

April 28, 2020

**CHAIR AND CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSIONERS**

City of Long Beach  
California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new two-story, 2,400-square-foot single-family residence (primary residence) in conjunction with the conversion of an existing 779-square-foot dwelling unit over an existing two-car garage to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) at a property located at 38 Temple Avenue. The existing two-story structure at the rear of the site is not a contributing structure within the Bluff Park Historic District. (District 3)

**APPLICANT:** Niraj Sharma  
38 Temple Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90803  
(Application No. COAC2001-01)

**THE REQUEST**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new two-story, 2,400-square-foot single-family residence (primary residence) at the front of the existing property. In conjunction with the new construction, the existing 779-square-foot dwelling unit over an existing two-car garage would be converted to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). No new square-footage or improvements are proposed to the existing structure. New site improvements, such as landscaping, paving, and perimeter fencing (side and rear), are included as part of this application.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on Temple Avenue, between East Ocean Boulevard to the south and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street to the north (Exhibit A - Location Map), within the R-2-L zone (Two-Family Residential, Large Lots). A 20-foot-wide public alley (Bronce Way) borders the property to the south. The subject 5,000 square-foot lot is developed with a two-story structure at the rear of the property, setback approximately 78 feet from the front property line on Temple Avenue. The existing structure features a two-car garage (425-square-feet) and accessory storage area (245-square feet) at the ground floor and a 779-square-foot residential unit above. The 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor unit cantilevers to the west of the unit, which creates an overhanging porch at the ground floor. The applicant is proposing to maintain the existing rear structure in its same use and configuration, and the two-car garage will continue to take access from an existing 20-foot wide alley which abuts the side of the property.

The existing structure is a non-contributing structure in the Bluff Park Historic District. Based on assessor records, this structure was constructed in 1924. The building stands two-stories in height and is designed in a vernacular interpretation of the Italianate style (Exhibit B – Photographs). The exterior of the residence and garage consists of horizontal wood siding, a variety of window styles (including hung, casement, fixed styles), flat roof, wide-overhanging eaves with decorative corbels, a frieze, and dental details below the roofline. No interior or exterior work is proposed on the existing structure as part of this application.

A Study Session was held at the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) meeting on June 11, 2018 regarding future development on this property (Exhibit C – CHC Study Session Presentation [June 2018]). As part of this analysis, an extensive review of the permit history for this property was conducted in 2018 by Environmental Science Associates (ESA) to verify if a primary dwelling was historically present on the site (Exhibit D – Study Session Exhibit – June 2018 [Environmental Science Associates, 2018]). As a result of this research and analysis, the existing structure appears to be a garage/ancillary structure related to a main house that is no longer extant on the property.

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed project requires approval of the CHC because the new primary dwelling constitutes infill construction and exceeds 250 square-feet. The new primary residence would be located in the front half of the lot and be visible from the public right-of-way (Temple Avenue). 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 conversion of the 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor unit over the garage to an ADU does not require CHC review because no new square footage or exterior changes are proposed to accomplish this change of occupancy. Under State law, an ADU is generally allowed by-right on this site, as long as it meets unit size limitations and other ADU development standards. This application is limited to design review by the CHC pursuant to Section 2.63.080 of the City of Long Beach Municipal Code (CHC) for consistency with historic district standards.

The proposed two-story primary dwelling would be 2,400-square-feet in size and feature a front porch, roof deck, and rear patio areas at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors (Exhibit E - Plans). The existing structure at the rear would remain in its existing location and orientation to the lot, detached from the new residence. The proposed primary residence will be set back 15 feet from the front property line on Temple Avenue with a 5-foot projection for the front porch, which is allowed per R-2-L development standards. On the sides, the new structure will be set back 4 feet from the northern property line (interior lot line) and 6 feet from the southern property line (alley). The rear 2<sup>nd</sup> story patio will maintain a 13-foot-2-inch separation from the existing two-story structure at the rear.

The new roof would provide a 10:12 roof pitch and feature a faux gable in a mansard style roof with composition shingles similar to the predominant roof style and materials established for the Colonial Revival architectural style. The height of the new primary residence facing Temple

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Avenue is 28-feet-2-inches in height as measured to the top of the parapet. The existing 2-story structure at the rear of the property (to be converted to ADU) is 20-feet-10-inches in height.

