the noted Los Angeles-based architects Meyer and Holler, Inc., the Ocean Center Building, constructed in 1929, was the first modern office building on the bluff. Its preserved terracotta roof tiles, stucco walls, and tower element exemplify the Spanish influences popular in southern California architecture. The building is capped with a stout octagonal shape tower that originally held a smaller fifty-foot concrete cupola and lantern. Following the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, the smaller tower and lantern were removed. In 1936 the building was renovated. Despite these changes, the Ocean Center Building has retained its distinct architecture and massing and remains a major point of reference on the Lone Beach skyline.

The 14-story building was designated a Long Beach Landmark by the City Council in 1989 via Ordinance No. C-6609. At that time, not only were the exterior character-defining features of the building identified, but also portions of the interior spaces as well, namely the elements within the lobby and entryway corridor (terrazzo flooring, painted entry ceiling, plaster ceiling, wainscot and mahogany wood panels, and marble walls). The ordinance also notes that users of the office spaces above the public lobby area are encouraged to retain the original architectural components, including the mahogany doors and overall corridor configuration.

The subject proposal would convert the primary use of the building from office to residential. Retail and restaurant uses would line the building's street frontages, and seven loft units would be introduced along the building's western façade. The existing 91-stall parking garage, located on the fourth and fifth floors, would be restriped for a more functional and code-compliant stall arrangement. Flat roof portions of the building

would be converted into common areas, highlighted by a new 1,147-square-foot, contemporary-designed amenity room at the seventh floor. New balconies would be introduced on the building's south and west faces, and the east façade's existing fire escape would be converted into balconies via removal of vertical ladders connecting each landing. On the interior, existing publically-accessible common areas, such as building's main entryway and lobby off Ocean Boulevard, would be maintained and preserved without alteration. Existing circulation corridors between each floors' stairways will retain their original (and existing) configuration and tile flooring.

In compliance 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), staff has analyzed the proposed project and believes the project meets these requirements and those of the City's zoning codes.

**FINDINGS:** (from Section 2.63.070(D) of the Long Beach Municipal Code)

- 1. (It) will not adversely affect any significant historical, cultural, architectural or aesthetic feature of the concerned property or of the landmark district in which it is located, is consistent with the spirit and intent of this chapter.**

*The proposed project, as conditioned, will not adversely affect any significant historical, cultural, architectural or aesthetic features of the subject landmark property. The work will be conducted pursuant to the guidelines and recommendations of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.*

- 2. (It) will remedy any condition determined to be immediately dangerous or unsafe by the Fire Department or the Development Services Department.**

*The Ocean Center Building is not considered dangerous or unsafe, and has been occupied on a full-time basis since its construction. Fire Department and Building Bureau personnel have reviewed the project for compliance with all applicable safety codes and have required upgrades that the applicant has included in their project scope. These upgrades include seismic strengthening to improve building performance and installation of fire sprinkler and fire alarm systems.*

- 3. The proposed change is consistent with or compatible with the architectural period of the building.**

*As conditioned, the proposed interior and exterior modifications will not compromise the character-defining features that make the Ocean Center Building historically significant. Repair and/or replacement work for missing or damaged features will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Elements being reintroduced, such as the storefront systems, will be done in a manner reflective of their initial*

*establishment. New elements being introduced, such as the seventh floor deck's amenity room, the loft units proposed on the west façade, and added balconies, will be designed and situated in a manner that will either purposefully distinguish from existing architecture (the amenity room) or be well integrated into the existing architecture.*

4. **The proposed change is compatible in architectural style with existing adjacent contributing structures in a historic landmark district.**

*The Ocean Center Building is an individually designated landmark that is not located within a historic district. As such, this finding is not applicable.*

5. **The scale, massing, proportions, materials, colors, textures, fenestration, decorative features and details proposed are consistent with the period and/or are compatible with adjacent structures.**

*The proposal maintains the proportions, scale, and character of the original structure. Facade modifications, treated to match existing colors, materials, and details, will be complementary in nature.*

6. **The proposed change is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings by the U.S. Department of the Interior.**

*As proposed and conditioned, the project conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The historic character of the building and its defining features that give it historic significance will be retained and rehabilitated.*



**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**  
**110 W. Ocean Boulevard**  
**Ocean Center Building**  
**HP 14-340**  
**November 10, 2014**

1. This approval is for interior and exterior modifications in conjunction with the adaptive reuse of the Ocean Center Building, a designated historic landmark. The improvements to the property shall be as shown on plans received by the Department of Development Services – Planning Bureau on October 31, 2014. These plans are on file in this office, except as amended herein.
2. The project must be completed per the plans approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission, including all conditions listed herein. Any subsequent changes to the project must be approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission or by Planning Bureau staff before implementation. Upon completion of the project, a staff inspection must be requested by the applicant to ensure that the approved plans have been executed according to approved plans and that all conditions have been implemented before occupancy hold can be released.
3. There is a ten calendar-day appeal period that will lapse at 4:30 p.m., ten calendar days after the action by the Cultural Heritage Commission is made. Appeal of the Commission's action will not be accepted after this time. A separate fee will apply to appeal an action taken by the Cultural Heritage Commission.
4. This Certificate of Appropriateness shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of the rendering of the decision by the Cultural Heritage Commission. Pursuant to the Cultural Heritage Commission Ordinance Section 2.63.070(I), this approval shall expire within one year if the authorized work has not commenced. Should the applicant be unable to comply with this restriction, an extension may be granted pursuant to Section 2.63.070(I) for an additional 12 months maximum. The applicant must request such an extension prior to expiration of this Certificate of Appropriateness. After that time, the applicant will be required to return to the Cultural Heritage Commission for approval. In addition, this Certificate of Appropriateness shall expire if the authorized work is suspended for a 180-day period after being commenced.
5. Application for building permits is contingent on Planning Commission (or City Council, upon appeal) approval of a Site Plan Review permit. Required Building permits shall be obtained by the applicant. Building permits must be obtained prior to the implementation of any construction or rehabilitation work. Separate plan check and permit fees will apply.

6. Any damage caused to the building during construction shall be reported immediately to the Planning Bureau and repaired in a manner that is consistent with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
7. The applicant shall obtain a separate Certificate of Appropriateness for any proposed exterior changes that are not part of the subject proposal's scope of work (as detailed on plans referenced in Condition No.1).
8. Any proposed changes to the plans approved by the Cultural Heritage Commission and staff will need to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Development Services or their designee prior to implementation. Significant changes to the project's design will require review and approval by the Cultural Heritage Commission prior to the issuance of building permits.