The architectural period of significant of the District spans from 1903 to 1949. Within the District boundaries, there are intact examples of a variety of architectural style, including Spanish, Colonial, Mediterranean and Tudor Revivals, as well as Craftsman, Victorian, and Streamline Moderne homes. The new primary residence is a modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style, which is an architectural style found within the Bluff Park Historic District. The new structure incorporates several architectural features of the Colonial Revival style to integrate the design within the District, while also deviating from the prescribed design standards to avoid creating a false sense of history. The structure would feature horizontally oriented siding at the front elevation (hardie plank siding in smooth finish), stucco at the side and rear elevations (smooth finish), hung windows with shutters, gabled roof, and column porch elements. In a modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style, the residence will feature an offset entry with a 5-foot-deep open porch that spans the entire front of the elevation. Simple wood columns are proposed in contrast to the typical Tuscan columns that support the shallow porch or pediment typical to this architectural style. The roof is designed with a faux gable in a mansard style roof with composition shingles to visibly conceal the proposed 675-square-foot roof deck. This design would be consistent with the Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines, in that the building is infill construction and would not remove historic building components, the roof deck is on a flat roof that is two-stories in height, and the roof deck would be completely screened from the public right-of-way. In addition, the residence includes a 5-foot-wide front porch and a 378-square foot 2<sup>nd</sup> floor patio at the rear with stairs leading to the roof deck. The new porch areas will include wood railing consistent with the Colonial Revival Style Guide.

Most of the proposed windows for the new residence are double hung windows, which includes the 10 new double hung windows on the front elevation. The orientation of the windows on the front elevation would be symmetrical between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> story and entry. The front door would feature a wood paneled door with sidelite windows. On the rear elevation, there are a variety of window styles proposed, which includes slider and awning windows and a folding door with inset glass. All proposed windows would be of quality wood or wood-clad materials and have wood trim to be consistent with the Colonial Revival style. To ensure the proposed window is of high quality and non-reflective materials, the window manufacturer specifications and samples shall be submitted to the Planning Bureau staff prior to the issuance of building permits. Additionally, a condition has also been placed on the project requiring the applicant to conduct an assessment of the existing windows and doors on the rear structure and to replace any non-period-appropriate windows/doors with historically appropriate windows/doors in order to bring the existing structure into conformance with the historic district guidelines.

Site improvements are proposed as part of the construction of the new primary dwelling, which includes landscaping, paving, and perimeter fencing (side and rear). The front and rear yards will be re-landscaped. The front yard will include grass and planter areas along the frontage and walkway leading to the entry. As conditioned, the entry walkway will be poured Portland cement concrete and be sized to correspond with the two entry columns. At the rear yard areas,

grass and permeable pavers will be installed to control site runoff. The existing front yard picket fencing would be removed, and new 6-foot-high vertically oriented wood perimeter fencing would be installed on the side and rear property lines. As conditioned, consistent with the Bluff Park Design Guidelines, no front yard fencing would be permitted as part of the project.

The existing two-story structure is currently painted a blue color with white trim. In order to ensure compatibility among all the structures on the lot as well as compatibility of the proposed structure with the Secretary of Interior Standards and the Bluff Park Historic District Design Guidelines, the owner will be required to obtain a certificate of appropriateness to the paint the existing structure at the rear to complement the new primary residence. The structures will be required to be painted in colors that are appropriate for the both the Colonial Revival and Italianate architectural styles, prior to issuance of final Certificate of Occupancy for the new primary residence.

The Design Guidelines for the Bluff Park Historic District provide guidance for infill construction. The guidelines state that new construction should be generally compatible with the existing contributing buildings in the District and reasonably “blend in” with its surroundings. The new primary residence would be located in the front half of the property and would be highly visible from the public right-of-way. Consistent with the Design Guidelines, the structure has been designed as a modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style, which is a style present in the District, and oriented towards Temple Avenue, consistent with other adjacent properties. Furthermore, a review of records indicate that the existing rear structure was likely accessory to a former primary dwelling on the site. The proposed property would not change the use of the site or disrupt the visual character of the District.

The majority of contributing properties in the Bluff Park Historic District are one or two stories in height, therefore, the introduction of a new two-story structure would not interrupt the visual continuity or integrity of the District. In addition, while East Ocean Boulevard and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street are major street frontages in the District, adjacent properties have primary structures that are oriented to and treat Temple Avenue as the front yard for setback purposes, similar to the proposed residence. Within the block of Temple Avenue between Ocean Boulevard and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street, four of the eight properties are visually oriented towards Temple Avenue under existing conditions and as such this orientation is consistent with existing development patterns (Exhibit F – Existing Setbacks Map). The front yard setback for the proposed structure is consistent with the setback of those similarly situated properties that are oriented toward Temple Avenue and thus consistent with the existing development patterns. In addition, the abutting property to the north (2800 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street/46 Temple Avenue) is oriented towards East 1<sup>st</sup> Street, with a 6.5-foot side yard setback on Temple Avenue. This property features a garage with a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor unit that is setback and takes access from Temple Avenue. The new setback for the proposed structure would generally align with this structure and provide a sense of visual continuity.

The ordinance encourages infill development to take its queues from the surrounding buildings. The existing structure is two stories in height and adjacent properties also feature two-story structures. The introduction of a new two-story structure would be consistent with the pattern

of the District as a whole. In addition, the existing structure was likely accessory to a non-extant primary structure and the introduction of a new residence would restore the property's visual relationship to the other properties along Temple Avenue. While not designed in the same architectural style as the existing rear structure, the modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style in the new primary residence will visually complement the rear structure without creating a false sense of history.

The project will maintain an appropriate scale with the context of the Bluff Park Historic District and context of the block which consists of a mix of one-story and two-story structures, with a variety of architectural styles on Temple Avenue ranging from Craftsman, Prairie, and modern infill construction. As proposed, the scale and size of the new two-story residence does not detract from the existing rear structure as it is a non-contributing structure and no substantial exterior modifications are proposed. The overall height of the new primary residence is 28-feet-2-inches measured to the top of the parapet. The similarity in roof height with the existing 2-story structure provides visual compatibility between the two structures in compliance with Standard No. 9. Similarly, the width of the proposed primary residence spans the frontage while providing a slightly larger setback on the south side, which results in a site orientation that preserves views of the rear structure at the intersection of Temple Avenue and Bronze Way (alley).

The proposed structure is complementary with the existing residence's Italianate architectural style and does not give a false sense of the property's historical development. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Standard No. 9 states that "new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features..." The new primary dwelling is a modern interpretation of the Colonial Revival style and has been designed to complement the context of the District, but has also been designed with features as a deep porch, roof deck, and rear patios that differentiate the project from the original detached, rear structure. The proposed project will provide a cohesive design between the new residence and the existing structure.

As designed, the proposed two-story residence will not have visual impacts when viewed from the front of the street along Temple Avenue. The proposed ADU will be consistent and in full compliance with the City's residential development standards for the R-2-L (Two-Family Residential, Large Lots) zoning district, the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinances C-5869 and C-6835, and the Colonial Revival Style Guide. The proposed primary residence is located in the front half of the property and will be compatible in massing and size yet distinguishable from the rear structure.

## **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 Long Beach Municipal Code, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the Bluff Park Historic District Ordinance. With conditions, Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of

Appropriateness for construction of a new two-story, 2,400-square-foot single-family residence (primary residence) in conjunction with the conversion of an existing 779-square-foot dwelling unit over an existing two-car garage to an ADU. All the findings can be made in the affirmative for the proposed improvements, as these improvements are compatible in overall scale, massing, proportions and materials with the architectural style of the existing structure at the rear of the property and the context of the District. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, subject to the conditions of approval (Exhibit G – Findings and Conditions of Approval).

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on that assessment, the City has determined the project to be Categorically Exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to the provisions of Article 19 Section 15303 (a) (new construction or conversion of small structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. No further environmental review is required.

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Public notices were distributed on April 14, 2020. As of this date, no letters were received in response to this project.

Respectfully submitted,



MARYANNE CRONIN  
PROJECT PLANNER



ALEJANDRO PLASCENCIA  
PRESERVATION PLANNER



CHRISTOPHER KOONTZ, AICP  
PLANNING BUREAU MANAGER



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ADVANCE PLANNING OFFICER

CK:PAD:AP:mc:ps

Attachments:   Exhibit A – Location Map  
                      Exhibit B – Photographs  
                      Exhibit C – CHC Study Session Presentation (June 2018)  
                      Exhibit D – Study Session Exhibit – June 2018 (Environmental Science Associates, 2018)  
                      Exhibit E – Plans  
                      Exhibit F – Existing Setbacks Map  
                      Exhibit G – Findings and Conditions of Approval